

# Factors Affecting Teachers' Decisions to Leave the Profession

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## **Executive Summary**

In November 2001 the DfES commissioned the Centre for Education and Employment Research at Liverpool University to investigate the factors affecting teachers' decisions to leave the profession during the calendar year 2002. The study had two main purposes. First, to provide an accurate and up-to-date picture of the current extent of teacher loss from schools in England, in particular whether it was increasing or falling. Secondly, to go beyond mere description and get behind the figures to tease out the underlying motivations of teachers leaving the profession.

### **Key Findings**

- Turnover (loss from schools) and wastage (loss from the maintained sector) of full-time teachers in 2002 were found to be, respectively, 14.1 per cent and 7.9 per cent. Comparisons with DfES and Employers' Organisation trend data suggest that these are down on previous years which had seen steep rises.
- Five main factors were found to influence teachers' decisions to leave: workload, new challenge, the school situation, salary and personal circumstances. Of these, workload was by far the most important, and salary the least.
- Of every 100 teachers resigning, 40 were moving to other maintained schools, 13 were retiring (9 prematurely), 9 were leaving for maternity or family care, 7 were going on supply, 7 were taking other teaching posts (independent schools, FE and HE), 5 were going to 'other employment', 4 had left for 'other education posts', and 4 had resigned to travel. The destinations of the other 11 were unknown to the schools.
- Leavers tended disproportionately to be either young with a few years' service or older and approaching retirement, to be female, and to come from the shortage subjects. There seemed to be no link to ethnic background.
- Teachers in London and the south and east were more likely to move to other schools and to leave than teachers in the midlands and the north. The leavers differed in their reasons for going and their likelihood of returning.
- Over 40 per cent of the leavers said that nothing would have induced them to stay. The main changes that would have made a difference to the others were a reduced workload, more support from the school and a higher salary.
- Only 13 per cent of the leavers thought it 'very likely' that they would return to teaching full-time, fewer still part-time, but nearly a quarter were contemplating supply. Female leavers were the more likely to expect to return part-time or to supply.
- All but 2 per cent of the leavers followed up after one or two terms were sure they had done the right thing. Nevertheless, about a third had changed their plans. Ten per cent had, in fact, taken new contracts in schools, usually part-time, so on some definitions wastage will have been lower than initially estimated.

## **Aims**

The investigation had six main aims:

- To quantify the relative importance of the factors influencing teachers' decisions to leave the profession.
- To identify the destinations of those leaving.
- To analyse the characteristics of teachers leaving the profession.
- To explore any geographical variation.
- To explore what factors might influence teachers' decisions to stay.
- To identify what factors might encourage those who have left the profession to return to teaching.

## **Background**

The research was commissioned against a background of increasing concern both in England and abroad about recruiting and retaining teachers. The study focused on exits from the profession. Previous monitoring by the DfES and the Employers' Organisation for Local Government has provided a statistical description of how many teachers were leaving schools (turnover) and leaving the maintained sector (wastage). There have also been some quantitative and qualitative studies which have contributed some understanding of the reasons and destinations, both nationally and locally.

## **Methodology**

A three-layered approach was adopted with a schools survey followed by a leavers survey and interviews. In addition, a follow-up survey was conducted in January 2003 of those who had left in the spring and summer of 2002.

Response rates were very good, at least 75 per cent in the schools surveys. From among those schools responding on all three occasions, structured samples of primary schools (N=1,349), middle schools (N=30), and secondary schools (N=316) were constructed to reflect the populations in terms of region and size, and region only in the case of special schools (N=87). The samples also corresponded closely with the other national distributions which were available.

The schools listed all teachers leaving them during 2002 from which we compiled a dataset of resignations (N=5,245). Questionnaires were sent, via the schools, to those leavers who were not going on to a full-time or part-time post in a maintained school, taking maternity leave or who had reached normal-age retirement. From their responses we compiled a leavers dataset (N=1,066). A sub-sample of 306 leavers was interviewed. Spring and summer leavers who provided their names were sent a further questionnaire in January 2003 to create a follow-up dataset (N=395).

## **Findings**

**Trends, Turnover and Wastage:** Turnover and wastage of full-time teachers from primary and secondary (including middle) schools in 2002 were estimated at, respectively, 14.1 per cent and 7.9 per cent. The nearest equivalent comparisons suggest that these are lower than in 2001, which had seen sharp increases in the previous four years.

**Reasons for Leaving:** Five main factors were found to underpin reasons for leaving: workload, new challenge, the school situation, salary and personal circumstances. Of these, workload was by far the most important, and salary the least. Relatively few of the teachers were being tempted away by better career prospects or being offered a higher salary elsewhere. Leavers from secondary schools were more likely to cite the school situation, particularly poor pupil behaviour, than leavers from primary schools.

**Destinations:** About 55 per cent of the resignees whose future plans were known to the schools were leaving the maintained sector. Full-timers were the most likely to move to full-time posts, and part-timers to part-time posts. Deputy headteachers were the most likely to be moving to other schools, probably for promotion. Heads of department in secondary schools were the most likely to be recruited by independent schools. About 10 per cent of the female resignees were leaving for maternity or family care. Ethnic minority resignees were more likely to be leaving for maternity and less for retirement. Different destinations were associated with different reasons. Retirees pinpointed 'workload', and downplayed 'new challenge'. Those moving to independent schools tended to emphasize the 'school situation' and 'salary'. Those heading for other jobs stressed the excessive workload in schools, not the attraction of opportunities elsewhere. Those moving out of the classroom to take other education posts were significantly more likely to cite 'new challenge' and 'salary', and less likely to complain of the 'school situation'.

**Characteristics of Leavers:** Leavers tended to be disproportionately either young with a few years' service or older and approaching retirement. Young leavers were more likely to cite 'salary' and 'personal circumstances (including travel)', older leavers 'workload'. Young leavers, particularly those travelling or teaching abroad, were more likely to expect to return to full-time teaching. Female teachers also were more likely to move and leave than male teachers, and this is associated with higher turnover and wastage rates in primary schools. Female teachers were more likely to hold, to leave, and expect to return to, part-time and fixed-term posts. Ethnic minority teachers were no more likely to leave than others. Turnover in the shortage subjects tended to be higher than in other subjects.

**Geographical Variation:** Teachers in London and the south and east were more likely to move to other schools and to leave than teachers in the midlands and the north. Leavers in London tended to be a distinctive group. They were significantly more likely to cite 'salary', 'new challenge' and 'personal circumstances' as reasons for going. They were also, by far, the most likely to indicate that they would return to teaching full-time. In contrast, in the North East, the region with the lowest turnover and wastage, less than ten per cent of the leavers indicated that they were 'very likely' to return to teach full-time. Their main reasons for going were also different: 'workload' and the 'school situation'.

***Influences on Staying:*** Over 40 per cent of the leavers said that nothing would have induced them to stay. Of the others, 43 per cent suggested a reduction in workload and fewer initiatives, a third, improvements to the ways schools are run, and, a quarter, a better salary might have made a difference. Pupil behaviour came fourth, being much more important to secondary leavers.

***Likelihood of Return:*** About half the leavers indicated that they were ‘very unlikely’ to return to teaching in maintained schools, either full-time or part-time, but only 38 per cent were similarly emphatic about not returning to do supply. Age, length of service, ‘workload’ and the ‘school situation’ were inversely related to the likelihood of return, while leaving for ‘new challenge’ and ‘personal circumstances’ were positively associated. Those leaving to travel, teach abroad and go on to supply teaching were the most likely to envisage returning; those going into other employment, teaching in independent schools and lecturing in FE/HE, as well as those retiring, the least.

***Decisions in Retrospect:*** Nearly all the leavers followed up one or two terms after leaving were sure they had done the right thing in leaving. Nevertheless, a third had changed their plans in the meantime. Ten per cent had, in fact, taken new contracts in schools, usually part-time, mainly from among those intending to go on supply, those who were unsure what to do, and those leaving for family care. So on some definitions wastage would have been lower than would have initially seemed. The same five factors were found to underpin the decisions to leave seen in retrospect as reported at the time of the resignation. In fact, the mean scores tended to be higher suggesting that the leavers felt even more strongly about going.

### **Policy Pointers**

Our purpose has been investigation, description and analysis, not to canvass particular policies. Nevertheless, it is possible to identify a number of policy pointers. We here summarize the main inferences that can be drawn.

- The DfES and the Employers’ Organisation could usefully revisit their characterisations of turnover and wastage with a view to agreeing common definitions which could form part of the co-ordinated approach to data collection in the public sector envisaged in the Comprehensive Spending Review in 2002.
- Whether possible levers to improve teacher retention are sought through exploring reasons for leaving or possible inducements to stay, workload, too many initiatives and pupil behaviour in secondary schools emerge as the most likely candidates. The only exception is salary which is frequently mentioned as an inducement to stay, but does not feature as a reason for leaving (perhaps because for most it is not on offer).
- Some teachers leave because of the particular school situation. Making retention part of the training of headteachers, ensuring national guidelines for support are implemented, and flexibility in employment to cater for those who wish to job share or work part-time could all have a part to play in reducing unnecessary loss.
- Teaching in an independent school appears to be relatively more attractive. Are there lessons to be learned and how far could they be applied in the maintained sector?

- A wide variety of advisory posts has recently been created around classroom teaching and these are proving more attractive than teaching itself. The assessment of the costs of any strategy or initiative depending on such posts should take into account the impact on teacher retention.
- Leaving is age related with more teachers likely to go at the two ends of the spectrum. Could more be done to retain teachers during their first years in the profession? What impact would encouraging teachers in their fifties and sixties to stay for a few more years have on ameliorating any teacher shortages and, if it appeared desirable, how might it be achieved?
- The higher cost of living in London is recognised in allowances, but should the issues surrounding national salary scales be revisited in trying to find ways of securing a relatively stable backbone of staff for schools throughout the country?
- In seeking to encourage leavers to return, there are some groups who are much more worth targeting than others, for example, young people who have left to see something of the world, those who are taking a break supply teaching and those who have taken temporary contracts in advisory posts.

## 1. Introduction

- 1.1 In November 2001 the DfES commissioned the Centre for Education and Employment Research at the University of Liverpool to investigate the factors affecting teachers decisions to leave the profession during the calendar year 2002.

### Remit

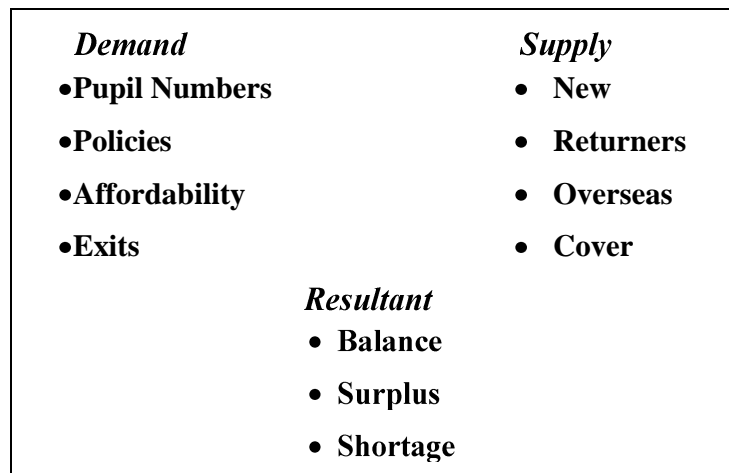
- To quantify the relative importance of the factors influencing teachers' decisions to leave the profession.
- To identify the destinations of those leaving – whether most of them find jobs after teaching, the type of work undertaken and the reasons for this.
- To analyse the characteristics of teachers leaving the profession – for example, age, gender, ethnicity, career stage, levels of responsibility, and subject area – and identify any patterns that emerge.
- To explore geographical variation in teachers' decisions to leave or stay in the profession – that is, to consider the impact of regional factors as well as generic factors.
- To explore what factors might influence teachers' decisions to stay in the profession – whether anything could have convinced them to stay.
- To identify what factors might encourage those who have left the profession to return to teaching – whether there are any obstacles or incentives for returning to teaching in the future.

### Background

- 1.2 The research was commissioned against a background of increasing concern with finding and retaining enough teachers of sufficient quality to staff our schools. England is not alone. UNESCO (2002) marked World Teachers Day in 2002 with the warning, based on a joint study with the International Labour Office, that “relentless population growth and declining working conditions are creating severe shortages of teachers in the world’s classrooms that may lead to a slide in education standards”. Highlighting population growth as a cause suggests that UNESCO had the plight of developing nations particularly in mind. In emphasising working conditions, however, it was also commenting on a trend that it had detected in industrialised nations. “The declining conditions and low salaries in the industrialised nations are discouraging new recruits to the profession, creating shortages and threatening to diminish the quality of education at a time when the need for new knowledge and skills is growing dramatically”.
- 1.3 UNESCO’s cautionary words are underlined by EURYDICE’s (2002a,b) recent study of the teaching profession in Europe, defined to include the countries of the European Union, the candidate countries, and members of the European Free Trade Association. Of the 31 countries providing information, 21 reported teacher shortages, 13 general and eight in particular regions and subjects. The explanations given were remarkably similar. From Belgium to Romania there were references to the poor competitive position of teaching with respect to the other occupations to which those with the necessary abilities might aspire.

- 1.4 The other side of the coin is oversupply leading to teacher unemployment. Six countries reported surpluses. Greece and Cyprus attributed this to a combination of the generous conditions attached to teaching and few opportunities elsewhere. Italy and Liechtenstein reported that a falling birth rate had reduced the requirement for teachers. Austria and Portugal did not offer explanations.
- 1.5 The main elements in balancing teacher provision are shown in Chart 1.1. Demand is essentially driven by four elements: pupil numbers, government policies, affordability and wastage. There are also four main types of supply: newly-trained teachers, those returning from being out of service, teachers recruited from other countries, and temporary cover of various kinds. Too many teachers leads to unemployment, too few leaves schools struggling to staff their classes. Imbalances may be across the whole system or specific to particular regions, schools or subjects.

**Chart 1.1: Teacher Provision**



- 1.6 In the EURYDICE (2002b) study, we have seen that 21 nations reported teacher shortages and six, surpluses. Only four were in the happy position of being able to claim that demand and supply matched: Finland and Spain, and closer to home, Northern Ireland and Scotland. Clearly, it would be interesting for any country experiencing difficulties to see how they have managed it.
- 1.7 In this report we focus on the exit element of teacher demand in England. Previous monitoring has provided a statistical description of how many teachers are leaving, and quantitative and qualitative research studies have contributed some understanding of the reasons and destinations.

### **Statistical Description**

- 1.8 Monitoring of teacher demand and supply in England (previously together with Wales) is generally good. In the EURYDICE study it was one of only four countries (the others were the Netherlands, Sweden and Iceland) that were able to provide comprehensive trend data. However, that comparative study revealed there were also important definitional differences. Whereas the data from Sweden and the Netherlands indicated large and growing teacher shortages, and in Iceland a stubborn deficit, in England, contrary to common impression, there appeared to be no shortfall. But closer inspection showed that the difference turned on the definition

of vacancy. England had counted only those posts to which no teacher had been appointed, whereas the other three countries had included, as well, posts occupied by non-qualified or inappropriately qualified teachers.

- 1.9 A major source of statistical information about teachers in England is the annual publications of the Department for Education and Skills. From them, it is evident that many qualified teachers do not make teaching their career. The latest volume of *Statistics of Education: School Workforce in England 2002 Edition*, page 91, records that 290,100 qualified teachers aged under 60 were not working in schools (and that excludes those receiving a teacher's pension). Of those, 82,700 had never taught. There are thus two aspects to teacher retention: loss of teachers (with which we are concerned) and loss of trainees.

### ***Loss of Teachers***

- 1.10 Both the DfES and the Employers' Organisation for Local Government regularly compile statistics on teachers leaving maintained schools. Both publish two indices: turnover and wastage. Turnover is resignations from individual schools, some of which can be to move on to other schools. Wastage is loss from the maintained sector. But there are definitional and measurement differences (which we will explore in detail in Chapter 5) and they consistently produce different results. In 2000-2001, the latest year for which we have figures, the DfES (2002c) reported rates of 16.4 per cent and 9.0 per cent for turnover and wastage respectively, while the Employers' Organisation's (2002) estimates were only 12.8 per cent and 6.5 per cent. Nevertheless, both sets of data do indicate a steep rise in the number of teacher resignations from 1998 to 2001 and one of the issues for the present research is whether this has continued.
- 1.11 Comparisons between different professions and occupations are difficult, but teacher turnover at times does seem to be somewhat higher than elsewhere. Whitmuir Management Consultants (2000) in a report for the School Teachers' Review Body cited average turnover rates in 1999 for the health service of 12.4 per cent and for local authorities of 11.5 per cent, against the DfES' estimate for that year of 15.2 per cent. This is, however, considerably better than the 26 per cent turnover in retail industries found by Reed Personnel Services (1999). The Audit Commission (2002) in a recent report on recruitment and retention in the public sector noted that in the absence of easily comparable information "considerable energy is devoted to arguing about the size of the problem". It welcomed the action planned in the Comprehensive Spending Review 2002 for a more co-ordinated approach to data collection.
- 1.12 Although we cannot be sure of the relative extent of wastage in the teaching profession there is, nevertheless, considerable actual loss, especially bearing in mind the length of training involved. From the age profile of the teaching force we can also see that many teachers are approaching retirement. The Government has acknowledged that 45 per cent of serving teachers will reach 60 at some point in the next 15 years (DfES, 2001), so leaving rates can be expected to increase. As Chart 1.1 illustrates exits from the profession are one of the main elements determining the requirement for new recruits.

### ***Loss of Trainees***

- 1.13 In England, the Government has put considerable effort and investment into creating incentives to train as teachers. The Green Paper, *Teachers: Meeting the Challenge of Change*, DfES (1998), sets out a number of proposals most of which have been carried through and developed, so there are now training salaries, 'golden hellos' for shortage subjects, tuition fee remission, repayment of student loans and fast-tracking. The incentives do seem to have boosted recruitment. The latest report of the School Teachers' Review Body (2003) shows that the intake into mathematics teacher training courses has risen by nearly half as many again since 1998/1999, albeit from a very low base. There have been increases too in the other core subjects of science (up 19 per cent), English (up 17 per cent) and modern foreign languages (up 6 per cent). As impressive as this may seem, with the exception of English, the training places taken up are still below allocations, with shortfalls of 29 per cent in modern foreign languages, 15 per cent in maths and 9 per cent in science.
- 1.14 The training targets have to be set higher than they need be because of the substantial numbers of trainees who appear either not to enter teaching or to soon leave. An analysis of published statistics (Smithers and Robinson, 2001b) showed that of every 100 entering teacher training and due to complete in 1998 only 88 did so, and just 59 were in full or part-time service in maintained schools in March 1999. Six per cent could be expected to enter later raising the overall number entering teaching to 63, but, given the high wastage in the first years, only 53 of the original 100 were likely to be teaching after three years.
- 1.15 A similar calculation has been carried out by Johnson (2002) who found that 40 per cent of those who started training with a view to completing in 1998 (including the four-year BEd) had not become teachers by the following March. This component of wastage is rather higher than the DfES' estimates, but nevertheless in modelling teacher demand and supply the Department assumes losses of 25 per cent in training from BEd courses and 11 per cent from PGCE courses. It also builds in non-entry rates for successful completers ranging from 16 per cent for female primary to 30 per cent for male secondary (DfEE, 1998).

### **Research on Teacher Retention**

- 1.16 Published sources thus provide a reasonable numerical description of the flows through teacher training into and out of teaching, but they cannot reveal the underlying reasons. Research on teacher supply has been dominated by studies of recruitment. Edmonds, Sharp and Benefield (2002) reviewed the literature on recruitment and retention to initial teacher training. They considered in detail the 42 articles out of 300 citations since 1986 judged to contain the best evidence. They found that people tend to be drawn to teaching by intrinsic occupational values such as wanting to work with children, search for intellectual fulfilment and the sense of contributing to society. Male recruits were more likely to emphasize extrinsic rewards such as salary, status and approval.
- 1.17 Edmonds *et al* found only limited research into recruitment to particular subjects or from under-represented groups such as male trainees for primary schools. But, in particular, they drew attention to the lack of research on the retention of teacher

trainees. The studies they did find tended to be small scale and retrospective. Our own literature review has found also only relatively few studies of the retention of teachers themselves.

### *Quantitative Studies*

- 1.18 The first large-scale study of teacher resignations in England and Wales we have to report in all modesty was by ourselves (Robinson and Smithers, 1991). Through surveys and interviews we attempted to chart for the calendar year 1989 the full cycle of how many teachers were leaving, where they were going, what happened to the posts, how many applicants there were for vacancies, and how many posts were filled and on what contracts. It involved all secondary schools (including independent schools within the area) in a ten per cent sample of LEAs in England and Wales. Four hundred and seventeen schools (367 maintained and 50 independent) out of a possible 431 agreed to participate. Notwithstanding the six sweeps, 62.4 per cent of the schools returned all questionnaires.
- 1.19 The report was the first to emphasize the distinction between turnover and wastage and it found rates for teachers leaving full-time permanent contracts in maintained secondary schools of respectively 9.6 per cent and 5.1 per cent. About 70.5 per cent of the resignations fell in the summer term, with 19.2 per cent in the autumn and 10.3 per cent in the spring. The main reasons the teachers gave for leaving were work overload, poor pay, lack of respect, poor discipline and having to teach outside their subject. Sixteen per cent of the vacancies arising in maintained schools in summer 1989 could not be filled either because there were no applications or none from whom a suitable appointment could be made. Independent schools tended to fare better, with turnover of 6.3 per cent and wastage of 3.2 per cent. Nearly all vacancies in independent schools (98 per cent) were filled, and all except 6 per cent on permanent contracts.
- 1.20 Both turnover and wastage have increased considerably in recent years. Twelve years after the initial study we had the opportunity of again conducting a national survey of teacher resignations (Smithers and Robinson, 2001a). We found that the equivalent turnover and wastage rates for 2001 had risen to 14.5 per cent and 6.8 per cent respectively. As in the earlier study, among secondary teachers, the most frequently given reason for going was workload (58 per cent of leavers) followed this time by pupil behaviour (45 per cent). But in 2001 the new category of 'government initiatives' had to be added (37 per cent). Salary (25 per cent), stress (22 per cent) and status/recognition (20 per cent) were again frequently cited. Leavers from primary schools (not covered in the 1989 survey) mentioned pupil behaviour less often (16 per cent), but were more likely to give as reasons workload (74 per cent) and government initiatives (42 per cent).
- 1.21 Workload has been a recurring theme. Varlaam, Nuttall and Walker (1992) in a survey of one in three staff of all maintained schools in a ten per cent structured sample of LEAs in England and Wales (response rate 35 per cent) found that 'having a manageable level of paperwork' was a source of dissatisfaction for 78 per cent of the respondents. 'Having a manageable workload', 'having a manageable level of stress' and 'having sufficient time for private life' also came in the top five out of 38 potential sources of dissatisfaction. The importance of workload as an issue emerges

again in a recent 'census' conducted for the General Teaching Council (2003) by MORI and published in *The Guardian*. Of the fifth or so of the teaching force who responded, impressive in number (about 70,000) but of unknown representativeness, 56 per cent indicated that workload (including paperwork) was the major demotivating factor. This was followed by initiative overload (39 per cent), target-driven culture (35 per cent), and pupil behaviour/discipline (31 per cent). Scott (1999) in a questionnaire survey of teachers in 114 schools in eight Local Education Authorities (LEAs), but with only a 26 per cent response rate, found that "school teaching staff are increasingly feeling inadequate in the face of rising expectations and greater responsibilities being placed upon them".

- 1.22 Relative salary has been another theme. Dolton and Klaauw (1995,1999) have applied econometric analysis to a sample of 1980 UK graduates surveyed in late 1986/early 1987. They found 66 per cent of the teachers still in the classroom after five years. They calculated a ten per cent salary increase would have raised the retention rate to 69 per cent, and a 25 per cent increase to 73 per cent. They found that BEd graduates are less likely to quit than those with more marketable degrees. Women from higher social class backgrounds and privileged schools were more likely to leave for family reasons because, the researchers suggest, the opportunity cost of having children is lower.
- 1.23 Sturman (2002) has looked more generally at the quality of life of teachers and finds that it compares favourably with that of other workers. Consistent with the econometric findings she reports that teachers tend to be more dissatisfied with their salaries, but they were also more likely to complain of stress than other employees. Stress and satisfaction have been recurring issues in teacher retention (Poppleton, 1991; Evans, 1998; Travers, 1996; and Troman and Woods, 2001).

### *Qualitative Studies*

- 1.24 In addition to surveys, there have been a number of qualitative studies looking in depth at various aspects of teacher retention. Typical is the report of Wilkins and Head (2002) based on case studies of 18 teachers. They found the most common causes of dissatisfaction to be heavy workload, a poor working relationship with a superior and being out of tune with the thrust of recent policy thinking in education. Focus groups conducted with teachers in 29 schools by IRS Research (2000) for the School Teachers' Review Body identified the status of teachers, overall pay levels and workload as the main recruitment and retention issues requiring action at national level.
- 1.25 An early study by Gooding (1989) explored the likelihood of former teachers returning to the classroom. She interviewed 21 contacted through four teacher training colleges and found that not one intended to go back, at least not in the foreseeable future. Of the 21, eight were still involved in education but in posts they regarded as preferable to classroom teaching (as inspectors, administrators, and teaching in independent schools and other sectors). Six were undertaking further study including retraining for other occupations; four were mainly looking after their children; and three were in other employment – as a priest, in public relations and self-employed. Gooding recommended that in any modelling of teacher supply a clear distinction should be drawn between teachers definitely out of the system and

those who are likely to return. Her study suggested that returners would comprise only a small proportion of the ‘pool of inactive teachers’, as it had become known. Some leavers, however, could be encouraged to return through more support during career breaks, job sharing and reduced timetables for those re-starting.

### ***Regions and Subjects***

- 1.26 National studies have found differences with region and subject. Turnover and wastage rates tend to be higher in London and the South East than in other parts of the country. Hutchings, Menter, Ross, Thomson and Bedford (2000) investigated teacher supply and retention in six London boroughs mainly through a census of all teachers in the schools (response rate 35 per cent). They reported that the demographic profile of London teachers was different from the rest of the country, with more young short-term teachers. Forty per cent were under 35 and most intended to stop teaching in London within five years. They argued that the mix of young transient teachers – teachers who spend a few years at the beginning of their careers in the capital and overseas teachers seeing something of the world – and long-term teachers had got out of balance. Cunningham (2000) in a supplementary report highlighted as major push factors the cost of living in London and the higher pay differential with respect to equivalent professions.
- 1.27 The School Teachers’ Review Body commissioned IRS Research (2000) to take a close look at the recruitment and retention of classroom teachers in London. It conducted case studies of 12 schools in London LEAs and 12 outside. All but one of the London schools was facing some difficulties in recruiting teachers compared with half those outside. In the capital, housing costs was the most commonly cited negative factor in retention, but outside it was workload. This was borne out by focus groups of teachers, 17 in London and 12 outside. In London, location (particularly housing costs), pay and pupil characteristics were identified as the main reasons why staff might leave a school. Outside London, the focus groups were most likely to cite promotion.
- 1.28 Not only are there differences with location, but also subject. Professional bodies like the Institute of Physics (1999) have long campaigned to increase the number of specialist teachers in their subjects. But, as regards the physical sciences, the situation may be getting worse. Blackwell, Lynch and Jones (2001) have drawn on the Office of National Statistics longitudinal study based on a one per cent sample of the population in England and Wales in the 1971, 1981 and 1991 censuses to follow the flows of men and women with science, engineering and technology (SET) degrees into and out of teaching. They found that the profession relies heavily on those born between 1947 and 1956, many of whom are due to retire in the next decade. Between 1981 and 1991 while men moved between teaching and other SET employment, women were more likely to move to full-time housework. Teaching, they suggest enabled women with SET degrees to combine professional and family life. But women’s expectations are now more like men’s and this will reduce the pool of potential returners to science teaching.
- 1.29 Languages is another shortage subject and Pachler (2001) has reviewed the recruitment, training and retention of teachers of German in the UK. He concludes that “for a complex combination of reasons, unless urgent action is taken, the future for German as a foreign language in the UK as an integral part of the compulsory

education of pupils aged 11-16 is at risk". Among the reasons for concern was teacher dissatisfaction. The chief complaints were workload, bureaucracy, poor pupil behaviour – which puts a strain on teacher-parent relations – and the accountability culture which leads to tension between classroom teachers and middle managers. He suggests that teachers quit more to get out than to move on to other things, citing Ross (2001) who found that only 27 per cent of the teachers leaving schools in London would be earning more in their new posts.

