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1. Introduction

Schools facing challenging circumstances continue to be a serious concern, especially to a government committed to social justice and opportunity for all. 'Challenging circumstances' or 'challenging schools' can have many interpretations and associations – poor pupil intake, low performance, or negative Ofsted judgements. In this report we use these terms in a broad sense, recognising these connotations but without passing judgement, aware that such crude measures do not encapsulate the complex contexts of these schools. The starting point of the report is that the most important factor in raising levels of attainment in schools facing challenging circumstances is a high quality, stable workforce, backed up by good leaders. Yet many feel that it is precisely these schools that have the most difficulty in attracting and retaining sufficient staff. This view is based on widespread belief, anecdotal evidence, and some research evidence. At the same time, the high level deregulation of the teacher market in England can make changing this situation difficult in policy terms.

Nationally, the peak of the 'crisis' in terms of teacher vacancies has passed, yet problems persist in schools facing challenging circumstances. The combination and interplay of these factors presents a vital issue in social justice terms, as many of those students who potentially have the most to gain from education, as a means of breaking out of deprivation, are currently getting a poorer deal from our education system. Smithers and Robinson have undertaken important research in this area, which found:

> 'There is, indeed, a polarity in the system, particularly in the secondary phase, whereby teachers move to schools in what they perceive to be the more favourable circumstances. Schools with higher proportions of pupils who perform poorly, are eligible for free school meals, or have special needs, tend to find it more difficult to hold on to staff. This is understandable in terms of teachers' career progression since they can find themselves judged on the academic performance and behaviour of their pupils. It is arguable, however, that pupils who find learning more difficult deserve the better teachers. It becomes an issue, therefore, how and to what extent to attempt to counteract the polarity' (Smithers and Robinson, 2003).

Their most recent report confirmed this important finding: struggling schools are losing teachers at a higher rate as they move to less challenging schools (Smithers and Robinson, 2005).

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The government has placed considerable focus on schools facing challenging circumstances, however, surprisingly, there is no policy targeted at recruiting and retaining high quality teachers in these schools. This is despite the consensus that teacher effects have a greater impact on attainment than school effects. Furthermore, this issue has been made more pressing politically following a recent Education and Skills Select Committee report which concluded this should be a top priority for both the government and the Teacher Training Agency (House of Commons Education and Skills Select Committee, 2004). A focus on these teachers could prove to be a key factor in unlocking many of the issues faced by challenging schools.

ippr wanted to investigate two key policy challenges, arising from the link between these factors:

- How can a climate be created to ensure that enough high quality (or potential high quality) teachers want to teach, and stay teaching, in the most challenging schools?
- How can teachers who have made this choice be supported and trained so that they have the resources to do the best possible job and are motivated to remain in these schools?

Our view is that the vast majority of teachers are able to be 'high quality teachers' when they are well supported and valued. The primary research sought to understand from the teachers' perspective why teachers are attracted to school X rather than school Y.

Methodology

Population of schools

We selected our population of **challenging schools** as those schools that were at risk of missing the government's targets: schools with less than 25 per cent of students achieving the benchmark of five GCSEs at grades A*-C in four out of the last five years, including 2004. This gave us a population of 96 schools outside of London. This measure would have given us only 11 schools in London, and as we were interested in the particular issues faced by schools in the capital, we boosted the London sample to include schools that had not reached 25 per cent of students achieving five GCSEs at grades A*-C in three out of last five years (not necessarily including 2004), which gave us 24 London schools in total.

We matched each school in this group with a school similar in terms of type and ethos, factoring out other factors that affect teachers' choices. The **matched schools** were in the same travel to work area and had the same

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features in terms of faith/non-faith, single-sex/mixed, with/without a sixth form. The rationale for this was to eliminate a range of possible reasons why a teacher might prefer working in one school rather than another, and focus on attainment. In every case the matched school had significantly higher attainment, although we also avoided those schools that were extremes in terms of exceptionally high attainment.

