



THE REALITY OF SCHOOL STAFFING

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The National Union of Teachers

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Executive Summary

Attracting and retaining teachers can seem very different in schools from how it looks to the policymaker. The picture currently being presented at the national level is of more money for schools, teachers' workload being successfully addressed, and training applications bounding upwards. But what about the schools? This report analyses the current state of staffing as seen by them in relation to affordability, retention and recruitment.

Data have been collected from samples of 980 primary schools (5 per cent) and 368 secondary schools (10 per cent) in England and Wales. The primary sample is representative of the national distributions in terms of region, size, type and status. The secondary sample, in addition, corresponds to those for gender, age range, and specialism. The questionnaire covered changes in pupil numbers, budget settlements and staffing complement, both teaching and support, and any impact on the curriculum. It also gathered information on applications for, and appointments to, posts available for September 2003. This report completes research on the school year 2002-03, the first account of which was given in November 2002 (Smithers, Robinson and Tracey). The interim report focused on retention and the match between qualifications and subject taught.

Key Findings

Affordability

- Over half of primary schools (56.4 per cent) and nearly two-thirds of secondary schools (63.3 per cent) reported that the budget settlement in 2003-04 was worse than the previous year's. This was related to changing intakes, but 38 per cent of primary schools and 53.8 per cent of secondary schools with a higher or a similar roll reported a relative drop in income. This was in spite of the planned 6.3 per cent increase in local authority spending on education, claimed to amount to an 11.6 per cent rise when specific grants including the Standards Fund were taken into account. The problem seems to have been that the money reached schools very unevenly.
- Scaling up from our samples suggests that affected schools were having to lose some 8,800 full-time equivalent teachers. 4,920 primary schools cut back 5,702 FTEs and 1,190 secondary schools 3,115 FTEs. This was accomplished mainly through natural wastage, but there were 2,000 redundancies and 3,320 fixed-term contracts were not renewed.
- Some schools were creating new teaching posts. Primary schools added 1165.2 FTEs and secondary schools 3,135 FTEs. Setting these against the loss from other schools suggests that across the system there was a net loss in the primary phase of 4,537 FTEs, but a net gain in secondary phase of 20 FTEs.
- Support staff are currently being shed as well as teachers. Estimates from our samples suggest that 6,200 primary schools were losing 10,688 FTEs and 2,890 secondary schools 1,620 FTEs, or 12,308 in all. These losses will have been, to some extent, offset by the schools able to appoint extra support staff, but only 29 per cent of

primary schools and 42 per cent of secondary schools with rising rolls said they were able to afford to do so.

- In addition to cutting staff, schools have used their reserves, set deficit budgets, and severely pruned all other areas of expenditure. In some cases, earnings and donations have made the difference.

Workload

- Staff reductions and other savings have resulted in larger classes in nearly half the secondary schools and a fifth of primary schools. Primary schools were also intending to reduce planning, preparation and assessment time and make more use of teaching assistants. Headteachers, themselves, were having to take on more teaching and cover other duties.
- Secondary schools were having to ask more teachers to take classes outside their subjects, adding to the already considerable mismatch. They were also trimming the curriculum in various ways. There was widespread concern about standards with “the situation on the ground being the most serious ever at present”.
- Headteachers with an adverse 2003-04 budget were often at a loss as to how they could begin to implement workload reduction when they were having to cut back on teaching and support staff, or unable to make new appointments.

Recruitment

- In the samples, 491 primary schools (50.1 per cent) and 348 secondary schools (94.6 per cent) were seeking to make, respectively, 812 and 1,960 appointments, which scale up to 16,240 and 19,600 posts for England and Wales.
- Advertised classroom teaching posts in primary schools received, on average, three times as many applications as those in secondary schools, 16.4 against 5.3. But the position was reversed when it came to deputy headships, 6.9 against 22.3. Head of department posts in secondary schools received fewest applications of all, on average 4.3 per post.
- Applications for classroom posts in primary schools ranged from an average of 3.8 in Outer London to 33.9 in the North East, and for secondary posts from 3.0 in Inner London to 9.4 in Wales. History received 11.8 applications per post and 76.9 per cent of the applications were rated good, compared to maths where there were 4.0 applications per post of which only 35.0 per cent were rated good. Within the overall pattern there were a number of hot and cold spots.
- Secondary headteachers rated the quality of NQTs higher than that of other applicants and appointed relatively more of them. In primary schools, the ratings of NQTs and other applicants were similar and they were as likely to be appointed to advertised posts, though posts were also being filled by recruiting directly from LEA pools of the newly qualified.

Policy Pointers

- The Government should initially adopt a schools perspective (rather than a system perspective) in determining the amount of money to be made available to schools. It should begin its calculation with data on what schools need to run efficiently and effectively, and test out its decisions with studies of the impact on schools.
- In seeking to arrive at fair funding arrangements the Government should take into account existing disparities as well as guaranteeing at least a minimum increase.
- The Government should review its policy of top slicing the schools' budget which, in effect, is a tax on all schools to fund initiatives which can be capricious in their consequences.
- The Government should phase out most special grants over a transition period of from three to five years and incorporate the money into mainstream funding.
- The Government should review its policy of funding on a per pupil basis. Rolls are set to fall in primary schools by 7.3 per cent to 2010. While intakes to secondary schools are still rising, they will also fall by 4.8 per cent over the same time span. On present pupil-teacher ratios this will require schools to cumulatively reduce their teaching complements by about 10 per cent to the end of the decade.
- The Government should take the opportunity of falling rolls in primary schools to improve the pupil-teacher ratio in the direction of secondary schools and other OECD countries. Employing more teachers relative to the number of pupils would be to tackle workload at source.
- The Government should review the delegation of responsibilities to primary schools and consider whether there should be an umbrella of administrative co-ordination provided by the LEAs or formal federations. Primary schools with two or three teachers are very different organisations from secondary schools with a staff of 70 or more. There is a case for treating the two phases differently.
- Teacher supply should be considered at the school level as well as the national. Data should be regularly collected on the ease with which schools in different parts of the country are able to recruit to different subjects. Persistent cold spots should be addressed and any hot spots noted.
- Adopting a schools perspective, the Government should monitor in detail in a small number of schools on an annual basis the match between subjects taught and qualifications as a basis for helping schools to secure sufficient appropriately qualified teachers.

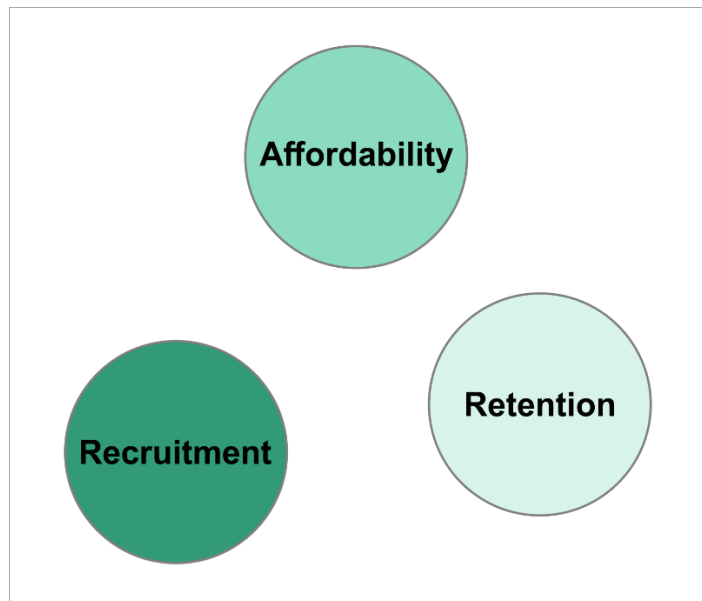
Conclusion

The Government should seek to complement the national perspective on teacher supply which it has to take with a schools perspective. The interplay between affordability, retention and recruitment in individual schools is the reality of school staffing.

1. Introduction

- 1.1 Two different perspectives can be adopted on school staffing: the national and the school. At the national level, securing sufficient and appropriately qualified staff is mainly a matter of deciding how many teachers can be afforded, projecting demand from pupil numbers and teacher wastage, and ensuring that sufficient new teachers are coming through the training routes to replace those going and to fulfil policies. At the school level, it is more of a juggling exercise. Headteachers and governors, with the support of LEAs, have essentially to keep three balls in the air: the budget, recruitment and retention.

Chart 1.1: Staffing Schools



- 1.2 At the national level, the Government has been offering bullish reports. It claims to have raised school funding appreciably. The *Spending Review 2002* (HM Treasury, 2002) made provision to increase local authority spending on education by 6.3 per cent in 2003-04 and a further 5.7 per cent and 6.1 per cent in the two succeeding years. Public expenditure on education had already risen from 4.5 per cent of GDP in 1997-98 to 5.1 per cent in 2002-03 during a period of economic expansion. The National Statistics First Release on the *School Workforce in England* (2003b) reported that the number of full-time regular teachers was up by 4,300 on the previous year and the Government has pointed to this as the highest figure since 1982. It also claims to have turned the corner on the recruitment of secondary teachers (recruitment to primary has been less of a problem) through its portfolio of financial incentives. Celebrating the latest analyses from the Graduate Teacher Training Registry the minister for schools said, “Recruitment to teacher training has already risen for three years in a row after almost a decade of decline. These figures confirm that our measures to attract more people into the teaching profession are taking effect and that we are on the right track” (DfES 2003 g). Teacher wastage which had gone up by nearly 50 per cent since 1998 fell back in 2002 (Smithers and Robinson, 2003).

- 1.3 But at the school level things can look very different. We first became acutely aware of this in one of our first projects on teacher supply. We were commissioned in 1990 by the Department for Education and Science, as it was then, to investigate something that was genuinely puzzling. As far as it could tell from its figures, teacher supply was under control, yet it was receiving, as it put it, “many cries from the field”. It threw open its data to us and funded us to conduct interviews with LEAs and headteachers. Our conclusion (Smithers and Robinson, 1991) was different perspectives could lead to different impressions. A one per cent undershoot, we suggested, could leave politicians and officials thinking they had got it about right, but if that one per cent affected your particular school it would feel like a crisis.
- 1.4 As we have conducted further studies, we have come to realise that there are a number of reasons why the state of teacher provision might look very different from the different vantage points. In a Leverhulme-funded study of teachers leaving at the turn of the nineties (Robinson and Smithers, 1991) we drew attention to the importance of distinguishing between loss from the system as a whole, or wastage, and loss from particular schools, or turnover. Wastage is important to the policymaker because it is an indicator of whether there are enough teachers across the system as a whole, but for individual schools it is turnover that is important because as they seek to secure the staffing they require, it matters not whether a vacancy has been caused by a teacher resigning to go to another school or to quit the profession entirely. Turnover can be more than double wastage (Employers’ Organisation for Local Government, 2002).
- 1.5 The National Union of Teachers has recently found itself as puzzled as the Department was in the early 1990s, but from the other direction. In contrast to optimistic picture presented by Government, the experience of its members is that there are still considerable difficulties in staffing individual schools. This prompted the NUT to ask us to investigate the state of teacher provision in schools during the school year 2002-3. We began with teacher resignations, appointments and the implications for the matching of teaching to qualifications. Our findings, based on 34 interviews with headteachers and a survey of 1,258 teachers, both representative cross-sections, were published in an interim report in November 2002 (Smithers, Robinson and Tracey, 2002). We make further reference to those findings in this report, but as the year progressed the main focus of the schools’ concern shifted to funding. They had been led to suppose from the Spending Review that they could expect to receive 6.3 per cent more from April 2003, but as the information trickled out many were finding that they were apparently going to receive less in real terms.
- 1.6 In order to quantify this aspect of the schools’ experience we undertook a further survey in the summer term of 2003. The details of the methods are given in Appendix A. The study was conducted on 908 primary schools and 368 secondary schools, respectively five per cent and ten per cent structured samples of the populations of maintained schools in England and Wales. Appendix B compares the samples with national distributions, and shows the samples to be representative of the populations in terms of region, size, school category, school type and, additionally for the secondary phase, specialism, gender and age range.

- 1.7 The questionnaire covered changes in pupil numbers, budget settlements and staffing complement, details of any teaching or support staff posts lost or reduced, and the impact on the curriculum and the timetable. Information was also gathered on applications for, and appointments to, posts that were becoming available for September 2003.
- 1.8 The shape of this report reflects the metaphor of the three balls. We begin in Chapter 2 with what the schools told us about their relative income for 2003-04, what had affected this, and how it varied across the LEAs, regions and school types. In Chapter 3 we examine the impact on staffing. Since six times as many schools (786 against 127) reported their budget settlements 'worse' than 'better', the tendency was for schools to be shedding staff, and we quantify this in terms of both teachers and support staff. But schools were striving to keep up their staffing so we also examine the consequences for the other areas of expenditure.
- 1.9 Fewer staff has implications for the curriculum and the teachers themselves, and we consider these in Chapter 4. The Government has acknowledged that teachers can suffer excessive workload and it has brought forward a number of proposals (DfES, 2002a). These depend essentially on employing more teaching assistants. In Chapter 5 we look at the current state of the proposed reform in the light of the 2003-04 budget settlement.
- 1.10 Even though some schools were reducing their staff complements most were also seeking to recruit to at least some posts for the start of the new school year. Some schools were creating new posts and we offset these against staff losses to estimate the net flows. In Chapter 6, we report on how many applications the schools were receiving, how they rated the quality of the applicants and whether they were able to proceed to appointment. We consider differences with phase, region and subject.
- 1.11 In our concluding chapter we report on how the schools saw the prospects for the coming year. From their descriptions and prognosis, we attempt to draw out policy pointers.

2. Affordability

2.1 In this chapter we present the schools' experience of the budget settlement 2003-04. Chart 2.1 shows that 56.4 per cent of the primary schools and 63.3 per cent of the secondary schools reported that it was worse than the previous year. Only 9.1 per cent and 10.3 per cent respectively reported that it was better. The relatively few 'winners' tended to do better in gross amount, on average, than the 'losers'. Primary 'winners' reported themselves to be better off by, on average, £38,999 and the 'losers' to be worse off by, on average, £32,032. In the case of secondary schools, the respective figures were: 'winners' £146,588 and 'losers' £129,367.

Chart 2.1: Budget Settlements by Pupil Numbers

Pupils on Roll	Budget Settlement						Total	
	Better		Same		Worse		N	%
	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%
<i>Primary</i>								
Higher	27	2.8	57	5.8	88	9.0	172	17.6
Same	36	3.7	199	20.3	284	29.0	519	53.0
Lower	26	2.7	82	8.4	181	18.5	289	29.5
Total	89	9.1	338	34.5	553	56.4	980	100.0
<i>Secondary</i>								
Higher	29	7.9	45	12.2	111	30.2	185	50.3
Same	6	1.6	47	12.8	87	23.6	140	38.0
Lower	3	0.8	5	1.4	35	9.5	43	11.7
Total	38	10.3	97	26.4	233	63.3	368	100.0

1. Contingency coefficients: primary = 0.140, P<0.001; secondary = 0.225, P<0.001.

2.2 The funding formula is driven mainly by pupil numbers. Chart 2.1 cross-tabulates budgets with rolls. In line with national demographics, 29.5 per cent of the primary schools reported fewer pupils as compared with 11.7 per cent of the secondary schools. The analysis reveals that, as to be expected, there is a correlation between income and pupil numbers, but it is less strong than might have been expected. Combining cells from Chart 2.1, we can see that 38 per cent of the primary schools and 53.8 per cent of the secondary schools with a higher or similar roll reported that their budget settlements were worse than last year.

2.3 The relative weakness of the relationship could stem from at least three causes:

- Unevenness in the allocation of the resources following changes in the Government's funding formula;
- The effects of the withdrawal or allocation of specific grants;
- Schools' estimates of real-terms increases and decreases differing in accuracy.

Variations

- 2.4 Chart 2.2 shows how the budget settlements varied by region. For both primary and secondary phases the differences are statistically significant (primary, chi-squared = 46.73, df = 20, P<0.001; secondary, chi-squared=43.72, df = 20, P<0.002), but not striking. For both, there appear to be more losers in the East of England and London than other parts of the country, and fewer in Wales. The winners emerged mainly in the Midlands, with also a relatively high proportion of primary winners in the North West and Inner London, and secondary winners in the North East. Overall, the results seem to show something of a shift from the south to the north. In Wales, half the schools reported the budget settlement had remained the same, though few thought it had improved.

Chart 2.2: Budget Settlements by Region

Region	Primary				Secondary			
	Better		Worse		Better		Worse	
	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%
North East	4	8.3	31	64.6	4	18.2	10	45.5
North West	20	14.7	77	56.6	3	6.3	29	60.4
Yorks & Humber	6	6.1	55	56.1	3	9.1	22	66.7
East Midlands	10	11.6	48	55.8	8	25.0	18	56.3
West Midlands	12	12.9	44	47.3	6	14.3	21	50.0
East of England	4	3.7	77	71.3	4	9.1	35	79.5
Inner London	5	13.9	22	61.1	1	8.3	9	75.0
Outer London	2	3.4	37	63.8	1	3.8	24	92.3
South East	12	8.8	78	56.9	5	9.4	34	64.2
South West	6	6.2	56	56.6	3	9.1	21	63.6
Wales	8	9.9	28	34.6	0	0.0	10	43.5
Total	89	9.1	553	56.4	38	10.3	233	63.3

- 2.5 Since allocation is through the LEAs, rather than region, we looked to see if there were any patterns across the metropolitan districts, the counties and the unitary authorities, but none emerged except to confirm that there tended to be more losers in London. This may appear surprising, but the detailed figures provided by the DfES (2003d) show how the new government funding formula played out in 2003-04 compared with the previous arrangements. What is striking is the seeming idiosyncrasy of the gains and losses.
- 2.6 The first part of Chart 2.3 shows changes in the minimum amounts LEAs were required by the Government to allocate to schools. Authorities like the City of London and Wokingham were expected to increase their allocations by over 10 per cent, while for Portsmouth and Southampton it was below 3 per cent. The second part of the chart shows the difference in millions between the amount of central grant received to cover all services provided by the local authority and the educational spend required of the LEAs. In the cases of Barnet and Essex, the expectation laid on the authorities is that they would ‘passport’ an increase to

schools more than the total increase in the overall formula grant (the difference to be made up from council tax). The third layer in the chart shows what proportion had, in fact, been ‘passported’ in selected authorities, ranging from 37.2 per cent above what was specified in Bexley to 26.2 per cent below in Westminster.