### ***Policy-Related Research***

1.30 The Government responded to the frequently expressed concerns about teacher workload when, in 2001, it commissioned PriceWaterhouseCoopers (PwC) to conduct a review. Teachers were benchmarked against other occupations and it was found that “teachers and headteachers work more intensive weeks than other comparable managers and professionals. On an annual comparison, teachers work at similar levels to other managers and professionals.” The main issues to emerge in fieldwork in over 100 schools, and discussions with national and local bodies, were the burden of documentation, the pace and manner of change of government initiatives, the pressure of rising expectations, deteriorating pupil behaviour and lack of parental support.

1.31 The PwC report was referred to the School Teachers’ Review Body (2002) which recommended that teacher workload, which it found to be averaging 52 hours a week in term time, be tackled. The Government brought forward a series of proposals in *Time for Standards: Reforming the School Workforce* (DfES, 2002b) which are currently being implemented including the establishment of an Implementation Review Unit (DfES, 2003). Increased support for teachers through teaching assistants is a major plank of that reform. The National Foundation for Educational Research (2002) has reviewed the evidence on the impact of teaching assistants. They conclude that while it is generally positive, the preparing and planning teachers will have to do to make the most effective use of assistants could increase workload.

### ***Research in Other Countries***

1.32 Many countries are experiencing teacher shortages, but Stoel and Thant (2002) suggest from their study of teachers in nine industrialized countries that the United States and England are the exceptions in suffering acute retention problems, particularly of the newly trained. They report that while 30 per cent of US teachers leave within five years, in Germany it is less than five per cent, in Hong Kong less than 10 per cent, and in France and Portugal it is negligible. Stoel and Thant attribute the differences to the relative conditions. US teachers, for example, earn less than other professionals, while in Portugal there are few opportunities for teachers outside the classroom. Polls indicate that the American public holds the teaching profession in low esteem and respect, but Japan’s teachers come from the top five per cent of high school graduates.

1.33 Retention has become the focus of teacher supply in the United States (Fetler, 1997; Stinebrickner, 1998; McCreight, 2000; Hanushek, Kain and Rivkin, 2001). The National Commission of Teaching and America’s Future (NCTAF) (2002) has recently issued a report suggesting that enough teachers are trained, but the problem

is high attrition rates. It estimates that almost a third of America's teachers leave sometime during their first three years, and the rate is even higher in low-income communities. Attrition rates are highest in special education, mathematics and science, each of which loses about a fifth of their teachers annually. NCTAF identified four main factors contributing to teachers leaving: salaries, working conditions, preparation (for which it is something of a pressure group) and mentoring support in the early years of teaching.

- 1.34 Murphy and Novak (2002) cite evidence that nine per cent of new teachers in the US quit during their first year. They suggest that this is due to such factors as frustration with the working environment, the pursuit of other professional opportunities and for personal reasons. But they also draw attention to another aspect of teacher retention which resonates with the UK: the ageing teacher population. Murphy and Novak suggest that almost half the teachers in some subjects and districts will become eligible for retirement in the next ten years.
- 1.35 Australia also has to contend with an ageing teacher force (Senate Employment, Education and Training Reference Committee, 1998). Preston's (2000) projections reveal that 58 per cent will have been over 40 in 2002. Her analyses also show that only a third of those with secondary teaching qualifications aged 55-59 are still teaching, reflecting a tendency to retire early. Nearly forty per cent of the qualified aged 25-29 were not teaching suggesting that Australia may be similar to the United States and England in having high early drop-out. A factor in this is the burgeoning of international recruitment of young teachers from Australia to teach in countries like England. While this is not new and many have returned to teach in Australia after a few years, it was unclear whether re-entry would continue at its former levels.

### **Purpose**

- 1.36 There is thus much that is already known about teacher retention, both in this country and abroad, and one may wonder about the need for another study. But there is real point for at least two reasons. First, data about education dates rapidly. There is always a need, therefore, for accurate and up-to-date information on the current situation. Secondly, as extensive as the emerging research on teacher retention has been, it has been largely descriptive. It is also important to get behind the figures and tease out the underlying motivations of teachers leaving the profession.
- 1.37 There were thus two main purposes for the present investigation. First, to present an accurate up-to-date picture of how many teachers are leaving and where they are going with a view, in part, of establishing whether things are generally getting better or worse. And, secondly, to go beyond surface description to reveal any patterns that might be at the root of teachers' decisions to leave.
- 1.38 This report sets out the main findings of that study. In the next chapter we describe in detail our methods. This is supported by an appendix which examines the representativeness of the samples in relation to population characteristics. Having set out our approach, in Chapter 3 we report the total number of resignations from schools in 2002, irrespective of whether the teacher was moving to another school or

leaving the profession. In Chapter 4, we look in detail at the destinations so as to be able to distinguish the within-schools moves (of various kinds) from other destinations. Our estimates for turnover and wastage for 2002 are reported in Chapter 5 and compared to the differing estimates for previous years offered by the DfES and the Employers' Organisation for Local Government. As well as trying to determine the trends in turnover and wastage, we also look at how they vary by region and gender.

- 1.39 The remaining chapters focus on the leavers. Chapter 6 compares those leaving with those moving to other schools. Chapter 7 explores in detail the reasons for leaving and the underlying factors in different groups. In Chapter 8, we consider how likely the different kinds of leavers are to return to maintained schools to teach full-time, part-time or on supply. Those leaving the profession at the end of the spring and summer terms 2002 were followed up in January to see how they viewed their decisions in retrospect. Chapter 9 reports the findings of that follow-up study.
- 1.40 The research has been undertaken to increase understanding, not to promote particular policies. Nevertheless, from the characteristics of those who are leaving, where they are going and their reasons, it is possible to identify some policy pointers and we set these out in Chapter 10.

## 2. Methods

- 2.1 The population studied was teachers leaving primary, secondary and special schools in England during the calendar year 2002. There were three layers to the basic design:
- First, a survey of schools was conducted to coincide with the three resignation dates during the year to discover how many teachers were resigning and where they were going.
  - Secondly, the resignees in each of these surveys who were leaving the profession were sent questionnaires.
  - Thirdly, a sub-sample of those leavers was interviewed.
- 2.2 Through representative samples of schools, representative samples of resignees were identified from whom, in turn, it was hoped to achieve representative samples of leavers from the profession.
- 2.3 In addition, a follow-up study was conducted in January 2003 of those who had indicated they were leaving the profession in the spring and summer terms of 2002 to ascertain whether in retrospect they thought they had done the right thing in leaving, what they had intended to do and whether they were doing it.

### Sampling and Participation

#### *Schools*

- 2.4 Initial samples, stratified by local education authority (LEA), were drawn randomly. These initial samples comprised 4,541 primary schools (1 in 4), 1,774 secondary schools (1 in 2) and 294 special schools (1 in 4). Letters inviting schools to participate were sent out at the end of January 2002. Those agreeing were sent questionnaires close to each of the three resignation dates of 28 February, 31 May and 31 October 2002. Table 2.1 shows the response rates.

**Table 2.1: School Response Rates**

Participating Schools	Primary <sup>1</sup>		Secondary <sup>2</sup>		Special <sup>3</sup>		Total	
	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%
Agreed	2,163	100.0	792	100.0	160	100.0	3,115	100.0
Spring Survey	1,922	88.9	602	76.0	145	90.6	2,669	85.7
Summer Survey	1,893	87.5	595	75.1	139	86.9	2,627	84.3
Autumn Survey	1,861	86.0	600	75.8	141	88.1	2,602	83.5
All Three Surveys	1,578	73.0	448	56.6	120	75.0	2,146	68.9

1. Includes middle deemed primary.

2. Includes middle deemed secondary.

3. Includes non-maintained.

#### *Resignations*

- 2.5 The questionnaire asked the schools to list those teachers leaving during, or at the end of, the term. The total numbers of teachers recorded as leaving schools – henceforward referred to as resignations or resignees - are shown in Table 2.2.

**Table 2.2: Resignations**

Resignations	Primary <sup>1</sup>		Secondary <sup>2</sup>		Special <sup>3</sup>		Total	
	FT	PT	FT	PT	FT	PT	FT	PT
Spring Survey	471	130	543	78	37	12	1,051	220
Summer Survey	1,839	400	2,820	478	92	19	4,751	897
Autumn Survey	503	113	596	119	39	8	1,138	240
Total	2,813	643	3,959	675	168	39	6,940	1,357
Totals FT+PT	3,456		4,634		207		8,297	

1. Includes middle deemed primary.

2. Includes middle deemed secondary.

3. Includes non-maintained.

### *Leavers*

- 2.6 The next stage involved sending a questionnaire to each resignee leaving teaching in the maintained sector (henceforward referred to as leaver). The information provided by the schools on resignations did not include the names of the resignees, but did give details of their posts and their destinations. A school's return was photocopied and leavers, except those reaching normal-age retirement or taking a break for maternity (where the reasons were thought to be obvious), were highlighted.
- 2.7 The highlighted sheet was sent back to schools with a request to hand on to each identified leaver an envelope containing a letter, a questionnaire and a prepaid reply. Table 2.3 shows responses to the leavers' questionnaire.

**Table 2.3: Leavers**

Leavers	Primary <sup>1</sup>		Secondary <sup>2</sup>		Special <sup>3</sup>		Total	
	FT	PT	FT	PT	FT	PT	FT	PT
Spring Survey	106	30	102	15	3	5	211	50
Summer Survey	328	69	491	102	13	1	832	172
Autumn Survey	98	37	138	29	7	4	243	70
Total	532	136	731	146	23	10	1,286	292
Totals FT+PT	668		877		33		1,578	

1. Includes middle deemed primary.

2. Includes middle deemed secondary.

3. Includes non-maintained.

### *Interviews*

- 2.8 The leavers questionnaire asked if the leaver would be willing to be interviewed and, if so, to give their name and a contact telephone number. Three-fifths (60.2 percent) of those returning questionnaires did so. Three hundred from primary and secondary schools (including middle) were chosen for interview to reflect destinations, type of contract and resignation date. If the person could not be contacted after persistent attempts then the nearest equivalent was substituted. Twice as many secondary leavers as primary were interviewed to take account of the more varied and specialised nature of teaching in this phase. In addition, all of the relatively few offers from leavers from special schools to be interviewed were taken up.

2.9 Table 2.4 shows the interviews conducted. The design was carried through completely, except for one secondary interview which did not record properly and was not used.

**Table 2.4: Interviews**

Resignations	Primary <sup>1</sup>		Secondary <sup>2</sup>		Special <sup>3</sup>		Total	
	FT	PT	FT	PT	FT	PT	FT	PT
Spring Survey	10	0	18	2	0	0	28	2
Summer Survey	65	6	122	17	2	0	84	23
Autumn Survey	18	1	35	5	2	3	55	9
Total	93	7	175	24	4	3	272	34
Totals FT+PT	100		199		7		306	

1. Includes middle deemed primary.

2. Includes middle deemed secondary.

3. Includes non-maintained.

### ***Follow Up***

2.10 Spring and summer leavers who provided their name (whether interviewed or not) were sent a follow-up questionnaire in January 2003. Although we had their names we did not have their addresses. The questionnaires were, therefore, sent in stamped envelopes bearing the leaver's name to the schools with a request that the letter be sent on to his or her last known address. Table 2.5 shows the response rates.

**Table 2.5: Follow Up Response**

Phase	Sent Out	Returns	
		N	%
Primary	261	151	57.9
Secondary (inc Middle)	365	240	65.8
Special	11	4	36.4
Total	637	395	60.0

2.11 The overall response is very good especially as most of those travelling, going to teach abroad or returning to work in their own country will have left their last known address and not be contactable.

### **Instruments**

2.12 As can be inferred from the description of the overall design of the study, data was gathered by four main instruments: a schools questionnaire, a leavers questionnaire, an interview schedule, and a follow-up questionnaire.

### ***Schools Questionnaire***

2.13 The schools questionnaire was a folded four-sided sheet the middle two pages of which were occupied by a large chart on which the school was asked to list (without giving names) those teachers leaving that term. For each leaver the school was asked to indicate post, whether full-time or part-time, whether permanent or fixed-

term, gender, ethnic background, and destination in 17 categories ranging from going to teach full-time in another state school to not known. Sixteen lines were provided on the chart. When occasionally a school had more than 16 leavers in the term it was asked to photocopy the blank chart and continue listing as from a seventeenth row.

- 2.14 The front page of the questionnaire asked for some establishing details, such as category of school, type of school, gender of pupils, number on roll, how many teachers were leaving and whether the schools saw this as increasing or decreasing. On the back page, headteachers (or their representatives) were asked to give the numbers of staff employed (excluding supply), whether they had attempted to persuade any of the leavers to stay, and to offer a general comment, if they wished, on how turnover was affecting their school. There were variants for primary, secondary and special schools to take account of the different school types and the more specialised nature of teaching in the secondary phase. The amount of establishing information requested in the summer and autumn surveys was reduced to what was needed to bring the returns for each school together.

### *Leavers Questionnaire*

- 2.15 The leavers questionnaire consisted of five pages. The first two asked for background information, such as type of contract, gender, age, nationality, ethnic origin, teaching qualification, pay scale, additional allowances, years teaching, date of first post and any breaks in service. The secondary questionnaire differed from the primary and special questionnaires in that it began by asking for details of main teaching subject and other teaching subjects.
- 2.16 Pages 3 and 4 explored destinations and reasons. Respondents were first asked to tick a box which best described their destination and then to write a few lines giving more information. Similarly, they were asked to tick boxes to give a general indication of their reasons for leaving and then explain in more detail.
- 2.17 The fifth page asked when they had first thought seriously about leaving their current post, when they finally decided to leave, and what, if anything, would have induced them to stay. They were then asked to tick boxes to indicate the likelihood of their returning to teaching in a maintained school, full-time, part-time and as a supply teacher, in the next five years. Finally, they were asked if they would be willing to be interviewed and, if so, to give their name, a contact telephone number and the best time to ring.

### *Interviews*

- 2.18 Interviews were conducted by a team of ten experienced interviewers, including ourselves and another member of the CEER core team, Louise Tracey. They were fully briefed on the purposes of the study and given the questionnaires returned by the interviewees. The interviewers worked to a printed schedule exploring, systematically, the post vacated, the route by which the leaver had got into teaching, the school they were leaving, their destination, their reasons for leaving, and the likelihood of their returning. The approach was, in each case, to start with the

questionnaire responses, partly as a check on their accuracy, but mainly as a basis for probing in depth.

- 2.19 The interviews were (with the permission of the interviewee) taped, and then transcribed by an experienced team of four to provide a written record of the interview.

### ***Follow-Up Study***

- 2.20 The follow-up study was designed mainly to discover what the leavers were doing and how they viewed their decisions, in retrospect, 10 months after resigning in the case of the spring leavers, and 6 months in the case of the summer leavers. The questionnaire began with five establishing questions: name, name of the school they had left, gender, age and type of contract. The destinations questions, both tick box and open-ended, from the leavers questionnaire were then repeated, with a re-phrased rubric to fit the present circumstances. The leavers were asked if the destination was the same as they had intended when they resigned and to tell us more if it was not.
- 2.21 Similarly, the questions on reasons for leaving and likelihood of returning were repeated. The leavers were asked whether they thought they had made the right decision in leaving the particular school and teaching in maintained schools generally. They were further asked what, if anything, would encourage them to return to teaching in a maintained school.

### **Analysis**

- 2.22 The sampling fractions were arrived at with the intention of securing at least five per cent of the population of primary schools and ten per cent of the populations of secondary schools and special schools responding to all three surveys.

### ***Structured Samples of Schools***

- 2.23 The anticipated response rate was, in the case of primary schools, greatly exceeded. This led to us to base the analyses on a 7.5 per cent structured sample rather than the planned 5 per cent. A ten per cent structured sample of secondary (including middle) schools was devised according to plan. Although there were sufficient special schools overall to have constructed a ten per cent sample, responses were rather patchy by region and a 7.5 sample was opted for as more representative. The composition of these samples by region is shown in Table 2.6.

### ***Primary Schools***

- 2.24 Structuring was by region and number of pupils on roll. Where more schools were available than were required for any cell, the schools to be included were randomly selected by a computer programme. Where too few schools were available in any one cell, compensation was from neighbouring cells keeping the row and column totals the same. Tables 2.7 and 2.8 show how the primary schools sample compared with the national distributions by region and school size. Appendix A shows that the sample also corresponded very closely with the national distributions in terms of

type of school (infant, first, infant junior etc) and school status (community, voluntary aided etc.).

**Table 2.6: School Samples by Region**

Region	Primary	Middle	Secondary	Special	Total
North East	74	6	14	5	99
North West	203	-	49	16	268
Yorks & Humber	147	1	33	8	189
East Midlands	131	3	27	7	168
West Midlands	145	4	39	11	199
East of England	160	9	35	9	213
Inner London	45	-	11	1	57
Outer London	88	-	28	10	126
South East	206	3	49	16	274
South West	150	4	31	4	189
Total	1,349	30	316	87	1,782

### *Middle and Secondary*

2.25 Inspection of the questionnaire returns revealed rather different patterns for secondary schools *per se* and middle schools deemed secondary. It was, therefore, decided to analyse them separately. Of the 448 secondary schools responding on all three occasions, 57 were middle deemed secondary, leaving 391 secondary schools as such.

**Table 2.7: School Samples Compared To National Distributions by Region<sup>1,2</sup>**

Region	Primary		Middle		Secondary		Special	
	%S	%N	%S	%N	%S	%N	%S	%N
North East	5.5	5.4	20.0	20.3	4.4	5.1	5.7	5.8
North West	15.0	15.0	-	-	15.5	15.2	18.4	17.2
Yorks & Humber	10.9	10.8	3.3	3.0	10.4	10.1	9.2	9.0
East Midlands	9.7	9.7	10.0	10.0	8.5	9.3	8.0	7.5
West Midlands	10.7	10.7	13.3	14.3	12.3	11.9	12.6	11.4
East of England	11.9	11.7	30.0	29.0	11.1	10.8	10.3	9.1
Inner London	3.3	4.0	-	-	3.5	4.3	1.1	6.2
Outer London	6.5	6.5	-	0.7	8.9	8.7	11.5	7.5
South East	15.3	15.2	10.0	12.0	15.5	15.1	18.4	17.7
South West	11.1	11.1	13.3	10.7	9.8	9.5	4.6	8.6
Total	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0

1. %S refers to percentage of sample and %N to percentage of national distribution.

2. National distributions taken from *Statistics of Education. Schools in England*, 2002, p. 18-19.

2.26 The samples of middle and secondary schools were structured in relation to cross-tabulations of the school populations by region and number of pupils on roll. Tables 2.7 and 2.8 show how they compare with the national distributions. Appendix A shows that the secondary sample also closely matched the national distributions in terms of gender (girls', boys', coeducational), age range (up to 16, up to 18), specialism (technology, languages etc) and status (community, voluntary aided etc).

### *Special Schools*

- 2.27 No national cross-tabulation of special schools by region and size was available, so the sample was arrived at solely on the basis of region. The 120 schools who had replied on all three occasions were randomly reduced by computer programme to the required 87. Table 2.7 (on the previous page) shows how it compares.

**Table 2.8: Structured Samples Compared To Populations by School Size<sup>1,2</sup>**

Number on Roll	Primary		Middle		Number on Roll	Secondary	
	%S	%N	%S	%N		%S	%N
Up to 100	15.0	15.1			Up to 400	2.8	2.7
101 to 200	29.9	29.9	6.7	6.0	401 to 700	17.4	17.4
201 to 300	31.0	31.0	10.0	10.3	701 to 1000	33.5	33.6
301 to 400	15.0	15.0	23.3	24.0	1001 to 1300	27.5	27.4
401 to 500	6.8	6.8	30.0	28.3	1301 to 1600	14.6	14.1
501 or more	2.2	2.2	30.0	31.3	1601 or more	4.1	4.8
Total	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	Total	100.0	100.0

1. %S refers to percentage of sample and %N to percentage of national distribution

2. National distributions taken from *Statistics of Education. Schools in England, 2002*, p. 43.

### *Resignations from Sample Schools*

- 2.28 The sample of 1,782 schools received a total of 5,245 resignations from teachers during 2002, as shown in Table 2.9. This represents an average of 2.71 full-time teachers resigning and 0.45 part-time teachers resigning per school. There were, of course, given the different average school sizes, big differences with phase. For full-time teachers there were, during 2002, 1.43 resignations per primary school, 2.9 resignations per middle school, 7.14 per secondary school, and 1.1 per special school.

**Table 2.9: Resignations from Sample Schools**

Resignations	Primary		Middle		Secondary		Special <sup>1</sup>	
	FT	PT	FT	PT	FT	PT	FT	PT
Spring Survey	322	91	11	0	313	51	18	1
Summer Survey	1,263	283	60	6	1,613	270	55	13
Autumn Survey	350	78	16	1	329	71	22	8
Total	1,935	452	87	7	2,255	392	95	22
Totals FT+PT	2,387		94		2,647		117	

1. Includes non-maintained.

- 2.29 Scaling up from the sampling fractions (7.5 per cent for primary and special schools, and 10 per cent for middle and secondary), we can see what these resignations mean in population terms. During 2002, we estimate that primary schools in England received a total of 31,830 resignations (25,800 full-time, 6,030 part-time), middle schools received 940 (870 full-time, 70 part-time), secondary schools 26,470 (22,550 full-time, 3,920 part-time) and special schools 1,560 (1,267 full-time, 293 part-time). In total, this comes to 60,800 resignations (50,487 from full-time posts,

10,313 from part-time posts). But it must be borne in mind that this is not loss to the profession; some of the teachers will have been moving to other schools.

- 2.30 Table 2.10 vindicates another aspect of the design (based on the findings of Robinson and Smithers, 1991, and advice from LEAs) which is that about 70 per cent of the resignations were anticipated to take place in the summer, the end of the school year. Resignations were, however, more evenly distributed between the spring and autumn than the 10/20 split that had been assumed.

**Table 2.10: Total Resignations from Sample Schools**

Resignations	Full-time		Part-time		Total	
	N	%	N	%	N	%
Spring Survey	664	15.2	143	16.4	807	15.4
Summer Survey	2,991	68.4	572	65.5	3,563	67.9
Autumn Survey	717	16.4	158	18.1	875	16.7
Total	4,372	100.0	873	100.0	5,245	100.0

### *Leavers from Sample Schools*

- 2.31 Table 2.11 shows the replies received in response to questionnaires which were sent to schools to pass on to those leaving teaching in maintained schools.

**Table 2.11: Leavers from Sample Schools**

Leavers	Primary		Secondary <sup>1</sup>		Special <sup>2</sup>		Total	
	FT	PT	FT	PT	FT	PT	FT	PT
Spring Survey	74	17	59	9	2	2	135	28
Summer Survey	248	51	304	68	7	0	559	119
Autumn Survey	68	28	92	19	6	4	166	51
Total	390	96	455	96	15	6	860	198
Totals FT+PT <sup>3</sup>	488		557		21		1,066	

1. Includes middle deemed secondary

2. Includes non-maintained.

3. 8 did not indicate whether part-time or full-time, 2 primary and 6 secondary.

### *Response Rate*

- 2.32 The 1,578 returns from leavers (from all schools, not just those in the structured samples) represent 37.7 per cent of the questionnaires sent out. The response rate is, however, higher than this for two reasons. First, 212 replies were received from teachers who had been listed by the school as leaving the profession, but who, in fact, were moving to other schools. Their questionnaires have not been included in the analyses. We also received 48 telephone calls or letters from headteachers or their representatives saying they were unwilling to pass on questionnaires to particular leavers because of the circumstances of their going (for example, chronic illness, disciplinary reasons). In both cases, the actual numbers known to us are likely to be underestimates (for example, teachers moving to another school may have not returned a questionnaire because they thought it was no longer relevant; not all headteachers who did not pass on questionnaires for particular reasons will have

notified us). Nevertheless, taking the figures at face value our estimate of the response rate to our leavers survey is 43.8 per cent.

### *Statistical Analysis*

- 2.33 Questionnaire data were coded and tagged by an experienced team of three according to printed coding frames. Our computer specialist, Mandy-Diana Coughlan, took the lead in the compilation of the datasets, inputting the coded information into excel files and verifying them.
- 2.34 The datasets were then transferred into files of the Statistical Package for the Social Sciences Version 10. For analysis by descriptive statistics, missing cases were excluded. In multivariate analyses, however, isolated missing cases were replaced by the mean or median of the particular distribution. This will have reduced the variance, but was preferable to losing the other information. The analyses were run by Mandy-Diana Coughlan and ourselves.

### 3. Resignations

- 3.1. Our research design is based on the assumption that structured samples of schools will yield representative samples of leavers. The questionnaires completed by the schools listed all teachers leaving during, or at the end of, the particular term, whether they were going to another school or quitting the profession. We are using the term ‘resignee’ to denote someone leaving a school irrespective of their destination. This is not the same as leaving teaching. It is an important statistic nevertheless. To a headteacher, a resignation is a resignation whether or not the person is going to another school. The school is still down. At the school level, as opposed to the system level, it is resignations which are the key to teacher retention. Leavers from the profession only becomes the more important measure at the system or policy level. In the terminology we are using, ‘resignees’ are the basis of ‘turnover’ and ‘leavers’, the basis of ‘wastage’. It follows that schools’ perceptions of teacher retention are mainly influenced by turnover or, more colloquially, the ‘churn’ in the system.
- 3.2. In order to understand who is resigning we first make comparisons of the resignees returned by the schools with the national distributions of teachers in terms of region and gender (age was left to the leavers questionnaire). We also describe the resignees in terms of ethnic background, type of contract, post, and, for the secondary phase, main subject of teaching, but for most of these there are no good national data for comparison.