Institute for Policy Studies in Education

Working with the Institute for Policy Studies in Education (IPSE) we undertook:

- a school survey – a request for information and a questionnaire was sent to the headteachers of the 140 schools in our population. The response rate was very low
- an analysis of Employers' Organisation (NEOST) data – this data is collected every year. It was used to provide an overview of staffing for the population of schools in our two groups
- A teachers' questionnaire – issued to all teachers in five challenging and five matched schools, to achieve a broad overview of their career patterns, motivations and job satisfaction.

People and Policy team at ippr

We have also carried out qualitative research, working with ippr's People and Policy team. We conducted 11 focus groups with teachers:

- Six with teachers from challenging schools; five with teachers from matched schools.
- Seven in London; two in the North West; two in a town in the South East.
- In total 73 teachers from 16 schools took part.
- We ensured a mix of gender, age, ethnicity, time in teaching, numbers of schools taught in, subjects taught, qualifying routes and teaching positions.
- Teachers were self-selecting, and incentives were paid.

To find out more

The primary research reports can be found at www.ippr.org/education and the full reports can be downloaded free of charge. There are also some more details of the primary research in appendix A.

The focus of the report has necessitated excluding related areas that would also have been of interest but were not within the scope of this project. Crucially, we have focused on secondary, not primary schools, and teachers, rather than on all the school staff. Also, the report looks at the issues in relation to England rather than the whole of the United Kingdom

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and does not explore international comparisons. We have touched on a number of areas that could form the focus of a whole report. Curriculum and the 14-19 agenda is the prime example; in spite of its relevance, there was only space in this report to touch on the issues.

The report is structured around five main chapters, which address in turn:

- the context, outlining the pertinent issues to this debate
- the system factors, addressing teachers' pay and conditions
- the schools and how they are organised and run, particularly focusing on what makes the difference for teachers
- the teachers and their learning
- the students, issues around managing behaviour effectively and teachers' satisfaction from meeting their needs.

The concluding chapter brings this discussion together, and includes reflections and implications for policy. Throughout the report, we draw on the primary research undertaken, seeking to understand the issues, as well as referring to existing literature in the area, and drawing on discussions with key stakeholders and the insights from seminars held at the ippr.

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2. The context

This chapter aims to provide some context, addressing the two issues brought together in this project: schools facing challenging circumstances and teacher recruitment and retention. First, the link between deprivation and low attainment is considered in terms of the extensive research in this area and in relation to government policy. This is followed by an analysis of the teacher market and the factors affecting recruitment and, crucially, retention of high quality teachers generally. It then focuses in on these issues for schools serving deprived areas. The combination and interplay of these factors presents a critical issue in social justice terms, as those students with potentially the most to gain from education – as a way to break out of the cycle of disadvantage – can be seen to be getting a worse deal from our education system.

In spite of the relatively limited amount of hard evidence, encouraging teachers to work in challenging schools is, rightly, high on the political agenda. The Education and Skills Select Committee investigated teacher recruitment and retention issues in 2004. Its report concluded that, whilst the crisis of 2001 had largely passed, the persisting problems in relation to schools facing challenging circumstances required urgent action, particularly in relation to training (House of Commons Education and Skills Select Committee, 2004). More recently, the Secretary of State has asked the School Teachers' Review Body (STRB) to consider this issue (DfES, 2005b).

Schools in challenging circumstances

Deprivation and attainment

For a government committed to social justice and opportunity for all, attainment in schools in deprived areas continues to present a serious challenge. Attainment in these schools, as measured by proportion of 16 year olds achieving five GCSEs at A*-C, is well below the national average. Only 20 per cent of pupils in schools with the poorest intake achieved this benchmark in 2001, compared with 50 per cent nationally (Lupton, 2004a); though since 1998 the rate of improvement has been fastest in schools with the most deprived intakes (Strategy Unit, 2005). While the relationship between social background and attainment is common to all industrialised societies, the UK is one of the countries with the strongest association between pupils' socio-economic background and their school performance (Schuemer, 2004).

It is well documented in school effectiveness research that the majority of variance in school results is predicted by 'home background' of the intake, with around 8 to 15 per cent consistently attributed to what schools actually do (as summarised in Sullivan and Whitty, 2005). This evidence highlights the importance of policies to address poverty (Robinson, 1997); however, it does not mean that schools do not matter. Having said this, policy makers have sometimes exaggerated the difference that individual schools can make in challenging social disadvantage and structural inequalities.