Table 2.3: Funding Allocations 2003-04

LEA	Highest	LEA	Lowest
% Change in Formula Spending Share 2002-03			
City of London	12.6	Hammersmith & Fulham	3.3
Wokingham	10.3	Knowsley	3.2
Cambridgeshire	10.0	Plymouth	2.9
West Berkshire	10.0	Portsmouth	2.8
South Gloucestershire	9.9	Southampton	2.6
Difference between FSS and Grant to Cover All Services in £Millions			
Birmingham	44.92	Dorset	0.44
Liverpool	25.22	Rutland	0.34
Lancashire	18.30	Isles of Scilly	0.16
Tower Hamlets	15.33	Essex	-0.26
Bradford	15.09	Barnet	-1.21
%Education Spending ‘Passported’			
Bexley	137.2	Croydon	90.2
Southampton	122.1	Trafford	89.9
Medway	120.7	Wokingham	88.3
Camden	120.5	Isles of Scilly	83.4
Solihull	114.6	Westminster	73.8

1. DfES (2003d) ‘LEA budgets published’, DfES Press Notice 2003/0079.

- 2.7 From the Revenue Support Grant allocations to local authorities we can glimpse why there should be more winners among schools in the north than the south, but the variations in the way the money has been ‘passported’ demonstrate, in part, why the relationship between changes in budget and roll is not clearcut. Winners and losers are not confined to any region, but are distributed across England, and also Wales which has similar funding arrangements.

Specific Grants

- 2.8 Another factor creating winners and losers in the 2003-04 budget settlement has been the decision to switch from specific grant funding to general grant funding. Schools that had been particularly successful previously in drawing from the Standards Fund could have been significant losers this year since a number of grants paid through the Fund ceased in 2003-04, for example, the School Improvement Grant, School Inclusion, Induction of Newly Qualified Teachers, Performance Management, Class Size, Qualifications, Pupil Support Allowances, Pupil Learning Credits, Recruitment and Retention Fund, Learning Support Units. On the other

Box 2.1: Special Grants – Primary

“S.R. bid finding and E.A.Z. help end in April 2004 and this will mean a loss of 2.5 aux staff”

VA, Primary, North East (0125)

“Need extra support staff to support SEN pupils. E.g. visually impaired child rejected on Band D, therefore no funding.”

Junior, North East (0167)

“The budget has been affected by inadequate funding for Threshold, ESAs and Standards Fund. Standards Fund has reduced by 50% for small schools support. We still have the same problems to deal with as we have always had and yet we are supposed to do the same good job on less finance.”

Infant, North West (0279)

“We are paying our ICT Technician salary from NGfL. We cannot meet the workforce reform demands by September.”

VA, Primary, North West (0455)

“Our budget balanced but if it were not for the KSI Class Size Money we would have had to use all our £20, 000 contingency.”

First, Yorks & Humb (1122)

“We have profited this year from an increase in ‘Funding for Inclusion’ - a new method in the LEA of funding Special Needs provision - we have used some of this to maintain two classes in each year group even where numbers are low.”

VC, Primary, Yorks & Humb (1158)

“We only have 4% free school meals so we lose out in our delegated budget and Standard Funds too. I cannot afford to employ the extra TA as planned.”

Primary, Inner London (2886)

“I have only been able to stay out of the classroom because the LEA have given me support as a newly appointed head, in order to raise standards which are very poor.”

Primary, Wales (4774)

“The situation in Wales is desperate. We receive no additional IT or high performance grants, my capitation is £4,000 and a supply budget which covers 12 days per year.”

Primary, Wales (4776)

“Our budget means that children are taught in wide age bands; one class has years 1, 2 and 3 children. Our budget was saved by a small schools grant given by the LEA.”

Primary, Wales (4851)

“The LEA originally hoped to provide schools like ours (area of deprivation) with better budgets but it was shelved due to political pressure.”

Primary, Wales (4586)

Box 2.2: Special Grants – Secondary

“Without ‘Schools in Challenging Circumstances’ grant for the last two years and LiG funding this year we would have had serious financial problems.”

Comp 11-16, North West (329)

“Competition for recruitment from neighbouring schools who enjoy specialist status, SRB, LiG, Excellence Cluster, Excellence in Cities funding. We have none of these.”

Comp 11-16, North West (330)

“The Leadership Incentive Grant has been used to support the budget through creative accounting. The Standards Fund has been reduced dramatically. Many innovations have had to be put ‘on hold’.”

Comp 11-16, Yorks and Humb (387)

“We are very fortunate to be EiC, specialist and LiG eligible - otherwise we ’d be finished. As it is, we are losing 0.5 FTE to try to address the workload agreement with no extra funding.”

Tech 11-19, West Midlands (729)

“We are lucky being a grammar school in an inner city EiC/LiG group. Even so, it will be difficult to meet the new work time agreement.”

VA, Sports, Grammar 11-18, West Midlands (738)

“Gaining LiG will keep us going financially.”

Comp 11-19, East (987)

“To support the staffing budget we have put a moratorium on new developments and the whole of our LiG grant has gone into staffing, as has much of our TC funding.”

Tech 11-19, Outer London (1325)

“With roll rising by 50 we needed two extra staff but could only afford one. But achieving specialist status enabled us to appoint another 0.6 science teacher with specialist school money.”

Science 11-18, South East (1437)

“Not as bad as feared, but without LiG we would have been in deficit.”

Comp 11-16, South East (1430)

“We have received LiG funding which has made a real impact through the employment of two additional teachers.”

VC, Comp 11-16, South West (1625)

“It is only because we are anticipating getting specialist school status that we have been able to appoint an I C T teacher - we ’ll be in a mess we are unsuccessful!”

VC, Comp 13-18, South West (1774)

“In Wales, we have developed a ‘grant’ culture eg KS3, key skills developments etc. Schools now rely on these extras to underpin the budget.”

Comp 11-16, Wales (1988)

hand, the introduction of the Leadership Incentive Grant (of £125,000 for three years to secondary schools in Excellence in City areas or with fewer than 30 per cent of Year 11 attaining at least five A*-C grades at GCSE or where more than 35 per cent of pupils are eligible for free schools meals) will have protected a number against budget reductions. But while 1,400 will have benefited, 1,700 will have been left out. We can see the part played by these specific grants in the headteachers' comments of Boxes 2.1 and 2.2.

- 2.9 Our analyses found no statistically significant differences between the different types of school, other than the 11.0 per cent of specialist schools reporting themselves better off indicated that, on average, they received £188,571 more compared with the £117,000 received by the 9.6 per cent of non-specialist schools. This is in line with the headteachers comments in Box 2.2.

Resumé

- 2.10 The budget settlement for 2003-04 has meant that schools have had to cope with considerable changes in formula funding and specific grants. In addition, they have been faced with increases in teachers' pensions contributions and national insurance contributions, and a foreshortened salary scale with more rapid progression. At the national level, there was an extra 6.3 per cent going into schools, plus another 5.3 per cent from specific grants, but the majority of schools found themselves relatively worse off, made all the more galling by the expectation of a generous increase. The information was also received late by schools and they found themselves having to make rapid adjustments. It is to these we now turn.

3. Impact on Staffing

3.1 Schools with lower than expected income in 2003-04 have attempted to balance their books by a combination of measures including cutting back on staff (whose costs make up a very large proportion of the budget), use of reserves, and making other savings or earnings. Even so, 19 per cent of the primary schools and 29 per cent of the secondary schools said they would be having to set deficit budgets. In this chapter we focus on staff reductions and, in Chapter 4, on other enforced savings. Schools found themselves downsizing with respect to both teachers and support staff.

Teachers

3.2 Chart 3.1 shows that 56.4 per cent of primary schools reported their income to be less, but only 25.3 per cent were reducing staff. Similarly, for secondary schools 62.8 per cent per cent reported a lower real-terms income, but only about a third were sacrificing posts. This is consistent with schools seeking to retain good staff at all costs, including allowing the proportion of the budget taken up by staff costs to rise to unsustainable levels. A middle school in the East Midlands told us, for example, that the proportion was being allowed to rise from 83% per cent in 2002-03 to 87 per cent in 2003-04 (Box 4.8, page 25).

Chart 3.1: Teaching Staff by Budget Settlement

Teaching Staff	Budget Settlement						Total	
	Better		Same		Worse		N	%
	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%
Primary								
Larger	22	2.2	37	3.8	29	3.0	88	9.0
Same	53	5.4	252	25.7	339	34.6	644	65.7
Smaller	14	1.4	49	5.0	185	18.9	248	25.3
Total	89	9.1	338	34.5	553	56.4	980	100.0
Secondary								
Larger	22	6.0	44	12.0	60	16.3	126	34.2
Same	10	2.7	39	10.6	74	21.1	123	33.4
Smaller	7	1.9	15	4.1	97	26.4	119	32.3
Total	39	10.6	98	26.6	231	62.8	368	100.0

1. Contingency coefficients: primary = 0.265, P<0.001; secondary = 0.289, P<0.001.

3.3 The 248 primary schools reducing staff reported cutting a total of 285.1 full-time equivalent posts, and the 119 secondary schools, 311.5 full-time equivalent posts. Since they are respectively 5 and 10 per cent samples of maintained schools in England and Wales this suggests that primary schools cut 5,702 primary FTEs and secondary schools 3,115 FTEs, or 8,817 FTEs in all. This is loss from affected schools, but not from the system, since some schools receiving favourable settlements were able to take on extra staff. In paragraph 7.5, page 41, we estimate that 1,165 FTE new primary and 3,135 FTE new secondary posts were created, leaving a net loss for primary of 4,537, but a net gain for the secondary phase of about 20.

3.4 The cutback in staffing was partly in response to falling rolls, but mainly due to budgetary constraints. Chart 3.2 shows that about 85 per cent of the schools losing posts gave reduced real-terms income as the reason, against the 48 per cent of primary schools and the quarter of secondary schools citing falling rolls.

Chart 3.2: Reasons for Downsizing

Reason	Primary (N=248)		Secondary (N=119)	
	N	%	N	%
Falling Rolls	119	48.0	30	25.2
Budgetary Constraints	215	86.7	99	83.2
Restructuring	21	8.5	17	14.3
Other	2	0.8	3	2.5

3.5 The type of posts shed by schools downsizing is shown in Table 3.3. On a headcount basis, the 5 per cent sample of primary schools lost 375 posts and the 10 per cent sample of secondary schools 392 posts. Of these, 139 and 177 respectively were full-time permanent posts wholly lost. The others were a mixture of full-time and part-time, permanent or temporary posts, wholly or partly lost.

Chart 3.3: Posts Lost by Type of Contract

Contract	Wholly		Posts Lost Partly		Total	
	N	%	N	%	N	%
Primary						
Full-Time Permanent	139	37.1	27	7.2	166	44.3
Full-Time Fixed-Term	82	21.9	15	4.0	97	25.9
Part-Time Permanent	35	9.3	15	4.0	50	13.3
Part-Time Fixed-Term	49	13.1	13	3.5	62	16.5
Total Primary	305	81.3	70	18.7	375	100.0
Secondary						
Full-Time Permanent	177	45.2	74	18.9	251	64.0
Full-Time Fixed-Term	52	13.3	5	1.3	57	14.5
Part-Time Permanent	35	8.9	6	1.5	41	10.5
Part-Time Fixed-Term	33	8.4	10	2.6	43	11.0
Total Secondary	297	75.8	95	24.2	392	100.0

3.6 The posts not being replaced, either wholly or partly, became vacant in a variety of ways. Table 3.4 shows that this was mainly through teachers moving to another school or leaving the profession, but 18 per cent had been freed up by redundancy. In addition, a third of the primary posts and a fifth of the secondary posts had not been re-established on the completion of a fixed-term contract.

3.7 Scaled up, the samples indicate that 2,000 posts had been declared redundant across the system. Of these redundancies, 1,240 were primary posts, 640 compulsory and 600 voluntary; and 760 were secondary, 150 compulsory and 610 voluntary. In addition, 3,320 fixed-term contracts were not renewed, 2,520 in primary schools and 800 in secondary schools. The hidden element in staff reductions is, of course, the posts that would have been created in expanding schools if they could have been afforded.

Chart 3.4: Reasons Post Available for Axing

Exit Mode	Primary		Secondary	
	N	%	N	%
Compulsory Redundancy	32	8.5	15	3.8
Voluntary Redundancy	30	8.0	61	15.6
End of Fixed Term Contract	126	33.6	80	20.4
Resignation to Move to Another School	81	21.6	120	30.6
Resignation/Retirement from Profession	106	28.3	116	29.6
Total	375	100.0	392	100.0

3.8 The loss of posts was not confined to particular parts of the country. Chart 3.5 shows that the axed posts were mainly in proportion to distribution of schools, but there were variations reflecting the 2003-04 budget settlements. The East of England and London were shedding proportionately more posts at both primary and secondary levels. Generally, the Midlands seems to have been cushioned to some extent. The relatively poor settlements for primary and good for secondary in the North East show up in the posts lost. Wales seems to have suffered less than England.

Chart 3.5: Posts Lost by Region

Region	N	Primary		N	Secondary	
		%	%National		%	%National
North East	25	6.7	5.0	21	5.4	6.0
North West	64	17.1	13.8	50	12.8	13.0
Yorks & Humber	31	8.3	9.9	30	7.7	8.9
East Midlands	22	5.9	8.8	29	7.4	8.8
West Midlands	31	8.3	9.8	37	9.4	11.4
East of England	53	14.1	10.7	50	12.8	11.6
Inner London	17	4.5	3.7	21	5.4	3.7
Outer London	31	8.3	5.9	38	9.7	7.5
South East	38	10.1	13.9	55	14.0	14.0
South West	33	8.8	10.1	42	10.7	9.0
Wales	30	8.0	8.3	19	4.8	6.2
Total	375	100.0	100.0	392	100.0	100.0

3.9 Loss of secondary posts by subject is shown in Chart 3.6. What is striking is that most of the savings appear to have been made outside the mainstream. SEN seems to have been particularly badly hit. Only modern languages of the major subjects, where a number of schools seemed to be reducing their provision, was losing a disproportionately large number of posts.

Table 3.6: Resignees from Secondary Schools by Subject

Subject	Posts Lost		Staffing ¹
	N	%	%
Maths	46	11.7	11.7
ICT	13	3.3	2.0
Science ²	53	13.5	14.9
Modern Languages	47	12.0	9.3
English ³	40	10.2	13.9
History	10	2.6	4.7
Geography	16	4.1	5.1
RE	7	1.8	3.2
Design & Technology ⁴	43	10.9	11.7
Art	11	2.8	4.1
Music	7	1.8	2.5
PE	11	2.8	7.1
Other ⁵	88	22.4	9.7
Total	392	100.0	100.0

1. Percentage tuition in subject as percentage of tuition taken from Table 29, page 30, *Secondary Schools Curriculum and Staffing Survey 1996/1997*.
2. Includes physics, chemistry, biology, science and other science.
3. Includes drama.
4. Includes business studies and home economics.
5. Includes SEN, Welsh, and other subjects. 37 SEN posts (9.4 per cent) and 20 posts in other subjects (5.1 per cent) were among those lost.

3.10 The decisions that lie behind these figures are illustrated in Boxes 3.1 and 3.2 compiled from the comments made by the headteachers. They bring out graphically the kind of juggling that has been going on. In some cases, posts were lost by making teachers redundant, but more often those leaving were not replaced. On occasions, this would be a deputy or assistant head with the head opting to carry a greater load. Alternatively, senior staff could be replaced by teachers on lower salaries. Staffing was also cut by not making appointments in line with rising rolls. Other headteachers have been relying on happenstance. One head of a primary school in the South East commented, “three pregnancies have been very useful financially.” The tensions that can arise are illustrated by a comment from Wales where the head remarks that the governors think “the money has gone on lining the pockets of teachers and not on resources where it is needed.” But, in general, schools preferred to make other savings to maintain staff, with the proportion of the budget devoted to staff rising in some cases to over 90 per cent.

Box 3.1: Impact on Primary Staffing

“Reduction in budget due to falling numbers is having the biggest impact. Next year we will probably be facing redundancies unless any more teachers leave in the meantime.”

VA, Primary, North West (0845)

“Three teachers are retiring in August 2003. They are being replaced by using a less qualified NQT and by a reduction in the number of classes from 10 to 9. This will result in increased class sizes in Key Stage 2.

Primary, North West (0563)

“Budget balanced only because of serious cuts to spending, in addition to not replacing a teacher.”

VC, Primary, Yorks & Humb (1290)

“I am making 3 support staff redundant in order to keep a teacher in each class. I am using all additional funds for this e. g. personal development and curriculum resources etc. - everything is being cut back.”

Infant, East Midlands (1833)

“Over the past two years voluntary redundancies have had to be sought. This year KS2 classes will be larger, one above 30. Parents concerned about quality of education able to be provided. Pressure on staff likely to increase. This makes it more difficult to attract more pupils to try and increase pupil rolls.”

VC, Primary, West Midlands (2092)

“For the same staff as last year it looks as though we will need a further £150,000 to avoid a deficit. We are desperate to avoid redundancies. We simply do not know what to do.

Primary, East (2977)

“The difficulty this year has particularly been NI/Pensions contributions. This took the salaries bill much higher than ever before...virtually on the same staffing and similar budget.”

Primary, Outer London (3213)

“I am reluctant to lose classroom support staff so I have reduced everyone’s hours a little in order to sustain them in employment.”

Primary, South East (3538)

“I am not replacing my Deputy who has just got a headship.”

Primary, South East (3855)

“The proportion of our budget spent on staff has risen to over 90% which is really unsustainable; it is only our growing numbers and use of reserves that enable us to maintain staffing levels, but we need more staff for 2 or 3 extra classes.”

Primary, South West (4103)

“The Governors blame Threshold payments for the shortage of cash and believe the additional money has been used to ‘line the pockets’ of teachers and not on resources where it is needed This attitude is very divisive.”

Primary, Wales (4661)

Box 3.2: Impact on Secondary Staffing

“We are in debit and have to pay back loans from previous years. The budget is therefore very tight and hence the redundancy and not renewing fixed-term contracts.”

Tech 11-16, North East (77)

“One voluntary redundancy, but this is merely the start. I have one full-time teacher leaving at Christmas and one full-time teacher retiring. Another senior HoD will retire at Easter. It is possible that none will be replaced.”

Lang 11-16, North West (289)

“Staff reductions due to loss of grants and increased payroll costs.”

Comp, 11-18, Yorks & Humb (474)

“Losing three full-time posts. The position is difficult and made worse by the promise of plenty after several years of blight. We have no reserves. We no longer believe next year will be better.”

Found, Lang 11-18, East Midlands (681)

“We have a shortfall of around £110,000. We have cut three staff Senior management will bear the brunt. We hope to balance the budget within two years.”

Lang 11-16, West Midlands (791)

“The budget settlement for Z003/04 has had a profound impact on the staffing of our school. Five valued members of support staff have lost their jobs and there have been two compulsory redundancies for long serving teachers. It will take a long time for us to recover from this.”