**Table 3.1: Resignations in FTEs Compared to Teachers by Region<sup>1,2</sup>**

Region	Primary		Middle <sup>3</sup>		Secondary		Special	
	R	T	R	T	R	T	R	T
North East	80.7	9,974.4	18.7	1,354.2	82.7	9,542.2	2.0	860.5
North West	245.0	27,988.5	-	-	285.3	28,538.5	16.7	2,435.9
Yorks & Humber	180.3	20,004.4	3.0	199.8	267.7	20,139.0	8.7	1,271.0
East Midlands	173.3	15,654.9	6.3	666.0	177.3	16,285.9	5.3	904.6
West Midlands	175.0	21,217.7	10.3	954.6	261.0	21,095.6	14.7	1,873.0
East of England	266.3	19,553.1	20.3	1931.4	294.7	19,719.6	15.7	1,297.9
Inner London	143.0	10,353.1	-	-	138.3	7992.5	2.0	814.9
Outer London	2422.7	16,838.6	0.0	44.4	255.3	16,816.5	17.3	1,187.1
South East	380.0	28,406.9	7.3	799.2	393.0	28,323.9	19.0	2,649.3
South West	2199.3	17,418.9	23.3	710.4	230.3	17,796.5	1.0	1,233.5
Total	2,085.7	187,409.0	89.2	6659.0	2,385.6	186,250.2	102.4	14,527.7

1. R is the number of resignees and T the number of teachers in FTEs.

2. National distributions taken from *Statistics of Education. Schools in England*, 2002, p. 22-23, 48-50, 71.

3. No middle schools deemed secondary in North West or Inner London.

#### Region

- 3.3. Tables 3.1 and 3.2 show the distribution of resignees by region compared to the national distributions in terms of full-time equivalent teachers (FTEs). Part-time posts have been converted to FTEs using the DfES’s preferred proportion of 0.33.

Table 3.1 shows the actual figures and Table 3.2, for ease of interpretation, percentages.

- 3.4. In the main groups of primary and secondary resignees there seems to be a clear geographical split. With few exceptions (for example, resignations of secondary teachers in Yorkshire and Humberside), proportionally more teachers than to be expected from the staffing complements were resigning from schools in the south and east, and fewer from the north and midlands. These differences will be examined further in Chapter 5 which looks in detail at turnover and wastage.
- 3.5. The pattern was less clearcut in the smaller groups of middle and special resignees. Middle school resignations were dominated by the high turnover in the South West which means that most other regions come out as lower than to be expected from the national distribution. Resignations from special schools were broadly in line with the overall pattern, with more than to be expected in the East, Outer London, the South East and also the West Midlands, but fewer in the South West.

**Table 3.2: Percentages of Resignations Compared to Percentages of Teachers by Region<sup>1,2</sup>**

Region	Primary		Middle		Secondary		Special	
	%R	%T	%R	%T	%R	%T	%R	%T
North East	3.9	5.3	21.0	20.3	3.5	5.1	2.0	5.9
North West	11.7	14.9	-	-	12.0	15.3	16.3	16.8
Yorks & Humber	8.6	10.7	3.4	3.0	11.2	10.8	8.5	8.7
East Midlands	8.3	8.4	7.1	10.0	7.4	8.7	5.2	6.2
West Midlands	8.4	11.3	11.5	14.3	10.9	11.4	14.3	12.9
East of England	12.8	10.4	22.8	29.0	12.4	10.6	15.3	8.9
Inner London	6.9	5.5	-	-	5.8	4.3	2.0	5.6
Outer London	11.6	9.0	0.0	0.7	10.7	9.0	16.9	8.2
South East	18.2	15.2	8.2	12.0	16.5	15.2	18.5	18.2
South West	9.6	9.3	26.1	10.7	9.7	9.6	1.0	8.5
Total	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0

1. %R refers to percentage of resignees and %T to percentage of teachers in FTEs.

2. National distributions taken from *Statistics of Education. Schools in England*, 2002, p. 22-23, 48-50, 71.

## Gender

- 3.6. Tables 3.3 and 3.4 shows the distribution of resignees by gender displayed in the same way, first numbers and then percentages. The national distributions by gender are most readily available in terms of headcount and that has been used as the unit in this case. Table 3.4 shows that across primary, middle and secondary schools more female teachers resigned than male teachers, with the proportions similar to the national pattern in special schools. We shall be exploring the reasons for the greater turnover of female teachers in the next chapter when we consider destinations.

**Table 3.3: Resignations (Headcount) Compared to Teachers by Gender<sup>1,2</sup>**

Gender	Primary		Middle		Secondary		Special	
	R	T	R	T	R	T	R	T
Female	2,077	185,583	64	5,034	1,549	108,750	83	11,560
Male	306	32,786	30	2,626	1,084	85,317	34	4,690
Total	2,383	218,369	94	7,660	2,633	194,067	117	16,250

1. R is the number of resignees and T the number of teachers in headcount.

2. National distributions taken from *Statistics of Education. Schools in England*, 2002, p. 22-23, 48-50, 71.

**Table 3.4: Percentage Resignations Compared to Percentage Teachers by Gender<sup>1,2</sup>**

Gender	Primary		Middle		Secondary		Special	
	%R	%T	%R	%T	%R	%T	%R	%T
Female	87.2	85.0	68.1	65.7	58.8	56.0	70.9	71.1
Male	12.8	15.0	31.9	34.3	41.2	44.0	29.1	28.9
Total	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0

1. %R refers to percentage of resignees and %T to percentage of teachers in headcount.

2. National distributions taken from *Statistics of Education. Schools in England*, 2002, p. 22-23, 48-50, 71.

- 3.7. Table 3.5 and 3.6 show that female resignees are more likely than male resignees to be giving up part-time appointments, particularly permanent contracts, reflecting the posts held. The greater proportion of women in part-time and temporary posts is one of the reasons for the higher resignation rate among them on headcount or in FTEs.

**Table 3.5: Primary Resignations by Gender and Type of Contract**

Contract	Female		Male		Total	
	N	%	N	%	N	%
Full-Time Permanent	1,259	60.8	218	71.9	1,477	62.2
Full-Time Fixed-Term	396	19.1	51	16.8	447	18.8
Part-Time Permanent	240	11.6	14	4.6	254	10.7
Part-Time Fixed-Term	176	8.5	20	6.6	196	8.3
Total	2,071	100.0	303	100.0	2,374	100.0

**Table 3.6: Secondary Resignations by Gender and Type of Contract**

Contract	Female		Male		Total	
	N	%	N	%	N	%
Full-Time Permanent	1,111	72.3	874	81.0	1,985	75.9
Full-Time Fixed-Term	124	8.1	123	11.4	247	9.4
Part-Time Permanent	209	13.6	37	3.4	246	9.4
Part-Time Fixed-Term	93	6.1	45	4.2	138	5.3
Total	1,537	100.0	1,079	100.0	2,616	100.0

### Ethnic Minorities

- 3.8. Table 3.7 shows that few of the resignees were from ethnic minority backgrounds. No national distribution is currently available so we cannot say whether this is a higher or lower rate than to be expected from the proportion of staff they comprise.

**Table 3.7: Resignations by Ethnic Background**

Ethnic Minority	Primary		Middle		Secondary		Special	
	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%
Yes	72	3.2	2	2.2	136	5.3	2	1.9
No	2,172	96.8	91	97.8	2,435	94.7	106	98.1
Total	2,244	100.0	93	100.0	2,571	100.0	108	100.0

### Contract

- 3.9. Table 3.8 shows that the proportion of the resignations from teachers on full-time permanent contracts varied across the phases. It was lowest in primary schools where about a fifth of the resignees were leaving full-time temporary posts. There were also more resignations from part-time posts in primary schools.

**Table 3.8: Resignations by Contract**

Contract	Primary		Middle		Secondary		Special	
	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%
Full-Time Permanent	1,479	62.2	79	84.0	1,990	75.9	84	71.8
Full-Time Fixed-Term	447	18.8	8	8.5	247	9.4	11	9.4
Part-Time Permanent	254	10.7	4	4.3	247	9.4	15	12.8
Part-Time Fixed-Term	196	8.2	3	3.2	139	5.3	7	6.0
Total	2,376	100.0	94	100.0	2,623	100.0	117	100.0

### Post

- 3.10. Table 3.9 shows the distribution of resignees by post. As to be expected, the great majority of the resignees were classroom teachers.

**Table 3.9: Resignations by Post**

Post	Primary		Middle		Secondary		Special	
	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%
Headteacher	103	4.3	4	4.3	31	1.2	6	5.2
Deputy/Assistant Head	174	7.3	6	6.5	107	4.1	9	7.8
Head of Dept/Faculty	-	-	32	34.8	492	18.7	-	-
Teacher	2,103	88.4	50	54.3	1,998	76.0	101	87.1
Total	2,380	100.0	92	100.0	2,628	100.0	116	100.0

3.11. Headteachers who were leaving also returned information about themselves. Comparison with the numbers of schools in the structured samples (Table 2.6) indicates that 8.1 per cent lost their headteachers in 2002 - 7.6 per cent of primary schools, 13.3 per cent of middle schools, 9.8 per cent of secondary schools, and 6.9 per cent of special schools.

### Subject

3.12. Table 3.10 shows the pattern of resignations by main teaching subject as specified by the school. Forty-two per cent of the secondary resignees came from the core subjects of maths, science and English. The best available national comparison is still the 1996 Secondary Schools Curriculum and Staffing Survey (DfEE, 1997) – only provisional results from the 2002 survey have been released so far because of a disappointing response rate (DfES, 2003). Data from the 1996 survey have been set alongside the resignation data from the present survey in Table 3.10 and there is remarkable similarity.

**Table 3.10: Resignees from Secondary Schools<sup>1</sup> by Subject**

Subject Category	Resignees		Staffing <sup>2</sup>
	N	%	%
Maths	323	12.2	11.7
ICT	97	3.7	2.0
Science <sup>3</sup>	394	14.9	14.9
Modern Languages	279	10.5	9.3
English <sup>4</sup>	396	14.9	13.9
History	94	3.5	4.7
Geography	124	4.7	5.1
RE	97	3.7	3.2
Design & Technology <sup>5</sup>	287	10.8	11.7
Art	118	4.4	4.1
Music	82	3.1	2.5
PE	144	5.4	7.1
Other <sup>6</sup>	214	8.1	9.7
Total	2,649	100.0	100.0

1. Includes middle deemed secondary.

2. Percentage tuition in subject as percentage of tuition taken from Table 29, page 30, *Secondary Schools Curriculum and Staffing Survey 1996/1997*.

3. Includes physics, chemistry, biology, science and other science.

4. Includes drama.

5. Includes business studies and home economics.

6. Includes learning support, and any subjects and areas other than listed.

3.13. Given the changes in the curriculum since 1996, the increase in ICT teaching for example, the most that can be taken from the comparisons of Table 3.10 is the reassurance that the sample of resignations looks to be representative. But, interestingly, the Employers' Organisation (2002) reports that turnover of full-time

teachers has been consistently higher than average amongst teachers in English, music, modern foreign languages and religious education and together with ICT, biology, chemistry and mathematics had the highest teacher turnover in 2001. Subjects with the lowest turnover were special educational needs, art, craft and design, history, social sciences, and geography. Allowing that special educational needs and social sciences come under 'other' in Table 3.10 and the Employers' Organisation classifies art with craft and design, these findings are remarkably consistent with the direction of the differences in Table 3.10. This may mean there is more to them than simply comparison with data that are long in the tooth.

### **Resumé**

- 3.14. Overall the data of Table 3.1 indicate that, during 2002, 14.8 per cent of teachers (in FTEs) in primary schools resigned, as did 13.3 per cent in middle schools, 12.8 per cent in secondary schools, and 9.4 per cent in special schools. More teachers were resigning than to be expected from the staffing complement in the south and east of England, and fewer in the midlands and the north.
- 3.15. More women than men were resigning. Few of the resignees came from the ethnic minorities. About 8 per cent of the headteachers resigned during the year. Over 40 per cent of the resignations in the secondary phase came from the core subjects of maths, science and English. This reflects the proportion of tuition time devoted to these subjects. The data are consistent with the Employers' Organisation's finding of higher turnover in English, mathematics and modern foreign languages than history or geography.

## 4. Destinations

- 4.1 In this chapter we consider in detail where the resignees are going. Our dataset is the 5,245 resignations recorded by the schools in the four structured samples. In addition to considering the variety of destinations, we separate those moving to posts in other maintained schools from those leaving the sector. We thus have a basis for distinguishing turnover from wastage.
- 4.2 Table 4.1 shows the distribution of the sample across the phases and special schools. Scaling up from the samples to the population, suggests that in 2002, 31,830 teachers resigned from primary schools, 940 from middle schools, 26,470 from secondary schools and 1,560 from special schools. In other words, a total of 60,800 for England.

**Table 4.1: Destinations of Resignees by Phase**

Destination	Phase				Total
	Primary	Middle	Secondary	Special	
Full-Time Maintained Sch	797	32	1,026	38	1,893
Part-Time Maintained Sch	115	2	84	4	205
Supply Teaching	261	2	96	5	364
Independent School	63	6	90	3	162
Teaching Abroad	83	3	109	5	200
Lecturing FE/HE	5	-	29	-	34
Other Education	91	6	120	4	221
Other Employment	90	3	156	9	258
Maternity	181	3	69	6	259
Family Care	105	3	82	1	191
Travel	80	3	107	4	194
Normal-Age Retirement	83	10	135	9	237
Ill Health Retirement	50	4	58	3	115
Early Retirement	155	7	165	13	340
Other <sup>1</sup>	90	2	110	8	210
Not Known	138	8	211	5	362
<b>Total</b>	<b>2,387</b>	<b>94</b>	<b>2,647</b>	<b>117</b>	<b>5,245</b>

1. Includes redundancy and overseas returning home.

- 4.3 Continuing with these population estimates, 21,700 (35.6 per cent) were to go to work full-time in other maintained schools. In addition, 2,450 (4.0 per cent) were taking part-time posts and 4,530 (7.4 per cent) moving to supply teaching. Altogether 32,100 (52.7 per cent) were leaving teaching in maintained schools. Of those, 2,680 (4.4 per cent) could have been anticipated as normal-age retirements.
- 4.4 Table 4.2 shows the distributions as percentages. Moving to full-time teaching in another maintained school is, by far, the most common destination followed by supply teaching, 'not known' (where the school indicated it did not know where the resignee was going) and early retirement. Looked at in round figures, of every 100 resignees, 40 were going to teach either full-time or part-time in another maintained school, 13 were retiring, 9 were leaving for maternity or family care, 7 were going to

supply teaching, 7 to other teaching (independent schools, abroad, FE/HE), 5 to other employment, 4 to other education (for example, as advisers), and 4 were going to travel. The destinations of the remaining 11 were either unknown to the school or described as ‘other break’.

**Table 4.2: Percentage Destinations of Resignees**

Destination	Primary	Middle	Secondary	Special	Total
Full-Time Maintained Sch	33.4	34.0	38.8	32.5	36.1
Part-Time Maintained Sch	4.8	2.1	3.2	3.4	3.9
Supply Teaching	10.9	2.1	3.6	4.3	6.9
Independent School	2.6	6.4	3.4	2.6	3.0
Teaching Abroad	3.5	3.2	4.1	4.3	3.8
Lecturing FE/HE	0.2	-	1.1	-	0.6
Other Education	3.8	6.4	4.5	3.4	4.2
Other Employment	3.8	3.3	5.9	7.7	4.9
Maternity	7.6	3.2	2.6	5.1	4.9
Family Care	4.4	3.2	3.1	0.9	3.6
Travel	3.4	3.2	4.0	3.4	3.7
Normal-Age Retirement	3.5	10.6	5.1	7.7	4.5
Ill Health Retirement	2.1	4.3	2.2	2.6	2.2
Early Retirement	6.5	7.4	6.2	11.1	6.5
Other <sup>1</sup>	3.8	2.1	4.2	6.8	4.0
Not Known	5.8	8.5	8.0	4.3	6.9
Total N	2,387	94	2,647	117	5,245

1. Includes redundancy and overseas returning home.

- 4.5 The proportions moving to teach full-time in other maintained schools are broadly comparable across the phases, ranging from 32.5 per cent from special schools to 38.8 per cent from secondary. The proportions heading for other destinations are similar as well. In keeping with the predominance of female teachers in primary schools, the resignees from this phase were more likely to be going for maternity or family care reasons. Perhaps not unconnected with this they were also more often recorded as leaving to become supply teachers.

### **Selected Destinations in Depth**

- 4.6 Many of the categories used in collecting destination data are self-evident, for example, full-time teaching in a maintained school or normal-age retirement. But others raise interesting questions. What, for example, are the ‘other education posts’? What ‘other employment’ are they intending to enter? Why are many teachers leaving the profession prematurely? Where are those travelling going? Why are so many destinations unknown to the schools?
- 4.7 In an attempt to answer these questions we have taken them as themes in the analysis of the interviews, and in Boxes 4.1- 4.5 we provide illustrations of what the leavers told us about their plans.

#### **Box 4.1: Other Education**

*“I support the literacy co-ordinators in schools. I will also help the teachers deliver good literacy. I have got ten schools which need intensive support. I will do staff meetings and Inset training.”*

**Female, 45-49, West Midlands, Primary, 5-11**

*“I will be advising schools on the numeracy strategy and giving them some help with what they need. I will still be in schools.”*

**Female, 40-44, East, Primary, 5-11**

*“It will involve me going into primary schools with a mobile classroom, delivering health and drugs education to them.”*

**Female, 35-39, South East, Primary, 4-11**

*“I am organising the authority’s outdoor education. I have been involved with it as a head for a long time now and I knew quite a few people in the organisation so it was an easy step.”*

**Male, Headteacher, 55-59, North East, Middle, 9-13, Maths/Science**

*“I am leaving to work as a Parent Partnership Officer in the LEA. It involves working for the parents. If their child has a special need and they think it is not being met, or they don’t understand how the system works, I put them in touch with the right people. I have nearly finished a psychology degree.”*

**Female, 30-34, North East, Comp, 13-18, French**

*“I was already involved as a teacher in the foundation subjects strand of the KS3 strategy (the LEA and school were involved with one of the pilots); a consultancy post in an adjoining LEA came up so it was just a natural move really.”*

**Female, 40-44, Yorks & Humbs, Comp, 11-18, History**

*“I am going to be an ICT consultant for the LEA. I will be working with a group of schools, at departmental level and with individual teachers, to look at what could be effective teaching and learning practices in those schools.”*

**Male, 40-44, Outer London, Boys’, 11-18, ICT**

*“I shall be working as the Gifted and Talented Co-ordinator for the LEA. For me it is a secondment. I don’t want to leave teaching permanently. As a teacher, the LEA had sent me in to help other schools that were underperforming in science. I knew I could do a pretty good job and on my own terms.”*

**Male, 50-54, Inner London, Comp, 11-16, Science**

*“My main job as an LEA advisor is with Leadership and Development. I shall be designing and organising programmes for headteacher induction and linking with the new National College. I have also got responsibility for a PFI project.”*

**Female Headteacher, 40-44, South East, Sec Mod, 11-18**

*“I see my move into Advisory as an opportunity to work in a variety of special schools. I have got responsibility for all the special schools in the City. I want to move over while I am still enjoying it all.”*

**Female, 45-49, East Midlands, Special, 5-19**

## Box 4.2: Other Employment

*“I want to work as a freelance. I’m hoping to give support and training in primary ICT. Garden design. Voice-overs for videos. I’ve been planning my escape route for some time.”*

**Female, 45-49, East Midlands, Primary, 5-11**

*“I am going to become a driving instructor. It is still teaching people, tailoring teaching and adapting it to the individual pupil. It is teaching a life enhancing skill. The only other thing at my age and with my experience and qualifications would be in educational admin.”*

**Female, 50-54, East Midlands, Primary, 5-11**

*“I have done office work during the summer holidays using my language skills and I am going to sign up with an agency to do anything with French and German and earn enough to survive off really.”*

**Female, Under 25, West Midlands, Comp, 11-18, French**

*“I am setting up my own business doing IT training and consultancy for small businesses and charities. The attraction is to do with developing myself in a way that I want to.”*

**Male, 30-34, West Midlands, Comp, 11-16, Maths/Business Studies**

*“I am setting up my own business using my craft skills. I am a keen amateur photographer. I would like to do portraits and wedding photography.”*

**Male, 40-44, East Midlands, Comp, 11-18, Design & Technology**

*“I am going to be running a small hotel, managing the staff, the buildings the facilities, everything. I was thinking of leaving teaching. What tipped the balance was this job offer and the support of my family to cut our income.”*

**Male, 40-44, Eastern, Comp, 11-18, Science**

*“I am going to be writing, recording and helping people to perform music, so it is completely freelance working from home. The thought of being able to do freelance music gave me the confidence not to hang on for another year.”*

**Male, 35-39, Outer London, Comp, 11-18, Music**

*“We are going to run a small pub. One of the reasons that appeals is that we will survive or fail on our own initiative which I have come to realise is very important to me and which was being eroded from my job as a teacher.”*

**Female, 40-44, South East, Comp, 11-18, English**

*“After only two years teaching I am leaving to set up a business to advise small firms on human resource issues, which I used to work in”.*

**Female, 45-49, South East, Girls’, Grammar, 11-18, Business Studies.**

*“My husband has been full-time in the business for four years and I have been doing the administration and marketing so I am moving full-time to that.”*

**Female, 45-49, South East, Special, 11-16**

### Box 4.3: Teaching Abroad/Travel

*I am going (to Australia) for a year definitely with a working visa and then I will just see when happens.”*

**Female, 25-29, North West, Primary, 5-11**

*“My partner is also a teacher and we knew that this year we definitely wanted to move out of London. We didn’t make a conscious decision that we wanted to go overseas, but just started looking at the adverts and thought ‘wow’. The packages that they offer, can we afford not to?”*

**Female, 25-29, Outer London, Infants, 4-7**

*“It’s a British School in Manila. It’s a two-year contract and a much better salary package. For the first time ever I shall still be able to teach, have my own place to live and be able to save some money.”*

**Female, 25-29, South East, Primary, 5-11**

*“Teaching mostly Egyptian children, but teaching the British curriculum. It was either that or leaving teaching altogether.”*

**Female, 25-29, South East, Infants, 4-7**

*“I want to see more of the world than a school full of children every day.”*

**Female, 30-34, South East, Primary, 5-11**

*“I don’t know very much about America at all. I’ve seen five or six different schools out there, but apart from that I know very little about the teaching. I like a challenge, I like an adventure and I’m looking forward to it.”*

**Male, 40-44, East, Middle, 9-13, Science/Maths**

*“Thailand for three months and Australia for three months. I felt even if I wasn’t going travelling it was time for a change anyway for me.”*

**Female, 25-29, North West, Comp, 11-18, Physics**

*“I am not just going for the money, but for the whole package. I like the sunshine and it will be nice to finish at half past one each day. I will only have ten children in each class.”*

**Female, 35-39, North West, Girls’ Comp, 11-18, MFL**

*“We have contacts in Wellington and we are just going to travel around and see what happens. I love teaching and I want to teach and my wife feels the same, and it is a good way of travelling around. It broadens your teaching experience as well.”*

**Male, 25-29, West Midlands, Sec Mod, 11-16, Biology/Science**

*“I have a new partner now and he has done lots of travelling previously and it is something I have wanted to do for a long time so I am looking on it as having a complete break from everything. The travel plans are fairly open at the moment and it depends on all sorts of things.”*

**Male, 45-49, East, Comp, 11-18, Biology/ICT**

*“It was in my mind that one day we would do this. If, perhaps, I’d had a very good year at the beginning, it wouldn’t have been something I would have thought about this year. I think teaching and travelling sort of marry together.”*

**Female, 25-29, South West, Comp, 11-18, Philosophy/RS**

#### **Box 4.4: Ill Health/Early Retirement**

*“I will be spending time at home. I have never taken time out and have worked continuously for twenty-eight years.”*

**Female, 50-54, North West, Primary, 5-11**

*“We are moving house and we have a wonderful place in Norfolk. So a complete change in lifestyle. I am going to be a governor of the local school.”*

**Male, 55-59, Yorks & Humbs, Junior, 7-11**

*“I want to travel because I gave up quite a lot of my outside activities when I took on the headship. I like painting and gardening.”*

**Female, Headteacher, 55-59, East Midlands, Primary, 5-11**

*“My husband is retired and he has got some health problems. With full-time teaching I found it really hard. I want to spend more time with my husband and also my grandchildren.”*

**Female, 55-59, East, Infant, 4-7**

*“The general decision that I was not going to work until I was sixty was influenced by the fact that my husband is ten years older than me and already retired.”*

**Female, 50-54, Inner London, Primary, 5-11**

*“I want to do things that I really enjoy. I was asked to return to school and help out, but I haven’t done that as yet.”*

**Female, 55-59, South West, Junior, 7-11**

*“I have decided to take my normal school holiday and just relax and then give myself until Christmas to write something which sells. People have said do I want to go back on supply and my answer is a very firm ‘no’ really.”*

**Male, 55-59, West Midlands, Middle, 10-13, Maths**

*“I felt that the time had come when I needed to get out. My husband was retiring and I didn’t want to go on for another five years. I will do some supply work.”*

**Female, 55-59, North West, Technology School, 11-18, MFL**

*“By the end it had made me very ill. I consider myself very fortunate as I have succeeded in getting ill health early retirement which is against the odds for somebody my age and I have got a new job (as a librarian) that is really pleasant to do.”*

**Male, 45-49, Yorks & Humbs, Comp, 11-16, Geography**

*“I think I have done my bit for education. Some people suggested that I look at somewhere like B&Q because they take more elderly people. Some people have asked me to do some decorating for them and I could do that.”*

**Male, 55-59, East, Comp, 11-19, Design & Technology**

*“My children have gone through university and my mortgage is paid. There comes a time in life when you don’t want to be working six days a week. I have achieved what I wanted to achieve.”*

**Male, 55-59, Outer London, Comp, 11-18, Science**

#### **Box 4.5: Not Sure**

*“I would still like to use the teaching in some way, but not within a school or with children. It is very definite that I still want to work with people.”*

**Female, 25-29, North East, Primary, 4-11**

*“I doubt very much that I will go back into teaching, but I haven’t decided what I am going to do. We are also thinking of moving house so it is probably a good time to sit back until that has happened.”*

**Female, 30-34, Yorks & Humbs, Primary, 5-11**

*“I haven’t made any final decision. I’m going to give myself from now until Christmas off, then I shall decide what to do.”*

**Female, 40-44, East Midlands, Primary, 5-11**

*“I am still so desperately tired. I really don’t want to think. People say I have good organisational skills and good people management skills, but I don’t know.”*

**Female, 45-49, South East, First, 4-7**

*“I am still not convinced that there is a living to be made in the travel business, but it gives me thinking time. At the end of six months I may decide to pack it in having given it a fair crack and return to supply.”*

**Male, 45-49, South West, Junior, 7-11**

*“I have always thought I would do some temporary teaching to keep the pennies coming in. I have also gone back to making things, which at the moment is rocking horses.”*

**Male, 50-54, West Midlands, Middle, 9-13, Music**

*“I’m not sure whether I’m going to go back to work or not. If I do it will probably be part-time and probably office work. My husband is a vicar, so I could have quite a role if I wanted to.”*

**Female, 30-34, East Midlands, Technology School, 11-18, Maths**

*“I would like to return to working with children in some way whether it be teaching or training. I really want now to be able to download the pressure. I am looking for posts with maybe three days commitment.”*

**Female, 50-54, Eastern, Comp, 11-16, Science**

*“My daughter is at primary school and my son is four in October. I am going to have a year off, but I will be living near enough to my parents to be able to do some supply. I am doing a distance learning dyslexia certificate which will take up fifteen hours a week.”*

**Female, 30-34, Outer London, Girls’ Comp, 11-16, English**

*“I don’t know what I am going to do. As I said, I have got property, and I have opened up a guest house and that is just breaking even now.”*

**Male, 25-29, South East, Comp, 11-16, Maths/IT**

*“I want a job that doesn’t consume me completely. I have no office skills whatsoever to offer. I am just reliable, so I am looking for a bit of filing or something, but I haven’t started to look yet.”*

**Female, 40-44, South West, Comp, 11-18, Spanish/French**

### ***Other Education***

- 4.8 Box 4.1 shows that most of the five in 100 teachers leaving for ‘other education’ were taking posts as advisors. Among the examples in the sample were advisors in literacy, numeracy, Key Stage 3 subjects, ICT, gifted and talented, leadership and development, and special needs. We also found teachers moving to health and drugs education, outdoor education, and to become a parent partnership officers. The unfolding of recent policies and strategies has created a penumbra of posts around but not within schools.