It is also clear that the links between poverty and low achievement are established early in life. Feinstein (2003) has demonstrated that scores of cognitive ability at 22 months predict educational qualifications at age 26 and are related to family background. This study found the children of educated or wealthy parents who scored poorly in the early tests had a tendency to catch up, whereas children of worse-off parents who scored poorly were extremely unlikely to catch up and were shown to be an at-risk group. There was no evidence that entry into schooling reversed this pattern; it gets more pronounced and the link becomes harder to break as students progress through their schooling. Thus the correlation between achievement and deprivation is a significant challenge for schools to address, particularly at secondary school where the odds are increasingly stacked against pupils who are lagging behind.

Strategies have often highlighted individual school successes with the assumption that other schools need to emulate this 'best practice'. This does not involve a thorough evaluation, but rather holding up one school that has exceeded expectations, and encouraging other schools to copy it, supposedly to replicate the exceptional success. As Lupton rightly highlights, this approach allows little scope for the complex context factors to be understood and taken into account (Lupton, 2004b). Mortimore and Whitty have argued that, whilst 'committed and talented heads and teachers can improve schools even if such schools contain a proportion of disadvantaged pupils' they go on to warn of 'the dangers of basing a national strategy for change on the efforts of outstanding individuals working in exceptional circumstances':

> 'Whilst some schools can succeed against the odds, the possibility of them all doing so, year in and year out, still appears remote given that the long-term patterning of educational inequality has been strikingly consistent throughout the history of public education in most countries.' (Mortimore and Whitty, 1997)

As Mortimore and Whitty suggest, the link between deprivation and low education achievement is a longstanding one. Poverty presents barriers to children's education that result in them starting secondary school with below average attainment and having to deal with social and economic problems that inhibit their learning (Lupton, 2004b).

The size of the challenge is hard to overstate, yet schools can make a difference and researchers have sought to unpick what are the key components of

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'success against the odds' (National Commission on Education, 1996). Researchers mention, for example, a vision for the school, ethos, high aspirations, a focus on teaching and learning, distributed leadership, physical environment, common expectations about pupil behaviour and success, and investment in good relations with parents and community. Or, equally, factors that are associated with failure, often the reverse of the previous list, such as lack of vision, unfocused leadership and dysfunctional staff relations.

The role of teachers is a key consideration in these findings. 'There is a consensus that "teacher effects" matter more than "school effects", so that, for any given subject, it matters more which class one is in than which school' (Sullivan and Whitty, 2005). Therefore the high quality teachers that schools can attract and retain are clearly an invaluable resource. We will return to the issues arising here in more detail in the second half of this chapter, where we focus on teachers.

Government policy and priorities

While this evidence strongly suggests that, in the long run, broader social policies will contribute more than educational interventions to reducing school attainment differences, education policy clearly has a key part to play (Reed and Robinson, 2005). It is not acceptable to those motivated by social justice to resign ourselves and wait for poverty to be reduced: current school students should be offered the best opportunities to succeed. Thus recognition of the challenge of deprivation has been manifest in a range of compensatory measures to assist children from disadvantage backgrounds in schools. The current government has increased these activities, resulting in significantly higher funding, focused around area based initiatives, such as Excellence in Cities, with some success attributed, as there has been faster improvement in deprived areas (Strategy Unit, 2005).

Almost from the start, the present government has intervened to support schools where underachievement is most marked, working on the basis of 'intervention in inverse proportion to success'. It focused at first on area based initiatives, mentioned above, but then intensified its efforts, targeting individual schools, those deemed to be 'in challenging circumstances'. Now the focus is – revealingly – targeted at those secondary schools at risk of missing the floor targets (see next paragraph). Much of the substantial additional funding for these schools is for provision outside normal timetabled lessons, such as mentors, or city learning centres or learning support units. Much of the institutional focus has been on leadership. However, there has been little emphasis on one aspect of these schools that is often argued to be of the highest importance – leaders need a stable and high quality workforce to lead.