Comp 11-16, East (1099)

“Gained £400,000 on schools budget, but lost £500,000 from Standards Fund. Hence having to reduce staffing by 2.8 F T E as well as making other savings.”

Comp 11-16, Inner London (1182)

“Staff costs have escalated sharply accounting for more than any increase in budget. We have lost two posts and are looking at all ways to reduce staff costs without seriously damaging the quality of education.”

VA, Tech 11-18, Outer London (1219)

“Significantly the worst year in my six years as head. Despite losing two staff I am unlikely to be able to balance the budget.”

Comp 11-16, South East (1397)

“The main issue is not appointing teaching and support staff in line with the rising roll. We are three teachers short, and there are two technicians, two teaching assistants and one caretaker who we are not appointing but should.”

Found, Arts 11-18, South West (1671)

“Losing 5.9 FTE due to falling rolls and previous generous funding not continuing. Some savings made on surplus lessons, but teaching also covered from within school staffing and buying lessons from another school.”

Comp 11-16, Wales (1865)

Support Staff

- 3.11 Box 3.2 also brings out that it is not only teaching posts that are being cut or reduced, but also support posts - at a time when they might have been expected to have increased to take a number of tasks off the shoulders of teachers from September 2003 (see Chapter 6). In some cases, their posts were being cut to be able to maintain the teaching complement. In others, hours for all assistants were being reduced to save losing any completely.

Chart 3.7: Reductions in Support Staff

Category	Schools	Primary		Schools	Secondary	
		Sample FTE	National FTE		Sample FTE	National FTE
Teaching Assistants	280	482.7	9654	47	98.4	984
Clerical Assistants	49	37.6	752	28	31.8	318
Technicians	11	10.3	206	16	12.0	120
Others ¹	17	3.8	76	13	19.8	198
Total	310	534.4	10,688	289	100.0	1620

1. Includes librarians, welfare assistants, learning mentors, school meals assistants and playground supervisors.

- 3.12 The numbers of support posts being lost are shown in Chart 3.7. In the samples, 310 primary schools (31.6 per cent) and 289 secondary schools (78.5 per cent) were reducing support staff. Scaled up to the population this suggests that some 12,300 support staff were going. Most were teaching assistants (86.4 per cent), but clerical assistants, technicians, librarians and school meals staff were also being shed. About ten times as many were going from primary schools reflecting their greater role in those schools. Not only were there cutbacks in support staff: only 29.3 per cent of the 172 primary schools with rising rolls and 41.9 of the 185 expanding secondary schools said they could afford to appoint extra support staff.

Resumé

- 3.13 The budget settlement for 2003-04 has left large number of schools in difficulty. Scaling up from our samples suggests that 4,920 primary schools were having to lose a total of 5,702 full-time equivalent teachers. In the secondary phase, 1,190 schools were cutting back 3,115 FTEs posts, giving a total of some 8,817. This was accomplished mainly through natural wastage, but there were 2,000 redundancies, and 3,320 fixed-term contracts were not renewed.
- 3.14 Support staff posts were being cut back as well as those of teachers. Our sample estimates suggest that 6,200 primary schools were shedding 10,688 FTEs and 2,890 secondary schools, 1,620 FTEs, or 12,308 in all.
- 3.15 Taking teachers and support staff together, it appears that affected schools were losing some 21,125 FTEs. These will not all have been lost to the system because, as we have seen, other schools received favourable settlements and have been able to increase their complements. These are discussed in paragraph 7.5, page 41. However, less than half those with increasing pupil numbers could afford to appoint extra staff.

4. Balancing the Budget?

- 4.1 In the report so far we have concentrated on the ‘losers’ and that is fair because there were more of them, but we should not forget there were also ‘Winners’. About 10 per cent of schools reported better budget settlements in 2003-04 (see Chart 2.1, page 4) than the previous year.

Winners

- 4.2 Boxes 4.1 and 4.2 show how the schools came to be in this fortunate position. A common theme was that they had been funded for increasing pupil numbers. An arts college in London put it succinctly, “We are in the very fortunate position of having been funded for a rising roll so We have been able to appoint more teachers and support staff.” A higher intake could be a double bonus in enabling schools to run more efficiently. An 11-16 comprehensive in the South East explained, “the increase takes me to full classes.” In some cases, the schools had worked to raise their entry through particular initiatives or by expanding the sixth-form. Others felt they managed themselves well. A boys’ grammar school in the South East pointed to its “sophisticated system of financial control and accountability.”

Box 4.1: Winners – Primary

“Our out-turn has been used to buy in a 0.5 teacher to support a large year group. As we will this year be using all of our budget this will be a one-off opportunity.”

Junior, North East (0104)

“We have a surplus from previous years which is helping us to improve the number of staff on a temporary basis.”

VA, Primary, North West (0541)

“We are in a stable position this year by keeping our roll the same (means attracting new pupils due to Infant Class Size initiative) and carrying balance forward. I cannot tell how long this will pertain.”

Junior, North West (0557)

“We have a ‘young’ staff therefore cheaper - therefore demands on budget are less. Also planned a carry forward from last year to cater for an additional teacher.”

VA, Primary, Yorks & Humb (1335)

“We have been able to increase teaching and support staff only because we are replacing very long serving staff with NQTs.”

VA, Primary, West Midlands (2133)

“This year we have managed to appoint an additional 0.4 teacher to release the Deputy Head and SENCO each week, but how long we can sustain this is unclear.”

Primary, East (2436)

Box 4.2: Winners – Secondary

“As we have very experienced staff with commitment we can cover all curriculum areas with specialists and not enlisted parties.”

VA, Girls’ Tech 11-18, North East (39)

“We haven’t had to modify the curriculum yet. We have managed by the skin of our teeth. There has been a little bit of internal adjustment.”

Comp 11-18, Yorks & Humb

“We are only in this position because we have been recently reorganised from 13-18 to 11-18 and we are in the process of replacing agency staff with NQTs. Otherwise I would have found balancing the budget difficult without reducing staff.”

Arts 11-18, East Midlands (642)

“We have used all our accumulated reserves. The additional member of staff was afforded only because the LEA paid upfront for the additional pupils we were asked to take.”

Maths & Comp 11-16, West Midlands (771)

“We have expanded and will do so for two more years.”

Comp 11-19, East (1067)

“We are in the very fortunate position of having been funded for a rising roll so we have been able to appoint more teachers and support staff”

Arts 11-16, Inner London (1182)

“We are fully staffed in all specialist areas for Sept 2003. Although there were budget reductions we have been able to use LiG and EiC (cluster) money to compensate and fund some internal promotion.”

VA, Modern 11-18, Outer London (1240)

“My LEA has been fair. The school has a sophisticated system of financial control and accountability. We manage well. We had a surplus of £97,000 in 2002/03,” projected surplus for 2003/04 is £143, 000.”

Found, Grammar Boys’ 11-18, South East (1454)

“I have few complaints. The roll is rising and the increase takes me to full classes, so we are running at our most efficient, ie multiples of 30 entry.”

Comp 11-16, South East (1394)

“We’re lucky. Our budget has benefited significantly from a) our rising numbers, b) our expanding sixth form and c) the LSC funding for our post-16 is much higher than the LEA used to be.”

Found, Tech 11-18, South West (1736)

“School growth allows us to maintain staffing levels. Small (2%) reserve.”

Comp 11-16, Wales (1951)

- 4.3 Some schools attributed their fortunate circumstances to windfalls. A school in the South West found that funding from the Learning and Skills Council for the sixth form was much higher than it had received from the LEA in the past. A voluntary aided modern school in London found that the Leadership Incentive Grant and Excellence in Cities money more than compensated for the loss on formula funding. A school in the West Midlands was grateful that the LEA had paid upfront for anticipated pupil increases. A primary school in Yorkshire and Humberside was happy to have a young (and therefore cheaper staff).
- 4.4 Some of the schools we have classed as ‘winners’, however, were not much of winners. A primary school in the North West, for example, was using an accumulated surplus to appoint extra staff on a temporary basis. Another in the West Midlands was able to do so because long serving staff were being replaced by newly-qualified teachers. In the East Midlands a reorganised arts college was replacing agency staff with NQTs. Some of the extra appointments were “one-off” and there was concern about how long they would be sustainable.
- 4.5 In their juggling to bring in extra staff these schools were similar to those who had striven to maintain their staffing or keep reductions to a minimum. Faced with reduced formula funding schools wanting to avoid staff cuts, in the main, adopted a combination of three courses of action: using reserves, planning a deficit budget or drawing on other saving or earnings.

Use of Reserves

- 4.6 The cynical might suggest that a Government which had expressed concern at the amounts of contingency reserves schools were holding had devised the 2003-04 budget settlement as a means of flushing them out. Certainly Boxes 4.3 and 4.4 show that many schools were only able to keep up their staff complements by draining their reserves, “slashed to zero” as an arts college in the West Midlands put it.
- 4.7 Both primary and secondary schools constantly referred to how their reserves had kept them afloat. In some cases, the money had been accumulated from previously generous treatment.” I inherited an underspend following several years of additional funding for the school’s challenging circumstances” (Inner London 11-18 Comprehensive). But the money could also have been held for a particular purpose.” It will be impossible to meet the reduction in teachers’ workload requirements without using all reserves which were earmarked for a building project” (Infant, North West).
- 4.8 While the use of reserves has enabled these schools to maintain their staffing this year, the comments in Boxes 4.3 and 4.4 emphasize that it can only be a temporary solution. Once the reserves have gone they have gone. Unless there is a marked improvement in the next settlement, the full force of the underfunding this year will be felt in 2004-05.

Box 4.3: Use of Reserves – Primary

“Added to the trauma of a disastrous budget (if I hadn't saved more than £50,000 unallocated we would have a deficit budget), inclusion of disabled pupils has resulted in a ‘watering down’ of LSA target groups so that my present LSAs work with those pupils because the amount of support service help is reduced.”

Primary, North East (0169)

“We were fortunate to have a reasonable balance last year. This has been halved! We hope that funding is forthcoming next year otherwise we will have to make cuts.”

VA, Primary, North West (0334)

“This year we have managed using reserves and because we have a young staff. It will be impossible to meet the reduction in teachers’ workload requirements without using all reserves which were earmarked for a building project. The huge increase in staffing costs and loss of Standards Funds has had an enormous impact.”

Infant, North West (0573)

“We have had to use last year’s underspend to balance the budget. This money was saved for improvements.”

Primary, Yorkshire & Humberside (1014)

“This year’s budget has been supported by a £20,000 carry forward from last year and having made a redundancy I am running a deficit of £11,500 this year.”

Infant, East Midlands (1648)

“Without use of development capital and the fact that we are replacing an experienced teacher with an NQT we would not be able to have a balanced budget 03/04.”

VA, Primary, West Midlands (1959)

“We have cut capitation and used reserves to offset our deficit budget. The bottom line budget given was equal to last year, but more money was needed to cover basic costs.”

VA, Primary, West Midlands (2017)

“This year we have used all our carry forward. It had been earmarked to improve accommodation. We feel very strongly that teachers and learning support assistants are required to improve the teaching and learning in schools, but next year, unless the budget is much better, both teachers and support assistants will have to be made redundant.”

VC, Primary, East (2489)

“Little more than a standstill budget this year. Budget is balanced by using roll over to absorb staffing costs.”

Primary, South East (3755)

“This year there are no redundancies because we have used our contingency which is down from £30,000 to £5,000. Next year who knows?”

Primary, South West (4479)

Box 4.4: Use of Reserves – Secondary

“Standstill budget through use of surplus.”

Middle, North East (25)

“More pupils, one staff reduction, using up nearly all reserve. Far too many staff paid out of temporary funding.”

Comp 11-16, North West (153)

“Used all reserves / reduced capitation / vired formula capital monies to balance the books.”

Bus & Ent 11-19, Yorks & Humb (440)

“We have had to use the main part of my reserves to balance the budget, because the upper pay spine was not funded in full and the rising roll has not been covered. Cannot implement the teacher workload agreement.”

Found, Middle, East Midlands (716)

“We are only managing to maintain staffing by slashing our contingency to zero. We can only carry on like this for one year. If the Government doesn't put in more money next year it will be very painful.”

Arts 11-16, West Midlands (868)

“We have only been able to retain our current level of staffing in a falling roll situation by biting deeply into our surplus.”

Comp 12-16, East (1103)

“As a new head, I have inherited an underspend following several years of additional funding for the school's challenging circumstances. This cushions the 2003/04 budget where my LEA's settlement is very bad.”

Comp 11-18, Inner London (1150)

“We have used our reserves and started a programme of underspend at Christmas. We now have no reserves/contingency and despite a rapidly rising roll we have not been able to appoint additional support staff since the priority has been to recruit sufficient teachers and pay more to existing ones for retention.”

Lang Girls' Modern 11-19, Outer London (1312)

“By using £236,000 of carry-over monies (reserves) we are able to balance this year's budget. We will, of course, not be able to do this a second year.”

Arts 11-18, South East (1569)

“We are only able to maintain staffing using a rollover of £190, 000 which will not be available next year.”

Girls' Modern 11-18, South East (1485)

“Only prudent forward planning to carry forward a sum to cover a known falling roll has also helped in this tight financial situation.”

Middle, South West (1770)

“Budget worse than last year so have had to use the reserves as well as losing a post.”

Comp 11-18, Wales (Welsh Medium) (1921)

Deficit Budget

- 4.9 Even with the use of reserves and other measures nearly a fifth of primary schools and 30 per cent of secondary schools indicated that they would be setting a deficit budget in 2003-04. Boxes 4.5 and 4.6 show that the main motivation appeared to be an unwillingness to risk standards.” We had to appoint an extra teacher for the extra class. We cannot afford it, but we cannot afford not to.” (Voluntary Aided Comprehensive in the North West).” Although advised by the Director of Education to consider staff changes to repay the deficit I am not willing to compromise the children’s education” (Primary, Inner London). A comprehensive in Inner London shows the decision was not taken lightly, “We have taken out a licensed deficit - the first in the history of the school. All because of the funding this year we have anxiety, stress and low morale among the staff and governors.”
- 4.10 Some schools were setting deficit budgets in the hope, as one school put it, the Government “will come to its senses”. Others were planning to repay on the basis of a rising roll over several years. More schools may be in deficit than have explicitly planned. An 11-16 comprehensive in the South East explained disarmingly, “We have not set a deficit budget, but I do not expect our proposed budget to work by the end of the financial year.”

Box 4.5: Deficit Budget – Primary

“We have gone from a £68,000 surplus in 2002-3 (earmarked for a major building project) to £80,000 deficit in 2003/4 due to cut in Standards Fund (£78, 000) and increase of 10% on all staff costs.”

Primary, North West (0499)

“The school is increasing in size from September 2003 but we need to set a deficit budget to enable the school to operate. The deficit will be repaid over two years due to the rise in roll.”

Primary, Yorks & Humb (4923)

“We are an area of very high social deprivation. It is essential we keep our classes small so we are going to have a deficit of about £40, 000.”

Primary, East Midlands (1586)

“In a small school we have no flexibility with staffing. Expensive staff make an overspend budget.”

VA, Primary, West Midlands (2205)

“Although advised by the Director of Education to consider staff changes to repay the deficit I am not willing to compromise the children’s education and am postponing this until year 3 of the repayment. Who knows, the Government may come to their senses by then!”

Primary, Inner London (2944)

Box 4.6: Deficit Budget – Secondary

“We had already cut our staffing to the bone. Therefore as our numbers are increasing in September, we had to appoint one extra teacher for the extra class. We cannot afford to, but we cannot afford not to.”

VA, Comp 11-16, North West (210)

“Carried over £185,000 deficit in March 2003 and it will increase by £15,000 to March 2004. Situation equates to at least four redundancies. Quality of provision will be reduced. Overall achievement will fall drastically. Not fault of LEA; fault lies at the door of central Government.”

VA, Grammar 11-18, Yorks & Humb (528)

“We have an ongoing deficit incurred through building. As a result we are not growing the staff complement in proportion to the growth in student numbers.”

VC, Tech 14-19, East Midlands (597)

“Budget situation is very difficult in rural area, but some things we cannot afford to do. Although our funding per pupil increased unavoidable staff costs tipped the balance the other way.”

Comp 11-18, West Midlands (902)

“Have only coped by getting LEA to agree to run a deficit budget over five years. We have a rising roll so figures do balance eventually.”

Comp (Sports from Sept 03) 11-16, East (1091)

“We have taken out a licensed deficit -the first in the history of the school. All because of the funding this year we have anxiety, stress and low morale among the staff and governors.”

Comp 11-16, Inner London (1208)

“This year’s budget is a disaster. We are going to have to run a deficit and to get anywhere near balance we have had to use all our LiG, Beacon and Standards Fund to prop up the salaries budget. We have no funds for curriculum development or building improvement.”

VA, Comp Girls’ 11-18, Outer London (1310)

“We are not running a deficit budget, but I do not expect our proposed budget to work by the end of the financial year.”

Comp 11-16, South East (1408)

“This year there is not enough money to meet existing staffing even before other costs are contemplated - hence a shortfall of circa £400,000.”

Found, Tech 11-18, South East (1389)

“The governors will not compromise the education of the pupils and so seek a licensed deficit budget.”

Sports 11-18, South West (1717)

“Deficit budgets have been set for two years. Reserves have been drawn down to well below the minimum required by the Audit Commission.”

Found, Comp 11-18, Wales (2006)

Box 4.7: Other Savings/Earnings – Primary

“We can only maintain staff by cutting down on training and resources. We think the teacher is the biggest asset to the children.”

Primary, North East, (0182)

“We have managed to keep the same staff by using reserves, deciding on no training unless totally paid for (fees and supply) and no new resources.”

VA, Primary, North West (0735)

“From having a healthy surplus’ and looking to expand its staff the school’s current budget has led to cutbacks in two part-time teachers’ hours and other areas (resources, INSET) in order to preserve all full-time teaching posts at current levels.”

Junior, Yorks & Humb (1226)

“In order not to lose any staff have had to make budget cuts in all other areas e.g. resources, books, staff development etc.”

Infant, East Midlands (1465)

“We are just about maintaining our staffing ratio, but at the expense of less money set aside for resources and supply teaching budget.”

Junior, East Midlands (1702)

“Due to budget costs staff at this school are donating a day's pay to fund library books.”

VC, Primary, East Midlands (1541)

“Staffing is only able to be sustained as a “one off” for 2003/2004 by using all of carry forward saved to target curriculum developments, plus removal of all non-contact time, removal of all professional development training, and severe limitations to capitation expenditure eg:- no spending on curriculum area.”

VA, Primary, West Midlands (2299)

“The extra income I generate in my work outside the school - OFST ED, EA etc is essential in affording the high quality staff we are determined to keep employing.

Primary, East (2445)

“We can do no decoration, improvements or purchase of resources this year.”