### ***Other Employment***

- 4.9 What is striking about the four in 100 teachers moving to other employment is how few are going to work for major employers (Box 4.2). In fact, there were none among our interviewees, though in the past we have found the occasional science graduate joining a pharmaceutical company or ICT specialist snapped up by the private sector.
- 4.10 When teachers move to other employment they often create it themselves. We found examples of teachers leaving to set up an ICT consultancy, to offer advice on human resource issues and to go freelance as musicians, writers or photographers. Others left to run hotels or pubs. On occasions, to pay the bills, they were looking for work in offices or taking on relatively mundane jobs such as driving instructor. The overwhelming impression is not of teachers being poached by other sectors of employment, but taking the initiative themselves to move on and do something else.

### ***Teaching Abroad/Travel***

- 4.11 The eight in 100 resigning to travel and/or teach abroad are mainly young, though some go in the middle years particularly if their life has taken a new direction, as for example, a new partner (Box 4.3). They go in the main to broaden their experience, not to leave teaching, and if they come back to this country they are likely to resume their teaching careers. They are sometimes tempted abroad by the attractive packages, small class sizes in the independent schools, and the sunshine. One (see the last comment in Box 4.3) summed it up for many when she said, “I think teaching and travelling sort of marry together.”

### ***Ill Health/Early Retirement***

- 4.12 Nine of every 100 teachers leaving are retiring prematurely, either through ill health or by agreement. Box 4.4 shows, not surprisingly, that in contrast to those travelling they tend to be in their fifties, though we did find examples of ill-health retirements among those 45-49. Most seemed to be retiring early because they had had enough or because they could afford to. Some of our interviewees wanted time to themselves (in one case to travel), others to be with a partner who had retired. Some were prepared to leave without an immediate pension and were contemplating other employment, for example in B&Q. One person retired in his forties on health grounds became a librarian. The picture that emerges is of many teachers having had enough of teaching by their fifties. Only just over four in 100 teachers appear to make it to the relatively young retirement age of 60.

### *Not Sure*

- 4.13 For seven out of 100 resignees the school did not know where they were going. This does not mean that the schools were uninterested, because as our interviews revealed many of the leavers were themselves unsure. This group mainly includes teachers wanting above everything to leave – “I am still so desperately tired”, “I want a job that doesn’t consume me completely” and “I really want now to be able to download the pressure”. Leavers in this category were from across the age ranges. Some still wanted to continue to work with people (though not in schools) and others were considering routine jobs, for example clerical work. Several mentioned supply teaching as a good standby to keep “the pennies coming in without the hassle”.

### **Different Destinations**

- 4.14 So far we have been mainly considering the destinations of the resignees as one big group irrespective of the type of contract they held, or the post, or their gender or ethnic background. In the following tables we present those destinations where the sub-groups differed.

### *Contract*

- 4.15 Tables 4.3 shows that a resignee’s destination in maintained education is clearly related to the type of contract held. Teachers on full-time permanent contracts were the most likely to move to full-time permanent contracts in other maintained schools. Part-timers were the most likely to move to part-time posts and also to supply. Those who had held a fixed-term contract could be seeking another or going to supply. Most of the moves to ‘other education posts’ were from those on full-time permanent contracts. Part-timers were proportionally more likely to leave for maternity, family care, and early retirement. The destinations of those on temporary contracts were less likely to be known.

**Table 4.3: Destinations by Type of Contract<sup>1</sup>**

Destination	Primary				Secondary			
	%FTP	%FTT	%PTP	%PTT	%FTP	%FTT	%PTP	%PTT
FT Maint School	41.8	30.7	9.1	6.6	46.4	25.3	8.1	10.9
PT Maint School	2.2	2.0	16.9	15.8	1.4	0.8	14.6	13.0
Supply	4.5	23.5	7.1	36.2	1.9	11.8	2.0	16.7
Other Education	4.4	2.5	3.9	1.5	5.2	0.8	3.6	2.2
Maternity	8.5	2.7	14.6	2.6	2.8	0.4	4.5	0.7
Family Care	2.8	1.6	14.6	9.6	2.1	0.4	11.3	4.3
Age Retirement	4.1	0.5	5.9	2.6	4.7	1.2	10.5	8.0
Ill-Health Retire	2.8	0.2	3.2	0.0	2.4	0.4	3.2	0.7
Early Retirement	8.3	1.1	7.5	4.1	6.8	0.8	10.5	0.7
Not known	3.3	14.3	2.8	8.7	4.7	32.7	6.1	15.9
Total N	1,479	447	254	196	1,987	245	247	138

1. FTP – full-time permanent, FTT – full-time fixed-term, PTP – part-time permanent, PTT – part-time fixed-term.

### *Post*

- 4.16 Table 4.4 distinguishes the resignees by phase and post. It seems that deputy-head teachers are the most likely to be taking posts in other schools, presumably often moving up to headships. It looks as if heads of department are most likely to be tempted away from secondary schools to join independent schools and this is consistent with those schools using the state sector as something of a proving ground. Table 4.4 also shows that it was the senior staff in both primary and secondary schools who were most likely to be recruited to the advisory posts illustrated in Box 1.

**Table 4.4: Destinations by Post<sup>1</sup>**

Destination	Primary			Secondary			
	%Head	%Dep	%T	%Head	%Dep	%HoD	%T
FT Maint School	38.8	54.6	31.5	41.9	48.1	40.0	38.0
PT Maint School	1.0	2.3	5.2	0.0	0.0	1.4	3.8
Supply	1.9	1.1	12.2	0.0	0.0	2.0	4.3
Ind School	1.0	1.1	2.9	0.0	0.9	22.2	3.9
Other Education	11.7	5.7	3.3	3.2	9.4	9.8	3.0
Maternity	1.9	8.0	7.7	0.0	0.0	1.6	3.0
Family Care	1.0	2.3	4.7	0.0	0.9	3.7	3.1
Age Retirement	5.8	4.6	3.3	19.4	3.8	7.1	4.4
Ill-Health Retire	4.9	1.7	1.9	0.0	1.9	3.5	1.9
Early Retirement	23.3	8.6	5.5	29.0	28.3	10.0	3.7
Not known	4.9	1.7	6.2	0.0	0.0	2.8	9.8
Total N	103	174	2,103	31	106	494	2,634

1. Dep – deputy/assistant headteacher, HoD – head of department, T – teacher.

- 4.17 Most of the headteacher resignees were either transferring to other schools or retiring. A quarter of the headteachers leaving were taking early retirement and a further fifth of those in the secondary phase had reached normal-age retirement.

### *Gender*

- 4.18 In Chapter 3 we reported that a higher proportion of female teachers were resigning than male teachers. Table 4.5 pinpoints a major and obvious reason. Across the phases and special schools about 10 per cent of the female teachers were leaving for family reasons against a handful of the male teachers. In the two main groups of primary and secondary, male teachers were more likely to be moving to full-time posts in other maintained schools and female teachers to part-time posts which again could be role related.

**Table 4.5: Destinations by Gender<sup>1</sup>**

Destination	Primary		Middle		Secondary		Special	
	%F	%M	%F	%M	%F	%M	%F	%M
FT Maint School	31.7	44.6	39.1	23.3	36.2	42.9	34.9	26.5
PT Maint School	5.1	3.0	3.1	0.0	4.1	1.9	4.8	0.0
Maternity	8.7	0.0	4.7	0.0	4.5	0.0	7.2	0.0
Family Care	4.7	2.3	4.7	0.0	4.9	0.5	1.2	0.0
Total N	2,080	303	60	30	1,546	1,081	83	34

1. %F refers to percentage of female resignees and %M to percentage of male resignees.

### *Ethnic Minority*

4.19 Only 4.3 per cent of the resignees in our primary and secondary samples were recorded as being from an ethnic minority (and the number in middle and special schools were too small for meaningful analysis). No national figures are available for comparison. The destinations of resignees from the ethnic minorities were found to be similar to those of other resignees. Table 4.6 shows they were more likely to resign for maternity and less for any of the forms of retirement than other resignees. Their destinations were also less likely to be known.

**Table 4.6: Destinations by Ethnic Background<sup>1</sup>**

Destination	Primary		Secondary	
	%E	%O	%E	%O
Maternity	9.7	6.9	3.7	2.5
Age Retirement	1.4	3.6	4.4	5.2
Ill Health Retire	1.4	2.0	1.5	2.3
Early Retirement	1.4	6.9	0.7	6.5
Not Known	8.3	5.8	15.4	7.7
Total N	72	2,248	136	2,565

1. %E refers to percentage of ethnic minority resignees and %O to percentage of others.

### **Resumé**

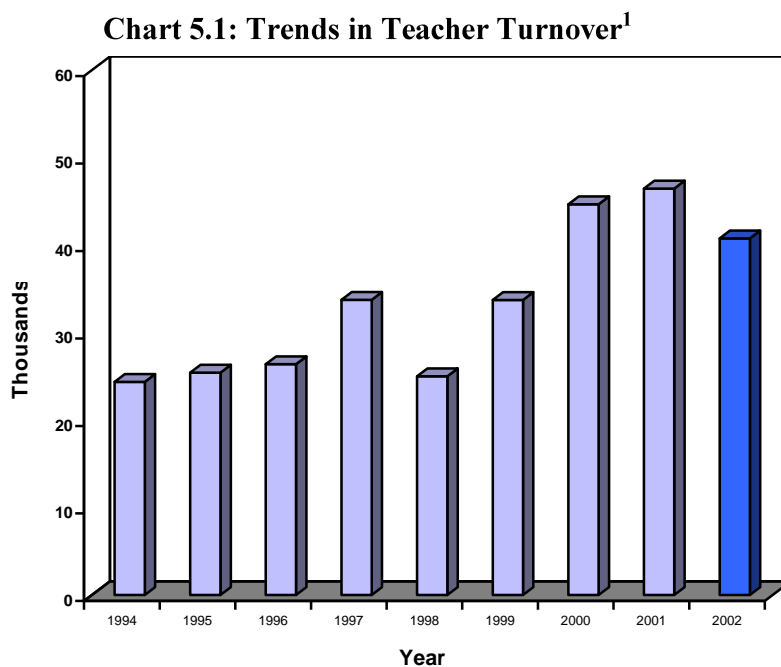
4.20 In 2002, our population estimates suggest 60,800 teachers resigned from primary, middle, secondary and special schools in England. Of every 100, 40 were moving to other maintained schools, 13 were retiring, 9 were leaving for maternity or family care, 7 to supply, 7 to other teaching, 5 to other employment 4 to other education posts and 4 to travel. The destinations of the other 11 were unknown.

4.21 ‘Other education’ comprised mainly advisory posts created through government initiatives which have been recruiting experienced staff from schools. Few of the teachers leaving for other employment were going to major employers, but rather were making their own work. Younger leavers were more likely to resign to travel and older leavers take early retirement. Seven per cent of the resignees did not know what they were going to do next – their main motivation seemed to be to get out of teaching.

4.22 Full-timers were more likely to be moving to full-time posts in other schools and part-timers to part-time posts. Headteachers tended to resign either to take posts in other schools or to retire (a third were retiring from primary and a half from secondary). Deputy headteachers were the most likely to take posts in other schools, we may suppose in many cases for promotion. Heads of department were the most likely leave for independent schools, which like to recruit on track record. About ten per cent of the female resignees were going for maternity or family care reasons, which accounts for much of the higher turnover among them. Ethnic minority resignees were more likely to be leaving for maternity and less, for retirement.

## 5. Trends, Turnover and Wastage

- 5.1 From our survey we have estimated (paragraph 2.30) that a total of 60,800 teachers left primary, secondary (including middle) and special schools in England in 2002. In this chapter we address the question of whether this is higher or lower than previous years.
- 5.2 The most ready comparison is with the annual surveys of the Employers' Organisation for Local Government (EO). These include the sixth-form colleges but since 1994 they have been shown separately. The EO surveys do, however, cover Wales, but the Organisation kindly forwarded its figures for the Principality so they could be subtracted.
- 5.3 The EO's main run of data is for teachers leaving full-time permanent contracts. From Table 3.8 we are able to estimate that 40,760 full-time permanent teachers (excluding special schools) left in 2002. Chart 5.1 shows what happens when we put this figure in the line of EO estimates since 1994.



1. Resignations of full-time permanent teachers from maintained primary and secondary schools in England.

**Source:** Resignations for 1994-2001 from Employers' Organisation's *Survey of Teacher Resignations 1985/2001*, with Wales excluded.

- 5.4 The trend revealed by the EO is a steep increase since 1998, with the number of resignations almost doubling from 25,009 to 46,472. The year 1998 was atypical in that departures in the preceding year had been speeded by a change in the pension regulations which made the terms for early retirement less generous. But over the period 1994 to 2001 the overall trend is upwards.
- 5.5 Our survey suggests that this has not continued into 2002. Taking the figures at face value, resignations were down by 12.3 per cent in 2002 compared with 2001. The

usual health warnings about comparing different datasets apply, but it does look as though, at the very least, the steep rise in resignations from full-time permanent posts has not continued. This inference is consistent with the shape of the EO curve between 2000 and 2001.

## Turnover

- 5.6 Resignations are the basis of turnover. Both the Employers' Organisation and the DfES regularly publish annual estimates. Unfortunately, as we can see from Table 5.1, they produce widely different results. The trends are the same, with both showing a peak in 1997 and a trough in 1998 for example, but DfES turnover is 3-6 percentage points above that of the EO. In the case of part-time teachers the estimates are even more discrepant.

**Table 5.1: Turnover Rates of DfES and EO Compared**

Year <sup>1</sup>	%Full-Time		%Part-Time	
	DfES	EO	DfES	EO
1994-1995	14.4	8.0	-	5.8
1995-1996	13.9	8.5	-	7.3
1996-1997	14.4	9.0	-	7.4
1997-1998	15.9	11.6	-	9.7
1998-1999	14.3	8.6	30.1	8.8
1999-2000	15.2	9.8	31.1	8.5
2000-2001	16.4	12.8	31.0	10.0
2001-2002		13.3	-	10.6

Sources: DfES (2002) *Statistics of Education, Teachers in England/School Workforce in England*; Employers' Organisation (2002) *Survey of Resignations and Recruitment 1985/6-2001*.

1. DfES data refer to financial years from 1 April, Employer Organisation data to calendar years.

- 5.7 There are a number of possible explanations for the differences:

- The DfES and EO draw on different databases. The DfES uses the Database of Teacher Records derived from pensions information; the EO conducts annual surveys.
- The databases lead the two organisations to adopt somewhat different definitions of turnover. For the DfES, it is full-time teachers (that is both permanent and temporary) who were in service on 31 March one year, but not in full-time service the next. The EO covers only full-time permanent teachers and the survey is conducted for the calendar year. Similarly, part-time turnover for the DfES is based on all part-time teachers, but for the EO it is part-time permanent teachers only.
- The EO's estimate includes Wales where turnover rates are lower (Smithers and Robinson, 2001).

Of these, the inclusion by the DfES of teachers on temporary contracts could have been expected to have the biggest effect.

5.8 Our survey indicates that turnover for full-time teachers (permanent and fixed-term) in primary and secondary (including middle) schools in England in 2002 was 14.1 per cent. This is higher than the latest figure published by the EO, but lower than that of the DfES. It, however, corresponds directly to neither. Like the DfES's, it is for England only and includes fixed-term teachers, and like the EO's it is for a calendar year and obtained by survey. Of the two, it is probably closer to the DfES's. This would further suggest that turnover has fallen in 2002.

**Wastage**

5.9 Of more interest to policy makers, though not to schools, is loss from the system. This has been labelled 'wastage'. Both the DfES and EO provide annual estimates, but here there is yet another complication. The DfES treats as wastage any teachers who held full-time contracts one year who did not hold them the next. Thus a move to a part-time contract, on this definition, would be part of wastage. The EO defines wastage as 'the annual turnover of full-time permanent teachers net of moves within the LEA sector'. It thus differs from the DfES' definition both in restricting itself to those on permanent contracts and excluding moves to part-time contracts and some supply.

**Table 5.2: Wastage Rates of DfES and EO Compared**

Year	%Primary		%Secondary	
	DfES	EO	DfES	EO
1994-1995	8.9	5.0	8.0	4.8
1995-1996	9.0	5.3	8.5	5.5
1996-1997	9.7	5.8	8.3	5.5
1997-1998	10.7	7.4	9.3	7.4
1998-1999	8.8	5.0	7.4	4.6
1999-2000	9.4	5.9	7.9	5.3
2000-2001	9.8	6.6	8.3	6.3
2001-2002	-	6.5	-	6.1

1. DfES data refer to financial years from 1 April, Employer Organisation data to calendar years.

5.10 Table 5.2 shows that DfES' estimates of wastage emerge as several percentage points higher (in some cases half as much again). The EO (2002, page 47) has investigated the discrepancy and attempted to put its estimates on a similar footing to the DfES' by taking into account fixed-term contracts, but this still leaves a large difference. This must reside partly in the different destinations treated as wastage. It may also be that the survey method underestimates in comparison with pension records (because those completing a questionnaire may forget to include some people). In addition, there is the lag in compiling the pension records to be reckoned with.

5.11 We have, in the first instance, followed the DfES' definition by calculating the number of teachers leaving full-time posts other than to teach full-time in another maintained school. The first column of Table 5.3 shows the resulting estimates.

These are close to the DfES' estimates of wastage for 2000-2001, but somewhat lower. This could indicate that wastage has fallen in 2002 or reflect the different methods of data collection. An actual fall would mean that wastage as well as turnover decreased in 2002. The step down in Chart 5.1 would then reflect both fewer movements between schools and fewer leaving the maintained sector.

**Table 5.3: 2002 Wastage Rates by Different Definitions**

Phase	DfES	Less Moves To	
	Definition	Part-Time	Part-Time and Supply
Primary	9.3	8.9	8.0
Secondary (inc Middle)	7.3	7.1	6.7
Total	8.2	7.9	7.3

- 5.12 In Table 5.3 we also deduct from the wastage rate, first, those full-time teachers moving to part-time posts and then those moving to supply posts. This reduces the wastage estimates in the direction of the EO's published rates for 2001. In the case of secondary leavers the adjusted figure of 6.7 per cent comes out as the same as the EO's estimate taking into account fixed-term contracts. In primary, it is still higher – 8.0 per cent against 7.1 per cent.
- 5.13 Our best estimate of the percentage of teachers leaving the profession from full-time posts in primary and secondary (including middle) schools in 2002 is 7.9 per cent. This is derived from the proportion of the full-time teacher complement leaving for destinations other than full-time or part-time posts in other maintained schools. We believe the DfES definition overestimates wastage by treating moves to part-time posts as loss.
- 5.14 The DfES data for 2000-01 indicate that 55.5 per cent of turnover was wastage. The EO's data for the equivalent year suggests 50.8 per cent because all within LEA schools are discounted. On the basis of our best estimate it is 56.0 per cent. In broad-brush terms just over half of turnover is loss to classroom teaching in maintained schools.
- 5.15 Consistently across all three approaches, wastage from primary schools is found to be higher than from secondary schools. Wastage from special schools in our study was lower at 5.9 per cent

### **Region**

- 5.16 Table 5.4 shows loss by region. The pattern is that foreshadowed in Table 3.2 with higher turnover and wastage in the south and east than in the north and midlands, though with a less sharp divide for the secondary phase. Secondary turnover in Yorkshire and Humberside is, for example, above that in the South West. The regional picture emerging in Table 5.4 seems to be relatively enduring. It has regularly shown up in the Government's publications on the school workforce (for example, DfES, 2002a, Table 12, page 34).

**Table 5.4: Turnover and Wastage by Region**

Region	Turnover <sup>1</sup>		Wastage <sup>2</sup>	
	Primary	Secondary <sup>3</sup>	Primary	Secondary <sup>3</sup>
North East	10.9	9.5	6.7	4.9
North West	12.0	10.1	7.3	5.4
Yorks & Humber	12.5	13.6	7.0	8.0
East Midlands	14.7	11.0	8.9	5.7
West Midlands	11.4	12.5	6.5	6.4
East of England	18.5	14.9	10.6	7.8
Inner London	19.2	17.5	12.7	10.7
Outer London	20.4	15.4	13.4	9.5
South East	19.0	14.2	10.6	8.2
South West	15.1	13.1	10.7	8.5
Total	15.3	13.1	9.3	7.3

1.Full-time teachers, both permanent and fixed-term.

2.Based on the DfES definition of full-time teachers (permanent and fixed-term) who leave to do anything other than move to a full-time permanent post in another maintained school.

3.Includes middle

## Gender

5.17 Table 5.5 shows turnover and wastage by gender. Female teachers were both more likely to resign and more likely to leave the profession than male teachers. A similar finding is reported in the DfES' evidence to the School Teachers' Review Body in September 2002. This probably follows from the 10 per cent of female teachers leaving for maternity and family care against the handful of the male teachers who cite family reasons.

**Table 5.5: Turnover and Wastage by Gender**

Gender	Turnover <sup>1</sup>		Wastage <sup>1,2</sup>	
	Primary	Secondary <sup>3</sup>	Primary	Secondary <sup>3</sup>
Female	14.9	14.2	9.8	7.8
Male	12.4	12.7	6.7	6.7
Total	14.6	13.5	9.3	7.3

1. Full-time teachers (permanent and fixed-term).

2. Based on the DfES definition of full-time teachers (permanent and fixed-term) who leave to do anything other than move to a full-time permanent post in another maintained school.

3. Includes middle.

5.18 The gender difference also accounts in our survey for the difference in turnover and wastage rates between primary and secondary. Not only are there proportionally more women in primary schools, but it seems they are also more likely to leave than those in secondary schools.

## **Resumé**

- 5.19 Our best estimates for turnover and wastage of full-time teachers from primary and secondary (including middle) schools in 2002 are respectively 14.1 per cent and 7.9 per cent. Comparisons with estimates from the DfES and the Employers' Organisation for Local Government suggest that these are down on the previous year, which had seen the third increase in a row.
- 5.20 Turnover and wastage rates are lower in the north and midlands, and higher in the east and south. This seems to be a relatively persistent pattern. Female teachers were more likely to move and leave than male teachers, and this is associated with higher turnover and wastage rates in primary schools.

## 6. Movers and Leavers

6.1 Resignations from schools can be, as we have seen, to move to another maintained school or to leave the sector. In this chapter we ask: do these two groups differ? Since, as we saw in Chapter 5, definition is crucial, we begin by stating ours. ‘Mover’ here is a teacher leaving to take a full-time or a part-time post in another maintained school; ‘leaver’, shorthand for ‘premature leaver’, is all those leaving teaching in maintained schools except those reaching normal-age retirement. Our first analyses are of the schools dataset, the information provided by schools on all teachers resigning during 2002. We begin with types of contract. We then concentrate on those giving up full-time permanent contracts. Finally, in this chapter, we draw on the leavers dataset to look at age and length of service – two variables not covered in the schools questionnaire.

### Type of Contract

6.2 Tables 6.1 and 6.2 compare the movers and leavers by the type of contract they held. Overall, 39.5 per cent of the primary resignees and 44.4 per cent of the secondary resignees were classed as movers. Across the types of contracts, the patterns are similar for both the primary and secondary phases. In both, the leavers were significantly more likely to come from those holding fixed-term or part-time contracts. About half those leaving full-time permanent posts do so to move to another maintained school compared with between a fifth and a third of those on fixed-term or part-time contracts.

**Table 6.1: Movers and Leavers from Primary Schools by Contract<sup>1</sup>**

Type of Contract	Movers			Leavers		
	N	%Column	%Row	N	%Column	%Row
Full-Time Permanent	650	71.7	45.8	768	55.4	54.2
Full-Time Fixed-Term	146	16.1	32.8	299	21.6	67.2
Part-Time Permanent	66	7.3	27.6	173	12.5	72.4
Part-Time Fixed-Term	44	4.8	23.0	147	10.6	77.0
Total	906	100.0	39.5	1,387	100.0	60.5

1.Comparison of movers and leavers, Chi-squared=67.96, df=3, P<0.001.

**Table 6.2: Movers and Leavers from Secondary Schools by Contract<sup>1</sup>**

Type of Contract	Movers			Leavers		
	N	%Column	%Row	N	%Column	%Row
Full-Time Permanent	949	86.1	50.1	945	68.3	49.9
Full-Time Fixed-Term	64	5.8	26.4	178	12.9	73.6
Part-Time Permanent	56	5.1	25.3	165	11.9	74.7
Part-Time Fixed-Term	33	3.0	26.0	94	6.8	74.0
Total	1,102	100.0	44.4	1,382	100.0	55.6

1.Comparison of movers and leavers, Chi-squared=106.56, df=3, P<0.001.

## Gender

- 6.3 We now turn to take a close look at those leaving full-time permanent contracts. Tables 6.3 and 6.4 show that, in both the primary and secondary phases, female resignees were more likely to be quitting teaching in the maintained sector than moving to another school, while the reverse was the case for men.

**Table 6.3: Movers and Leavers from Primary Schools by Gender<sup>1</sup>**

Gender	Movers			Leavers		
	N	%Column	%Row	N	%Column	%Row
Female	529	81.6	44.0	673	87.6	56.0
Male	119	18.4	55.6	95	12.4	44.4
Total	648	100.0	45.8	768	100.0	54.2

1. Chi-squared=9.84, df=1, P<0.002.

**Table 6.4: Movers and Leavers from Secondary Schools by Gender<sup>1</sup>**

Gender	Movers			Leavers		
	N	%Column	%Row	N	%Column	%Row
Female	508	53.5	47.7	556	59.1	52.3
Male	441	46.5	53.5	384	40.9	46.5
Total	949	100.0	45.8	940	100.0	54.2

1. Chi-squared=6.06, df=1, P<0.02.

## Ethnic Minorities

- 6.4 Table 6.5 shows that under one in twenty of those resigning from full-time permanent posts was from an ethnic minority. They were just as likely to be moving to another school as leaving the profession.

**Table 6.5: By Ethnic Minority**

Background	Primary		Secondary	
	%Movers (N=611)	%Leavers (N=733)	%Movers (N=916)	%Leavers (N=920)
Ethnic Minority	3.6	3.3	4.5	4.3
Other	96.4	96.7	95.5	95.7
Total	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0
Chi-squared	0.11, df=1, not signif		0.18, df=1, not signif	

## Post

- 6.5 Table 6.6 shows that those resigning deputy-headships in primary schools were significantly more likely to be among the movers – 59.2 per cent were taking posts in other schools compared to 40.8 per cent leaving the profession. It is not unreasonable to suppose that the main reason will have been to step up to a headship. No differences were found with post in secondary schools - Table 6.7 - though there is some suggestion that heads of department (HoD) were more likely to

be among the leavers. (In Table 4.4 we saw that over a third of the HoD leavers were being recruited by independent schools.)