This continuing focus on low attainment is highlighted by the priority the government places on one of its most high profile education targets, the

'floor target' at GCSE, where the emphasis is placed on students achieving five grades at A*-C. The targets are that in all schools, 25 per cent of students achieve this benchmark by 2006, with 30 per cent doing so by 2008. In 2004, there were 157 secondary schools that did not reach the 25 per cent benchmark; raising the bar to 30 per cent results in nearly 10 per cent of secondary schools (340 schools) falling short of this minimum standard in 2004. The floor targets are continuing to look ambitious.

The number of initiatives emerging from the Department for Education and Skills (DfES) has been criticised, because whilst many include positive ideas and a focus on deprived areas or floor target schools, the cumulative effect has largely been seen as a burden on schools. Furthermore, the importance of taking local context and priorities into account is hard to achieve with a national policy. London Challenge was seen as a new way of working in this respect, and more recently the New Relationships with Schools approach is aiming to rationalise the plethora of helping hands in schools, with a 'single conversation' and an emphasis on self evaluation (DfES, 2004a). This should be seen as a positive step forward, allowing for better alignment of plans and removing the sense of initiative overload from teachers.

Teachers

Recruitment and retention

The recruitment and retention of a high quality workforce is a central aspect of the government's education policy. It is seen as a prerequisite for the standards agenda, and with the consensus that teachers can make more difference than the school attended, the importance of high quality teachers is further reinforced. Whilst teacher effectiveness is very difficult to measure, research, mainly in the US, has shown it to be an important determinant of pupil attainment (Chevalier *et al*,, 2005). Furthermore, the assumption of a link between teacher quality and pupil attainment is perhaps universal.

The 'crisis' in the recruitment and retention of teachers, which peaked in 2001, was a key policy issue for government, with the numbers leaving the profession for reasons other than retirement rising (Ross and Hutchings, 2003). To investigate the issue, the DfES commissioned Smithers and Robinson to undertake research into the reasons behind teachers' decisions to leave the profession. In keeping with other research in this area, they found five main factors cited – workload, seeking a new challenge, the situation in school, salary and personal circumstances – with secondary school teachers more likely to cite the situation of the school, particularly poor pupil behaviour (Smithers and Robinson, 2003).

Smithers and Robinson also looked at what could influence teachers to stay: 43 per cent of respondents suggested a reduction in workload and fewer initiatives, a third pointed to improvements in the ways schools are run, and for a quarter a better salary would entice them to stay. Worth not-

ing is that fourth in the list was pupil behaviour, and that this was much more important to secondary teachers. They also highlighted that wastage could be overstated as the research found more teachers end up returning, with a third changing their plans, 10 per cent of whom were taking new contracts in schools (Smithers and Robinson, 2003). Cockburn and Haydn bring our attention to the 'soft factors which have been highlighted as influential in recent studies, for example: "friendly colleagues", "pleasant surroundings", "intellectual challenge", "scope for creativity", "freedom", and "room for initiative"'(Cockburn and Haydn, 2004).

The fact that high proportions of those leaving the profession were found to be doing so early in their career has been highlighted as a concerning trend, particularly as it is combined with an ageing profession, and there are clear implications for the pool of future school leaders. If we look at the numbers: 'The DfES … record that in March 2001 there were 290,000 qualified teachers who had worked in the maintained sector but were no longer in service', with '97,000 teachers who qualified in the last five years who were not recorded as in teaching in the maintained sector in England' (Ross and Hutchings, 2003). It should be noted that these figures could overstate the issue as they do not capture, for example, those who could be teaching part time or supply teachers. Having said this, the numbers are not insignificant, so, even accounting for some exaggeration, the government's interest in this issue is clearly justified.

From the 'teaching crisis' often referred to in 2001, the situation in relation to the recruitment and retention of teachers has been improving, as can be seen in figure 2.1. The DfES definition of vacancy has its critics but its consistency allows comparison over time.