Primary, East (2626)

“We managed to balance our budget only by careful ‘manipulation’ of the figures and by taking a far greater contribution from the School Association...without this we would have been in serious difficulties.”

Primary, South East (3944)

“The Governors have had to raise the money to avoid redundancies.”

Primary, South West (4482)

“Only able to keep heads above water by using monies ‘earned’ by the Head, not covering with supply, no extra resources. This created a carry forward which will not be there next year.”

Infant & Nursery, South West (4525)

Box 4.8: Other Savings/Earnings – Secondary

“We are reducing all non personnel budgets to make ends meet, including, capitation, maintenance, INSET etc.”

Comp 11-16, North West (223)

“Reduction in budget has reduced development in extra management posts of responsibility.”

VA, Comp 11-16, Yorks & Humb (482)

“Proportion of budget taken up by staffing up from 83 per cent last year to 87 per cent now.”

Comp 11-14, East Midlands (596)

“We have cut other budgets massively to safeguard teachers’ posts this year. Next year this will be an impossibility. The leadership group will have to do mass covers.”

Arts 11-16, West Midlands (790)

“There has been an ‘extra’ injection of cash from central and local Government which has kept us afloat. INSET has been slashed to maintain contact ratio.”

Found, Tech 11-18, East (1089)

“Budget this year has meant no trips or visits, cancellation of clubs, study support, enrichment, minimum capitation - just to teach, and then not all posts could be replaced/filled.”

Comp 11-16, Inner London (1208)

“We are reducing by two staff and cutting choice in Y10. There will be less CPD, fewer school visits, reduced departmental expenditure, reduced ICT spending etc.”

Comp 12-16, Outer London (1286)

“Assistant Head (MPS+threshold+3M.Pts) and two teachers (MPS+threshold) leaving and replaced by three teachers (one Australian and two Canadians) paid on unqualified scale.”

Middle, South East (1533)

“In order to maintain staffing levels we have taken a risk with our budget and will, in an emergency, use capital funds to cover the shortfall. This school has very old buildings so using capital money is disastrous in the medium to long term.”

Middle, South East (1471)

“Our budget is based on robbing capitation, staff development, buildings and reserves.”

Comp 11-16, South West (1725)

“Directly running catering with profits fully funding one teacher post which is hardly ideal.”

Comp 11-16, Wales (1951)

Other Savings and Earnings

- 4.11 Schools have looked at all possible means of balancing the books this year. In order to protect staffing a number, as Boxes 4.7 and 4.8 show, have massively cut budgets, for among other things, training, capitation, maintenance, supply, books, study support and clubs. “In order not to lose any staff I have had to make budget cuts in all other areas, eg. resources, books, staff development etc.” (Infant, East Midlands).” Our budget is based on robbing capitation, staff development, buildings and reserves” (1 1-16 Comprehensive, South West). As a result the proportion of the budget going on staff, already very high, is in a number of schools reaching 90 per cent.
- 4.12 In addition, schools are making other savings on staff. “Assistant Head (MPS+threshold+3MPts) and two teachers (MPS+threshold) leaving and replaced by three teachers (one Australian and two Canadians) paid on unqualified scale” (Middle, South East). “The school’s current budget has led to cutbacks in two part-time teachers’ hours and other areas in order to preserve all full-time teaching posts.” (Junior, Yorkshire and Humberside). “Plus removal of all non-contact time.” (Voluntary Aided Infant and Junior, West Midlands). “The leadership group will have to do massive covers” (Arts 11-16, West Midlands). We will be examining the consequences for staff workload in more detail in Chapter 6.
- 4.13 Schools have also been looking at ways to boost their earnings. An 11-16 comprehensive in Wales is funding a teaching post out of the profits of running the catering. Several primary schools were reliant on the earnings of the headteacher outside the school on, for example, Ofsted inspections. Donations were also playing a part. The staff at a voluntary controlled infant and junior school in the East Midlands were giving a day’s pay towards the purchase of library books. The School Association was making a bigger contribution at a primary school in the South East. The governors were raising money to avoid redundancies at a primary school in the South West.

Resumé

- 4.14 The over-riding impression from the headteachers’ comments in this chapter is that the budgets of many schools in 2003-04 will be operating on a knife edge, apart that is from the few receiving favourable funding. Some of the losers have bitten the bullet and reduced staff, but many are holding on in the hope the Government will rectify the situation. They have used their reserves, set deficit budgets or tacitly expect to go into the red, and have severely pruned all other areas of expenditure. In some cases, earnings and donations will make the difference.

5. Impact on the Curriculum

5.1 The staff reductions and the other savings we have discussed in Chapters 3 and 4 will have impacted on the teaching in schools in various ways. Chart 5.1 shows that the most common consequence is larger classes, reported by nearly half the secondary schools and a fifth of the primary schools. Primary schools were, in addition, often planning to reduce the teachers' already very limited planning, preparation, marking and assessment time, to make more use of teaching assistants and to recruit less expensive staff. Secondary schools were mainly intending to make savings by adjusting the timetable, holding fewer lessons in some subjects, reducing the number of sets and asking staff to teach more outside their subjects, while also looking to less expensive staff and cutting non-contact time. Secondary schools, however, were not proposing to rely more on teaching assistants.

Chart 5.1: Impact on Teaching

Proposed Changes	Primary		Secondary	
	N	%	N	%
Larger Classes	212	21.7	180	49.2
Less Non-Contact Time	307	31.4	81	22.1
More Teaching Outside Subject	41	4.2	155	42.3
Less Expensive Staff	160	16.4	83	22.7
Reduce Number of Sets	0	0.0	107	29.2
Fewer Lessons	39	4.0	84	23.0
More Temporary Staff	75	7.7	50	13.7
More Use of Teaching Assistants	185	18.9	1	0.3
Total ¹	977	100.0	366	100.0

1. 3 primary schools and 2 secondary schools did not respond to this question.

5.2 Space was provided for schools to write other changes they were having to make and remarkably 97 of the primary schools (10.0 per cent) used it to stress that the headteacher and senior staff would have to do more teaching. (Only three of the secondary schools did so). The strength of feeling comes through clearly in the comments in Box 5.1. Teaching timetables of 50 per cent or more were not uncommon, with in one case 90 per cent being cited, and the prospect of even more envisaged. Leadership, management and administration have to be fitted into in the time not occupied by teaching or covering other duties such as in one case, "cleaning the school during half term, as I cannot afford temporary cover when a cleaner is sick." (Junior School, South East).

5.3 The pressure on the headteachers can be intense. The head of a primary school in Inner London suggested that the "job is becoming unmanageable, especially in relation to building matters and raising funds through grant applications." The head of a primary school in the South East protested that "the work/life balance is not applicable to the role of a head." The head of an infant school in the South West,

Box 5.1: Impact on Primary Heads and Teachers

“We have no training budget for staff this year. Workforce reform on hold - progress we had made in giving staff non-contact time has now been lost. Management team severely depleted.”

Primary, North East (0013)

“Head teacher teaching time about 50% of the school week. No non-contact time for staff Key Stage 2 classes 36, 36, 37.”

First, North East (0235)

“As the head of a small school I have a teaching commitment of 0.9 because I can only afford to pay for 0.1 support. This is not sufficient to cover the workload.”

VC, Primary, North West (0879)

“My hours as a teaching head have increased from 2 days to 3 due to budget. LSAs if ill have no cover leaving staff without support.”

Primary, East Midlands (1785)

“We have no professional development budget this year, no planned supply days and reduced sickness insurance. Next year, as head, I will be back to teaching almost full-time unless budget increases.”

VC, Primary, West Midlands (2198)

“We have only managed to maintain staffing by fudging the budget and me doing 0.4 permanent teaching. We are certain to be hugely overspent by the end of the year.”

VA, Lower, East (2371)

“All the teaching staff teach full-time so all additional tasks required by the DfES/LEA become the head’s responsibility. The head’s job is becoming unmanageable, especially in relation to building matters and raising funds through grant applications.”

Primary, Inner London (2940)

“I have no money for supply cover. I have covered the deputy’s as well as my duties during this term. I have even cleaned the school during half-term as I cannot afford temporary cover when a cleaner is sick.”

Junior, South East (3529)

“We cannot afford to give 2 NQTs 10% PPA time in 2003/4. Pensions, NI and incremental drift in all departments (teaching and non-teaching) have taken ALL the notional extra funding we received in April 2003.”

Primary, South East (3731)

“After 9 years as a successful head I am resigning due to the added pressures of recent, successive initiatives. There is no deputy or SMT as funds don’t allow. My successor is a class teacher with no management experience.”

Infant, South West (4227)

“Small schools seem worse off than ever. Despite ‘extra’ money, head’s teaching duties are often 70% per week.”

Primary, South West (4438)

unable to afford a deputy, was quitting after nine years “due to the added pressures of recent successive initiatives.” We shall be seeing in Chapter 7 that it is extremely difficult to recruit to senior positions in primary schools. In Chapter 8, we shall be raising the question of whether the full delegation of responsibilities is the best way of managing and administering small schools.

- 5.4 Box 5.1 also brings out the pressures on other staff, with reduced opportunities for training, and even induction training being eroded. Supply cover has also been cut. The various attempts to save on spending have culminated in larger classes in over a fifth of primary schools (see Chart 5.1). Box 5.2 illustrates some of the particular decisions the schools have had to take and their consequences.

Box 5.2: Impact on Primary Class Sizes

“A sudden fall in budget this year has put great pressure on staffing costs. Re-modelling workforce will be very difficult and class sizes much larger.”

Primary, North East (0171)

“There is no cushion for supply cover - staff will be limited to essential core subject courses. Classes will be combined (against my principles). Many areas have been cut to the bone in order to maintain staffing.”

VC, Primary, North West (0485)

“Class sizes have increased to bring in funding. Bigger classes definitely have an effect on standards.”

VA, Primary, North West (0530)

“Resources budget cut to minimum. If staff are absent little money for supply so classes will be divided up amongst other.”

Primary, Yorkshire & Humberside (1157)

“Combining into 3 classes, with one R/Y1/Y2 class of 29 has caused an uproar amongst the parents. We are losing at least five to other schools, with another three possible leavers.”

VC, Primary, East Midlands (1449)

“The more able and gifted and talented groups brought to an end. Part-time staff now cover instead of following their job descriptions. Morale lowered.”

Infant, Outer London (3182)

“We have always managed to run with small classes (average 25) - this is no longer possible.”

Middle, South East (4044)

“Legislation for class sizes does not work in small infants schools - it is a nightmare to manage... and parents blame schools for ‘mishandling’ numbers.”

Infant, South East (3933)

Box 5.3: Impact on Teaching in Secondary Schools

“We have had to postpone increasing the number of sets for teaching in Y7 and Y8 because of an extremely tight budgetary position.”

Lang 11-18, North West (320)

“A French/Spanish teacher is leaving. We are not replacing her because we are disapplying modern languages in KS4.”

Comp 11-16, North West (200)

“The combination of falling rolls and tighter budgets mean larger classes, less choice, and greater stress generally and on senior staff in particular.”

Comp 13-18, Yorks & Humb (540)

“We are employing more cover supervisors to reduce our supply costs. All class sizes will be significantly larger. We are embarking on a strategic review to look further at planned staffing reductions in order to prevent deficit spiralling out of control.

Comp 14-19, East Midlands (605)

“Every teacher is up to their maximum load so we are having to reduce the number of sets, have larger classes and use more teachers outside their subjects. SEN support will suffer because staff do not have the periods and we are not able to increase our support staff.”

Comp 11-18, West Midlands (764)

“We are losing 1.2 FTE so other teachers will teach more and there will be less non-contact time. We are also losing 1.4 support staff from SEN, therefore this department has suffered cuts in service more than any other.”

Middle, East (1145)

“We are opening a sixth form for which we can only afford part-time teachers this year.”

VA, Tech Girls’, Inner London (1170)

“We have lost three posts in spite of a rising roll, because of budget cuts. This means larger classes, fewer sets, fewer lessons in some subjects, and less non-contact time for teachers.”

VA, Comp (becoming Bus & Ent) 11-18, Outer London (1227)

“Innovation has a cost and puts strain on scarce resources. Our new pathway curriculum KS4 has cost £10,000 to establish, will reduce exclusion and behaviour incidents, but no funding support.”

Comp 11-16, South East (1429)

“Hiring is difficult, firing is more so. In this county staff generally age in post and are reluctant to move on. They are also very reluctant to teach outside their area. Hence when the curriculum changes it is difficult to adjust staffing.”

Sports 11-18, South West (1704)

“Difficulty in providing the range of vocational courses we feel we need to offer in KS4/5 because of budget constraints.

Comp 11-19, Wales (4722)

- 5.5 About half the secondary schools reported there would have to be larger classes. In addition, as Chart 5.1 shows, there will also be fewer lessons in some subjects, the number of sets is being reduced and less expensive staff are being employed. Specifically, what this means is illustrated in Box 5.3. Modern languages teaching is being reduced because a teacher is conveniently leaving, hoped-for vocational courses are not being offered and, as was evident in Chart 3.6 (page 13), SEN is being particularly badly hit. Cuts in the supply cover budget are leading to an increased workload for teachers and also the use of cover supervisors. Innovation and development is under threat. A school in London is opening a sixth form with just part-time staff; a new pathway curriculum at KS 4 is at risk.
- 5.6 Over 40 per cent of secondary schools also indicated that they would have to ask teachers to do more teaching outside their subjects. This is on top of the mismatch that already exists. In a survey conducted in the autumn term and discussed in detail in the interim report (Smithers, Robinson and Tracey, 2002), we found that about a fifth of secondary teachers were teaching well outside their subjects. We reproduce the key table as Chart 5.2.

Chart 5.2: Teaching and Qualifications

Subject(s) Taught	Number of Teachers	Qualification in Subject(s)				Total %
		QTS ¹		Degree only ²		
		N	%	N	%	
Maths	183	140	76.5	11	6.0	82.5
ICT	112	15	13.4	9	8.0	21.4
Chemistry	22	17	77.3	3	13.6	90.9
Physics	25	16	64.0	3	12.0	76.0
Biology	26	21	80.8	5	19.2	100.0
Science	164	85	51.8	60	36.6	88.4
MFL	137	126	92.0	5	3.6	95.6
English	164	149	90.8	0	0.0	90.8
History	84	62	73.8	7	8.3	82.1
Geography	98	76	77.6	7	7.1	84.7
RE	86	39	45.3	6	7.0	52.3
D&T	84	63	75.0	9	10.7	85.7
Art	45	40	88.9	2	4.4	93.3
Music	30	26	86.7	3	10.0	96.7
PE	133	105	80.0	1	0.8	80.8
Total ³	1393	980	70.4	131	9.4	79.8

1. Where first or second subject of main teaching qualification - PGCE, BEd, certificate etc.
2. Degree in subject although not main teaching qualification.
3. Subject total, teachers could be counted more than once.

- 5.7 A generous definition of being appropriately qualified (first or second subject of teaching qualification irrespective of degree subject, or just a degree in the subject or a closely-related one) suggests mismatch of the order of 20 per cent. But on a

narrower definition of just teaching qualification it comes out as 30 per cent. Even this is to take a favourable view, since the staff surveyed were those appointed to specific posts and listed in prospectuses. It takes no account of the temporary and supply staff, and cover teaching, used to plug gaps.

- 5.8 The lack of fit revealed in Chart 5.2 can arise in several ways. Since it is difficult to fill the training places in subjects like maths and physics, mismatch will stem from there not being enough well-qualified teachers. This is also likely to be the case for IT which as a new subject will take time to build up training routes and a reservoir of appropriately qualified staff. But, generally, there is little difficulty in appointing to history or PE posts and the use of, on the face of it, inappropriately qualified teachers here must reflect conscious choices on the part of those drawing up the timetables. Those choices will have been further constrained in many schools by the budget settlement of 2003-04.
- 5.9 An over-riding concern for schools was that the staff cuts and other savings would impinge on the quality of education they were able to provide. Boxes 5.4 and 5.5 highlight some of the specific concerns.

Box 5.4: Quality – Primary

“The reduced budget for 2003/4 was a surprise to all involved in school, with little or no notice. It has made provision of similar standards very difficult.”

VA, Primary, North West (0897)

“Very concerned about the impact our loss will have on the support we offer to class teachers and children. We are inner city, multicultural and very inclusive. Behaviour is good because of a cohesive and consistent policy of support. We will not be able to continue to provide as much. Our deficit is so large we will not be able to clear it in one year.”

Primary, East Midlands (1707)

“I have been a head for 30 years. Now I have no choice but to undo much of what I have created.”

Primary, East (2879)

“We have numerous commitments and expectations to fulfil in our post-OFSTED action plan to raise standards, but on reduced resources.”

Primary, Outer London (3434)

“Having been encouraged to employ more staff to support the many government initiatives to raise standards, this year’s standstill budget was a kick in the teeth.”

Primary, South East (3768)

“We have been well funded but this year’s reduction/shortfall will set us back – no new equipment, redundancies, SD Action plan on hold and OFSTED Action plan delayed.”

Primary, South West (4370)

Box 5.5: Quality – Secondary

“We are a school in ‘serious weakness’ in an area of high deprivation. We are losing 3.4 teachers, and the larger groups are bound to affect standards.”

Comp 11-16, North East (66)

“The effects of budgets and the workforce remodelling could undermine standards.”

Comp 11-16, North West (327)

“Financial management is taking up a disproportionate amount of time thus distracting from other aspects of headship such as promoting achievement.”

Comp 11-16, Yorks & Humb (386)

“The more SMT do to paper over the cracks ie teaching/phone duty/cover/isolation unit the less time there is for strategic planning.”

Comp 11-16, East Midlands (636)

“This year we have not replaced management points from teachers who are moving elsewhere which will certainly impact on standards.”

Arts 11-16, West Midlands (790)

“Whatever national comments are made about recruitment, schools finance etc, the situation on the ground is the most serious ever at present. Standards are threatened.”

Comp 13-19, East (940)

“After years of making progress on all fronts from being in special measures to excellent Ofsted, it is at risk because of the severe cuts imposed by this year’s funding.”

Comp 11-16, Inner London (1208)

“Budget cuts have dramatically affected the ability of the school to address its major priorities for improvement. We have not replaced 7.3 teachers and 5.5 support staff so all aspects of the curriculum will suffer.”

VA, Comp 11-18, Outer London (1229)

“The knock-on effect of increasing class sizes will have a devastating effect on the health and welfare of the staff.”

Lang 12-16, South East (1608)

“Next year will be problematic due to further drop in population - 30 pupils so around £60, 000 - which has worrying implications for maintaining standards.”