**Table 6.6: Movers and Leavers from Primary Schools by Post Held<sup>1</sup>**

Post	Movers			Leavers		
	N	%Column	%Row	N	%Column	%Row
Headteacher	37	5.7	42.0	51	6.7	58.0
Deputy Headteacher	87	13.4	59.2	60	7.8	40.8
Teacher	526	80.9	44.6	654	85.5	55.4
Total	650	100.0	45.9	765	100.0	54.1

1. Chi-squared=11.80, df=2, P<0.005.

**Table 6.7: Movers and Leavers from Secondary Schools by Post Held<sup>1</sup>**

Post	Movers			Leavers		
	N	%Column	%Row	N	%Column	%Row
Headteacher	13	1.4	52.0	12	1.3	48.0
Deputy/Assistant Head	49	5.2	49.0	51	5.4	51.0
Head of Department	201	21.2	46.0	236	25.0	54.0
Teacher	683	72.2	51.5	644	68.3	48.5
Total	946	100.0	50.1	943	100.0	49.9

1. Chi-squared=4.03, df=3, not significant.

### *Age*

- 6.6 We now turn to look at two other important characteristics of the leavers – age and length of service. We did not ask the schools to provide this information since it was unlikely they would have had it readily to hand. These analyses are based, therefore, on the questionnaires the leavers themselves filled in. In consequence, we cannot make direct comparisons with the movers (who were not approached to complete a questionnaire).
- 6.7 In the case of age we can, however, make comparisons with the national distribution. In its evidence to the School Teachers' Review Body in September 2002, the DfES (2002c) provided a breakdown of the full-time teaching force by age and gender. It includes fixed-term contract as well as permanent so Tables 6.8 and 6.9 differ from the preceding tables in this chapter not only in being derived from a different dataset, but in referring to all full-time teachers.
- 6.8 Tables 6.8 and 6.9 reveal that, for both male and female teachers, for both primary and secondary phases, it was those at the two ends of the age spectrum who were the most likely to leave. Those aged 40-49 were, in all cases, the least likely to go. Very few teachers continued beyond 60. Encouraging good teachers to stay for several years longer could have an appreciable impact on ameliorating teacher shortages.

**Table 6.8: Leavers from Primary Schools by Age and Gender**

Age	Sample <sup>1</sup>		National <sup>2</sup>	
	N	%	N	%
<b>Female</b>				
20-29	90	27.0	35,885	23.5
30-39	76	22.8	31,456	20.6
40-49	57	17.1	46,726	30.6
50-59	110	33.0	37,564	24.6
Over 60	0	0.0	1,069	0.7
Total	333	100.0.	153,700	100.0
<b>Male</b>				
20-29	7	13.7	4,321	14.9
30-39	18	35.3	7,105	24.5
40-49	10	19.6	9,048	31.2
50-59	15	29.4	8,294	28.6
Over 60	1	2.0	232	0.8
Total	42	100.0	29,000	100.0

1. Leavers from full-time posts in the leavers dataset.

2. From Chart 1 DfES *Written Evidence to STRB*, September 2002.

**Table 6.9: Leavers for Secondary Schools by Age and Gender**

Age	Sample <sup>1</sup>		National <sup>2</sup>	
	N	%	N	%
<b>Female</b>				
20-29	77	31.4	22,386	21.3
30-39	68	27.8	24,068	22.9
40-49	40	16.3	34,368	32.7
50-59	60	24.5	23,542	22.4
Over 60	0	0.0	841	0.8
Total	245	100.0.	105,205	100.0
<b>Male</b>				
20-29	31	16.8	11,201	12.7
30-39	35	18.9	20,011	22.8
40-49	42	22.7	30,341	34.4
50-59	72	38.9	25,666	29.1
Over 60	5	2.7	970	1.1
Total	185	100.0	88,288	100.0

1. From full-time posts (leavers dataset).

2. From Chart 2 DfES *Written Evidence to STRB*, September 2002.

6.9 Young teachers are also more likely to leave. In a largely female profession it is perhaps not surprising that a number of young teachers should take time out to bear and raise children. But young male teachers were also more likely to leave suggesting that a number of those who come into the profession do not find it a satisfying career.

### *Length of Service*

6.10 This is borne out by the data on length of service shown in Table 6.10. Teachers it seems are most likely to leave after a short time in the profession. Over a quarter (28.1 per cent) giving up full-time permanent contracts had been teaching for five years or fewer, and 45.2 per cent had been teaching for ten years or fewer. The pattern is similar in the primary and secondary phases. Leavers were least likely to come from those with 16 to 25 years service. But consistent with the pattern for age, departures rose again after 26 years in teaching.

**Table 6.10: Leavers<sup>1</sup> by Length of Service**

Years	Primary		Secondary	
	N	%	N	%
1-5	85	26.8	120	29.9
6-10	52	16.4	73	17.7
11-15	38	12.0	44	10.7
16-20	27	8.5	28	6.8
21-25	28	8.8	42	10.2
26-30	46	14.5	53	12.8
31 or more	41	12.0	53	12.8
Total	317	100.0	413	100.0

1. Leavers from full-time permanent posts in the leavers dataset.

### **Resumé**

6.11 Comparing movers and leavers suggests that those taking posts in other maintained schools are more likely to have held full-time permanent contracts, to be male and, in primary schools, to be deputy heads.

6.12 Many of the leavers had spent only a few years in teaching. A quarter of the leavers were under 30, and 28 per cent had been teaching for five years or fewer. It appears that having gained some experience in the profession an appreciable number of trainees decide it is not for them. Those who do make it their career seem inclined to serve for 16-25 years. But then resignations rates rise with it seems a widespread expectation among teachers that they will retire in their fifties.

## 7. Reasons for Leaving

- 7.1 We now consider in detail the factors behind the decisions to leave. We do this by analysing the leavers dataset, compiled from the teachers leaving our samples of schools during 2002 for destinations other than teaching on a full-time or part-time contract in another maintained school. It does not include either those reaching normal-age retirement (not premature departure) or maternity (reason assumed).
- 7.2 Table 7.1 presents the responses to a question which asked leavers to rate 16 possible reasons for going (arrived at from pilot interviews in seven schools) on a 3-point scale ranging from ‘of great importance’ to ‘of no importance’. Across the different phases and the three departure dates, ‘workload too heavy’ emerged as the major reason for leaving. Nearly half (44.8 per cent) of the leavers indicated that this was ‘of great importance’ in reaching their decision. About a third said it was ‘government initiatives’ and ‘stress’ which may not be unconnected with excessive workload. A third also put forward ‘wanted change’ and ‘personal circumstances’ as reasons ‘of great importance’ in deciding to go.

**Table 7.1: Rating of Reasons for Leaving**

Reason	Percentage Rating ‘Of Great Importance’				Total <sup>1</sup> (N=1,051)
	Primary (N=480)	Middle (N=22)	Secondary (N=530)	Special (N=19)	
Workload too heavy	52.1	31.8	39.1	36.8	44.8
Government initiatives	38.8	31.8	35.1	21.1	36.4
Stress	36.5	13.6	34.3	15.8	34.5
Wanted change	29.6	31.8	37.9	47.4	34.2
Personal circumstances	35.8	27.3	32.3	26.3	33.7
Wanted new challenge	21.3	40.9	32.5	36.8	27.6
Felt undervalued	22.3	18.2	31.9	5.3	26.7
Poor pupil behaviour	12.1	13.6	33.8	10.5	23.0
Attracted by another job	16.7	45.5	25.5	26.3	21.9
Way the school is run	16.3	4.5	25.1	5.3	20.3
Travel	16.7	36.4	19.1	21.1	18.4
Better career prospects	10.4	18.2	18.1	0.0	14.3
School salary too low	9.8	18.2	12.3	5.3	11.1
Poor resources/facilities	5.2	13.6	11.5	0.0	8.5
Offered higher salary	6.0	18.2	7.2	15.8	7.0
Difficult parents	5.8	4.5	2.8	0.0	4.2

1. Actual dataset is 1,066 cases, but 15 of the respondents did not complete the ‘reasons’ question.

- 7.3 Although there is broad similarity in the pattern of responses for the different groups, there are also important differences. Leavers from primary schools were emphatic about workload and this is consistent with the lower teacher-pupil ratios in that phase and also the Government’s drive on literacy and numeracy. Poor pupil behaviour was ‘of great importance’ in decisions to leave secondary schools, but less so in departures from primary and special schools. Nearly half the leavers from special schools were going because they ‘wanted change’. Approaching half (45.5

per cent) of those resigning from middle schools had been ‘attracted by another job’ and 40 per cent were looking for ‘a new challenge’.

- 7.4 These differences between the different groups are brought out in Table 7.2 which ranks the reasons for leaving. The order which emerges is slightly different from that in Table 7.1 because the ranking score also takes into account whether the reason was rated ‘of some importance’. The order of the two large groups, the primary and secondary leavers, is very similar with ‘workload’, ‘stress’ and ‘government initiatives’ at the top and ‘poor resources/facilities’, ‘offered higher salary’ and ‘difficult parents’ at the bottom. But with the important exception already noted of ‘poor pupil behaviour’. The two smaller groups, middle and special school leavers, also emphasised workload and downplayed ‘difficult parents’ and ‘poor resources/facilities’. They also attached importance, however, to ‘wanted change’ and ‘a new challenge’. Middle school leavers gave ‘attracted by another job’ as their third most important reason and those going from special schools were more likely to have been offered a higher salary elsewhere than those in the other groups.

**Table 7.2: Ranking of Reasons for Leaving**

Reason	Rank				
	Primary (N=480)	Middle (N=22)	Secondary (N=530)	Special (N=19)	Total <sup>1</sup> (N=1,051)
Workload too heavy	1	1=	1	1	1
Stress	2	10=	2	4	2
Government initiatives	3	5	3	5	3
Personal circumstances	4	6=	4	6	4
Wanted change	5	1=	5=	2=	5
Wanted new challenge	7	3=	7	2=	6
Felt undervalued	6	6=	8	14	7
Poor pupil behaviour	9=	8=	5=	8=	8
Way the school is run	8	10	9	12=	9
Attracted by another job	9=	3=	10	7	10
Travel	11	8=	12	8=	11
Better career prospects	13	14	11	12=	12
Salary too low	12	12	14	11	13
Poor resources/facilities	15	13	13	15	14
Offered higher salary	16	15	15	10	15
Difficult parents	14	16	16	16	16

1. Actual dataset is 1,066 cases, but 15 of the respondents did not complete the ‘reasons’ question.

- 7.5 In addition to the reasons offered, a space was left to add in others. Of the respondents, 142 (13.5 per cent) wrote in items which they ticked as ‘of great importance’. These included ‘becoming Ofsted inspector’, ‘literacy taken out of hands’, ‘quality of life’, ‘colleagues have left’, ‘fear of abuse/assault’, ‘other teachers’, ‘ill-health’, ‘husband’s job move’, ‘bring up children’, ‘maternity’, ‘concerned about direction of education’, ‘changing job pattern’, ‘boredom with classroom teaching’, ‘burn out’, and ‘poor departmental management’. Many of

these were specific examples of, and could have been subsumed under, those provided, but they also give interesting glimpses of what was prompting the teachers to go. The overlap, and the fact that the great majority of the respondents found no difficulty in expressing themselves through the 16 reasons provided, suggests that the items successfully capture the general picture.

### Factor Analysis

- 7.6 In order to see if there was any structure underlying the reasons, the 1,051 responses were factor analysed, both as one group and in the separate phase/school categories. From the overall correlation matrix, five principal factors were extracted with eigenvalues greater than 1, accounting for 62.8 per cent of the variance. When these were rotated using the varimax method, with Kaiser normalisation, the factor matrix shown in Table 7.3 was obtained.

**Table 7.3: Varimax Rotated Factors (N=1,051)**

Item	Loadings <sup>1</sup>				
	I	II	III	IV	V
Attracted by another job		.733			
Workload too heavy	.799				
Way the school is run			.841		
Better career prospects				.534	
Personal circumstances					.678
Poor pupil behaviour			.442		
Wanted new challenge		.862			
Felt undervalued			.770		
Poor resources/facilities			.736		
Offered higher salary				.752	
Stress	.771				
Government initiatives	.768				
Travel					.778
Difficult parents	.523				
Salary too low				.802	
Wanted change		.728			.315
Per Cent Variance	15.4	14.8	13.7	10.4	8.7

1. Three highest in each case, plus main loadings for 'difficult parents' and 'pupil behaviour'.

- 7.7 When the responses from primary, middle, secondary and special schools were analysed separately very similar structures emerged suggesting that the five factors go to the heart of decisions to leave. The five factors can be identified as:

- I **Workload** (workload too heavy, stress, government initiatives);
- II **New Challenge** (wanted new challenge, wanted change, attracted by another job);
- III **School** (way school is run, felt undervalued, poor resources/facilities);

IV **Salary** (school salary too low, offered higher salary elsewhere, better career prospects elsewhere);

V **Personal circumstances** (opportunity to travel, personal circumstances, wanted change).

7.8 There are thus two ‘push’ factors, ‘workload’ and ‘school’, and two pull factors, ‘new challenge’ and ‘salary’, along with the more differentiated ‘personal’. Poor pupil behaviour loads on the school factor. The relative importance of the factors can be inferred from Tables 7.1 and 7.2. But they can be compared directly by combining, in each case, the three main contributing items to create five new variables ranging from 1 (low) to 7 (high).

7.9 Workload (mean 4.25) emerged as the most important factor in teachers leaving, significantly different from the other four ( $P < 0.001$ ). In contrast, salary (2.09) was significantly less important ( $P < 0.001$ ) than the other four factors. Personal circumstances (3.30), wanting a new challenge (3.26) and the school situation (3.17) came in-between with similar scores.

### **Pen Portraits**

7.10 The factors are not just statistical structures, but summarize real decisions made by real people. We can see this in the seven pen portraits, compiled from the interviews, which follow on pages 53-59. Workload, new challenge and salary are each represented by one account, but there were two strands to ‘school’ and two to ‘personal circumstances’, both of which, in each case, are illustrated. The full list, with names we have assigned, is:

- Anne, aged 55-59 giving up teaching in a primary school, primarily because of the **workload**.
- Bill, a physics teacher and head of science in an 11-18 comprehensive, aged 44-49, who is looking forward to the **new challenge** of becoming a Key Stage 3 science advisor.
- Carole, a business studies teacher, aged 40-44, who is leaving an 11-16 comprehensive because of **poor pupil behaviour** which she attributes, in part, to the way the school is run.
- Doreen, an infants’ teacher, aged 45-49, who is leaving after one year because of the **management style and the poor induction** she received.
- Edward, under 25, a music teacher in an 11-16 comprehensive school who is leaving for a much better **salary** in an independent school.
- Fiona, aged 25-29, who is leaving a first school because she wants to devote herself to looking after her **children**.
- Geraldine, aged 25-29, leaving a primary school to **travel**.

### Box 7.1: Workload

*Anne, 55-59, classroom teacher in a primary school in the Yorkshire & Humberside region. Full-time permanent contract. She has been teaching for 33 years, 28 years in her current post. She has taken early retirement.*

Anne worked for three years after leaving school before teacher training. She was “a bit bored working in an office” and “I had always wanted to be a teacher, but when I was at school I was told I couldn’t be a teacher”. In particular, “I just liked working with children and teaching and it was interesting and there was a lot going on during the day, you were working with other people during the day.” She has not had any breaks in her service since starting teaching. Her current school is on a housing estate with some social problems, but she enjoyed her time teaching there. “Most of the parents were supportive and the children were lovely, always willing to learn, always willing to try and they were grateful for anything you did for them.”

Anne gave government initiatives and workload, and the way in which they had impacted on her autonomy as a teacher, as the major reasons for leaving. “I think it was the curriculum and I have said what kind of school it was, but I couldn’t cope with this one thing for an hour and then something else. You never seemed to get anything finished. I wasn’t happy with the target setting by the Government and by the Authority. We had always set our own targets and we knew the children thoroughly, so I wasn’t happy about that”.

The pressures had diminished her enjoyment of teaching, “I didn’t feel I was doing my job properly any more and I wasn’t as enthusiastic about it as I used to be. And I didn’t feel that I was using my initiative as I used to do. It was too set that you had to do this, and then that and then something else. It lost its spontaneity.” “The target setting and the after school bureaucracy really just added to the stress and you felt that you couldn’t function properly during the day.” This was within the context of LEA reorganisation meaning that “a higher percentage of poorly behaved children moved into the area”. Consequently, “I think it is a shame because I like being with the children. I think it was other circumstances rather than the children – apart from coping with them which was getting to take more and more of the time – rather than the teaching side because they were really lovely children.”

Since leaving her school: “I am just relaxing at the moment, but I think in winter I should probably get a part-time job.” She was unsure about the type of employment she would take, “I would like to work with computers or something like that but I am not qualified for that.” Consequently, she anticipated, “I will do a bit of supply teaching, probably near where I live.” This was because, “you don’t have staff meetings, after school work and locally I would be in a different area to the kind that the school was in”.

## Box 7.2: New Challenge

*Bill, aged 45-49, physics teacher and head of science in 11-18 comprehensive school in the North West, full-time permanent contract. Leaving to take up a two year post as a KS3 consultant/science advisor in East of England. Teaching for 18 years, 5 years in his current school.*

Bill had family members who were teachers and attributes becoming a teacher to this. He had one four-year break in service when he worked in software sales before returning to teaching. He was attracted to teaching because he enjoyed working with young people and being “someone who could teach others to do things.”

Bill still enjoys those aspects of the post but is leaving for a two-year post as a KS3 consultant/science advisor: “I will be going to schools who are lower performing in the county and I know I can make a difference there. It sounds very arrogant probably, but I strongly believe I can make a difference in those schools and I like that type of student. But if I go to a top-performing school I probably won’t like that... In September of this year we need to implement the national strategy for science in Key Stage 3. It is my job to train the teachers for their continuous professional development, go into their schools and help them out with the teaching, and support strategies to improve the overall performance of the county.”

This is a positive move out of teaching: “I have been teaching for 18 years and I think this is perhaps a moment to share my experience with someone else.” “I am in close contact with schools and students and teachers and that is what I like about it.” “I wasn’t bored with my job. I bought the *TES* every week to keep up to date with my literature and I just flicked through it and thought, hey, a good job, and one of my colleagues had been in a pilot scheme. I began to think about it more and more.” Family reasons also made a relocation desirable.

While Bill was sad to be leaving the school, his feelings about leaving teaching were more mixed: “I said to myself if I don’t like teaching anymore I should stop. I never thought that when I applied for this job that I would be so relieved not to teach for a while.” “I think it is the routine that you get into. There is a routine as a head of department, there is a routine as a teacher, you have the same books every year, you teach the same things every year and you must not trap yourself into the situation that you keep telling the same jokes every year.”

The Key Stage 3 post is fixed-term. “Within the national strategy, the first milestone is 2004, so my job is secure for two years. What happens afterwards has to be seen, but the expectancy in the country is that this will continue until at least 2007.” “I don’t shy away from teaching that is my job and that is the way I am – I am a teacher and I like doing that. So I would not say never again.”

### Box 7.3: School (Pupil Behaviour)

*Carole, 40-44, business studies teacher in 11-16 comprehensive, in the West Midlands, full-time permanent contract. Leaving to work with gifted pupils from inner city schools. Teaching for 11 years, five of those at her current school.*

Carole qualified as a mature student after previously being employed in secretarial work. She is now leaving to work with gifted pupils from inner city schools. She had been planning to leave teaching for a while, although, "I have to say that I handed in my notice before that [the job] came along so I did not leave to go to this job, I was leaving just to get out." There were a number of reasons for this, but, "I think it is just down to pupil behaviour. I think I could have probably put up with the workload, but you get yourself in front of a classroom of 30 kids who if they decide they don't want to work, they don't work, or you get one or two pupils who are just going to have a stand up argument with you every time and the possibility of physical violence. All that just rubs and eats away at anybody."

Carole blames this in part on the way the school is run: "It has a very weak management style which comes from the top down. The kids do not all seem to have very positive attitudes towards education." In particular, she highlights inconsistencies within the school towards discipline: "OK, it is not always going to be positive in the classroom. But if you have got a way of dealing with that very quickly, and a situation is diffused, and you can get on with teaching then that is fine, but now it is not the case." "It slips. Uniforms for the first couple of weeks and then it slips and the kids are allowed to get away with a few things and that reflects into the classroom which makes it very tough." "Very often there have been incidents of actual physical violence on teachers, definitely verbal abuse to teachers. The kids are not always disciplined in the same way and are sometimes back in school the next day pretty much. It is frustrating for the teachers as they are trying to discipline these kids and the kids are saying, 'yeah go on then, try it, it won't work'. In the end it wears you down."

"It is a very lonely place to be when you have got kids verbally abusing you and even the possibility of a physical attack upon you, and knowing that there may not be any discipline taken out on these children. You, therefore, compromise yourself and back off in situations where you could have been firmer. So it is a knock on effect of basically being worn away and the positive feeling you have of yourself just goes." The problems associated with management had led to action among teachers at the school: "We even brought in the regional bloke of the unions to try and improve on communications, but I have to say the buck stops at the top and she doesn't listen. In the end, staff just drift away and you don't get full staff presence at meetings."

Carole's attitude is: "If you cannot have a positive time in the classroom why the hell stay in teaching?" Consequently, she is looking forward to her new post, "I have never felt so happy which is quite sad in a way."

#### **Box 7.4: School (Management Style)**

*Doreen, 45-49, classroom teacher in an infants' school (4-7) in the South East. Full-time permanent contract. Leaving to supply teach and seek work in an independent school. Has been teaching for one year.*

Doreen ran a Montessori school and then decided to do a part-time BEd to qualify as a teacher: "I always wanted to teach. It was always something I wanted to do." This was her first post and her induction year. She felt, firstly, that she had not gained the correct impression of the school at the interview. "I went for an interview and I liked what I heard and there were all the things I believed in and everything else. But when you start a job you don't really know what it is all about until you are actually there. Sadly, what they said was totally different to how it was and I just could not be part of it." Secondly, she was disappointed at the lack of support she received as an NQT: "To be honest I got absolutely no support through my induction year. I met with my mentor once a term and the head once a term. I know that is flattery to me, because they both said every time, 'you don't need to be monitored you are an excellent teacher, la de da de da', but to me it wasn't satisfactory. The feedback was minimal, the mentoring was minimal, and apparently that was acceptable because when I went to the LEA and voiced my concern they said, 'it's all right, you did all right, you are very good'. I was really amazed because here is the Government paying all this money towards the school for me in my progression and there I got absolutely nothing".

Doreen felt that both these factors were compounded by the attitude of the head teacher: "It was a very hostile environment. The atmosphere was unbearable. The head teacher would shove something in my hand and say sign that, no good morning, no good evening, nothing. It was quite appalling and when I was treated like this I thought this isn't right – but I was not the only member of staff." The management was, "autocratic, there was no freedom to express yourself and, if you did, you were actually ignored or worse put in Coventry for having an opinion." The other staff "were very influenced by the head. If you were flavour of the month they would acknowledge you and speak to you, but if you weren't in her good books they kept away from you. It was that kind of atmosphere. She really was very powerful in the way she used them." "I can appreciate the pressure of her job, but heads must have management skills."

Despite this she did feel sad at leaving the school, "I had a super year, lovely parents, lovely children, but I could not do another year with the atmosphere and the lack of support. It would have affected my teaching. I really felt it would." "I love teaching, absolutely love it. I was just unfortunate with the school in which I was doing my induction year."

Doreen now intends to explore her options: "I am definitely doing supply work to just make sure that I am not judging all state schools the same. My aim though is to move into the private sector." If she were to return to full-time teaching in the maintained sector, "It would have to be a supportive and a transparent school."

### Box 7.5: Salary

*Edward, under 25, music teacher in 11-16 comprehensive school in Outer London. Full-time permanent contract. Leaving to teach at an independent girls' school. Has been teaching for three years in total, all at the same school.*

Edward went straight from school to university, to teacher training and then teaching. However, as a student he also gained experience in opera and theatre production. Teaching was an alternative to working in the less secure music industry. "I fell into it. My mum is a French teacher and I knew that I was pretty good with kids." Although doubtful he went with what he knew. "At first I was not really wanting to do it and now after three years there is nothing else that I want to do". At his present school, he teaches music, French and drama. He also runs the extra-curricular activities in music, including orchestras, choirs, music technology and lighting for school shows. He has enjoyed working at the school, "I am going to miss the kids and there is a very good community atmosphere at the school."

Edward is leaving to go to an independent girls' school. Salary was a major factor affecting this decision: "I am going to be director of music at the school. At present, I am doing a director of music job, but not being paid for it – just a management point. It's a full-time permanent post, but in the private sector you are on probation for two years in order to see if you are right for a job. But I am going to take the gamble because I am going up from £22K to £30K a year. It is a very big hike in salary and it is the only way to afford to buy a house around here."

"I am getting married this year and we wanted a house, but the salary wasn't good enough. I could have earned more not being a teacher, but I didn't want to do that so I just trawled around and looked at the schools that were able to offer a salary. A lot of the other staff are saying I have sold out."

There was also a feeling of the salary reflecting a teachers worth and of being undervalued in the state sector: "They value certain things in the state sector – they value maths, English and science and they will pay any number of recruitment and retention points to keep people there. But those of us in the creative arts, we feel that our subjects are undervalued." "The governors at the school will want to know why there isn't a production next year and yet they seem not to realise that if you don't pay people enough then you are going to lose them."

Edward does not anticipate a return to the state maintained sector: "I wouldn't be able to return to the state sector for the same amount of money that I was being paid. Hopefully, if I pass my two years probation, the salary will increase – it can't go down. For me to get that kind of salary in a state school, I would need to be doing some kind of management role like deputy head. To be honest I hate paperwork and I don't really intend doing that – I want to be concentrating on the job which I am good at which is teaching music."

### **Box 7.6: Personal Circumstances (Children)**

*Fiona, 25-29, classroom teacher in a first school in the South East, full-time permanent contract. Leaving to care for her children. Been teaching for five years, the last two in her current school.*

Fiona was attracted to teaching because of “working with children. I think I had known for a long time that that was what I wanted to do. I had no doubt about that.” She has two young children, aged three and five, the eldest of which is at school. Although she has previously worked on a job share she was now working full-time.

Fiona is leaving teaching to care for her children: “It is quite complex really because although it was a very heavy workload I didn’t really mind it because I loved my job. But it just wasn’t fair on my family and my own children. If I didn’t have children then I would have stayed.” “They have to take second place to the job.” “I thought I am never there. I am never there at the end of the school day to hear how they have got on.”

The lack of flexibility in hours of work was the principal factor. “I have heard people say that teaching is the ideal job when you have got your own children, but it is not.” Yes, you get the same holidays as your children, but you work such long hours and also that there is no flexibility there. I can never rearrange my working hours so that I can take my daughter to school which sometimes I would have loved to have done. I felt I was really missing out on all of that, getting to know the people at her school.”

Fiona did consider returning to job share as the solution, “and the head was very supportive, she always is. She said that she absolutely understood and that she didn’t want to lose me and that would be fine by her, but she would have to run it past the governors. They said no.” “If they had agreed it would have been four job shares in a school of seven classes, and I do appreciate that this is rather a lot. But I did feel it was rather unfair for them to just say no.” “I would also add that it was only two governors that made that decision, the chair and the deputy chair and neither of them have ever spoken to me in the time that I have been at the school. The governors that I do know were not involved in the decision.”