Figure 2.1: Teacher vacancies in primary and secondary schools, England

Year	Secondary		Primary	
	number	%	number	%
1990	2778	1.5	3716	2.1
1995	517	0.3	793	0.5
1996	587	0.3	861	0.5
1997	726	0.4	1088	0.6
1998	968	0.6	1391	0.8
1999	939	0.5	1376	0.8
2000	1246	0.7	1420	0.8
2001	2590	1.4	2110	1.2
2002	2450	1.3	1800	1.0
2003	2050	1.1	1110	0.6
2004	1660	0.9	790	0.5

Sources: STRB reports, DfES SFR/09/2004

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The teacher shortage, which peaked in 2001, appears to have been largely resolved. The number of primary teachers remains close to an all-time high, although we may be seeing the start of a reduction related to falling rolls. Vacancies are low and primary training is regarded as difficult to get into. Secondary vacancies have not reduced to the same extent, but there has been a marked improvement in the situation in inner London. As recruitment and retention issues are cyclical if we look at the last time the economy was in a similar position – 1990 – when secondary vacancy levels nationally were at 1.5 per cent, the current situation is by this comparison slightly better. We may speculate that this improvement is largely due to substantial increases in teacher pay. Although other policies such as workforce reform and the behaviour and attendance strategy are intended to contribute, some suggest they aim to embed positive changes, limiting the potential future impact of the economic cycle on teacher supply (Hillier, 2005). However, this global picture hides a range of variations. The traditional geographical and secondary subject difficulties remain, together with the difficulties experienced by struggling schools in getting and keeping sufficient quality staff.

Teachers in schools facing challenging circumstances

The assumption following from this context of a still relatively tight secondary teacher market is 'schools in disadvantaged areas are unlikely to be able to attract their fair share of good teachers' (Sullivan and Whitty, 2005). Smithers and Robinson have attempted to fill a significant gap in the literature by detailing variations between schools in terms of teacher turnover and wastage. This research finds that 'turnover, but not wastage, is significantly related to performance at GCSE (inversely) and to eligibility for free school meals and the measures of special educational needs (positively)' (Smithers and Robinson, 2004). This suggests that there tended to be movement away from those schools with more challenging circumstances.

Smithers and Robinson's most recent report confirmed this trend, with challenging schools suffering from higher turnover, with some secondary schools losing 30 to 40 per cent of their teachers in a year (Smithers and Robinson, 2005). Supporting this link, research focused on London schools found those schools with low levels of free school meals were more likely to fill vacancies than those with higher levels, and secondary school with higher GCSE performance attracted more applications (Hutchings *et al*, 2000).

Whilst there is a limited amount of literature on the particular intensity of work in challenging schools (Johnson, 1999), the differential importance of factors that attract and keep teachers has not been looked at in rela-

tion to different kinds of schools, particularly comparing challenging and less challenging schools. Very little is known about the internal market for teachers. Why are they attracted to school X as opposed to school Y? What induces them to stay at or leave X and Y? There are a few published studies that shed some light on these questions, but no official data published or unpublished. There is also a lack of information on the distribution of teachers according to their qualifications and experience, and Ofsted reports do not detail this type of information, despite its importance for school effectiveness (Sullivan and Whitty, 2005). The General Teaching Council (GTC) database is too new to reveal teachers' career paths. Apart from provision within teachers' national pay scales, there is no policy geared specifically to the recruitment and retention of teachers in challenging schools.

This project aimed to address this relative gap in our knowledge. We have undertaken primary research aimed at providing evidence to confirm or dispute the widely held assumption that schools in challenging circumstances struggle to recruit and retain high quality teachers. It is necessary to flag up here that we have not been totally successful in achieving this end, due to a disappointing response rate to our request for data from schools, which clearly limits the conclusions that can be drawn from this part of the research. The problems we have experienced highlight the pressures on schools, underlining the importance of the DfES's new objective in relation to data: 'collect once, use many times'. This is clearly significant in terms of reducing burdens on schools, and it makes sense. Also vital is ensuring that, in the 'new relationship', data is collected in sufficient detail and in a way that enables detailed analysis to get at issues like the one addressed here, which is not currently possible.

How can we increase equity in teacher supply?

We have considered the strong evidence for the persistent link between deprivation and low attainment, and the case for high quality teachers in the most challenging schools as being best placed to remedy this long-standing problem of the 'long tail' of low attainment. At the same time the teacher market is looking healthier, increasingly balancing since 2001. Having said this, however, staffing problems persist in schools facing challenging circumstances, which have been found to have higher teacher turnover (Smithers and Robinson, 2005).