Comp 11-16, Wales (1865)

- 5.10 Both primary and secondary schools were concerned about the consequences of the larger classes and reduction in individual support. An infant and junior school in the East Midlands said, “We are an inner city, multicultural and very inclusive. Behaviour is good because of a cohesive and consistent policy of support. We will not be able to continue to provide as much.” An 11-16 comprehensive in the North

East lamented, “We are a school in ‘serious weakness’ in an area of high deprivation. We are losing 3.4 teachers, and the larger groups are bound to affect standards.”

- 5.11 Lack of time for planning and insufficient funding to implement plans were also seen as a threat to standards. The headteacher of an 11-16 comprehensive in Yorkshire and Humberside complained that “financial management is taking up a disproportionate amount of time thus distracting from other aspects of headship such as promoting achievement.” A school in Yorkshire and Humberside pointed out that the more time senior staff spent “papering over the cracks”, the less there was for strategic planning. Primary schools were having to put their post-Ofsted action plans on hold.

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- 5.12 Staff reductions and other savings were reported as leading to larger classes in nearly half the secondary schools and a fifth of primary schools. Primary schools were also planning to reduce non-contact time and make more use of teaching assistants. Headteachers, themselves, are having to take on more teaching and cover other duties.
- 5.13 Secondary schools were having to ask teachers to take more classes outside their subjects, adding to the already considerable mismatch. They were also trimming the curriculum in various ways. There was widespread concern about the potential impact on standards.

6. Workload

- 6.1 The focus of concern when this study began was teacher retention. In our interim report (Smithers, Robinson and Tracey, 2002) we described through interviews with 20 headteachers (drawn from a cross-section of 37) the high levels of turnover they had experienced at the end of the school year 2001-02. The findings confirmed our earlier study (Smithers and Robinson, 2001) which showed that, while loss from the profession stood at 6.8 per cent, 14.5 per cent of teachers were leaving or moving from schools. These are averages and in our interviews for the current project we found an infant school in the East of England where half the staff, three out of six permanent staff, had left in summer 2002. A 14-19 comprehensive school in the East Midlands had had a turnover of 21 teachers. In a further study of teachers leaving in the calendar year 2002 (Smithers and Robinson, 2003) we found that the record level of teacher resignations in 2001 had abated somewhat, but nevertheless there was still considerable upheaval.
- 6.2 The reasons for leaving the profession were explored in all three studies. In the 2001 study, 74 per cent of the leavers from primary schools and 58 per cent of the leavers from secondary schools gave workload as the main reason for going. The 2002 study similarly found workload to be at the head of the list with again it being even more important for leavers from primary schools than secondary. In the present study there have been continual references to the pressures of workload.
- 6.3 The Government responded to the emerging evidence, in 2001, by commissioning PriceWaterhouseCoopers (PWC) to conduct a review. The demands on teachers were compared with those of 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.
- 6.4 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, 2002a) which are currently being implemented. The first phase, due to be implemented from 1 September 2003, means that from that date teachers cannot routinely be required to undertake a list of 21 tasks (originally 25, but there has been some grouping) ranging from typing and photocopying to classroom displays. As conceived, the workload reforms depend crucially on schools employing more support staff to alleviate the burden on teachers.
- 6.5 The number of teaching assistants employed in maintained schools in England has doubled since 1997, rising from 61,300 to 122,300 full-time equivalents (DfES, 2003b). By 2003 total support staff including teaching assistants, administrative staff, technicians and others had reached 222,400 FTEs compared with 423,900

FTE regular teachers. However, our survey has found that a common response of schools to a difficult budget has been to shed support staff (in some cases to save teaching posts). From our samples, we estimated in Chapter 3 (Chart 3.7, page 16) primary schools were planning to lose some 10,700 full-time equivalent support posts and secondary schools, 1,620. This must call into question the capability of some schools to keep to the timelines for reducing workload.

- 6.6 As we can see from Boxes 6.1 and 6.2 this was something deeply worrying to many headteachers. Throughout the country the heads of primary schools have found it impossible to reconcile plans to reduce teacher workload with their budget settlements. A head in the East of England confessed to having “no idea how I will be able to fund non-contact time for teachers or TA time to carry out more admin tasks.” A head of a first school in the North East encapsulated the situation as, “We were hoping to increase support staff, but have had to reduce the hours of those we have.” Elsewhere support hours were being redistributed away from children with statements and from learning support to carry out the tasks exemplified. Some support posts were going to enable schools to retain teachers. The head of an infant school in the South West gave voice to a widespread fear, “I will NOT use TAs as cheap teachers - this must not happen to the teacher’s role.” The head of an infants school in Outer London was concerned for her existing teaching staff, “I ask and get total commitment and am unable to give much in return but worsening conditions of service.”
- 6.7 Box 6.2 shows that headteachers of secondary schools were also concerned about staff morale. The head of an 11-18 comprehensive school in the East Midlands reported that many staff were looking elsewhere because of “the very real likelihood of compulsory redundancies next year” and there was “nervousness in teaching assistant/technical support staff”. Some schools were shedding support staff and others found that their recruitment plans had had to be scrapped. A number of headteachers had no firm ideas as to how the workload reform could be implemented within their budgets, and some were contenting themselves with displacing present tasks. Occasionally, schools were able to increase their support staff out of savings, including teachers going, but the load on teachers could be increased to solve other problems. A grammar school in Outer London had had two technicians retrained to solve a recruitment problem and the staff were going to have to cover the reduced technician hours themselves.
- 6.8 A junior school in Yorkshire and Humberside forcibly put a view shared by many when he said, “We all know the extra funding for extra teaching assistants was not there. A big con! If I ran this school like Tony Blair runs education, we would be in special measures.”
- 6.9 Consistently, in our studies, workload has been more of an issue in primary schools. This is understandable in terms of the pupil-teacher ratios shown in Chart 6.1. Historically, in England they have always been higher in primary schools and currently the difference is about 35.5 per cent. In other words, relatively there are a third fewer teachers in primary schools. This affects the amount of non-contact time that is available, with many teachers in those schools having hardly any.

Box 6.1: Workload – Primary

“We were hoping to increase support staff, but have had to reduce the hours of those we have.”

First, North East (0237)

“Because of the workforce reform, it looks likely that some LSA contact time will have to be reduced in order to carry out certain admin and clerical tasks.”

Primary, North East (0074)

“Reduction of ESA for children with statements. No development of our minimal teaching assistant cover.”

VA, Primary, North West (0274)

“Have had to reduce hours for support staff and lose some special needs provision that was much needed.”

Junior, Yorks & Humb (0969)

“We have had to reduce secretarial hours, TA hours, supply budget and training budget. Needed to make a teacher redundant but governors refused to accept issue of 188 notice.”

Primary, East Midlands (1485)

“Reducing teacher workload plans have been shelved this year due to inadequate funding.”

First, West Midlands (2206)

“I have no idea how I will be able to fund non-contact time for teachers or TA time to carry out more admin tasks.”

VA, Primary, East (2464)

“We will be moving towards using less expensive teachers, and teaching assistants taking more responsibilities.”

Primary, Inner London (2965)

“It is going to be impossible to implement the new agreement on teacher workload with the current budget.”

Primary, Inner London (3059)

“My staff work hard every day. I ask and get total commitment and am unable to give much in return but worsening conditions of service.”

Infant, Outer London (3240)

“There is no way I could meet the needs of non-contact preparation time given my present funding level. The PTR is being increased.”

Junior, South East (3961)

“The statutory 30 at KS1 makes management very difficult. I will NOT use TAs as cheap teachers - this must NOT happen to the teacher's role.”

Infant, South West (4248)

“We are using reserves this year to employ as many staff as possible for ‘inspection year’. TAs will be funded mostly from reserves. It cannot be sustained beyond August 2004 and cuts are expected.”

Primary, Wales (4750)

Box 6.2: Workload -Secondary

“We were planning on building a network of teaching assistants. I had a carry over of £102,000 which has been wiped out. All our plans are scrap.”

Middle, North East (103)

“Losing a technician and five teaching assistants, but have protected some non-teaching posts which I now regard as essential (attendance; alternative provision) rather than letting the temporary contracts lapse.”

Comp 11-16, North West (182)

We cannot meet the demands of the workload agreement and the prospect for the budget next year is dire. Teaching staff reduced by two. Morale is not good, and now there is the prospect of working to 65.”

Comp 11-18, Yorks & Humb (505)

“Low morale caused by very real likelihood of compulsory redundancies next year. Many staff looking at posts elsewhere. Impossibility of implementing remodelled workforce; nervousness in teaching assistant/technical support staff.”

Comp 11-18, East Midlands (567)

“We have been unable to employ additional support staff to implement workload requirements. In addition, we have lost an assistant head whose work will have to be picked up by other members of the leadership group.”

Comp 11-18, West Midlands (845)

“It will be impossible to resolve the conflict between the demands for teacher workload reduction and balancing a budget.”

Comp 11-16, East (1100)

“We are unable to implement teacher workload reforms which would entail employing more support staff and classroom assistants.”

VA, Tech Girls’ 11-16, Inner London (1170)

“We have re-trained two technicians as teachers and reduced technician hours which will be covered by teachers supporting themselves.”

Found, Grammar, Outer London (1338)

“We are gaining 60 pupils in September, but face £100,000 cut in budget. We have no money to reallocate the ‘24 tasks’ so support staff will simply have current work displaced.”

Found, Comp 11-16, South East (1418)

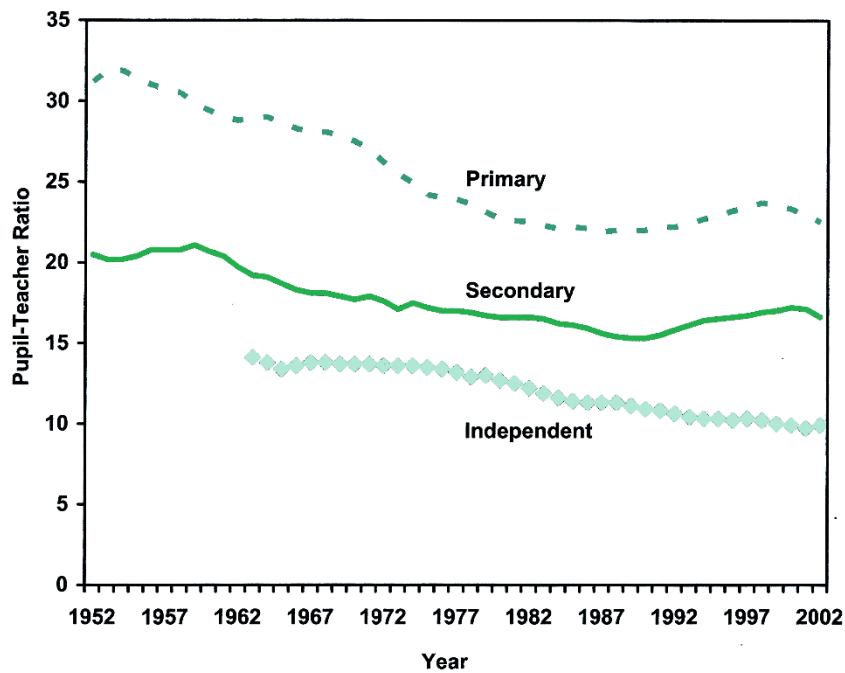
“I am extremely worried about implementing the national workload agreement. I am increasing class sizes at a time when I should be reducing workload. I am teaching more so is my deputy.”

Found, Comp 11-18, South East (1576)

“We are making one extra part-time technician appointment funded by savings in teaching staff.”

Comp 11-18, South West (1702)

Chart 6.1: Pupil-Teacher Ratios



Source: Annual publications of *Statistics of Education, Schools in England, Table 7.*

6.10 The Government's plans for reducing teacher workload include guaranteeing primary teachers ten per cent planning, preparation and assessment time from September 2005, but this has not been backed by funding the schools to employ more teachers. Indeed, the 2003-04 settlement threatens to increase workload by obliging some schools to shed teaching and support staff.

Resumé

6.11 In the light of their 2003-04 budget settlements many headteachers were at a loss to see how they could begin to implement workload reduction when they were having to cutback on teaching and support staff, or unable to make the new appointments that would be needed.

7. Recruitment

- 7.1 The third of the balls - along with affordability and retention - that schools have to keep in the air is recruitment. According to the headteacher of a comprehensive school in the South West:

Teacher recruitment is the most serious issue we have to face. The conspiracy of silence (heads cannot speak openly about this matter in order to protect their staff) means that the dramatic decline in the quantity and quality of candidates for teaching posts is obscured.

- 7.2 The Government has generally been able to present a positive picture of recruitment to training. It reported to the School Teachers' Review Body (2003) that, from the nadir of 1998, maths intake was up by nearly a half, science up by 19 per cent, English up by 17 per cent and modern foreign languages up by 6 per cent. As impressive as this might seem, the places filled were still some way below allocations, with shortfalls of 29 per cent in languages, 15 per cent in maths and 9 per cent in science. In contrast, there never has been any great difficulty in attracting primary trainees.

Vacancies

- 7.3 We are able to see how the current state of teacher training recruitment nationally affects headteachers on the ground from the surveys of representative samples of schools carried out in the summer term 2003. Of the 980 (5 per cent sample) primary schools, 491 (50.1 per cent) were looking to make appointments and of the 368 (10 per cent sample) secondary schools, 348 (94.6 per cent) were. Chart 7.1 tracks the process of appointment.

Chart 7.1: Teaching Posts Available for September 2003

Details	Primary		Secondary	
	N	%	N	%
Schools Seeking to Make Appointments	491	50.1	348	94.6
Teaching Posts Available	812		1,960	
Advertised Posts	623	79.6	1,788	93.6
Advertised Full-Time Permanent Posts	397	64.1	1,478	83.7
Advertised FTP for Classroom Teachers	341	54.7	1,192	66.6
FTP Classroom Appointment Made	317	96.6	1,096	93.8

1. Percentages refer respectively to the percentages of schools seeking to make appointments; the percentages of posts available that were advertised (29 primary posts and 51 secondary posts discounted because of insufficient information); the percentages of the advertised posts that were full-time permanent; the percentages of advertised posts that were for FTP classroom teachers; and the percentages of the classroom FTP posts that were filled (discounting 13 primary posts and 24 secondary post where the closing date had not been reached).

- 7.4 The 491 primary schools recruiting were seeking to make 812 appointments, of which 623 were advertised. Of the advertised posts, 397 were full-time permanent including 341 for classroom teachers. Appointments had been made to 317 (96.6 per cent) of these posts at the time of the survey in late June/early July. The 348 secondary schools making appointments were wanting to recruit to 1,960 posts, of which 1,788 (93.6 per cent) had been advertised. Of the advertised posts, 1,487 were

full-time permanent, including 1,192 for classroom teachers. Of these, 1,096 (93.8 per cent) had been filled.

New Posts

- 7.5 Estimates from these samples to the populations of schools in England and Wales suggest that in summer 2003 primary schools were looking to make some 16,240 appointments and secondary schools some 19,600. Of these, Chart 7.2 indicates that, on headcount, 1,640 primary and 3,230 secondary posts were new. Converted to FTEs using the DfES' standard fraction of 0.325 gives estimates of 1165.2 and 3135.4 respectively. Setting these new posts against the reductions in teaching staff arrived at in paragraph 3.3 (page 10) suggests that there was a net loss of full-time equivalent primary teachers across England and Wales of 4,537, but in the secondary phase losses and gains more or less balanced resulting in a net increase of just 20.4 posts. This difference between the phases, in part, reflects the trends in pupil intakes with primary rolls falling while secondary are still rising.

Chart 7.2: New Posts by Type of Contract

Type of Contract	Primary				Secondary			
	Total		New		Total		New	
	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%
Full-Time Permanent	480	60.0	24	5.0	1,571	82.6	255	16.2
Full-Time Fixed-Term	207	25.9	22	10.6	229	12.0	40	17.5
Part-Time Permanent	43	5.4	7	16.3	48	2.5	15	31.3
Part-Time Fixed-Term	70	8.8	29	41.4	53	2.8	13	24.5
Total ¹	812	100.0	82	10.1	1,960	100.0	323	16.5

1. Totals include 12 primary posts and 59 secondary posts for which there was no information on the type of contract.

Advertised Posts

- 7.6 Falling rolls probably also account, in part, for the high proportion of new primary posts which are part-time fixed-term. The difference between the primary and secondary phases in the proportion of advertised posts detailed in Chart 7.1 is also related to the type of appointments the schools are seeking to make. Chart 7.3 shows that full-time permanent posts are nearly always advertised in secondary schools and predominantly so in primary schools, but this is less often the case with the other types of appointment.

Chart 7.3: Advertised Posts by Type of Contract

Type of Contract	Primary			Secondary		
	N	%Posts	%Advert	N	%Posts	%Advert
Full-Time Permanent	397	64.1	84.7	1,487	83.7	95.3
Full-Time Fixed-Term	146	23.6	73.2	213	11.9	89.4
Part-Time Permanent	32	5.2	74.4	40	2.3	85.1
Part-Time Fixed-Term	44	7.1	65.7	37	2.1	69.8
Total ¹	623	100.0	79.6	1,788	100.0	93.6

1. Information on type of contract not provided for 4 primary posts and 11 secondary posts.

7.7 Another reason for the difference is that primary schools in some LEAs draw on pools of newly-qualified teachers (NQTs) recruited by the authority. Appointing from the LEA pool was also the most common reason for primary posts not being advertised (52.2 per cent), followed by appointing someone known to the school (37.3 per cent), recruiting to the Graduate Teacher Programme (9.0 per cent), and supplied by an agency (1.5 per cent). Overwhelmingly, the reason for not advertising a secondary post was that it was being filled by someone known to the school (96.2 per cent). A few were filled from agencies (1.9 per cent) or as GTPs (1.9 per cent), but most of the GTPs recruited by the secondary schools in our sample were appointed to posts that had been advertised.

Applications

7.8 The average number of applications received in response to an advertisement varied considerably between primary and secondary, and with the type of post. In keeping with ease of recruitment to training, and also falling rolls, Chart 7.4 shows that each advertised primary post attracted 15 applicants compared to six for each secondary post, but the differences were even greater when the level of the post is taken into account. Primary classroom posts attracted three times as many applications as those in secondary schools. But for headships and deputy headships the position was reversed. A deputy headship in a secondary school was likely to attract three times as many applicants as one in a primary school, and a headship nearly twice as many. Box 5.1 (page 28) brought out the very heavy demands on the senior staff of primary schools who often had major teaching commitments as well as leading, managing and administering. Heads of department/faculty are in a somewhat similar position in secondary schools and these were the posts which attracted fewest applicants.