Fiona then considered supply work, but was unable to find the necessary child care. Salary is a factor in this. “We moved here from Devon and my husband’s salary was increased by about £10,000 to account for the difference in costs. We weren’t any better off, but it helped us to get a house. My salary didn’t change, it was exactly the same.” “Teacher’s pay was a factor in why I have left because I love my job and my husband doesn’t love his in the same way. He would have been willing to be the one who stayed at home, if we could have managed that financially but we couldn’t.” Consequently, she is now anticipating devoting herself full-time to her family and home in the foreseeable future.

### Box 7.7: Personal Circumstances (Travel)

*Geraldine, 25-29, classroom teacher in a primary school in the East Midlands, full-time permanent contract. Intending to travel and teach abroad. She has been teaching for four years, two years in her current school.*

Geraldine had a year's break between university and teacher training whilst she applied for a PGCE place, working in an activity centre for children. She had always been interested in teaching. "When I was in the sixth form the teachers suggested that I did a degree and then, if I wanted, a PGCE, because it was more flexible. "I like working with the children and it is really nice to see them developing, and things that you have shown them or helped them with they can achieve. Every day is completely different, there is no day the same. I do really enjoy it."

Geraldine still enjoys teaching, but has decided to take some time out to travel and teach abroad. "It is something I have wanted to do for quite a while, but doing say two years was just a bit too long. Nepal is good because I am only going for three months. I think we are teaching seven to 14-year-olds English as a second language. It is voluntary so I am not getting paid for it. I am mixing it in with some trekking, a sort of working holiday. I am going with my friend, who also teaches and who I did PGCE with. We both want some time out before it gets too expensive. I found it on the internet, and we won't know what it is like until we get there."

"I was really sad when I left the school, but it was quite exciting not to have a job at the end of it. The parents were fantastic. They were totally and completely supportive and most of them wanted to come! I think I might have stayed for another year had I not wanted to go to Nepal. It was just that the time was right."

The head was supportive as well. "She offered to let me do it as a secondment coming back in January, which I didn't feel was perhaps in my best interests or the children's really. She did ask me to stay and not to go. The other members of staff were also very supportive about my decision. Obviously, there couldn't be a financial incentive to stay because that wouldn't be fair on the others, and I wouldn't have expected that." "It wasn't a huge surprise to the head because she did know that it was something that I had thought about, but I think she was hoping that I would stay. Realistically though she wouldn't have expected me to stay more than another year, because if you want promotion and want senior management then you would just have to leave. She was aware of that. But that is a problem with a small school."

Geraldine is expecting to return to teaching in the maintained sector, although is keeping her options open. "When I get back I probably will go into teaching. If something came up, I might not. I would go for a bigger school." She will also look for "something like an environmental education officer or an education officer for a charity - still working with children but in a different way. I realise that the pay for things like that is not particularly great and they don't come up very often. I think everybody goes through wanting to get out."

## Factors in Decisions

- 7.11 The five factors enable us to examine in detail whether the main underlying reasons for going were similar across all sub-groups, or whether one-way analysis of variance would reveal significant differences.

### Phase

- 7.12 As might be inferred from Tables 7.1 and 7.2, there were some differences with phase. Table 7.4 shows that secondary teachers were more likely to leave because of the school situation (pupil behaviour contributes here) and, along with middle school teachers, for reasons of salary. Middle school teachers, it seems, were the most likely to be looking for a new challenge.

**Table 7.4: Reasons for Leaving by Phase**

Phase <sup>1</sup>	Factor Scores				
	Workload	Challenge	School	Salary	Personal
Primary	4.40	2.91	2.67	1.91	3.21
Middle	3.68	4.05	3.27	2.55	3.64
Secondary	4.14	3.52	3.66	2.23	3.36
Special	4.11	3.89	1.95	1.95	3.32
ANOVA	not significant	F=9.3, df=3, P<0.001	F=27.8, df=3, P<0.001	F=4.4, df=3, P<0.005	not significant

1.Primary (N=480), Middle (N=22), Secondary (N=530), Special (N=19).

### Region

- 7.13 There were differences with region on three of the factors. The most interesting is salary. Table 7.5 shows this was rated most strongly in London which has the highest turnover and wastage rates. Inner London teachers were also the most likely to move on looking for a new challenge, while this rated low in Yorkshire and Humberside. Workload seemed to be especially an issue in the West Midlands, but less so in the North East.

**Table 7.5: Reasons for Leaving by Region**

Region	Factor Scores				
	Workload	Challenge	School	Salary	Personal
North East	3.64	3.79	3.33	2.23	3.10
North West	3.98	3.17	2.96	2.24	3.14
Yorks & Humb	4.27	2.70	3.39	1.60	3.04
East Midlands	4.33	3.19	3.22	1.75	3.31
West Midlands	4.87	3.62	3.51	2.14	3.38
East of England	4.47	3.29	3.08	2.03	3.42
Inner London	3.74	3.85	2.72	2.34	3.59
Outer London	3.96	3.36	3.14	2.62	3.43
South East	4.32	3.10	3.31	2.10	3.30
South West	4.22	3.26	3.10	2.04	3.23
ANOVA	F=2.5, df=9, P<0.01	F=2.2, df=9, P<0.05	not significant	F=3.6, df=9, P<0.001	not significant

### ***Contract***

7.14 There were also differences with contract. Table 7.6 shows that it was the permanent teachers who were most likely to leave because of workload (presumably because of their extra responsibilities) and the full-time teachers who were most likely to leave for salary reasons. In addition, the full-time permanent teachers were similarly emphatic about ‘new challenge’ and ‘personal circumstances’.

**Table 7.6: Reasons for Leaving by Contract<sup>1</sup>**

<b>Contract</b>	<b>Factor Scores</b>				
	<b>Workload</b>	<b>Challenge</b>	<b>School</b>	<b>Salary</b>	<b>Personal</b>
FT Permanent	4.42	3.46	3.20	2.16	3.30
FT Fixed-Term	3.51	2.75	2.92	2.17	3.06
PT Permanent	4.13	2.80	3.36	1.84	3.09
FT Fixed-Term	3.82	3.04	2.71	1.76	3.00
ANOVA	F=7.4, df=3, P<0.001	F=7.1, df=3, P<0.001	not significant	F=2.6, df=3, P<0.05	F=2.8, df=3, P<0.05

1. FTP (N=740), FTFT (N=108), PTP (N=140), PTFT (N=55).

7.15 In view of the differences with contract, we have concentrated in subsequent analyses on the 740 leavers from full-time permanent posts, so as to compare like with like. We examine whether reasons for leaving vary with gender, age, length of service, ethnic background, qualification, subject and likelihood of returning to teach full-time.

### ***Gender***

7.16 There were some differences in the reasons for leaving with gender. Table 7.7 shows that male teachers were more likely to resign because of school factors, and female teachers for personal reasons.

**Table 7.7: Reasons for Leaving by Gender<sup>1</sup>**

<b>Gender</b>	<b>Factor Scores</b>				
	<b>Workload</b>	<b>Challenge</b>	<b>School</b>	<b>Salary</b>	<b>Personal</b>
Female	4.43	3.44	3.08	2.17	3.51
Male	4.42	3.53	3.50	2.15	3.18
ANOVA	not significant	not significant	F=7.6, df=1, P<0.01	not significant	F=5.9, df=1, P<0.05

1. Female (N=511), Male (N=224).

### ***Age***

7.17 The reasons for leaving by age are revealing. Table 7.8 brings out the progression across the age groups. The older teachers were more likely to go because of workload and the younger ones because of salary. The younger teachers were also more likely to resign for a new challenge and personal reasons (which includes travel). Only the school situation itself was not significantly linked to age.

**Table 7.8: Reasons for Leaving by Age<sup>1</sup>**

Age	Factor Scores				
	Workload	Challenge	School	Salary	Personal
Under 30	4.08	3.98	3.26	2.83	4.22
30-49	4.28	3.94	3.32	2.39	3.38
50 or over	4.81	2.50	3.00	1.42	2.88
ANOVA	F=8.2, df=2, P<0.001	F=45.1, df=2, P<0.001	not significant	F=54.3, df=2, P<0.001	F=33.6, df=2, P<0.001

1. Under 30 (N=170), 30-49 (N=317), 50 and over (N=253).

### *Years Teaching*

7.18 The pattern for years teaching follows that for age, but does not replicate it, because many train to be teachers later in life. There were significant differences on all factors. Table 7.9 shows that, as with age, it is the longest serving teachers who are most likely to go because of workload, and the most recent entrants who resign for reasons of salary, new challenge and personal circumstances. In addition, the analysis reveals that it is those with 6-15 years service who are most likely to become discontented by their school situation.

**Table 7.9: Reasons for Leaving by Years Teaching<sup>1</sup>**

Years Teaching	Factor Scores				
	Workload	Challenge	School	Salary	Personal
1-5	3.97	3.88	3.30	2.80	3.85
6-15	4.49	3.84	3.49	2.37	3.56
16-25	4.46	3.64	3.21	1.99	3.18
26+	4.79	2.50	2.81	1.39	2.94
ANOVA	F=5.9, df=3, P<0.001	F=20.5, df=3, P<0.001	F=4.4, df=3 P<0.05	F=32.4, df=3, P<0.001	F=11.0, df=3, P<0.001

1. 1-5 (N=208), 6-15 (N=209), 16-25 (N=129) and 26 and over (N=194).

### *Post*

7.19 The reasons for resigning also varied with post as we can see in Table 7.10.

**Table 7.10: Reasons for Leaving by Post<sup>1</sup>**

Post	Factor Scores				
	Workload	Challenge	School	Salary	Personal
Main Pay Scale	4.27	3.69	3.34	2.44	3.73
Upper Scale	4.92	3.38	3.52	1.85	3.02
Advanced Skills	3.25	4.13	2.28	2.75	3.50
Other Senior	3.10	3.00	2.90	1.70	2.80
Deputy Head	4.60	2.96	2.43	1.74	3.21
Head Teacher	3.67	2.98	1.60	1.46	2.83
ANOVA	F=5.2, df=5, P<0.001	F=2.3, df=5, P<0.05	F=8.1, df=5, P<0.001	F=7.4, df=5, P<0.001	F=5.1, df=5, P<0.001

1. Main pay scale (N=400), upper pay scale (N=224), AST (N=8), other senior teacher (N=10), deputy/assistant headteacher (N=47), headteacher (N=48).

7.20 Deputy heads and those on the upper pay scale were the most likely to go because of workload. It was the advanced skills teachers who most wanted a new challenge. Headteachers, not surprisingly, were the least likely to leave because of the way the school is run. Salary was an important consideration for teachers on the main scale, but not headteachers, other senior management or those on the upper pay scale. Teachers on the main pay scale were also the most likely to go for personal reasons.

### **Qualification**

7.21 Table 7.11 shows that the reasons for leaving varied with qualification. This, in part, stems from their history. The teacher's certificate was principally a route into teaching in secondary modern schools and it was phased out from 1980. It is perhaps no surprise, therefore, that as with age and years teaching, it was the certificated teachers who were most likely to go because of workload. The PGCE has increasingly become the method of qualifying and proportionally more of the holders are new to teaching and young. The PGCE-qualified were the most likely to resign for a new challenge, for reasons of salary and personal circumstances. In addition, those holding a PGCE were also more likely to go because of the school situation.

**Table 7.11: Reasons for Leaving by Teaching Qualification<sup>1</sup>**

<b>Teaching Qualification</b>	<b>Workload</b>	<b>Challenge</b>	<b>Factor Scores School</b>	<b>Salary</b>	<b>Personal</b>
PGCE	4.36	3.77	3.44	2.33	3.57
BEEd	4.32	3.56	3.01	2.28	3.18
Certificate	4.94	2.79	2.83	1.67	3.06
ANOVA	F=17.3, df=2, P<0.001	F=23.1, df=2, P<0.001	F=8.1, df=2, P<0.005	F=21.9, df=2, P<0.001	F=8.3, df=2, P<0.005

1. PGCE (N=365), BEEd (N=136), Certificate (N=179).

### **Reasons and Destinations**

7.22 The reasons for leaving were closely associated with where the teacher was going. Table 7.12 shows that highly significant differences emerged on all five factors. In each case, the three destinations for which the reason was most important and the three for which it was least important have been highlighted.

7.23 Those attaching most weight to workload were likely to be aiming for other employment, taking early retirement or were not sure what to do. This is consistent with some finding teaching so onerous they simply wanted to get out without regard to what they would be doing next. Those least concerned about workload were those moving on to another post in education outside the classroom or leaving to care for the family.

7.24 The prospect of a new challenge tended to be most important for those going on to another education post, engaging in further study or taking a teaching post abroad. It was unimportant to those retiring or going on to supply teaching. The schools situation (including pupil behaviour) was important among those moving on to teach in an independent school or higher education, or who were not sure. It was

unimportant to those leaving for family care, overseas teachers returning home, or those taking education posts outside the classroom.

**Table 7.12: Reasons for Leaving by Destination**

Destination	Workload	Challenge	Factor Scores <sup>1</sup>		
			School	Salary	Personal
Supply Teaching	4.71	<b>2.65</b>	3.35	<b>1.65</b>	3.30
Independent School	4.48	4.49	<b>4.12</b>	<b>3.03</b>	<b>2.78</b>
Teaching Abroad	3.80	<b>4.78</b>	3.06	2.84	<b>5.14</b>
Lecturing in FE	4.60	4.60	3.40	2.00	<b>2.60</b>
Lecturing in HE	4.38	3.50	<b>4.38</b>	2.88	2.63
Other Education	<b>3.56</b>	<b>5.18</b>	<b>2.78</b>	<b>3.03</b>	2.88
Other Employment	<b>5.54</b>	4.33	3.98	2.58	3.19
Own Business	4.56	3.56	4.00	1.89	3.11
Further Study	4.86	<b>5.14</b>	3.86	<b>3.00</b>	3.43
Family Care	<b>3.79</b>	2.28	<b>2.10</b>	1.59	3.48
Travel	3.91	3.46	3.00	1.88	<b>5.35</b>
Ill-Health Retirement	3.93	<b>1.24</b>	2.48	<b>1.24</b>	<b>2.48</b>
Early Retirement	<b>5.02</b>	<b>2.09</b>	2.62	<b>1.33</b>	3.02
Not Sure	<b>5.05</b>	2.43	<b>4.16</b>	<b>1.83</b>	3.02
Returning Home	4.00	2.25	<b>2.00</b>	2.75	<b>3.63</b>
Other	<b>3.76</b>	4.42	3.65	2.24	3.18
ANOVA	F=5.2, df=15 P<0.001	F=26.6, df=15 P<0.001	F=6.0, df=15 P<0.001	F=11.1, df=15 P<0.001	F=11.1, df=15 P<0.001

1. On each factor, the three highest scores are shown in bold, and the three lowest in italics.

- 7.25 Although salary was not a reason that was stressed by the leavers, it was a factor in the decisions of those moving to independent schools, those taking education posts outside the classroom and those engaging in retraining. It was unimportant again to those retiring or turning to supply teaching.
- 7.26 Personal circumstances which includes travel as one of the items is the most important factor for those intending to travel or teach abroad, which at the very least is pleasing from the point of view of validity. It was also important for overseas teachers returning home. At the other end of the scale were those taking ill-health retirement, those going on to lecture in further education and those moving to teach in UK independent schools.
- 7.27 Among the various destinations those leaving the classroom to take other education posts such as advisors were the most distinctive, high on new challenge and salary and low on workload and the school situation. Those going to supply teaching were mainly concerned about the workload, and not much bothered by a new challenge or salary. Those going to independent schools seem to have been motivated by salary and the situation at the school they were leaving. The teachers planning further study emphasized challenge and salary, but also gave weight to workload, the school situation and personal circumstances. Those taking early retirement were going mainly because of workload, and salary and a new challenge were unimportant to

them. Those who were not sure what they would be doing were similar, but also seem to have been prompted by the school situation.

### **Influencing to Stay**

7.28 Could anything have induced the leavers to stay? In over two-fifths of the cases, it appears nothing. Four hundred and forty (43.1 per cent) of the 1,021 leavers from primary and secondary schools responded to an open ended question with a firm rejection. The other 57 per cent did, however, identify changes that would have encouraged them to remain in teaching. These have been classified in Table 7.13.

**Table 7.13. Possible Inducements**

Change	Per Cent 'Yes'		Total <sup>2</sup>
	Primary	Secondary <sup>1</sup>	
Reduced Workload/ Government Initiatives	55.2	33.7	43.0
Way School Run	21.8	40.2	32.2
Salary	21.4	26.4	24.3
Improved Pupil Behaviour	3.6	17.9	11.8
More Flexible Hours/Conditions	10.5	8.8	9.5
Changed Personal Circumstances	8.9	4.9	6.6
More Valued by Society/Parents	3.6	4.9	4.3
Other <sup>3</sup>	6.0	5.1	5.6
Total Number	248	329	577

1. Including middle deemed secondary

2. Does not include special schools.

3. Recognition of overseas qualification, if new job falls through, suitable contract becomes available, new climate of education, LEA more aware of situation in schools, enhanced pension, part-time and job shares, have access to higher salary scales

7.29 In many ways the improvements that were looked for are the obverse of the reasons for leaving. Reduced workload, a better school situation and improved pupil behaviour all featured. As in the reasons for going, workload was more important for primary leavers and the way the school is run and pupil behaviour for secondary leavers.

7.30 The responses on salary, however, are an interesting contrast. Somewhat surprisingly salary came well down the list reasons for leaving. But in terms of staying an improved salary was put forward by a quarter of those who might have stayed, the third most frequently mentioned desirable change. Thus while salary may not be much of a push factor in the sense that other reasons loomed larger in the decision to go, it would look to be a pull factor in potentially inducing some of those who could be encouraged to stay to put up with other hassles.

### **Resumé**

7.31 Overall, workload, government initiatives and stress were the main reasons for leaving classroom teaching in maintained schools. Leavers from secondary schools were much more likely to cite pupil behaviour than those from primary schools.

Five factors were found to underpin most of the variation: workload, new challenge, school, salary and personal. The pen portraits in Boxes 7.1 to 7.7 show how these can interact in influencing particular decisions.

- 7.32 Those leaving schools in London were the most likely to put forward salary, new challenge and personal circumstances (including desire to travel) as the reasons for moving on. Older teachers were more likely to leave because of workload, and younger teachers for salary. Women were more likely to go for personal reasons and men because of the school situation. Certificated teachers (who are necessarily older) were more likely to leave because of workload, and the PGCE-qualified for reasons of salary and a new challenge. No links were found with ethnic minority background or subject.
- 7.33 Particular combinations of reasons were found to be associated with particular destinations. Among the most distinctive were those going to other education posts (high on challenge and salary, low on workload and school situation), independent schools (high on school and salary, low on personal), teaching abroad (challenge, personal), other employment (workload), further study (challenge, salary), early retirement (high workload, low challenge, salary). Those who were not sure what they were going to do were leaving mainly because of workload and the school situation, and salary was unimportant.
- 7.34 Asked if anything would have induced them to stay, over two-fifths of the leavers intimated “absolutely nothing”. Of those who might have been encouraged to stay, leavers from primary schools were most likely to mention a reduced workload and leavers from secondary schools improvements in the way the school is run and better pupil behaviour. Salary, while not a major reason for going, would, if significantly improved, have tempted some to think again.

## 8. Likelihood of Returning

8.1 We have considered the various reasons why teachers are resigning in some detail. How likely are they to return and how far does this depend on their reasons for going, their circumstances and where they are going? We can address these questions through our leavers' questionnaire. Respondents were asked to indicate on five-point scales how likely they were to return to teaching in state schools, as full-time, part-time or supply teachers. Table 8.1 shows the overall pattern of responses. As far as full-time and part-time contracts were concerned nearly half thought it 'very unlikely' they would return. Only 13 per cent thought it very likely they would return to teaching full-time and 7 per cent part-time. But nearly a quarter indicated that it was very likely that they would turn to supply teaching.

**Table 8.1 Per Cent Likelihood of Return**

Return?	Very Likely	Likely	Perhaps	Unlikely	Very Unlikely
Full-Time (N=1,011)	13.1	6.1	19.7	11.9	49.3
Part-Time (N=958)	7.4	6.5	21.0	14.6	49.5
Supply (N=989)	23.8	9.1	20.0	8.8	38.3

### Type of Contract

8.2 It is to be expected that the likelihood of returning on a particular kind of contract would be related to the type of contract relinquished, and Table 8.2 shows that this is indeed the case. Those most likely to return to teach full-time are those who have come to the end of full-time fixed-term contracts, some of whom may not have wanted to leave. Those who held part-time contracts were the most likely to return to part-time contracts, particularly if it had been fixed-term. Those on fixed-term contracts were also the most likely to think it very likely they would do supply – presumably, in some cases, to tide them over until another contract came along.

**Table 8.2: Likelihood of Return by Type of Contract**

Contract	Per Cent <sup>1</sup> Very Likely to Return to		
	Full-Time	Part-Time	Supply
FT Permanent	12.7	5.5	20.7
FT Fixed-Term	26.0	9.6	36.4
PT Permanent	4.6	12.0	23.4
PT Fixed-Term	14.0	16.0	39.6
Total	13.1	7.4	23.7

1. Percentages within type of contract, total respondents; return to full-time, N=1,008, return to part-time, N=951, return to supply N=983.

### Age and Gender

8.3 We have seen in Chapter 6 (Tables 6.8 and 6.9) that about half the leavers are aged under 40 and female teachers are the more likely to leave. It has been speculated that this may be connected with their roles in childbearing and child-raising. This

leads to the question: are young women leavers more likely to return? Table 8.3 suggests they are – but not to full-time permanent contracts.

**Table 8.3 Per Cent Likelihood of Return of Leavers under 40 by Gender**

Return?	Full-Time		Part-Time		Supply	
	Female	Male	Female	Male	Female	Male
Very Likely	21.4	17.6	8.1	3.2	24.1	20.8
Likely	9.3	10.8	10.0	6.5	10.1	5.2
Perhaps	25.6	28.4	24.2	15.1	21.9	17.7
Unlikely	13.2	16.7	19.4	12.9	12.6	8.3
Very Unlikely	30.5	26.5	38.3	62.4	31.2	47.9
Cases	387	102	360	93	365	96
Chi-squared	2.15, df=4, not signif		17.81, df=4, P<0.001		10.29, df=4, P<0.05	

- 8.4 Comparing Tables 8.3 and 8.1 we can see that leavers under 40 were more likely to think they would return to full-time teaching than all leavers. Nevertheless, about 30 per cent considered it very unlikely that they would return. As far as return to full-time teaching was concerned there was no difference between the sexes.
- 8.5 But Table 8.3 also shows that female leavers were significantly more likely than male leavers to think it likely that they would return to teach part-time or to supply. This it may be inferred is likely to be due to the greater demands on them to juggle work and family commitments.

### Pen Portraits

- 8.6 Behind these generalisations, as we can see in Boxes 8.1 to 8.5, lie some particular decisions. The first three leavers are very likely to return. Hilary has been teaching for just over five years and is leaving to be with her partner who has been relocated to Europe, and she fully expects to take a full-time teaching post when she comes back. Joyce has been teaching for eight years, but is giving up a full-time permanent contract to devote herself to bringing up two young children and studying for an MA. If she returns she thinks it will be part-time, “While I do enjoy the work...I don’t see it as important as it used to be since I became a mother”. Leonard has just resigned from his deputy headship after teaching for 32 years. He loves teaching, but has found the workload was getting too much for him. He has already returned to supply teaching and he has found it “quite an eye-opener”. “I teach, I leave.”
- 8.7 In contrast, neither Irene nor Ken expects to return. Irene in her early forties has left her full-time permanent post in a primary school after teaching for five and a half years to become a literacy consultant with a LEA. She is receiving a higher salary and “I work hard now, but as a teacher, even though I would be home by six o’clock, I would start marking again. It was just too much.” Ken, a physics teacher for 31 years, has the opportunity of joining a university research team and to study for a PhD. He had been unsettled at school and was planning to make a move when this exciting opportunity came up through a contact. “Having moved away from teaching to do something different, I do not think I will ever go back”.

### Box 8.1: Very Likely to Return Full-time

*Hilary, 25-29, English teacher in a voluntary aided, mixed, 11-18 comprehensive in Surrey, on a full-time, permanent contract. She has been teaching for just over five years, the last two in her current post. She is going to join her boyfriend whose company has temporarily re-located him to Europe. She fully expects to return to teaching full-time at the end of this period.*

After gaining a Scottish MA in Literature and a PGCE, Hilary's first post was in an East Midlands comprehensive. After three years she moved to her current school, where in addition to teaching English to A-level, she co-ordinates literacy. For this extra responsibility she gets half a management point. Hilary also teaches Key Skills and is a form tutor. Coming from a family of teachers - her mother is an SEN teacher - she attributes her decision to enter teaching as a mixture of parental advice, fondness for children and the autonomy of the classroom. "I like children. I seem to get on quite well with them. I like the idea that in one day you can go through the whole gamut of emotions. You are in control of situations and you are seen as a responsible person who gets respect and gives respect back. It is a very attractive and appealing situation to be in." However well prepared about what to expect as a full-time teacher she admits to still being shocked at the workload involved. "It was a big shock I would say - the amount of work outside of school hours."

Hilary is very praising of her school. "It has an excellent reputation. It is very caring and supportive of both the children and the staff. It has got great opportunities for staff to develop themselves. They are very good at mentoring. It is one of the things I was going to do. It is a very high profile thing. If I had children I would be very happy for them to go there. It is a lovely environment, but it is a very demanding school and they have got very high expectations of you. From the first impressions when I walked into the school it seemed a very happy friendly place where the teachers really do care about the kids." Although quite upset about leaving she has decided to join her boy friend, now working on the continent. She has secured a temporary post in an international school. By keeping in touch with her school in England she hopes a vacancy may be found for her on her return in eighteen months time. Her future plans include further academic study to widen her subject expertise to include linguistics and phonetics.

Her reasons for resigning are entirely positive – to join her boyfriend and the excitement of a new opportunity. She has no misgivings about returning to teaching. Although a recent Ofsted inspection left her with "a slightly bitter taste in the mouth. It was one of those short ones, which actually lasted a fortnight and gave you very little feedback. It was disappointing." Otherwise Hilary has enjoyed her job, especially co-ordinating literacy. "It is nice and fast paced. There is variety, it maintains your interest and the kids always respond differently". She is fully supportive of the strategy, but wishes "that they would stop messing around with education so that we can have some stability and get things sorted".

## Box 8.2: Very Likely to Return Part-Time

*Joyce, 30-34, art & design teacher in an 11-16 comprehensive school in the North West, on a full-time permanent contract. She has been teaching for eight years in total, all of which were spent in her current school. She is taking time out for family care and is also studying for an MA with the Open University.*

Joyce became a teacher because, "I thought I would enjoy working with younger people and passing on my art knowledge." She is leaving her current post because, "At the moment I feel as though I need a change of scenery. It is a very progressive department and people may wonder why I am leaving it. I feel that eight years in one place is enough. It is not as though I am down about teaching, I do really enjoy it. There are obviously days and weeks when you wonder why you are doing it, but for the majority of the time I do enjoy it."