Our research supports these findings, with higher average teacher turnover in our population of challenging schools compared with the 'matched' schools, shown through analysis of the Employers' Organisation data. It also highlighted the issues that London schools face, with higher turnover in all of these schools. The teacher questionnaires showed teach-

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ers in challenging schools spent a shorter time at the school, again supporting the notion of higher turnover rates in these schools. While some teacher movement is healthy, Ofsted has estimated that annual turnover in excess of 12 per cent creates difficulties. We found a higher concentration of challenging schools with a particularly acute problem, with more than 60 per cent experiencing turnover above this level; an acute problem of extremely high turnover was found in one in four of the challenging schools, which were having to cope with over a fifth of their staff leaving in a year.

As Professor Alan Smithers commented on the publication of Smithers and Robinson's recent report:

> 'This, I think, goes to the nub of the present staffing problems in schools. Whilst turnover overall does not seem excessive – about one in seven for primary teachers and one in eight for secondary teachers – some schools are regularly losing a large chunk of their staff each year, and from the point of view of the government's social justice agenda these are often the schools who need them most' (quoted in the *Financial Times*, 27/5/05).

Thus, in spite of the government's emphasis on equality of opportunity, pupils with potentially the most to gain and teachers with the toughest jobs are more likely to have to cope with the difficulties presented by high teacher turnover in their schools.

So what can be done to increase the equity of this system? To ensure poor students have every opportunity to succeed, and to recognise the difference quality teachers make in these contexts? Our aim in this project has been to try to understand how a climate can be created to ensure that enough high quality (or potentially high quality) teachers want to teach, and stay teaching, in the most challenging schools. Furthermore, we have sought ways to ensure that teachers who have made this choice are supported and trained so that they have the resources to do the best possible job, and so are motivated to remain in these schools. As Brighouse has argued, given the difficult working conditions faced by teachers in disadvantaged schools, it will be necessary to offer additional pay or other incentives in order to attract sufficient high quality teachers to work in them (Brighouse, 2003).

In the main body of the report, we will go on to consider the key aspects of a teacher's experience that could make the difference. As we have touched on here, some factors will need to be in place, as their absence is a deterrent. Other factors act more positively, attracting those who might not have considered teaching into the profession and potentially into teaching in challenging schools. We will look at teachers' terms and conditions, largely organised at a system wide level; moving on to consider what individual

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schools can do in terms of their organisation. We will then consider teachers' careers, their initial motivations and training, and their continuing professional development. Last, but by no means least, we turn our attention to the students: managing their behaviour, meeting their needs, understanding their contexts. Throughout the report we will draw on existing research, government policy, our seminar discussions and our own quantitative and qualitative research undertaken for this project, aiming to draw out ideas of what interventions could improve equity in the current teacher market.

Conclusions

- There is a strong link between deprivation and attainment, but schools do matter.
- The government gives high priority to improving attainment in schools facing challenging circumstances.
- It is insufficient just to advocate spreading 'best practice', as this fails to account for the complex contexts facing schools.
- The 'crisis' in teacher recruitment and retention has passed.
- However, Smithers and Robinson and this research concur that average turnover is higher in challenging schools.
- Despite these widely accepted problems there is currently no policy specifically geared towards the recruitment and retention of teachers in challenging schools.

3. The system: teachers' pay, terms and conditions

Terms and conditions are not sufficient motivators in themselves; however, their absence can lead to disillusionment and attrition. It is therefore crucial that we ensure these system level factors are right. It has been suggested that simply increasing the salaries of teachers in the most challenging schools would solve this issue. Conditions more widely can be seen as being just as important, for example with workload cited as one of the top reasons for leaving the profession. This chapter looks at the existing literature and government policy, as well as the evidence gathered in our research, to seek to understand these factors so we can try to ensure positive conditions are in place, and conditions are not acting as a deterrent, putting teachers off working in challenging schools.

Pecuniary factors

If demand exceeds supply, one solution could be to increase the price of the resource, in this case teachers' pay in challenging schools, to balance the market. However, it seems that pay can only be a crucial intervention in the teacher market in some very specific ways. In this section we will firstly look at pay generally and whether an increase in pay would encourage a sufficient number of teachers into the most challenging schools. We then look at performance related pay and local pay issues, considering their possibilities and limitations.