Chart 7.4: Applications to Full-Time Permanent Posts

Type of Post	Primary			Secondary		
	N	% Posts	Mean Applicants	N	% Posts	Mean Applicants
Headteacher	14	3.5	9.2	10	0.7	16.2
Deputy/Assist Head	39	9.9	6.9	63	4.2	22.3
Head of Dept/Faculty				222	14.9	4.3
Classroom Teachers	341	86.3	16.4	1,192	80.2	5.3
Total ¹	397	100.0	15.2	1,487	100.0	6.0

1. Totals for primary and secondary posts allow for 3 and 2 missing cases respectively. Analysis of number of applicants does not include 5 primary posts where the closing date had not been reached and 8 primary posts when the appointment was made from the LEA NQT pool, or 16 secondary posts where the closing date had not been reached when questionnaire returned.

Applications by Region and by Subject

7.9 Given these differences, for like-with-like comparisons between regions, and with subject in secondary schools, we have focused on applicants to the 341 advertised full-time permanent classroom posts in primary schools and the 1,192 advertised full-time permanent classroom posts in secondary schools (see Chart 7.1). Chart 7.5 shows there were striking differences with region. Average primary applications ranged from 3.8 per post in Outer London to 33.9 per post in the North East. The

East of England and Inner London were also well below the overall average. Interestingly, in our sample there was only one advertised FTP primary classroom post in Wales (although 16 part-time and temporary posts).

7.10 Applications to secondary posts followed a similar pattern to primary applications although at one third the level. Again, the North West, Yorkshire and Humberside and the South West did relatively well, and London, the East and the South East relatively poorly. But there is also an intriguing contrast. While primary posts in the North East attracted the highest average number of applications of all the regions, for secondary it was among the lowest. For secondary posts Wales did best of all with an average of 9.4 applications.

Chart 7.5: Applications to Full time Permanent Classroom Posts by Region

Region	Primary		Secondary	
	N	Applications	N	Applications
North East	13	33.9	50	3.9
North West	31	26.2	141	7.9
Yorks & Humber	19	31.4	105	6.6
East Midlands	30	16.1	125	6.1
West Midlands	34	14.3	128	5.3
East of England	36	9.1	118	3.2
Inner London	35	10.3	52	3.0
Outer London	36	3.8	126	3.4
South East	56	12.3	190	3.9
South West	38	28.1	103	7.0
Wales	1	7.0	42	9.4
Total ¹	329	16.4	1,180	5.3

1. Primary does not include 4 posts whose closing date had not been reached or 8 where the appointment was made from the LEA pool; secondary does not include 12 posts where the closing date had not been reached.

7.11 There was also wide variation with subject. Chart 7.6 shows that history posts attracted, on average, about three times as many applications as those in maths, music, RE and Welsh. Art and geography also did relatively well, but English, design and technology and information and communications technology had to make do with between four and five applications per post. The position in physics is even worse than that in maths, but its position is masked by the ready recruitment to biology which falls in the same subject category.

7.12 Headteachers were also asked to rate the quality of the applications they were receiving. We come to the general picture in Chart 7.8. But in relation to the subjects we can see that quality was perceived to vary, to some extent, with the number of applications that were received. Over three-quarters of the applicants to the history and art posts were rated 'good', but in maths only 35 per cent were put in this category. This spectrum is consistent with the training figures. While history teacher training has no difficulty in meeting its targets, maths has always struggled and, in

spite of incentives, 15 per cent of the places still remain unfilled. Further, an analysis in 2000 (Smithers and Robinson, 2000) showed nearly two-thirds of history graduates recruited to teaching held a first or upper-second compared with only 33.4 per cent in maths. This suggests that there is an objective base to the headteachers' judgements and they do not simply perceive quality where applications are highest.

Chart 7.6: Applications by Subject

Subject	N	Applications	% Good
History	41	11.8	76.9
Art	35	10.0	81.3
Geography	60	8.0	55.6
Science ¹	193	5.7	44.9
PE	116	5.6	68.9
Modern Languages	71	5.5	55.4
ICT	65	4.6	50.0
Design & Technology ³	118	4.5	50.9
English ²	201	4.3	55.5
Maths	131	4.0	35.0
Music	33	3.8	40.0
RE	44	3.5	39.0
Welsh	5	3.2	20.0
Other ⁴	53	4.8	62.0
Total ⁵	1,180	5.3	52.6

1. Includes physics, chemistry, biology, science and other science.
2. Includes drama.
3. Includes business studies and home economics.
4. Includes SEN and subjects other than those listed.
5. Applicants for 75 of the posts not rated.

7.13 Since applications seem to vary considerably with both region and subject, it could be that one was causing the other. Chart 7.7 gives the number of posts and the applications for them across the regions in selected subjects. It shows that there are indeed regional and subject patterns. The East, London and the South East were struggling to attract applications receiving barely two or three across the subjects. Inner London could attract only 2.5 per post in PE, less than half the overall average. On the other hand, Wales did better than all the English regions in the core subjects of English, maths and science. The North West also generally had little difficulty, attracting 9 applicants per post in English, 10.5 in science, 9.7 in PE and 6.1 in design and technology (a good number for this subject). Yorkshire and Humberside and the South West also had little difficulty in attracting to some subjects.

7.14 But Chart 7.8 also brings out that pockets of shortage are likely to occur in otherwise relatively comfortable regions. For example, the 7 maths posts in the South West attracted only just over one applicant each and the one PE post in the Welsh sample received just one application. There is also variation within regions. While science

posts in the North East received an above average number of applications, the maths posts attracted only one application each. The South East, generally short of applicants, received above the average in PE. The West Midlands, average overall, only received about three applications per post in the core subjects of English and maths.

Chart 7.7: Applications to Selected Subjects by Region

Region	English		Maths		Science		D & T		PE	
	N	App	N	App	N	App	N	App	N	App
North East	7	3.6	2	1.0	6	6.3	8	3.1	4	2.3
North West	17	9.0	17	5.4	21	10.5	16	6.1	19	9.7
Yorks & Humber	18	4.8	11	7.6	18	6.8	10	7.0	12	4.7
East Midlands	22	4.8	16	4.6	24	6.9	11	5.5	8	8.0
West Midlands	24	3.1	10	3.2	22	5.2	12	6.1	14	3.4
East of England	24	2.3	5	1.6	27	3.2	8	3.1	14	4.1
Inner London	11	3.1	7	3.7	7	2.9	8	3.9	2	2.5
Outer London	18	3.2	20	3.8	20	2.7	15	2.2	8	4.8
South East	33	3.3	29	2.3	27	2.9	18	2.1	24	5.8
South West	23	5.1	7	1.3	16	8.6	8	6.3	10	4.8
Wales	4	10.5	7	7.3	5	12.0	4	5.5	1	1.0
Total	210	4.3	131	4.0	193	5.7	118	4.5	116	5.6

- 7.15 The comments made by headteachers in Boxes 7.1 and 7.2 bear out these tabulations. A headteacher in the South West refers to the “great trouble in recruiting in maths, losing three people who had virtually agreed contracts.” A school in the North East points to “serious shortage of applicants for maths/English/science not experienced in this area before.” A technology school in the South East remarks, “extremely difficult to recruit to all areas of the curriculum - they are all shortage subjects but some more than others - technology, physics, ICT, English, maths.”
- 7.16 The headteachers’ comments also underline a number of the other points to have emerged in the analyses of this chapter. Most regions had plentiful applications to primary posts, excepting Outer London and the East. Nearly all of the comments from primary schools come from those regions and they stress their reliance on overseas trained teachers: “overseas staff on fixed-term contracts mask issues of vacancies” (Primary, Outer London); “lots of interest from OTT but many have limited English skills” (Junior, East). There is also reference to another point which emerged in Chart 7.4 which is that it is very difficult to attract applicants for deputy-headships and headships of primary schools, “We have no deputy head and have been unable to appoint one (no real interest) for three years” (Infant, South East). Even the lament of a headteacher in Wales - “In the last two years I have lost two outstanding teachers because I was unable to offer them permanent posts” – resonates with the one full-time permanent classroom post available in the Welsh sample.

Box 7.1: Applications – Primary

“Recruitment of senior staff is very difficult. Even teaching staff applications are erratic - this time was good.”

Junior, East (2720)

“Advertising in TES, Jobscene and on the internet are costly. Response is very poor from UK trained teachers - lots of interest from OTT but many have limited English skills.”

Junior, East (2615)

“We exist on Australian supply staff which cost a great deal of money – thus budgets are reduced further.”

VA, Primary, Outer London (3285)

“Overseas staff on fixed-term contracts mask issues of vacancies.”

Primary, Outer London (3287)

“Adverts are a waste of time and money. Many teachers want to be non-class based or part-time to avoid paper work. School development is seriously hampered.”

Primary, Outer London (3348)

“We have no Deputy Head and have been unable to appoint one (no real interest) for 3 years. I am also losing my SENCO to early retirement and will have to do that job myself also!”

Infant, South East (3566)

“In the last 2 years I have lost 2 outstanding teachers because I was unable to offer them permanent posts.”

Primary, Wales (4689)

Box 7.2: Applications – Secondary

“Applicants for middle management posts very thin. Where are tomorrow’s leaders? Does anyone teach technology?”

Comp 11-18, North East (58)

“Serious shortage of applicants for maths/English/science not experienced in this area before.”

Tech 11-16, North East (79)

“Very few applicants for some posts. We have carried a vacancy for a whole year in music. We are having to pay management 3 to attract any maths applicants at all.”

Bus & Ent 11-16, North West (296)

“Very hard to recruit teaching staff in this borough in shortage subjects.”

Comp 11-16, Yorks & Humb (380)

“It is becoming increasingly difficult to obtain a field’ of teaching staff for interview. The number of applicants has dropped significantly in the past two years.”

Comp 11-18, East Midlands (641)

“There seems to be a very limited pool of good quality staff. Subjects such as music, English and physical sciences impossible.”

Comp 11-18, West Midlands (731)

“Management, recruitment and retention allowances do not attract applicants. But heads offer more money when they know a teacher has an interview. It happened with the posts we advertised in maths, D&T and MFL.”

Comp 11-16, West Midlands (916)

“Recruitment is a major problem. Lack of quality applicants. We rely more and more on GTP where we do get good quality but it takes a lot of staff time in support, mentoring etc.”

Tech 11-18, West Midlands (789)

“We can afford staff but getting high calibre committed people is the problem.”

Comp 11-18, East (987)

“We have 3.5 vacancies we have not been able to fill.”

Comp 11-18, Inner London (1150)

“Recruitment a nightmare - 17 OTTs, 4 RGTPS, 8 NQTs.....

Sports Boys’ Modern 11-18, Outer London (1333)

“To cover a long standing graphics vacancy I have had to appoint an ex-deputy head on CPS=3 plus UP2. An NQT would have done - none available.”

Bus & Ent 11-16, Outer London (1295)

“Recruitment is a serious issue in this area, due to housing costs etc. Employing GTPs is one way to overcome the problem, but training then becomes the issue.”

Boys’ Modern 11-18, Outer London (1313)

“The recruitment position is worrying. In this LEA the underlying trend is for fewer applications of with the exception of NQTs, poorer quality and demanding higher salaries.”

Found, Comp 11-19, Outer London (1300)

“Extremely difficult to recruit in all areas of the curriculum - they are all shortage subjects but some more than others - technology, physics, ICT, English, maths.”

Tech 11-19, South East (1438)

“We have invested in GTPs who teach considerably less, but ultimately have saved us from failing to find a teacher.”

VA, Boys’ Grammar, South East (1509)

“Very small field for any post. Often need to re-advertise.”

Sports 11-18, South East (1439)

“We have had great trouble in recruiting in maths, losing three people who had virtually agreed contracts.”

Comp 11-16, South West (1684)

“Welsh teachers are in very short supply in Wales: almost all appointments are made on the basis of personal recommendation/knowledge.”

Comp 11-18, Wales (1996)

7.17 The volume and substance of the comments in Box 7.2 also illustrate and confirm a number of the other aspects of recruitment to secondary posts revealed in the statistical analyses. We saw in Chart 7.4 that head of department posts attracted the fewest applicants of all. This is echoed by, among others, the school in the North East which remarked, “Applicants for middle management posts very thin. Where are tomorrow’s leaders?” Several schools commented on how they were coming to rely on the Graduate Teacher Programme to plug the gaps, and while it helped to overcome recruitment difficulties it called for a lot of staff time to do the training. A school in the West Midlands blew the whistle on management, recruitment and retention allowances suggesting, “they do not attract applicants. But heads offer more money when they know a teacher has an interview.”

Quality

7.18 A number of the secondary schools commented on the quality of the applicants. “There seems to be a very limited pool of good quality staff” (Comprehensive 11-16 West Midlands). “In this LEA the underlying trend is for fewer applications of, with the exception of NQTs, poorer quality and demanding higher salaries” (Foundation, Comprehensive 11-19, South East). We were able to test this against the headteachers’ ratings of the quality of the applications they were receiving. Their assessments are shown in Chart 7.8.

Chart 7.8: Ratings of Applicant Quality¹

Rating	Primary				Secondary			
	NQTs		Other		NQTs		Other	
	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%
Good	104	66.2	101	63.5	368	57.0	215	46.6
Average	42	26.8	49	30.1	230	35.6	172	37.5
Poor	11	7.0	9	5.7	48	7.4	72	15.7
Totals ²	157	100.0	159	100.0	646	100.0	459	100.0

1. Full-time permanent classroom posts.

2. Primary total does not include 4 posts whose closing date had not been reached or 8 where the appointment was made from the LEA pool; secondary does not include 12 posts where the closing date had not been reached. There was some reluctance on the part of headteachers to rate the quality of the applications: secondary headteachers declined to rate 87, primary 13.

7.19 The comment from the South East does seem to capture the general view. Secondary schools both seem to appoint more NQTs and to rate them more favourably. Nearly 60 per cent of the appointments to the advertised full-time permanent classroom posts in secondary schools went to NQTs and the headteachers rated 57 per cent of the applications from them as good compared to 47 per cent of the applications from others. In contrast, primary posts saw less of a difference, with both NQT and other applicants rated higher than by secondary schools. This is in line with ease of recruitment to primary teacher training and the greater interest in primary posts.

Resumé

7.20 In the samples, 491 primary schools (50.1 per cent) and 348 secondary schools (94.6 per cent) were seeking to make respectively 812 and 1,960 appointments, from

which we can estimate the demand nationally to be for some 16,240 and 19,600 recruits. Of these, 1165.2 primary full-time equivalents and 3,135.4 secondary FTEs respectively were new posts. Set against the losses recorded in Chapter 3 suggests a net loss in the primary phase of 4,377 posts, but a net gain in secondary of 20.4.

- 7.21 Advertised classroom teaching posts in primary schools received, on average, three times as many applications as those in secondary schools, 16.4 against 5.3. But the advantage was reversed when it came to deputy headships, 6.9 against 22.3. Head of department posts in secondary schools received fewest applications of all – on average 4.3 per post. Applicants for classroom posts in primary schools ranged from averages of 3.8 in Outer London to 33.9 in the North East, and for secondary posts from 3.0 in Inner London to 9.4 in Wales. History received 11.8 applications per post and 76.9 per cent of the applications were rated good. In contrast, for maths, where there were 4.0 applications per post, only 35.0 per cent were rated good. Within the overall pattern, there were a number of hot and cold spots, for example, very few maths applicants in the South West although there was generally good recruitment across the subjects in that region, and a relatively high number of PE applicants in the South East which otherwise struggled.
- 7.22 Secondary headteachers rated the quality of NQTs higher than that of other applicants and appointed relatively more of them. In primary schools, the ratings of NQTs and other applicants were similar and they were about as likely to be appointed to advertised posts, though some posts were being filled by recruiting directly from LEA pools of the newly qualified.

8. Prospects and Pointers

- 8.1 This report describes and analyses the current situation with regard to the staffing of schools in England and Wales from the schools' point of view. The prime focus for the DfES, and its politicians and officials, is not unnaturally the running of the whole system, but this can lead to misperceptions. A 13-19 comprehensive school in the East of England neatly encapsulated the importance of adopting a schools perspective when it volunteered:

Whatever national comments are made about recruitment, schools finance etc, the situation on the ground is the most serious ever at present. Standards are threatened.

- 8.2 Our approach has been to explore a number of themes under the general headings of affordability, retention and recruitment, drawing extensively on the personal accounts of headteachers. These have been set in the context of the patterns revealed by statistical analysis of representative samples of primary and secondary schools. 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.

Affordability

- 8.3 To draw out the implications for affordability we return to our starting point: the impact of policies on individual schools. A number of schools sent us detailed breakdowns of how they have been affected by the recent budget settlement and two, one from the north of England and one from the south, are reproduced in Boxes 8.1 and 8.2. Both seemingly out of the blue found that they had major shortfalls in their 2003-04 budgets even though they had been led to expect substantial increases. The causes are plain to them. As another school expressed it:

The key point is that although the Government has increased overall funding it is simply not a big enough increase to cover all the additional costs that they have also placed upon schools both knowingly and unwittingly.

- 8.4 The short-term consequences for these schools were painful. One had cut, through redundancy, posts amounting to 1 FTE teacher and also two support staff, the other had cancelled 1.5 FTE offers of appointment. Both were paring other expenditure to the bone to keep staff cutbacks to a minimum. Lessons were being reduced and teachers were being asked to teach more outside their main specialisms.
- 8.5 One of the schools was looking at the possibility of raising funds. But a major commitment would be required. Another school in the sample, a foundation 11-18 school in the South East, with a shortfall of £300,000, was consulting parents about their willingness to contribute regularly:

A number of students have asked me about fundraising, but the scale is large. We have around 1,000 families in the school. If each family responded to a plea for a donation of £300 per family, we would solve the problem immediately. Would this be a realistic proposal? Perhaps we could ask every family to give £10 per

Box 8.1: School A

11-16 sports college in the north of England reducing its teaching staff by 3.3 FTE to cope with a shortfall of £200,000 in its budget settlement although its pupil intake is increasing.

Causes of Shortfall

- Increase in employers' contribution to teachers' pensions and National Insurance has increased on-costs from 15 per cent to 22 per cent.
- Funding of certain activities via the Standards Fund ceased - loss of £62,000.
- Teachers' pay award of 2.9 per cent (or so we are told).
- Greater incremental drift due to shortened pay spine.
- 45 per cent of staff have gone through the threshold with 33 per cent on U2 in Sept 2003 (latter only 60 per cent funded).

Actions Already Taken

- Cancelled 0.5 appointment in PE.
- Withdrew offer of a contract in history.
- Cancelled visit from Russia.
- Temporary freeze on ordering.
- Reduced number of form groups in 2003-04 Y8 cohort from 9 to 7.

Actions Proposed

- Suspending activities which involve a cost such as KS3 and KS4 Mentoring, Staff Development, KS3 Strategy.
- A 50 per cent cut in planned expenditure on Careers, Gifted & Talented, Helpline, K3 Literacy, SEN, Alternative Curriculum, Director of Sport, PDM for SScO Prog.
- 50 per cent cut in Departmental Allowances.
- Reduction of teaching complement by four.
- SNA reductions.
- Hidden downsides - asking colleagues to teach in areas which are not their main specialism and less flexibility.