"It is a very successful art department and is well known in the borough. The things we are involved in also look fantastic on paper. It is just the man hours; you do have to put extra time in." "The fact that this has been my only school is another reason for leaving. I am not interested in management within an art department, and that has brought me into doing an MA as well."

Joyce has had a year off previously: "I was going to hand in my notice but the head teacher said that if he gave me a year would I be willing to come back." "Coming back and seeing the school had gone downhill made my mind up."

Rather than finding another teaching post she is having a break to care for her two children and complete an MA, "I am in a privileged position in that my partner is earning enough to enable me to take a couple of years out. I have got a four and a half year old and a sixteen month old" "I didn't feel that I would be able to do that [MA] whilst working full-time and running a family. I am too tired. I also wanted to take some time out with my daughters while they are still young." "I am just looking forward to enjoying life without the hassle."

Despite this, Joyce does anticipate retaining some ties with the school: "I have felt really sad. I know that it is the best thing for me. I do feel quite loyal because it has been my only post. I will miss some of the staff, certainly the department. I could always go in and join in workshops."

In addition, she expects to return to teaching in the future and is using her time out to prepare for that. For example, her MA: "I am hoping to go through the SEN route to add another string to my bow and maybe move into that when I re-enter education." "I am hoping that my MA will open new doors."

But Joyce is more likely to return part-time than full-time. This is because, "While I do enjoy the work and the money and freedom that it gives you, I don't see it as important as it used to be since I became a mother."

### Box 8.3: Very Likely to Return Supply

*Leonard, 50-54, deputy head teacher in a primary school in Outer London, full-time permanent contract. He has been teaching for 32 years, 23 years at his current school. Having taken early retirement, he plans to remain in education through supply teaching.*

Leonard has mixed feelings on leaving the school. "If I'm perfectly honest I left because at this stage I didn't think I'd last to sixty." However, "I would have loved to have carried on and I liked teaching but towards the end, the last three or four years, I was just not enjoying it because there was always other things taking my time. You were so stressed out in the classroom." "The school was absolutely brilliant. But it's the overall workload on teachers, it's an understanding of the hours teachers have to do to get the work done, regardless of how good the head teacher is." "I think the senior management of the school need to be given the ability to manage their school and not to be impinged upon by the LEA so much or by government initiatives." His decision to leave was taken "really over a period of about two years, it was a gradual attrition and then it wasn't exactly a road to Damascus, but it was, you know, at some stage I thought, right, that's it."

Leonard has now decided to go on supply: "Basically I want to teach. I don't want to be hassled now. I don't want to be hassled with curriculum responsibilities, staff meeting, in-service training days which are an absolute waste of time, absolutely mind-boggling stuff, particularly with computers, I mean, such a waste of time. I want to be away from that." "I can do my work, teach, teach well, get my marking done, leave my notes for the teacher and walk out and think, 'I've worked hard today. I've really enjoyed it. I've given something to the children, and hopefully they've taken it in and I've done a service to the school but that's it.'"

This also allows Leonard to be more flexible. First, in the number of days he works: "I'm hoping to get two or three days a week." Secondly, in the schools he works in: "To be honest I think I've put the years in and now I can afford to be choosy, in some senses I've served my time." "I wouldn't want it in a particularly challenging school. Although in some ways my expertise lies there. I have been in a school for the last three days where the problem child would be pretty average in the school I taught at. Basically I taught for 99.9 per cent of the time in the three days of supply I've done, whereas at my last post I'd have probably taught 75 per cent of the time - and 25 per cent was dealing with social and emotional difficulties. I'm not knocking it, but it's incredibly stressful."

So far Leonard feels that he has made the right decision: "I actually do not regret it one little bit." "I've just started supply. I've just done my first three days and it's been an eye-opener. The fact that I can get all my marking done and I can be out by quarter to four, it's been quite an eye-opener. It's a nice easy school to break into, mind you, but it's lovely. I teach, I leave."

#### **Box 8.4: Very Unlikely to Return (Workload and Salary)**

*Irene, 40-44, classroom teacher in a primary school in the North East, full-time permanent contract. She has been teaching for five and a half years in total, all at the same school. She is leaving to become an LEA primary literacy consultant.*

Irene went to university as a mature student, prompted by a divorce. She was the literacy consultant at her school, the chance for early responsibility being one of the main incentives to take the post. She is now moving on to become an LEA primary literacy consultant. Her son is now eighteen so she no longer needs the school holidays that a teaching post allowed her. In addition, "Our head teacher is very keen on people reaching their potential. She encourages people to develop themselves so people move on." However, she was becoming unhappy with the teaching profession: "The post came along at the right time. I've been increasingly dissatisfied with teaching in general. And this is not the school and it's not particularly the head. It's just the general kind of atmosphere, it's the lack of respect, the relatively low wages, the pressure, the paperwork and the accountability, and the attitude of parents. Over the last couple of years I've found it harder to do the job and enjoy it. Not because of the actual teaching, I love teaching, I love it. But it's the bureaucracy, more than anything."

Irene's new post involves, "taking national targets and fitting them into local targets, observing in schools, identifying needs, basically providing training, either at the professional development centre or in the school, and then monitoring the effectiveness of that, providing support for schools." "I feel quite torn. I mean, professionally, obviously, it's a big step up for me. I sort of fell into the job almost, because there is, in [the LEA], a programme which was created, called 'literacy associates', where they identified, I suppose, strong teachers, strong co-ordinators, who could enhance their programme. I'd been invited to do that, so a lot of the aspects of the job that I will be doing, I've already had a taste of. When the post came up, it just seemed sensible to go for it. As with any job, it's a number of factors, isn't it?"

Salary was also important: "I think that perhaps the basic salary for a teacher is not too bad, but when you take on areas of responsibility, I think there should be additions." "You want to do your best in the job, because that's your nature, you're all into it, and particularly teaching because it's a vocation, you are not rewarded for that." "My new salary will be half as much again from what I have been getting. I've gone from £22,000 to £35,000, and, you know, I feel at last I'm being paid what I'm worth. That has got a lot to do with it. Plus the respect, you know, is important. I also feel that I can do more good further afield, than in just a classroom-based post."

The advantages of Irene's new role greatly lessen the chances of her returning to classroom teaching: "The increase in salary is so great that I couldn't go back - it'd be foolish to. I work hard now, but as a teacher, even though I would be home by six o'clock, I would start marking again. It was just, just too much."

### **Box 8.5: Very Unlikely to Return (New Challenge)**

***Ken, 50-54, physics and ICT teacher in an 11-16 comprehensive technology college in the East of England, full-time permanent contract. He has been teaching for 31 years, 26 years in his current post. He is moving on to work in a university research team and to study for a PhD.***

Ken went into teaching because “I always liked the idea of vocation and something other than just earning money. I felt that when I was at school the quality of teaching wasn’t that good. I felt quite passionately that I could make a contribution.” He is now moving away from teaching: “My background is in physics, IT and electronics. I have a friend who is working in the University, designing equipment to investigate the atmosphere and I realised I could piggy back an experiment on one of theirs. I had been out to France with them for the launch. At Christmas they wanted to expand their group and they sent me a job description and I applied.”

There were a number of factors affecting this decision. First, changes within the school had unsettled him. “The management was light but very professional for about twenty years. Recently, there has been a change of head and many people characterised him as a cowboy. You couldn’t believe what he said. A lot of people felt issues weren’t dealt with and standards went down. He left a couple of terms ago and the latest head is absolutely superb.” Despite this, “Everybody that I spoke to felt that I should take the chance to go.” Secondly, Ken wanted a new challenge. “One of the reasons I stayed in the school was that it offered new challenges. I went into IT management systems and they introduced technology and I managed that. My job changed over the last 25 years. I have just come to the point where I needed new challenges.” “I feel that I have done a lot of teaching and a lot of different roles within teaching. I have achieved most of the goals I have set myself. I am not going to put down teaching, but I don’t need to satisfy myself any more that I can do it.”

Thirdly, personal circumstances: “I have got two daughters who have been to university, got jobs and moved away from home. I could take on a job that didn’t pay as much.” “I started to pay AVC’s five years ago to boost my pension. I had planned to make a change at 55, and this chance came at 54.” Finally, changes within teaching more generally led Ken to reach his decision: “There is less job satisfaction. If you have got bright kids in front of you and you know that you could really go places with them, but the syllabus is far short of what they could achieve. It is not motivating.” “Teaching is a less attractive job than it used to be.”

Consequently, Ken does not anticipate ever returning. “Having moved away from teaching to do something different I do not think I will ever go back. A lot of people that I worked with in teaching were trapped into it. Teaching is quite well paid and it is not easy for people in their forties to move into something else, or at least they perceive it that way. There were a number of people who were quite envious when I told them I was moving on.” “I have done it and I wouldn’t want to revisit it. I am not bitter though.”

## Return to Full-Time Teaching

- 8.8 In the pen portraits we have looked at particular decisions. Clearly, different motivations apply in different circumstances. We now turn to look for general patterns. We have used the technique of stepwise discriminant analysis to see how well we can predict the likelihood of a leaver returning to a full-time teaching post. The technique statistically creates a function which separates to the fullest possible extent people in different categories of a dependent variable, in this case indicating that they were ‘very likely’ or ‘very unlikely’ to return.
- 8.9 The independent variables made available were age, gender, years in teaching, pay scale, type of contract and the five reason-factors. Table 8.4 shows the order in which they were taken up. Age was the first, followed by workload, type of contact and then the school situation, personal circumstances and salary. Years in teaching correlates closely with age, and accounts for the different order in the final function compared with the stage at which the variable was entered. As a test, years teaching was removed, but this did not alter the basic structure of the function and as removing it reduced the predictive power slightly it was retained. Among the variables which did not add anything to the discrimination were gender, pay scale and wanting new challenge.

**Table 8.4: Variables in Discriminant Analysis**

Variable	F to Remove	Wilks' Lambda	Correlation with Function <sup>1</sup>
Age	18.72	.702	.693
Workload	46.28	.732	.612
Type of Contact	11.10	.694	.096
School Situation	7.0	.689	.344
Personal Circumstances	9.83	.692	-.257
Salary	5.9	.688	.002
Years Teaching	4.2	.686	.598

1. Correlations of variables not included in the analysis: pay scale 0.189; new challenge -0.147 and gender -0.104

- 8.10 On the basis of the discriminant function it was possible to classify 78.3 per cent of the original cases as we can see in Table 8.5.

**Table 8.5: Prediction of Likelihood of Returning<sup>1</sup>**

Actual	Predicted				Total	
	Very Likely		Very Unlikely		N	%
	N	%	N	%	N	%
Very Likely	103	78.0	29	22.0	132	100.0
Very Unlikely	108	21.7	390	78.3	498	100.0

1. 78.3 per cent of original grouped cases correctly classified

- 8.11 The discriminant analysis enables us to identify what characteristics of the leaver are most closely associated with perceived likelihood of returning to teach full-time.

### *Age*

8.12 The strong relationship between age and likelihood of return is brought out in Table 8.6. It is perhaps not surprising that younger leavers are more likely to return than older leavers, but what is striking is the graduated progression through the age bands. About half the leavers under 25 thought it very likely they would return to teach full-time compared with just 2 per cent of those aged 55-59.

**Table 8.6: Likelihood of Return by Age**

Age	Very Likely		Very Unlikely	
	N	% <sup>1</sup>	N	% <sup>1</sup>
Under 25	16	57.1	12	42.9
25-29	43	47.3	48	52.7
30-34	25	36.8	43	63.2
35-39	17	27.9	44	72.1
40-44	11	19.3	46	80.7
45-49	8	12.5	56	87.5
50-54	9	8.3	99	921.7
55-59	3	2.0	146	98.0
Over 60	0	0.0	4	100.0
Total	132	21.0	498	79.0
Chi-squared	118.7, df=8, P<0.001			

1. Percentages across rows

### *Years in Teaching*

8.13 A very similar pattern emerges for years in teaching. Table 8.7 shows that overall about four times as many were 'very unlikely' to return as were 'very likely' to do so, but among those teaching for up to five years it is almost half and half.

**Table 8.7: Likelihood of Return by Years in Teaching**

Years in Teaching	Very Likely		Very Unlikely	
	N	% <sup>1</sup>	N	% <sup>1</sup>
1-5	66	47.5	73	52.5
6-10	31	27.2	75	72.8
11-15	15	22.7	51	77.3
16-20	2	4.0	48	96.0
21-25	10	14.9	57	85.1
26-30	5	4.7	81	95.3
31-35	1	1.3	75	98.7
36 or more	1	4.5	21	95.5
Total	131	20.9	481	79.1
Chi-squared	106.8, df=7, P<0.001			

1. Percentages across rows

### *Type of Contract*

8.14 We have already looked at, in Table 8.2, the relationship with the type of contract that the leaver held, but in Table 8.8 we examine the relationship specifically with regard to the likelihood of return to full-time teaching. Those most likely to return were those leaving fixed-term contracts, perhaps not of their own volition. They, therefore, contribute to the churn in the system. Those leaving part-time contracts were less likely than those leaving full-time post to contemplate returning full-time.

**Table 8.8: Likelihood of Return by Type of Contract**

Contract	Very Likely		Very Unlikely	
	N	% <sup>1</sup>	N	% <sup>1</sup>
FT Permanent	91	21.1	341	78.9
FT Fixed-Term	27	42.2	37	57.8
PT Permanent	6	6.6	85	93.4
PT Fixed-Term	7	17.9	32	82.1
Total	131	20.9	495	79.1
Chi-squared	29.0, df=3, P<0.001			

1. Percentages across rows.

### *Reasons*

8.15 In Chapter 7 we found that five factors encapsulated the main reasons for teachers leaving the profession: workload, wanting a new challenge, school attributes, salary and personal circumstances. Table 8.5 showed several of them making a significant contribution to distinguishing between those very likely and very unlikely to return. Table 8.9 presents the mean scores. Those leaving because of workload or school reasons (including pupil behaviour) were the least likely to expect to return full-time and those leaving for personal reasons (such as to travel or raise a family) or wanting a new challenge were the most likely.

**Table 8.9: Likelihood of Return by Reason for Leaving<sup>1</sup>**

Factor	Very Likely (N=132)	Very Unlikely (N=498)	ANOVA	
			F	P
Workload	2.64	4.66	110.3	<0.001
Challenge	3.48	3.02	5.2	<0.05
School	2.20	3.32	36.1	<0.001
Salary	1.94	1.95	0.0	not signif
Personal	3.84	3.07	20.6	<0.001

1. Means on scales of importance in reason for leaving ranging from 7 (high) to 1 (low).

### *Region*

8.16 A number of other characteristics were found to be related to the perceived likelihood of returning. Interestingly, Table 8.10 reveals a relationship with region. Leavers from some of the regions with the highest turnover (for example London and the East) were the most likely to expect to return and those that were among the

most stable (the North East, North West and West Midlands), the least. The relationship with turnover and wastage rates is by no means perfect, but it can be speculated that young teachers from areas like London feel confident to resign in the expectation that a post would be readily available elsewhere, perhaps in a lower cost part of the country.

**Table 8.10: Likelihood of Return by Region**

Region	Very Likely		Very Unlikely	
	N	% <sup>1</sup>	N	% <sup>1</sup>
North East	2	9.1	20	90.9
North West	9	13.6	57	86.4
Yorks & Humber	13	20.3	51	79.7
East Midlands	14	20.9	53	79.1
West Midlands	6	11.8	45	88.2
East of England	24	25.0	72	75.0
Inner London	19	52.8	17	47.2
Outer London	13	23.2	43	76.8
South East	19	19.8	77	80.2
South West	13	17.1	63	82.9
Total	132	21.0	498	79.0
Chi-squared	30.5, df=9, P<0.001			

1. Percentages across rows.

### ***Post***

8.17 There was also a link with the post from which the leaver was resigning (Table 8.11). The most likely to return were the Advanced Skills Teachers leaving to broaden their experience. Those on the main pay scale were also among those more likely to return, but relatively few of the senior staff whether on the upper pay scale, senior management or headteacher thought they would ever return to teaching full-time

**Table 8.11: Likelihood of Return by Post**

Region	Very Likely		Very Unlikely	
	N	% <sup>1</sup>	N	% <sup>1</sup>
Main Pay Scale	101	28.9	248	71.1
Upper Pay Scale	14	7.5	173	92.5
Advanced Skills	4	50.0	4	50.0
Other Senior	1	12.5	7	87.5
Deput/Asst Head	5	16.1	26	83.9
Headteacher	6	14.3	36	85.7
Total	131	21.0	494	79.0
Chi-squared	39.9, df=6, P<0.001			

1. Percentages across rows.

### ***Destination***

8.18 Perceived likelihood of return was also strongly related, as can be seen in Table 8.12, to intended destination. Those most likely to see themselves as returning were those leaving to travel (and hence, in part, the association with age). Also among the potential returners were those heading for supply teaching, teaching abroad or taking two or three year appointments as advisors. Other than the retirees, those who saw themselves as ‘very unlikely’ to return were those going to other employment, those lecturing in FE/HE, and those transferring to independent schools (see Box 9.4). The ‘unsures’ were mainly wanting to leave teaching and most thought they were ‘very unlikely’ to go back.

**Table 8.12: Likelihood of Return by Destination**

<b>Region</b>	<b>Very Likely</b>		<b>Very Unlikely</b>	
	<b>N</b>	<b>%<sup>1</sup></b>	<b>N</b>	<b>%<sup>1</sup></b>
Supply Teaching	33	39.3	51	60.7
Independent School	4	10.0	36	90.0
Teaching Abroad	19	38.0	31	62.0
Lecturing FE/HE	2	9.5	19	90.5
Other Education	21	32.3	44	67.7
Other Employment	2	3.8	50	96.2
Family Care	5	17.2	24	82.8
Travel	26	76.5	8	23.5
Ill-Health Retirement	1	3.6	27	96.4
Early Retirement	1	0.7	133	99.3
Other <sup>2</sup>	8	25.0	24	75.0
Not Sure	10	16.7	50	83.3
<b>Total</b>	<b>132</b>	<b>21.0</b>	<b>497</b>	<b>79.0</b>
<b>Chi-squared</b>	<b>154.9, df=16, P&lt;0.001<sup>3</sup></b>			

1. Percentages across rows.

2. Includes overseas returning home, study, redundancy.

3. Some cells collapsed for presentation.

8.19 Among the characteristics not significantly related to perceived likelihood of return to full-time teaching were gender, ethnic background and phase. There was some slight tendency for female and primary teachers to see themselves as more likely to return, but it did not reach statistical significance. The only connection with teaching qualification was that certificated teachers were less likely to return, but they will have been mainly retirees. No link with main teaching subject was found.

### **Resumé**

8.20 Considering the leavers as a group, irrespective of age, gender or type of contract, about half thought it ‘very unlikely’ they would return to teaching, either full or part-time. Only 13 per cent though it ‘very likely’ they would to full-time and seven per cent to part-time. Nearly a quarter thought it very likely they would return to supply.

- 8.21 There were, however, important sub-groups. Young leavers were more likely to indicate they would return than older leavers. Young female teachers were likely to expect to return to part-time teaching or supply than young male teachers, though not to full-time teaching. Those who had held fixed-term contracts were more likely to return than those resigning from permanent contracts. Leavers from part-time posts were more likely to be thinking of returning part-time. What these statistical patterns mean in terms of individuals is illustrated in Boxes 8.1 – 8.5.
- 8.22 The variables which distinguished most clearly between those ‘very likely’ and ‘very unlikely’ to return to full-time teaching were age, resigning because of workload, years in teaching, resigning because of the school situation (including pupil behaviour), all of which reduced the likelihood of returning.
- 8.23 Other characteristics associated with likelihood of returning included post, region and destination. Those who had held more senior posts were less likely to return than those on the main pay scale. Leavers from London and other regions with high turnover and wastage were more likely to expect to return than those resigning in areas where there is less 'churn'. Those travelling, teaching abroad or supply teaching were the most likely to see themselves as returning full-time, and those going to other employment, lecturing in FE/HE and to independent schools the least (other, that is, than those retiring).

## 9. Decisions in Retrospect

- 9.1 In this chapter we consider how the spring and summer leavers of 2002 viewed their decisions in January 2003. Questionnaires were posted to their former schools to send on to the 637 leavers who had put their names to the original questionnaires. Sixty per cent (395) responded which is very good considering the indirect way they had to be approached and some groups, for example, those travelling will not have been contactable.
- 9.2 The spring and summer leavers were asked whether they thought, looking back, they had made the right decision, and all but seven said “yes”. Box 9.1 sets out the comments of the six who were unsure.

### Box 9.1: Not Sure Did The Right Thing

*“At 50 I am unlikely to get a job and get the threshold which I may have got had I stayed. My skills are greatly appreciated where I am and the pupils and my fellow teachers are lovely. But I do not feel secure. I get regular emails about staff off on sick grounds, who are having disciplinary proceedings taken against them. The school is run as a business, not a school. Salary and support assistants were not provided as stated; paperwork is way over the top. I was forced to support a non-walking child and suffered severe injuries to my back and neck and had to have time off, but I’m still in pain. I need the security of a maintained school.”*

**Female, 50-54, Left Primary School to Teach in Charity Run School**

*“Was very happy at school, but childcare costs and workload of full-time teaching forced me to leave. No part-time contract available. Will perhaps return after my family grows.”*

**Female, 25-29, Left Primary School for Family Care**

*“At the time of resigning, I needed eight days unpaid leave which was not allowed at county level. I wasn’t happy with the school procedures.”*

**Female, 40-44, Left Primary School for Supply Teaching and Job Share**

*“Although the salary was poor and the time left to myself was non-existent, I enjoyed teaching and was much more challenged by it than nursing.”*

**Female, 45-49 Left Secondary School to Return to District Nursing**

*“Good school, good teachers, great pupils, possibility of influencing some policies. However, the whole way teaching is managed, interfered with and undermined was too frustrating to be good for my health and well-being.”*

**Female 35-39, Left Secondary School to Study for Bar Exams**

*“From the financial and pensions point of view it was not the best move. From a personal well-being angle it was the only option.”*

**Female, 50-54, Left Secondary School to Teach French to Adults and Supply and Tutoring for Excluded Children with the Young People’s Support Service**

- 9.3 Only one leaver of the 395 leavers said outright that she thought she had made a mistake. She had left her middle school to work as a supply teacher.

“I should have had the courage to discuss it with the head – asked what the problem was, why the frequent visits? Every member of staff that was taken on at the same time as myself left by the end of the year. If I had said something, maybe the outcome would have been different. I enjoyed working there. I should not have given up so easily.”

9.4 Although the overwhelming majority reported they had done the right thing in leaving – and it is difficult to admit even to oneself that you have not with such a life-changing decision – 94 (23.8 per cent) mentioned that they were doing something different from what they originally had had in mind. Cross-tabulating the intended and the actual destinations as listed reveals even greater movement. Table 9.1 shows that only 227 of the 395 (57.5 per cent) leavers put down the same destination at the time of going and in the follow-up. Ignoring for the moment the 52 who said they were unsure, this still leaves about a third changing their plans.

**Table 9.1: Intentions and Destinations**

Destination	Intention												Total
	Maint Sch	Supply	Ind Sch	FE/HE	Other Educ	Other Emp	Maternity	Family	Travel	Retired	Other <sup>1</sup>	Unsure	
Maintained School		9		2	2			7		3	1	7	31
Supply Teaching		<b>41</b>		3	2	3		3	2	17	5	17	93
Independent School			<b>36</b>		1	1				2		2	42
Lecturing FE/HE		1		<b>6</b>	5					1	2	1	16
Other Education			2		<b>49</b>	3				3	1	4	62
Other Employment		1			2	<b>14</b>		1		8	4	14	44
Maternity		2											2
Family Care		1		2		1		<b>11</b>		2	2	2	21
Travel										2			2
Retired		2								<b>66</b>		3	71
Other <sup>1</sup>				1		2				2	<b>4</b>	2	11
Unsure													0
Total	0	57	38	14	61	24	0	22	2	106	19	52	395

1. Actual destinations same as intended destinations shown in bold.

2. Includes further study, overseas returning home, and various.

9.5 The major switches were to supply teaching and ‘other employment’. Although 57 had been intending to do supply, in fact, 93 in the follow-up reported that they were. Initially 24 were thinking of ‘other employment’, but 44 were engaged in it. They came mainly from the ‘unsures’, but also those who had taken early or ill-health retirement. But perhaps of the greatest interest are the 31 leavers in the spring and summer 2002 who had returned to maintained schools as contracted teachers by January 2003. Box 9.2 describes how in some cases this came about.

## **Box 9.2: New Contract in Maintained School**

*“Left to achieve a better home-work balance. I expected to do only supply. I have rejoined the school I left but I only work on Fridays as part of a job share.”*

**Female, 45-49, 0.2 Teaching Post In Same Primary School**

*“I was Deputy Headteacher and also literacy and assessment co-ordinator. I have struggled with a thyroid problem for the last three years and I felt I owed myself a life beyond school. I expected just to retire, but I am back at the same school on a part-time contract working with Year 6 for literacy and numeracy.”*

**Female, 55-59, Part-Time Teaching Post at Same School**

*“Felt rather disillusioned about not being offered permanent post at my previous school. Did think about doing something else, but after doing supply for six weeks realised I would like to return to full-time post.”*

**Female, 35-39, Full-Time Teaching Post at Key Stage 2**

*“Having held middle managerial positions for many years I felt the demands from the educational system and poor pupil behaviour were too great. I took early retirement, but needed to work part-time for 2-3 years to supplement my income. Have obtained a 0.6 appointment at sixth-form college.”*

**Male, 55-59, 0.6 Teaching Post in Sixth Form College**

*“Everyone was stretched to the limit including myself, and as the literacy co-ordinator I did not feel I could give the job the level of commitment it required. I was also very unhappy and isolated in my personal situation. I had intended to go abroad, or perhaps do supply. But after teaching on supply for one term, I have taken a full-time temporary contract to fill a short-term vacancy.”*

**Female 30-34, Full-Time Temporary Contract in a Secondary School**

*“Went to the school I left ‘on the rebound’ from previous school, escaping poor management. Found even more problems plus very difficult students. Had intended to write and do some supply teaching. But was headhunted by a community college and the head of English persuaded me that I could teach and pursue my own interests – a very different attitude from previous schools.”*

**Female 50-54. 0.6 Part-Time Permanent Post at Secondary School**

*“I never enjoyed the school and found the situation very difficult. I began to hate teaching. I thought about entering a different career, but was offered my present post (they looked for me!). It is a 0.4 post which gives me time to care for my family. Now I enjoy teaching again in a school that cares about its staff and pupils.”*

**Female 25-29, 0.4 Permanent Post in a Secondary School**

*“Left because lack of resources and kids ran school not the teachers. Have post in another school which also has ‘challenging’ children, but the procedures are followed and the difficult students can be permanently excluded. I am also a foster carer and we are getting paid to care almost as much as I earn as a teacher, so I am considering dropping teaching to become a full-time carer.”*

**Male 50-54, 0.6 Part-Time Teaching Resistant Materials at a Secondary School**

- 9.6 The differences between intended and actual destinations imply that fewer teachers are actually leaving the profession than some wastage calculations show. Thirty-one of the sample of 395 leavers (7.8 per cent) in spring and summer 2002 had, in fact, taken contracted posts in maintained schools by the following January. Few of the appointments were to full-time posts so they would have made little difference to wastage on the DfES definition (page 40). But estimates discounting part-time transfers would be lowered by the immediate returners. Allowing for the gaps in follow-up sample, for example those travelling or teaching abroad, about one in twenty of the leavers was, in effect, staying. Our wastage estimate of 7.9 per cent, in Table 5.3, page 41, thus reduces to 7.5 per cent.
- 9.7 In addition, about a quarter of the leavers (93 out of 395) were doing some supply teaching, including a third of those who were initially unsure what to do and 16 per cent of those taking early or ill-health retirement. This could further reduce wastage as measured on a within LEA-schools basis by the Employers' Organisation. Altogether over 30 per cent of the apparent leavers were still engaged in some classroom teaching, which suggests that teacher loss may not be as acute as is sometimes supposed.
- 9.8 The other side of the coin, however, is represented by those teachers leaving, often at an early age, and ending up in 'other employment'. Box 9.3 gives some of their personal accounts. Few seem to have been drawn by the prospect of alternative employment other than those who wanted time to pursue their creative talents. The first thought of many seemed to be to get out of teaching and decide what to do later. The range of things they turned to included the civil service, secretarial and temping, libraries, nannying and childcare, the army, gardening, safety officer, woodland officer, setting up own businesses like diving schools, property development, and running pubs and hotels. All of them said how much happier they are and that they now had time to pursue their interests and share in family life. The picture on returners presented in the preceding paragraphs may be altogether too rosy. We should not forget that many of those on supply had retired early because of the stress of the job and were working mainly for financial reasons.
- 9.9 The teachers moving for positive reasons were often going to independent schools or to the advisory posts recently created to carry forward the Government's various strategies and initiatives. Box 4.1 illustrates the range and attractions of these advisory posts. In Box 9.4 we look more closely at the reasons for going to the independent sector and to see if the move lived up to expectations some months on.
- 9.10 All but one of the 44 who had moved to independent schools were settled in their new posts, and the exception was leaving because her husband had taken a job in another part of the country. The great majority, as we can see from Box 9.4, expressed their pleasure at what they had found. Their stories are remarkably similar: they are able to enjoy their teaching, there is more time for preparation and marking, they are respected as professionals, there is less paperwork and interference, the children want to learn and the parents care, the resources and facilities are better, and, in some case, they are paid more. These are, in many ways, the mirror image of the reasons given by the whole leavers' sample for quitting the maintained sector.