Box 8.2: School B

A grammar school in the south of England reducing its staff by 1 FTE teacher, 1 FTE ICT co-ordinator and 1 FTE school secretary to cope with a shortfall of £150,000 in its budget settlement although its pupil intake will remain about the same.

Causes of Shortfall

- Cost pressures on staffing are 11 per cent deriving from a 5.2 per cent increase in superannuation, a 1 per cent increase in National Insurance and a teachers' pay rise of 2.9 per cent.
- The teacher's workload agreement and threshold payments put another 1 per cent on the budget.
- There are reductions in Standards Funds of 1 percent.
- Because of these changes the staff budget has risen from 80 per cent to 90 per cent.
- The 11 per cent increase in the staff budget equates to 10 per cent on the whole school budget.
- The school received 5 per cent from the LEA which was above the Government calculated recommendation for the area.
- The school thus faces a shortfall of 5 per cent.
- The total budget, including all funds for the school, is £3 million.
- A shortfall of 5 per cent is thus £150,000.

Options

- Cut staff - I have already cut one FTE teacher through redundancy and am looking at others; I shall need to cut five.
- Cut all costs - no books, maintenance, savings on heating and lighting etc. before making staff redundant.
- Raise funds from parents and sponsors.

Consequence

- The damage it has done and will do to the 15 years of work that I have invested in this school, and the many years of my predecessors before me, to make it an outstanding organisation.

month for 12 months. If all agreed, this would enable us to solve the problem for the next academic year (to Sept 2004). Because the school is a charity such donations would qualify as gift aid for tax purposes and the school would gain additional funding. What do you think? Please respond to the enclosed questionnaire.

- 8.6 But as difficult as it has been in the short-term, the outlook seems even gloomier. Boxes 8.3 and 8.4 set out the prospects as seen by our samples of schools. Many primary and secondary schools emphasized that they had only been able to get by using reserves, and that this would not be an option next year. Current staff reductions were, therefore, only the tip of the iceberg; many more would have to go next year if there is not a greatly improved settlement.
- 8.7 The difficulties schools have encountered with staff affordability this year appear to stem from a combination of two separable aspects of funding: (1) the total amount of money made available; and (2) the processes by which the money reaches the schools.

Amount of Funding

- 8.8 The Government has admitted that something went badly wrong in the 2003-04 funding settlement. Its early position was that, as spending for schools had increased by £2.7 billion against a £2.45 billion increase in schools' costs, there was a real terms increase across the system of £250 million (DfES, 2003c). It was the failure of LEAs to distribute the money to schools that had given rise to the apparent problem. But as headteachers across the country spoke out passionately, this stance has been progressively modified. In July, the Secretary of State set out in a statement to the Commons (DfES, 2003i) a modified framework for funding for the two years 2004-05 and 2005-06. This included an extra £400 million for both years to be found from DfES unspent reserves and cancelling some programmes. The turnabout was complete in September when in a live webcast available to every school Charles Clarke apologised. "The Government makes mistakes, certainly I do. The handling of school funding last year was a good example of that which I am determined to put right this year" (Garner, 2003).
- 8.9 How should the Government set about putting it right? What emerges from the present study is that policymakers should complement the national or system view they have to take with a schools perspective. In arriving at a total amount of money to be made available to schools from taxation the Government should begin its calculation with an assessment of what schools need to run efficiently and effectively, and once it has settled on an amount and means of distribution it should test these out in terms of their impact on schools. The 2003-04 debacle has all the makings of a scheme which may have looked all right on paper at the national level, but which had not really taken the schools themselves fully into account.

Policy Pointer 1: The Government should initially adopt a schools perspective (rather than a systems perspective) in determining the amount of money to be made available to schools. It should begin its calculation with data on what

Box 8.3: Prospects – Primary

“Just managed to balance budget with carry forward and not replacing staff. Worried that if this trend continues together with falling roll more staff reductions would be inevitable.”

Primary, North East (0053)

“Pupil rolls are falling. Next year it will be necessary to ‘lose’ a teacher. A smaller number of children in each class would be a much better option.”

Primary, North East (0154)

“In September we will have 16 fewer children in year 1 due to general falling rolls. We are therefore employing temporary staff in case we have to make cutbacks in staffing if the trend continues next year. This is why we are not replacing a much needed teaching assistant in Reception.”

Infant, North West (0513)

“With a drop in numbers and cheaper staff employed we are able to manage this year but are unsure about next year budget does not improve.”

Infant, Yorks & Humb (1378)

“Falling rolls account for most discomfort - a pupil ‘bulge’ leaving in July. Problems will be far more acute in Sept 04 when a one year maternity ‘expires’. At current levels we shall probably lose 2.0 F TE teachers. CSA support for workforce remodelling not viable.”

VC Junior, Yorks & Humb (1129)

“We had a large carry forward - £75,000 but have wiped this out. Have also lost 68½ hours TA support to keep afloat and have a small reserve for next year. Expect to go into deficit budget in 2004/05 if funding does not improve.”

Primary, East Midlands (1595)

“We have a carry forward which will support budget for 2003/4 but we will need to reduce classes from 7 to 6 in September 2005 and therefore reduce staffing by one teacher.”

Junior, East Midlands (1754)

“We can cover the additional costs of new pay levels for teaching assistants this year, but will struggle to do so in future.”

VA, Primary, West Midlands (2328)

“The additional post is temporary due to financial concerns for next year.”

Primary, West Midlands (2044)

“We have been able to set a budget this year only by reducing staffing, LSA hours reductions, reductions in admin hours, the head taking on more teaching and using up our entire carry forward. This cannot be sustained for 2004-05. The workload agreement cannot be implemented at present.”

Primary, East (2534)

“This year has been the worst budget settlement I can remember and next year looks like being worse.”

Primary, South West (4414)

Box 8.4: Prospects – Secondary

“If the current funding crisis is not resolved, large numbers of teachers will be made redundant next year. At a strategic level problems are financial, at teacher level it is workload and stress.”

Tech 11-16, North West (299)

“Using accumulated reserves 2003/04. Real concerns for subsequent years, especially as Standards Funds are transferred to formula grants, where we will lose out.”

Perf Arts 11-18, Yorks & Humb (544)

“I had a very large carry forward which is allowing me to maintain staffing levels for one more year. If funding does not improve I will be making two teachers redundant next year.”

VC, Middle, West Midlands (866)

“We have received extra funding for an increasing roll, but April 2004 looks to be more difficult.”

Comp 13-18, East (1079)

“We are losing five posts this year and we will have to go further down the staff reductions procedures route (we are £220,000 in red) if more money is not promised (and it is real money) for next year.”

Comp 11-19, Inner London (1186)

“The funding crisis is appalling. I am only able to balance the budget because of Technology College status and even so we are losing one post. We can't sustain another year at this level of funding without making further cuts.”

Found, Girls' Tech 11-18, Outer London (1248)

“Governors have agreed to set deficit budget in line with Secretary of State's comments. We fear for next year because the LEA has predicted further cuts.”

Boys' Grammar, South East (1470)

We have been able to keep existing staffing levels this year by tightening belts in maintenance and equipment, but this will not be possible next year when without a significant increase redundancies will happen.”

Girls' Grammar 11-18, South East (1472)

“We have been able to sort out a budget to get us through 2003/4 by using up all our carry forward. We now have no margin for covering any shortfall in 2004/05.”

Middle, South West (1639)

“If next year does not see a real increase in funding, we shall need to cut teaching staff raise class sizes and/or contact ratios. Not a happy situation with the workload agreement due to kick in and derisory sums on offer in Wales.”

Found, Comp 11-18, Wales (2006)

schools need to run efficiently and effectively, and test out its decisions with studies of the impact on schools.

Processes

- 8.10 Schools' concerns were not only directed towards the total amount of money available, but also the processes by which it reached them. A representative selection of headteachers' views are given in Boxes 8.5 and 8.6. A common thread running through many of the comments is, in the words the headteacher of an East Midlands 11-18 comprehensive, "chronic disparities in funding between schools and LEAs." The Government (DfES 2003f) is seeking to address this by guaranteeing a minimum funding increase in every school, though this of course will not rectify existing inequalities.

Policy Pointer 2: In seeking to arrive at fair funding arrangements the Government should take into account existing disparities as well as guaranteeing at least a minimum increase on a per school basis.

- 8.11 Another theme was the short-termism. The head of an 11-16 sports school in the North East put it bluntly. "Who in their right mind provides a budget which changes year on year and the information is only given four weeks prior to the new financial year. Three to five year budgets please." A primary school in the South East was equally forceful. "Too much change - too much giving money one year, then too much taking away the next. If I ran my school that way I'd be sacked." According to a primary school in Inner London, "pots of money suddenly appear and disappear so planning staffing is very difficult."
- 8.12 The Government is aware of these concerns. In announcing its schools' funding plans for the next two years (DfES, 2003f) Charles Clarke said, "This is the first step on the road to a more secure funding system in which schools can have confidence. Stability and predictability for headteachers will be our watchwords." Yet there will have to be further changes as the Government attempts to dig itself out of the hole.
- 8.13 A component of the present unsatisfactory funding arrangements which the Government seems disinclined to address is one of its own making. What a school in the East Midlands refers to as its 'ad hocery':

"Too much funding is allocated on an ad hoc basis (eg LiG) and other sometimes poorly conceived projects (excellence clusters, pathfinder schemes and even the specialist schools scheme). This makes planning of future staff requirements very difficult."

- 8.14 We saw in Boxes 2.1 and 2.2 (pages 7 and 8) just how important these special grants were in enabling some schools to balance their budgets. One of the distinguishing features of the 'winners' in Chapter 4 was that they were often in receipt of one or more of these grants. But, as a comprehensive school in the East of England perceptively points out, "the top slicing of the schools' budget to introduce 'initiatives' which are targeted at a small percentage of schools, is, in effect, a tax on other schools who are not eligible."

Box 8.5: Budget Process – Primary

“We are employing a T.A. for extra hours on a basic contract to cover workload national agreement responsibilities from September. This money has suddenly been allocated by the LEA till April 2004 as a temporary measure.”

VA, Primary, North East (0143)

“Infant class size limit (30) has resulted in moving from 2 to 3 infant classes with 3 teachers. Our delegated budget is based on 2.75 teachers. Healthy reserves are being used to meet this cost.”

VA, Primary, North West (0748)

“Although GS8 improved there are many more items to be paid for out of it, professional development being one. This is a mistake as schools will simply allocate this money to staffing etc. and not to staff development. I doubt that I will be able to run a balanced budget this year if staffing levels are to be maintained.”

Found, Primary, North West, (0880)

“Our budget would have needed redundancies if we had not gone into protection. Equipment and buildings budget is at a minimum.”

Primary, East (2466)

“Support staff are essential to run Government programmes - ELS, ALS, Springboard. Give primary schools the same funding per pupil as high schools.

VC, Primary, East (2825)

“Pots of money suddenly appear and disappear so planning for staffing is very difficult.”

Primary, Inner London (2917)

“The staffing budget rose by £100, 000+ this year (£50,000 was on-costs) the Government have made a MAJOR FUNDING MISTAKE. Watch out next year!”

Primary, South East (3669)

“Too much change - too much giving money one year then too much taking away the next. If I ran my school this way I'd be sacked.”

Primary, South East (3977)

“Actual budget gave an increase of 3.7%. However teaching staff costs have risen by 17.4% and non teaching by 5.1. New SSA formula is as unfair as the last.”

Primary, South West (4168)

“There is nothing in the formula which counteracts having 35 children less on roll but only 1 less class, nor helps schools whose numbers fluctuate year on year.”

Primary, South West (4215)

“Funding formula is such a fog in Wales; we have no idea what the settlement is for education and LEAs and the Assembly are blaming each other for the shortfall.

Primary, Wales (4552)

Box 8.6: Budget Process – Secondary

“Who in their right mind provides a budget which changes year on year and the information is only given four weeks prior to the new financial year. Three to five year budgets please.”

Sports 11-16, North East (33)

“If we were across the LEA boundary we would have been £500,000 better off last year.”

VA, Comp 11-16, North West (222)

“Budget difficulties caused by additional superannuation and national insurance costs, reduction of Standards Fund, smaller teacher pay spine so staff reach top much quicker, UPS 2 not fully funded.”

Comp 11-16, Yorks & Humb (493)

“Too much funding is allocated on an ad hoc basis (eg LiG) and other sometimes poorly conceived projects (excellence clusters, pathfinder schemes and even the specialist schools scheme). This makes future planning of staff requirements very difficult.”

Comp 11-18, East Midlands (678)

“Chronic disparities in funding between schools and LEAs.”

Lang 11-18, East Midlands (675)

“Major budget problem triggered by stopping Standards Fund for learning support unit and LEA reducing SEN funding.”

VC, Comp 11-16, West Midlands (899)

“Ask the Government to stop ‘top slicing’ the schools’ budget to introduce ‘initiatives’ which are targeted at a small percentage of schools. This is, in effect, a tax on other schools who are not eligible.”

Comp 12-18, East (1093)

“With staff costs increasing by almost ten per cent plus fully delegated SEN for the first time, it is outrageous that funding per pupil is decreasing in cash terms.”

Found, Tech 11-16, Outer London (1258)

“We suffer from being just outside the London allowance area. We also do not get LSC ‘area uplift’ enjoyed by sixth forms just across the ‘border’. Our living costs are needless to say identical.”

Arts 11-18, South East (1423)

“Apart from everything else a new ‘needs-led’ formula locally is transferring funding to primary sector, but does not take into account aspects of the secondary curriculum like I 4-I 9 courses, work-related learning etc.”

Arts 11-18, South West (1653)

“Change in LEA support for NQT will hit in Sept 03.”

Comp 11-18, South West (1732)

“The funds identified by the Welsh Assembly do not match those identified by the LEA or received at the school.”

Comp 11-16, Wales (1988)

- 8.15 It will not be easy for the Government to move away from its specific-grant strategy, since it has been intrinsic to its attempts to raise standards. But it should because it is patently unfair. Schools emerge as ‘winners’ or ‘losers’ almost in spite of themselves. It is the epitome of the systems perspective. On the basis of some decision taken in the remoteness of Whitehall a school can suddenly find itself the recipient or deprived of an extra hundred thousand pounds or more. It makes planning for staffing and anything else very difficult. A school in Wales refers to this as “the grant culture” in which schools “schools can become reliant on these extras to underpin the budget.”

Policy Pointer 3: The Government should review its policy of top slicing the schools’ budget which, in effect, is a tax on all schools to fund initiatives which can be capricious in their consequences.

- 8.16 If it does, as it should, go down this route then removal of existing special grants should be undertaken over an appropriate transition period. It was suddenly switching money from the Standards Fund to mainstream funding that created some of the difficulties in 2003-04 and the Government’s rescue plan for the next two years involves reversing the planned cuts to the Standards Fund and inflation proofing it through the extra £800 million that has been found. It is to be hoped that this reversal does not mean that it is ineluctably wedded to a ‘grant culture’.

Policy Pointer 4: The Government should phase out most special grants over a transition period of from three to five years and incorporate the money into mainstream funding.

- 8.17 We will also challenge another element in the Government’s funding arrangements, that of seeking to inject some stability by guaranteeing at least a minimum level of increase on a per pupil basis, in the next section when we look at retention and workload.

Retention

- 8.18 Retention was the aspect of school staffing that was uppermost in headteachers’ minds when this study began at the start of the 2002-03 school year. Teacher resignations and retirements had climbed steeply since 1998. But as the budget settlements became known the emphasis changed to looking for teachers who might be willing to move on to create some flexibility. This, however, merely masks the large number of teachers still leaving the profession prematurely, often because of unsustainable workload (Smithers and Robinson, 2001a, 2003).

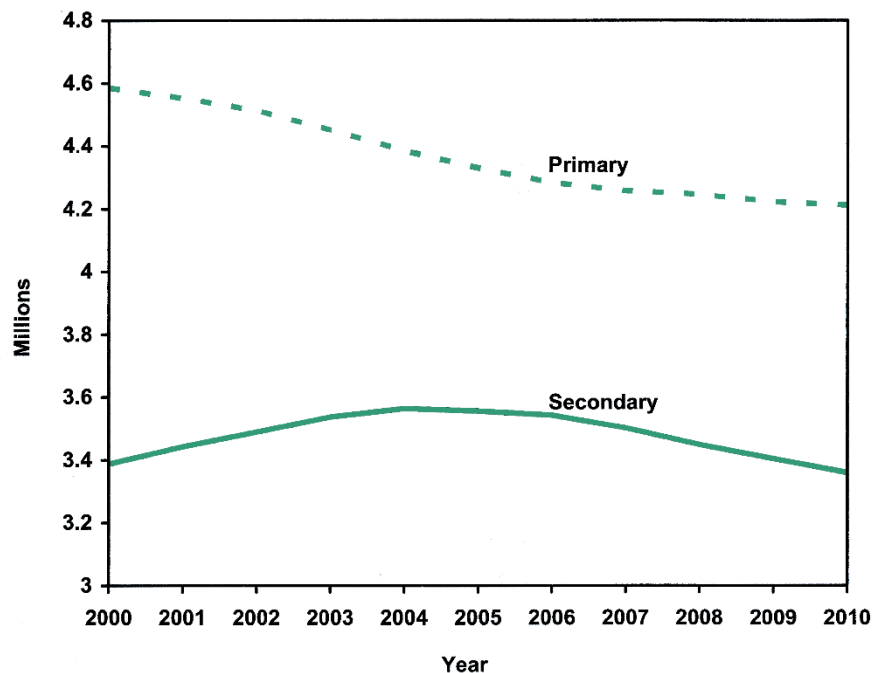
Workload

- 8.19 The Government has accepted that workload is at the heart of teacher retention and has embarked on a three-year plan to reduce the demands on teachers. It has revised the School Teachers Pay and Conditions Document so that from September 2003 teachers can no longer be required to routinely undertake administrative and clerical tasks (21 groups of activities have been specified as examples). Ironically, it was never part of teachers’ contracts that they should undertake administrative and clerical tasks, so, in a sense, ‘non-routinely performing them’ has been added to the responsibilities.

8.20 From September 2004 it is intended that a limit will be placed on the number of hours that a teacher can be required to cover for absent colleagues. This will be set at 38 hours which is another way of legislating for teachers to be required to provide that amount of cover. From September 2005 all teachers will be given guaranteed time within the school day for planning, preparation and assessment, at least a minimum of ten per cent of their teaching time.

8.21 These plans have already been thrown into some doubt, as we saw in Chapter 6, by some schools having to shed teaching and support staff. But, crucially, the welcome aspiration to free all teachers for at least ten per cent of their teaching time does not seem to be backed by funding to employ more teachers. This particularly affects primary schools, because as Chart 6.1 (page 39) showed, compared with secondary schools, they have a third fewer teachers in relation to the number of pupils. Furthermore, they have proportionally only about half as many teachers as do primary schools in Denmark, Hungary and Italy. Of the OECD countries, only Turkey, Mexico and Korea have less favourable ratios (OECD, 2002).

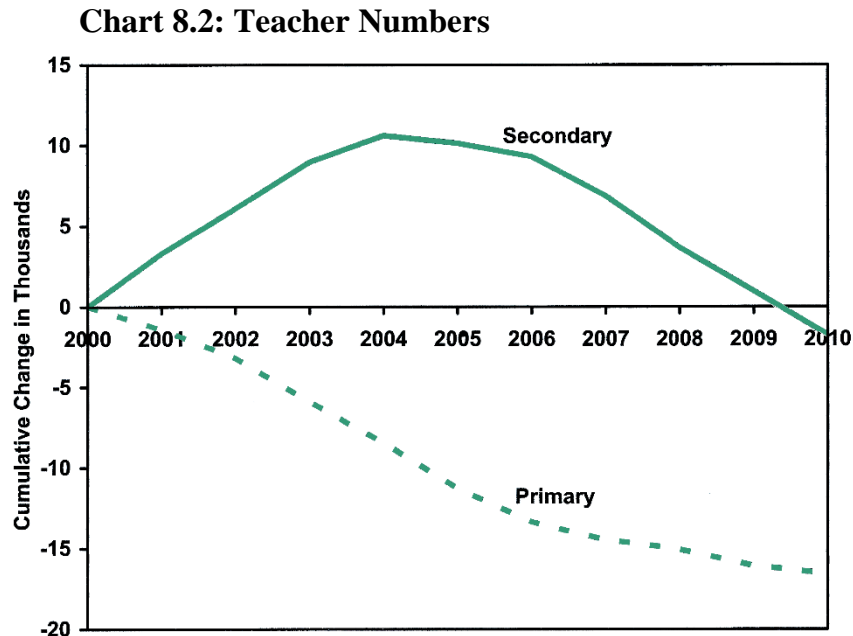
Chart 8.1: Pupil Numbers



Source: STRB (2003), *Twelfth Report*, Table 26.

8.22 With the per-pupil-funding basis of the Government’s plans for allocating money to schools, primary schools could find themselves having to lose yet more staff. A strand in Box 8.3 that we have not picked up on so far is the concern a number of schools were showing over falling rolls. A junior school in Yorkshire and Humberside remarked that “falling rolls account for most discomfort”. An infant school in the North West reported, “In September, we will have 16 fewer children in Year 1 due to general falling rolls. We are therefore employing temporary staff in case we have to make cutbacks in staffing if the trend continues next year. This is why we are not replacing a much needed teaching assistant in reception.” Chart 8.1 shows that these schools were not alone.

8.23 If allocation of funds to schools remains on a per pupil basis and the amounts are determined by precedent, then more teaching posts will have to go. If we apply the current pupil-teacher ratios to the pupil numbers of Chart 8.1, we find that the cumulative demand for teachers emerges as shown in Chart 8.2.



1. PTR of 22.5 for primary and 16.9 for secondary applied to pupil numbers of Chart 8.1

8.24 In the storm which broke over the 2003-04 settlement, the Government appeared to take some comfort from this trend. ‘It’s not me gov; its falling rolls what did it.’ But these demographic changes, in fact, represent a great opportunity. If the wish, at last, is to ensure that teachers in primary schools have some non-contact time, then funding of primary schools to keep up their staff complements would be the best way of achieving it. Class sizes could be reduced and teachers freed by the availability of other teachers. The head of a junior school in the North West put her finger on it when she said, “Pupil rolls are falling. Next year it will be necessary to ‘lose’ a teacher. A smaller number of children in each class would be a much better option.”

Policy Pointer 5: The Government should review its policy of funding on a per pupil basis. Rolls are set to fall in primary schools by 7.3 per cent to 2010. While intakes to secondary schools are still rising they will also fall by 4.8 per cent over the same time span. On present pupil-teacher ratios this will require schools to cumulatively reduce their teaching complements by about 10 per cent to the end of the decade.

Policy Pointer 6: The Government should take the opportunity of falling rolls in primary schools to improve the pupil-teacher ratio in the direction of secondary schools and other OECD countries. Employing more teachers relative to the number of pupils would tackle workload at source.

8.25 Another element in the Government's attempts to reduce teacher workload is that from September 2003: "All teachers and headteachers shall enjoy a reasonable work/life balance" and "All teachers, including the headteacher and other members of the leadership team shall have a reasonable allocation of time in support of their leadership and management responsibilities" (DfES, 2003e). Box 5.1 (page 28) showed that this issue was of particular concern to senior staff in primary schools. We also saw in Chart 7.4 (page 42) that deputy headships were the least attractive of posts in primary schools, with headships also receiving many fewer applications on average than classroom posts. Headteachers told us they were leaving because of the "added pressures of recent successive initiatives" and lack of "a reasonable work/life balance". The aspiration to redress this is admirable, but it is not obvious how it is to be accomplished.

Administration of Primary Schools

8.26 It may be that excessive demands on heads of primary schools and their deputies are inextricably bound up with current arrangements for devolving funding and responsibilities to the schools. In small schools particularly, heads and deputies may have almost a full teaching timetable, with leadership, management and administration fitted in around being essentially a classroom teacher. In Box 5.1 there are a number examples of how their teaching load had been increased by the 2003-04 budget settlement.

8.27 It is an open question just how many primary schools have the critical mass of senior staff with the appropriate expertise and administrative support to run the school as an organisation. Whereas delegation to schools has released the energies of secondary schools, it has become a burden for many primary schools, which, as small as they are, have similar accounting and reporting responsibilities to their many times larger counterparts. Is it time for the Government to rethink the administration of schools, distinguishing the primary and secondary phases? With primary schools a case could be made for providing an umbrella of administrative co-ordination through the LEAs or by formalising federations. This could fundamentally improve the work/life balance of the heads and deputies and get to the heart of the recruitment and retention problems.

Policy Pointer 7: The Government should review the delegation of responsibilities to primary schools and consider whether there should be an umbrella of administrative co-ordination provided by the LEAs or formal federations. Primary schools with two or three teachers are very different organisations from secondary schools with a staff of 70 or more. There is a case for treating the two phases differently.

Recruitment

8.28 Recruitment is our third theme. Applications and acceptances to teacher training seem to be improving. The Government has been able to claim that in 2003, 3000 more places on PGCE courses have been accepted, including increases of 35 per cent in maths, 26 per cent in design and technology, 14 per cent in science, 10 per cent in modern languages, 3 per cent in music and 2 per cent in English (DfES, 2003g). If the places are taken up, the trainees successfully complete and move into

posts in the maintained sector, then they will help to ameliorate the difficult situation described in Chapter 7. There was evidence that secondary schools in particular welcome NQTs who they rated as of higher quality than other applicants.

- 8.29 But these overall numbers are once again to take a systems view. Looking at it from the schools' end, our survey has revealed a number of hot spots and cold spots with respect to different parts of the country and different subjects. How persistent are the hot and cold spots over time? Why, when it is generally well provided, is the South West so apparently short of maths teachers? Why is the North East finding it hard to assemble good secondary fields at present? How is it that the North West does so well in science? Analysing teacher supply from this perspective, rather than just nationally, could, among other things, help to improve the nature and location of the training provision.

Policy Pointer 8: Teacher supply should be considered at the school level as well as the national. Data should be regularly collected on the ease with which, schools in different parts of the country are able to recruit to different subjects. Persistent cold spots should be addressed and any hot spots noted.

- 8.30 Our survey at the beginning of the school year found that nearly 30 per cent of teachers did not have a teaching qualification in the subject they were teaching. Our survey in June revealed that, in response to the 2003-04 budget settlement, headteachers were going to ask even more to teach outside their main specialism. Teacher recruitment is not just a matter of numbers, but of having enough good and appropriately qualified teachers. Unlike those countries discussed in the interim report (Smithers, Robinson and Tracey, 2002) where the teaching qualification specifies subject, 'appropriately qualified' in England and Wales is something of a grey area. The DfES has collected information on subjects taught and qualification match in the Schools Curriculum and Staffing Surveys (eg DfEE, 1997) supposedly held on a quadrennial basis. But the survey due in 2000 was missed and the results from a survey held in 2002 were delayed because of a disappointing response rate (DfES, 2003a). The eventual report (DfESh) does not have the 'feel' of having got inside the situation.

Policy Pointer 9: Adopting a schools perspective the Government should monitor in detail in a small number of schools on an annual basis the match between subjects taught and qualifications as a basis for helping schools to secure sufficient appropriately qualified teachers.

Conclusion

- 8.31 Teacher provision can look very different from a school's point of view compared with that of the policymakers. The Government should seek to complement its national perspective with a schools perspective including affordability, retention and recruitment, and their interactions, as they affect particular schools. That is the reality of school staffing.

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Appendix A: Methods

- A.1 The population studied was primary and secondary schools in England and Wales during the school year 2002-2003. The main part of the study was a postal questionnaire survey of schools, but there were also interviews with headteachers and a survey of teachers as reported in Smithers, Robinson and Tracey (2002).

Survey of Schools

Sampling

- A.2 Initial samples of schools, stratified by local education authority, were drawn randomly from our database of schools developed from the DfES' Register of Educational Establishments for England and the Primary Education Directory 2002 and the Education Authorities Directory and Annual 2002 produced by the School Government Publishing Company Ltd.
- A.3 The initial samples comprised 4,902 (1 in 4) primary schools and 1,842 (1 in 2) secondary schools. The questionnaires were sent to schools in the week beginning 25 June 2003. Of the letters sent out, 35 primary and 20 secondary were returned by the Post Office as not being deliverable. Fourteen schools (4 primary and 10 secondary) got in touch to say that because of local circumstances, for example the school closing, they did not think it helpful to respond. The effective initial samples were, therefore, 4,863 primary and 1,812 secondary schools.
- A.4 Of the effective samples, 2,048 primary schools (42.1 percent) and 668 secondary schools (36.9 per cent) responded. Of these, 27 primary and 14 secondary questionnaires were returned too late to be included in the analysis. The 2,675 questionnaires available for analysis were coded and tagged by an experienced team of four according to printed coding frames. The coded information was inputted into the computer as an Excel file, verified and then transferred into SPSS (Version 10) for analysis.

Structured Samples

- A.5 From the responses, structured samples of 5 per cent of primary and 10 per cent of secondary schools were derived from cross-tabulations of the national distributions by region and number of pupils on roll. The schools included in any cell were randomly selected by computer programme. Where occasionally there were too few for any cell, compensation was from a neighbouring cell. Middle deemed secondary schools were included in the secondary sample, but since they differ on size and regional distribution from other secondary schools they were drawn separately.
- A.6 The make-up of the primary and secondary samples is shown and comparisons with the national distribution by region and country are given in Table A.1. Distributions by school size are shown in Table A.2. Comparisons with national distributions for primary schools by status and type, and for secondary schools by status, type, gender of pupils, age range, and specialism are provided in Appendix B confirming that, in so far, as the initial response was representative, the structured samples of 980 primary schools and 368 secondary schools fully reflect the populations of schools in England and Wales.

Table A.1: Samples by Region and Country¹

Region and Country	Primary			Secondary		
	N	%Sample	%National	N	%Sample	%National
North East	48	4.9	5.0	22	6.0	6.0
North West	136	13.9	13.8	48	13.0	13.0
Yorks & Humber	98	10.0	9.9	33	9.0	8.9
East Midlands	86	8.8	8.8	32	8.7	8.8
West Midlands	93	9.5	9.8	42	11.4	11.4
East of England	108	11.0	10.7	44	11.9	11.6
Inner London	36	3.7	3.7	12	3.3	3.7
Outer London	58	5.9	5.9	26	7.1	7.5
South East	137	14.0	13.9	53	14.4	14.0
South West	99	10.1	10.1	33	9.0	9.0
Wales	81	8.3	8.3	23	6.3	6.2
Total	980	100.0	100.0	368	100.0	100.0

1. National distribution taken from *Statistics of Education, Schools in England, 2002*, Table 2, pp 18-19 and *Schools in Wales: General Statistics 2002*, Tables 3.1 and 4.1, p24 and p34.

Table A.2: Samples by School Size

Number on Roll	N	Primary		Number on Roll	N	Secondary	
		%Samp	%Nat			%Samp	%Nat
Up to 100	161	16.4	16.4	Up to 400	18	4.9	5.8
101 to 200	292	29.8	30.0	401 to 700	77	20.9	21.4
201 to 300	300	30.6	30.6	701 to 1000	119	32.3	30.9
301 to 400	141	14.4	14.4	1001 to 1300	91	24.7	24.6
401 to 500	64	6.5	6.6	1301 to 1600	47	12.8	12.8
501 or more	22	2.2	2.1	1601 or more	16	4.3	4.5
Total	980	100.0	100.0	Total	368	100.0	100.0

1. National distribution taken from *Statistics of Education, Schools in England, 2002*, Table 20, p43 and *Schools in Wales: General Statistics 2002*, Tables 3.7 and 4.7, p27 and p36.

Questionnaire

- A.7 The questionnaire was simple and attractively designed as a four-sided booklet. It first asked for some establishing information followed by questions on changes in the roll and teaching staff complement. If teachers were not being replaced, schools were asked to give the reasons and the total in FTEs. Schools were also asked whether they were able to afford extra support staff or whether they were having to make reductions, and to specify. There were questions on the budget settlement for 2003-04 and how it compared with the previous year's. Headteachers were asked whether there would have to be any changes to the teaching.
- A.8 Spread across the centre pages were detailed questions on staff not being replaced and recruitment. For each teacher not being replaced schools were asked to indicate the post, type of contract, whether the post was lost wholly or partly, how the post was vacated, and how the lost teaching input would be covered. For each post being

filled for September 2003, the school was asked to say what type of post, whether it was newly created, whether it had been advertised, the number of applicants, to rate the quality of the applicants, whether an appointment had been made, whether it was filled by an NQT and the type of contact offered.

Interim Report

- A.9 Interviews were conducted with headteachers at the start of the 2002-03 school year and a survey of teachers was undertaken in the autumn term. the data were analysed as an interim report (Smithers, Robinson and Tracey, 2002)
- A.10 Interviews with 34 headteachers (17 in each of primary and secondary) were carried out by two experienced researchers. They were chosen from the sampling frame to be representative of the regions, with two being held in each of the larger regions. The interviews were by telephone each lasting between 40 minutes and an hour. With the headteachers' permission the interviews were recorded. The tapes were transcribed and subjected to content and theme analysis.
- A.11 The survey of teachers was designed to explore the match between qualifications and subject(s) taught. About a third of maintained schools publish staff lists either in prospectuses or on their websites. From among those, an initial sample of 1 in 2 was drawn. Of the 514 schools approached to participate, 465 -agreed to do so. They were sent letters and questionnaires to be handed on to members of staff who had been drawn in a 1 in 10 random sample. In total 2,959 letters were sent out and 1,258 completed questionnaires were received (42.5 per cent).

Appendix B: Comparison with National Distributions

Primary

- B.1 Tables B.1 and B.2 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.

Table B.1: Primary Sample by Type of School

Type	Sample		National ¹	
	N	%	N	%
Infant	108	11.0	2,115	10.8
First	78	8.0	1,540	7.9
Infant and Junior	678	69.2	13,575	69.2
First and Middle	9	0.9	190	1.0
Junior	100	10.2	2,057	10.5
Middle – Primary	7	0.7	132	0.7
Total	980	100.0	19,609	100.0

1. *Statistics of Education, Schools in England, 2002*, Table 9a, p28 and *Schools in Wales: General Statistics 2002*, Table 3.2, p25.

Table B.2: Primary Sample by Status

Status	Sample		National ¹	
	N	%	N	%
Community	629	64.2	12,627	64.4
Voluntary Aided	193	19.7	3,863	19.7
Voluntary Controlled	136	13.9	2,753	14.0
Foundation	22	2.2	366	1.9
Total	980	100.0	19,609	100.0

1. *Statistics of Education, Schools in England, 2002*, Table 9a, p44 and *Schools in Wales: General Statistics 2002*, Table 3.5, p26

Secondary

- B.2 Tables B.3-B.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.

Table B.3: Secondary Sample by Gender of Pupils

Gender of Pupils	Sample		National ¹	
	N	%	N	%
Coeducational	326	88.6	3,263	88.5
Girls'	23	6.3	232	6.3
Boys'	19	5.2	189	5.1
Total	368	100.0	3,684	100.0

1. *Statistics of Education, Schools in England, 2002*, Table 10, p31 and *Schools in Wales. "General Statistics 2002*, Table 4.4, p35.

Table B.4: Secondary Sample by Status

Status	Sample		National ¹	
	N	%	N	%
Community	248	67.4	2,476	67.2
Voluntary Aided	52	14.1	568	15.4
Voluntary Controlled	17	4.6	131	3.6
Foundation	51	13.9	509	13.8
Total	368	100.0	3,684	100.0

1. *Statistics of Education, Schools in England, 2002*, Table 21, p 44 and *Schools in Wales: General Statistics 2002*, Table 4.6, p36.

Table B.5: Secondary Sample by Type of School

Type	Sample		National ¹	
	N	%	N	%
Comprehensive	306	83.2	3,063	83.1
Grammar	16	4.3	161	4.4
Modern ²	16	4.3	160	4.3
Middle – Secondary	30	8.2	300	8.1
Total	368	100.0	3,684	100.0

1. *Statistics of Education, Schools in England, 2002*, Table 9b, pp 28-29 and *Schools in Wales: General Statistics 2002*, Table 4.3, p35.

2. Includes technical and other.

Table B.6: Secondary Sample by Age Range

Age Range	Sample		National ¹	
	N	%	N	%
Up to 13 years	30	8.2	300	8.1
Up to 16 years	144	39.1	1,464	39.7
Up to 18 years	194	52.7	1,920	52.1
Total	368	100.0	3,684	100.0

1. *Statistics of Education, Schools in England, 2002*, Table 20, p 43 and *Schools in Wales: General Statistics 2002*, Table 4.4, p35.

Table B.7: Secondary Sample by Specialism

Specialism	Sample		National ¹	
	N	%	N	%
General	250	67.9	2461	66.8
Technology	46	12.5	473	12.8
Arts	16	4.3	202	5.5
Sports	23	6.3	195	5.3
Languages	20	5.4	173	4.7
Other	13	3.7	180	4.9
Total	368	100.0	3684	100.0

1. Taken as the mid points between numbers designated September 2002 and September 2003 since in describing themselves some, but not all schools anticipated their new status.

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