### **Box 9.3: Switches To Other Employment**

*“Had I stayed I probably would have had a nervous breakdown because of the stress caused by the headteacher. Ideally, I wanted an environmental education post, but they are very hard to find.”*

**Female, Under 25, Primary School to Road Safety Officer**

*“It was nothing to do with the school or the children – it was the ‘job’. When I resigned I did not have a clue what I wanted to do. I wrote away about all sorts of jobs, but this one ‘fell into my lap’ when a local landowner visited my garden and offered me the job of gardener.”*

**Male, 45-49, Primary School to Gardener**

*“When I resigned I didn’t know exactly what I wanted to do. I wanted to explore options in the run-up to my wedding in the summer. Healthwise, I just couldn’t have continued teaching. The nanny job came as a surprise and suited my ideas to fit around starting my own business making hand-made cards and developing my own art work.”*

**Female, 25-29, Primary School to Nanny/Housekeeper**

*“I felt a bit guilty at being a ‘rat deserting a sinking ship’, but I was not going to damage my health. I did not intend to do anything in particular. I needed a job and this was one I could do.”*

**Male, 25-29, Secondary School to Inland Revenue**

*“I am teaching piano, writing songs and performing. Although I did enjoy the actual teaching in the classroom, the rest of the job sucked away my energy and enthusiasm. I was stressed and constantly tired – yet more was constantly demanded. I feel now as if I have regained my quality of life.”*

**Female, 25-29, Secondary School to Self Employed Musician**

*“I had planned to study for a PhD in Education, but each day that passed being free of educational institutions, I became less interested in taking on further responsibilities in the field. I have passed examinations as a scuba diving instructor and I am now in the process of setting up my own diving school/club.”*

**Male, 40-44, Secondary School to Scuba Diving Instructor**

*“I had decided to give up teaching and was then introduced to the Civil Service by a friend, starting interviews in May. I have never regretted leaving teaching and I am very unlikely to return unless desperate.”*

**Female 35-39, Secondary School to Civil Service**

*“I was always thinking about the job, not sleeping due to stress. The crisis management of new initiatives took priority over teaching. The day I handed in my resignation my daughter said, ‘We’ve got our dad back’. I have bought a derelict farm and am developing a property business.”*

**Male 45-49, Secondary School to Property Developer**

*“I work as an assistant at our local library. I have no regrets about leaving teaching, because my family life is now much happier and I never get verbally abused. State schools are a sad indictment of the moral and social decay of our country.”*

**Female 30-34, Secondary School to Library Assistant**

#### **Box 9.4: Moves to Independent Schools**

*“I am happy and relaxed for the first time in my career. There is an emphasis on teaching and a refusal to take on unnecessary paperwork. I can do what I was trained to do, I can do it well, and I can do it within a reasonable working day.”*

**Female, 35-39, Infants School to Year 4 Teacher**

*“I am very happy in my new school. I am now teaching art as a specialist subject instead of being ‘a jack of all trades’. I am valued by parents, respected by colleagues and children and appreciated by the governors.”*

**Female, 30-34, Junior School to Head of Art in Boys’ Prep School**

*“In the independent sector I have more freedom to teach as I choose, better behaved children and generally more educated and responsible parents.”*

**Female, 30-34, Junior School to Year 3 Teacher**

*“The staff are more supportive. I am responsible for just seven children and there are five teaching assistants who assist with photocopying, displays etc. I also get 16 weeks holiday a year.”*

**Female, 25-29, Junior School to Special Needs Autism in Senior School**

*“I will never go back to teach in a maintained school. The kids were awfully disrespectful, aggressive and absolutely not motivated as their parents did not seem to care either. Here the children want to learn, there is more money in the department and I can let my imagination go.”*

**Female, 25-29, Secondary School to Teach Languages to Years 3-8**

*“I now enjoy a very pleasant working atmosphere, pupils who are keen to learn, a well managed school. I am able to teach. I have been freed from endless after school meetings fruitlessly chasing after the latest and ill-thought out government initiatives. And I am paid more.”*

**Male, 55-59, Secondary School to Physics Teacher**

*“My life is so much less-stressed. I am a head of department, as I was, but I have enough time to run the department and prepare and mark work. The new school is not encumbered by government initiatives, the children are better behaved, it’s a nicer atmosphere and there is much less stress and workload.”*

**Female 35-39, Secondary School to Head of Languages**

*“I really enjoy the teaching I am doing now. I feel valued by both students and management. There was little of that in my last school. The lack of work ethic and the ‘treatment’ I received from students means I would rather sell encyclopaedias than go back to the state sector.”*

**Male 45-49, Secondary School to Economics and Business Studies**

*“I feel like I have my life back. I’m treated as a professional and I am left to plan, teach and assess. I am enjoying my job so much that I don’t bother counting any more the days and weeks to the next break.”*

**Female 40-44, Secondary School to ICT Teacher at Two Independent Schools**

*“I have no doubts. I am enjoying teaching again. For me this was a good move, but I am concerned for state education.”*

**Male 40-44, Secondary School to Maths and Some Sports**

9.11 The leavers' accounts of their reasons for resigning changed little between the first and follow-up surveys. Table 9.2 compares the two in terms of the five underlying factors revealed in the analyses of Chapter 7. The correlations were all highly significant. In general, the mean scores tended to move up suggesting that the leavers had come to feel more strongly about going.

**Table 9.2: Factors in Leaving**

Survey (N=395)	Rating Scores				
	Workload	Challenge	School	Salary	Personal
On Leaving	4.60	3.16	2.67	1.91	3.21
Follow Up	4.68	3.12	3.27	2.55	3.64
Correlation	.720	.752	.755	.740	.537
Significance	P<0.001	P<0.001	P<0.001	P<0.001	P<0.001

### Resumé

- 9.12 All but seven of the 395 leavers in spring and summer 2002 followed up in January 2003 said they had done the right thing. Leaving aside those who were unsure initially about what they were going to do, about a third changed their plans. The main moves were to supply teaching and other employment particularly from among the retired. But 31 had taken new contracts in schools, usually part-time. They were mainly people who had been intending to do supply or who were unsure, but they also included a group who had left for family care. Allowing for these would not affect wastage rates calculated on full-time posts, but would lower estimates including moves to part-time contracts – we suggest from 7.9 to about 7.5 per cent.
- 9.13 Those most likely to carry through their plans were those going to an independent school. All but one of the 44 resignees moving in this direction expressed pleasure in their new posts and their reasons are, to a large extent, a mirror image of why teachers said they were leaving maintained schools.
- 9.14 The structure of the reasons given for leaving in the follow-up study was very similar to that at the time of leaving itself, suggesting that it is relatively enduring and can be taken as a policy pointer along with the other patterns described in this report.

## 10. Policy Pointers

- 10.1 Our remit has been to investigate the factors affecting teachers' decisions to leave the profession. In particular, we were asked to quantify the relative importance of the reasons, to identify the destinations, to analyse the characteristics of the leavers, to consider any geographical variation, and to explore what might influence teachers to stay and what might encourage them to return. Our purpose has been investigation, description and analysis, not to canvass particular policies. Nevertheless, it is possible to identify from the research a number of policy pointers.

### **Reasons for Leaving**

- 10.2 Five main factors were found to be influencing teachers' decisions to leave: workload, looking for a new challenge, the school situation, salary and personal circumstances. Of these, workload was by far the most important. In a ranking of 16 possible reasons, the three items loading most heavily on this factor occupied the first three places. Nearly half (44.8 per cent) of the all the leavers indicated that 'workload too heavy' was 'of great importance' in their decisions to leave. This rose to over half (52.1 per cent) of leavers from primary schools.

*Policy Pointer 1: Workload is the main reason teachers, particularly those in primary schools, give for going.*

- 10.3 Of the other four factors, salary emerged as the least important. Few of the teachers were being tempted away by better career prospects or being offered a higher salary elsewhere, and 'salary too low' came twelfth of the 16 possible reasons.

*Policy Pointer 2: Salary seems relatively unimportant in decisions to go but, as we shall be seeing, if raised would encourage some to stay.*

- 10.4 Two of the other three factors, wanting a new challenge and personal circumstances, essentially were about the teachers being drawn to other things. But the third, the school situation, does have policy implications. An important item contributing to this factor was pupil behaviour. A third of leavers from secondary schools indicated that this was 'of great importance' in their decisions to leave, but this was true of only 12 per cent of primary leavers.

*Policy Pointer 3: Poor pupil behaviour is a major influence on secondary school teachers' decisions to leave.*

- 10.5 Another element in the school situation is 'the way the school is run' which a quarter of secondary leavers and 16 per cent of primary leavers indicated was 'of great importance' in their decisions to leave. The interviews with the leavers revealed that the management style of the head, lack of support, and the lack of flexibility by governors in relation to job share all contributed to some going.

*Policy Pointer 4: School focused policies, such as making retention part of the training of headteachers, ensuring national guidelines for support are implemented, and flexibility in employment could all have a part to play in reducing unnecessary loss.*

## **Destinations**

- 10.6 Of every 100 teachers resigning in 2002, 40 were moving to other maintained schools (36 full-time and 4 part-time), 13 were retiring (9 prematurely), 9 were leaving for maternity or family care, 7 were going on supply, 7 were taking other teaching posts (independent schools, FE and HE), 5 were quitting for 'other employment', 4 were leaving for 'other education posts', and 4 were going to travel. The destinations of the other 11 were unknown to the schools.
- 10.7 Not all resignations, therefore, are loss from the profession. Loss from schools is normally encapsulated as 'turnover' and loss from the system as 'wastage'. Both appear to have fallen somewhat since 2001, but it hard to be precise because of definitional differences between the major sources of trend data, the DfES and the Employers' Organisation for Local Government. Moreover, some of those counted as loss from the profession are continuing to teach in independent schools, in further education (which overlaps with schools in sixth form colleges) and higher education, and as supply teachers.

***Policy Pointer 5: The DfES and the Employers' Organisation could usefully revisit their characterisations of turnover and wastage with a view to agreeing common definitions which could form part of the co-ordinated approach to data collection in the public sector envisaged in the Comprehensive Spending Review in 2002.***

- 10.8 After moves to other schools, the main destination was retirement, with about two thirds of those retiring going prematurely. They were significantly more likely to cite 'workload' as a factor in their decisions and significantly less likely to be looking for a new challenge. There seems to be a general expectation that the fifties are an appropriate time to retire. This has persisted even though a change in the pension regulations has meant that it is far less financially advantageous to do so. With 45 per cent of serving teachers reaching 60 within the next 15 years, encouraging good and proficient teachers to stay to normal-age retirement and a few years beyond could have a major impact on teacher supply.

***Policy Pointer 6: The DfES should examine what impact encouraging teachers in their fifties and sixties to serve for a few more years would have on ameliorating any teacher shortages and, if it appeared desirable, how it might be achieved?***

- 10.9 About 7 per cent of the leavers were planning to continue as teachers in the maintained sector, but on supply. The follow-up study revealed that nearly double that proportion, in fact, did so, being joined by significant numbers of those initially unsure or retiring early. The interviews revealed that many opt for supply because they see it as an opportunity to concentrate on what they enjoy most – teaching – without all the other duties which have become attached to being a full-time contracted teacher. Other teachers who wanted time to spend more time with their families were forced down this route by the lack of flexibility in the employment opportunities in the school they were leaving.

***Policy Pointer 7: The attractions of supply teaching underline some of the reasons why teachers are resigning from contracts, namely the workload and lack of flexibility, and they could be taken as pointers as to how the conditions of teachers could be improved to encourage more to stay.***

10.10 Another 7 per cent of leavers were resigning to take teaching posts elsewhere, particularly in independent schools. The follow-up study showed that this group was among the most settled and happy in its decisions and the least likely to return to maintained education. Compared with other leavers they were significantly more likely to emphasize the school situation and salary as the reasons for going. One physics teacher moving from a maintained secondary to an independent school in effect summed up the reasons of the many when he said, “I now enjoy a very pleasant working atmosphere, pupils who are keen to learn, a well managed school. I am able to teach. I have been freed from endless after school meetings endlessly chasing after the latest and ill-thought-out government initiatives. And I am paid more.” The personal accounts suggested that independent schools have found ways of addressing the teachers’ concerns over workload, pupil behaviour and too many initiatives. Smithers and Robinson (2001) found that about 30 per cent of the recruitment to independent schools was from maintained schools while less than 10 per cent moved in the opposite direction.

***Policy Pointer 8: Are there any lessons to be learned from the relative attractiveness of teaching in an independent school and how far could they be applied in the maintained sector?***

10.11 Five per cent of the leavers were going to ‘other employment’. Most of the ‘other employment’ was being created by the leavers themselves in, among other things, pursuing their creative talents, running pubs and hotels, and setting up their own businesses. Some of the leavers were joining the civil service, pharmaceutical companies, and libraries, but there was little evidence of many teachers being tempted away into other occupations. Consistent with this their main motivation for going was excessive workload in schools, not the attraction of opportunities elsewhere.

***Policy Pointer 9: There seems to be little poaching of teachers by other sectors of employment.***

10.12 A greater drain on classroom teaching has been demand from the many education posts created to implement and support the various initiatives and strategies. Four per cent of the leavers were going to these posts. They were significantly more likely to cite ‘new challenge’ and ‘salary’ than other leavers, and less likely to complain of the school situation. The attractions are borne out in the interviews. It appears that these posts were often better paid, offered a better balance between work and home life, were respected and offered the opportunity to have influence beyond the classroom. Some of those who had taken advisory posts on secondment were planning to return to the classroom, but many doubted they would want to or could afford to.

***Policy Pointer 10: A wide variety of posts has recently been created around classroom teaching and these are proving more attractive than teaching itself.***

*The assessment of the costs of any strategy or initiative depending on such posts should take into account the impact on teacher retention.*

### **Characteristics of Leavers**

10.13 Leavers tended to be disproportionately either young with a few years service or older and approaching retirement, to be female, and to come from the shortage subjects. They were less likely to be deputy headteachers or to hold full-time permanent posts. There seemed to be no link to ethnic background.

### **Age**

10.14 A quarter of the leavers were under 30 and even more had been teaching for five years or fewer. This comes on top of the high drop-out between successfully completing training and taking a teaching post in a maintained school uncovered in the literature review. Analysis of the reasons for going reveals that young leavers were more likely to cite salary and personal circumstances and less likely to complain of workload than the other leavers. The emphasis on personal circumstances reflects the wish of some young leavers to travel and others to take time out to raise a family. About half the leavers aged 29 or under indicated they were 'very likely' to return to full-time teaching (compared with 'very unlikely') against a fifth of leavers as a whole.

10.15 Those who do make their careers in teaching typically serve for about 20 years. But then the widespread assumption among teachers that they will retire in their fifties leads to resignation rates rising again.

*Policy Pointer 11: Leaving is age related with those at the two ends of the spectrum more likely to go. Could more be done retain teachers during their first years in the profession? Is it desirable/feasible to encourage more teachers to stay into their fifties and sixties (cf. policy pointer 6).*

### **Gender**

10.16 Leavers from full-time permanent contracts were more likely to be female than male. Female teachers were also more likely to hold and leave part-time and fixed-term contracts. About 10 per cent were leaving for maternity or family care. Consistent with this 'personal circumstances' was the most important factor in their decision following workload. In part, this reflects their roles in bearing and raising children, but in two income homes they also had more opportunity of taking time out or of retiring early. Juggling family and professional responsibilities is not easy and some teachers leave because the flexible arrangements they are seeking are not open to them. This underlines the importance of Policy Pointer 4.

### **Ethnicity**

10.17 No evidence was obtained that teachers from the ethnic minorities are more likely to leave or their reasons for going differed from the majority. Teachers from the ethnic minorities were, however, more likely to leave for maternity and less, to retire.

### **Levels of Responsibility**

10.18 Deputy headteachers, particularly in primary schools, were the most likely to move to other maintained schools, we can assume, in a number of cases, for promotion.

Heads of department in secondary schools were the most likely to move to independent schools reflecting the preference of these schools to recruit experienced staff who have proved themselves in the maintained sector. Teachers on the main pay scale were significantly more likely to indicate that salary, the school situation and personal circumstances were factors influencing their decisions to leave.

### ***Subject***

- 10.19 There are suggestions in the present study consistent with the Employers' Organisation's finding that turnover was greater in the shortage subjects of modern foreign languages, mathematics, the sciences, ICT and English than in subjects like history, geography and art. These are turnover data, not wastage, so they may reflect more opportunity to move on to other schools in the core subjects. It is not possible to stand this up with confidence, however, since national data by subject are poor.

***Policy Pointer 12: There are suggestions of higher turnover rates in the shortage subjects, but there is a need for better statistics on school staffing by subject.***

### **Geographical Variation**

- 10.20 Teachers in London and the south and east were more likely to move to other schools and to leave than teachers in the midlands and the north. As in previous studies, those leaving schools in London tended to be a distinctive group. They were significantly more likely than leavers in other regions to cite 'salary', 'new challenge' and personal circumstances (including the desire to travel) as factors influencing their decisions. Leavers in inner London were also, by far, the most likely to indicate that they would return to teaching full-time suggesting that relocation could be in their minds. In contrast, in the North East, the region with the lowest turnover and wastage, less than ten per cent of the leavers indicate that they were 'very likely' to return to teach full-time. Their main reasons for going were also different: 'workload' and the 'school situation'.

***Policy Pointer 13: The higher cost of living in London is recognised in allowances, but should the issues surrounding national salary scales be revisited in trying to find ways of securing a relatively stable backbone of staff for schools throughout the country?***

- 10.21 The present study focuses on teachers leaving in England. Our literature review revealed, however, that in EURYDICE's (2002b) comparisons of 31 countries only four reported that they been able to balance teacher demand and supply: Finland, Spain, Scotland and Northern Ireland.

***Policy Pointer 14: Are there any lessons to be learned from these countries and are there any features which could usefully be incorporated into policies for teacher recruitment and retention in England?***

### **Influences on Staying**

- 10.22 Over 40 per cent of the leavers (43.1 per cent) said that nothing whatsoever would have induced them to stay. But of the others, two-fifths suggested that they might have thought again if workload had been reduced and there had been fewer initiatives. A third intimated they would have seen things differently if there had not

been difficulties at their particular school, and a quarter said they would have reconsidered for a higher salary. A fourth possible incentive was improved pupil behaviour, with this being much more important to secondary leavers. In many ways, what would have influenced leavers to stay is the mirror image of what was prompting them to go. But salary emerges more strongly among the former than the latter, apparently because for some a substantial rise, if available, would have offset the other hassles.

***Policy Pointer 15: Whether possible levers to improve teacher retention are sought through exploring reasons for leaving or possible inducements to stay, the most likely appear to be reducing workload, improving pupil behaviour and a better scheduling of initiatives. The only exception is a higher salary which is frequently mentioned as an inducement to stay, but does not feature among the reasons for leaving (perhaps because for most it is not on offer).***

### **Likelihood of Return**

- 10.23 About half the leavers indicated that they were ‘very unlikely’ to return to teaching in maintained schools either full-time or part-time, but only somewhat over a third (38.3 per cent) were similarly emphatic about not returning to do supply. Looking at it through the other end of the telescope, only 13 per cent thought it ‘very likely’ that they would return full-time and fewer still part-time, but nearly a quarter were contemplating supply. Female leavers were much more likely than male leavers to think they would return part-time or to supply.
- 10.24 It was found possible to construct statistically a function that predicted the stated likelihood of returning to teaching full-time in 78 per cent of the cases. The main contributors to this were age and length of service, both inversely related to likelihood of return. But four of the five factors influencing decisions to leave were also important. Potential returners were more likely to have left for ‘a new challenge’ and ‘personal circumstances’ and less likely to have left because of ‘workload’ and ‘the school situation’ than those ruling out a return.
- 10.25 Likelihood of return was also connected with destination. Those leaving to travel, teach abroad and go on to supply teaching were the most likely to envisage a return to full-time teaching. Those going into other employment, teaching in independent schools and lecturing in FE/HE, as well as those retiring, the least.

***Policy Pointer 16: In seeking to encourage leavers to return, there are some groups who are much more worth targeting than others, for example, young people who have left to see something of the world, those who are taking a break supply teaching and those who have taken temporary contracts in advisory posts.***

### **Decisions in Retrospect**

- 10.26 The vast majority (98 per cent) of the leavers in the follow-up study were sure they had done the right thing. Nevertheless, about a third had changed their plans in the meantime. Ten per cent had, in fact, taken new contracts in schools, usually part-time, mainly from among those intending to go on supply, those who were unsure what to do, and those leaving for family care. Thus, on some definitions, wastage would have been lower than it would initially have appeared. The main switches,

however, were to supply teaching and other employment, particularly from among those retiring prematurely. Those most likely to carry through their plans were those going to teach in independent schools and all but one who had moved in this direction were staying (the leaver was moving with her husband who had been relocated).

10.27 The same five factors were found to underpin the reasons for leaving whether reported in retrospect or at the time of resigning. In fact, the mean scores tended to be higher in the follow-up suggesting that by then the leavers felt even more strongly about going.

***Policy Pointer 17: The factors influencing teachers' decisions to leave are relatively deep-seated and enduring.***

10.28 Effective policies for reducing unnecessary teacher loss need to be grounded in the evidence. In this report we have studied in detail the leavers of 2002. The patterns and associations described are offered as contribution towards that evidence base.

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## Appendix A: Samples Compared to National Distributions

A.1 The population studied was teachers leaving primary, middle, secondary and special schools in England during the calendar year 2002. Structured samples were arrived at by using region and the number of pupils on roll as the frame. Close matches for all samples were achieved as shown in Tables 2.7 and 2.8. In this appendix, we compare the school samples with other national distributions that were available to us.

### Primary

A.2 Tables A1 and A2 show that, in addition to region and school size, a close match was achieved for both type of school and whether the school was community, voluntary aided or controlled, or foundation. Only between infant and first did there seem to be some imbalance but taken them together there was close correspondence, as there was for the other school types.

**Table A.1: Primary Sample by Type of School**

Type	Sample		National <sup>1</sup>	
	N	%	N	%
Infant	163	12.1	1,915	10.6
First	92	6.8	1,540	8.6
Infant and Junior	928	68.8	12,314	68.5
First and Middle	7	0.5	190	1.1
Junior	143	10.6	1,894	10.5
Middle	16	1.2	132	0.7
Total	1,349	100.0	17,985	100.0

1. *Statistics of Education. Schools in England, 2002, p 28.*

**Table A.2: Primary Sample by Status**

Status	Sample		National <sup>1</sup>	
	N	%	N	%
Community	837	62.0	11,260	62.6
Voluntary Aided	269	19.9	3,720	20.7
Voluntary Controlled	212	15.7	2,643	14.7
Foundation	31	2.3	363	2.0
Total	1,349	100.0	17,985	100.0

1. *Statistics of Education. Schools in England, 2002, p.44.*

## Secondary

A.3 Tables A.3-A.6 show that the secondary sample corresponded closely with the national distribution in terms of type of school, gender of pupils, whether it took children to age 16 or 18, and by type of specialism. Community schools are somewhat over-represented in Table A.7, but this is the only one in which we had to add in our middle schools sample to compare with the national statistics, and the apparent unevenness may be associated with this.

**Table A.3: Secondary Sample by Type of School**

Type	Sample		National <sup>1</sup>	
	N	%	N	%
Comprehensive	283	89.6	2,836	89.8
Grammar	17	5.4	161	5.1
Secondary Modern <sup>2</sup>	16	5.1	160	5.1
Total	316	100.0	3,157	100.0

1. *Statistics of Education. Schools in England, 2002*, pp 28-29.

2. Includes technical and other.

**Table A.4: Secondary Sample by Gender of Pupils**

Gender	Sample		National <sup>1</sup>	
	N	%	N	%
Coeducational	274	86.7	2,744	86.9
Girls'	23	7.3	228	7.2
Boys'	19	6.0	185	5.9
Total	316	100.0	3,157	100.0

1. *Statistics of Education. Schools in England, 2002*, p.31.

**Table A.5: Secondary Sample by Age Range**

Age Range	Sample		National <sup>1</sup>	
	N	%	N	%
Up to 16 years	144	45.6	1,410	44.7
Up to 18 years	172	54.4	1,747	55.3
Total	316	100.0	3,157	100.0

1. *Statistics of Education. Schools in England, 2002*, p.43.

**Table A.6: Secondary Sample by Specialism**

Specialism	Sample		National <sup>1</sup>	
	N	%	N	%
Technology	43	13.6	409	13.0
Sports	11	3.5	141	4.5
Arts	10	3.2	143	4.5
Languages	14	4.4	141	4.5
General	238	75.3	2,323	73.6
Total	316	100.0	3,157	100.0

1. [www.dfes.gov.uk](http://www.dfes.gov.uk) specialist schools site (25 April 2002).

**Table A.7: Secondary (inc Middle) Sample by Status**

Status	Sample		National <sup>1</sup>	
	N	%	N	%
Community	244	70.5	2,278	65.9
Voluntary Aided	43	12.4	549	15.9
Voluntary Controlled	10	2.9	129	3.7
Foundation	49	14.2	501	14.5
Total	346	100.0	3,457 <sup>2</sup>	100.0

1. *Statistics of Education. Schools in England, 2002*, p.44, also includes middle schools.

2. Includes middle schools.

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