Teachers' pay

Conventional economic theory suggests that increasing the price of labour will increase its supply. This is the basis for the persistent proposal that localised teacher shortages can be overcome by means of targeted pay measures. Like most other innovations, this has been tried before, most notably by means of the Social Priority Allowance introduced in the early 1970s with little effect. Our research suggests that, whilst more pay is attractive for teachers, it would be insufficient to keep them in challenging schools without other positive factors being in place.

Peter Dolton and various collaborators have investigated econometrically the link between pay and supply. Dolton and van der Klaauw (1995; 1999) have shown that starting wages in teaching relative to estimated potential earnings elsewhere is positively related to the probability of changing jobs and becoming a teacher, including in the case of women taking career breaks. It is important to note that the comparator is not gradu-

ate pay generally, but the pay level for jobs available to graduates with the same level of qualification, since teachers as a whole have lower degree classes than graduates as a whole.

Dolton *et al*, (2002) surveyed five cohorts of UK graduates who graduated between 1960 and 1990. They were interviewed six years after graduation. Teachers earned about £3,500 less than non-teacher graduates (at 2000 prices), but their qualification levels would allow them to earn only £45 per annum more in non-teaching jobs. They concluded that a 10 per cent relative rise in teacher pay would increase the probability of becoming a teacher by 5.4 per cent. In the context of the turnover of teaching staff in London, a noteworthy finding was that graduates living in London and the South East were more than 6 per cent less likely to teach than those from elsewhere, a reflection of the particular pay differentials in the region. In later work for the Organisation for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD), Dolton *et al*, (2003) confirmed the link between relative pay and teacher supply, with a stronger effect for men than women. This work also showed the strong influence of the economic cycle on supply.

In the United States, Hanushek *et al*, (1999) found that salary level had, at best, a modest impact on quality of recruits. They concluded that although increasing salary levels would raise the supply of teachers, some other incentives merely shift teachers around. However, 'shifting teachers around' in the direction of the most challenging schools could be said to be one aim of policy. There is a risk that we draw teachers to the most challenging schools from other schools that are only marginally better placed. The aggregate teachers' supply is obviously also important.

This line of research gives insight into the supply of teachers at national level, but suffers from two drawbacks as far as this project is concerned. First, it does not cast light on the movement of teachers within a system, or the extent to which pay differentials could be effective in encouraging recruitment to particular schools. Second, the recent considerable changes to teacher earnings in England are not captured by research to date.

To illustrate the extent of these changes, figure 3.1 looks at the teacher paybill as calculated by the STRB. Although the number of teachers employed in 2004 is slightly higher than in 1999, average earnings have increased markedly and the paybill has increased by no less than 50 per cent. Although headline pay increases have been modest, and not higher than in comparable occupations, there have been three structural changes leading to wage drift,[1] which we will come on to in the following sections on performance related pay and local pay.

1 The gap between total earnings growth and wage settlements is referred to as 'wage drift'. Wage drift occurs when the earnings of some workers rise above the average for the industry. Workers doing the same job within the same industry may be paid differently because, for example, workers in cities are sometimes paid more to meet the higher cost of living, or older workers tend to earn more because they are paid a bonus to reward their experience.

Figure 3.1: The rising teacher paybill

Year	Paybill (England and Wales)	All regular teachers employed (England)
1999	£12 billion	401,200
2004	£18 billion	427,800

Source: STRB reports, SFR 2004

In our focus groups, teachers' pay was commonly mentioned as one of the most obvious incentives to work in a challenging school, and suggests a potential policy proposal would be for additional salary points to be associated with working in a challenging school. In a similar vein, the headteacher responses included a number of comments suggesting incentives for teachers to work in challenging or inner city schools, placing pay as second in a list of key factors for attracting staff to their school. The teacher questionnaire supported the importance of pay; 42 per cent of respondents in challenging schools and 54 per cent of those in matched schools identified pay level as an important factor for attracting them to work in that school. However, as mentioned above, the Social Priority Allowance was based on this thinking and proved to have little effect. Also, pay is an obvious factor in relation to work and it is therefore unsurprising that it was frequently mentioned.

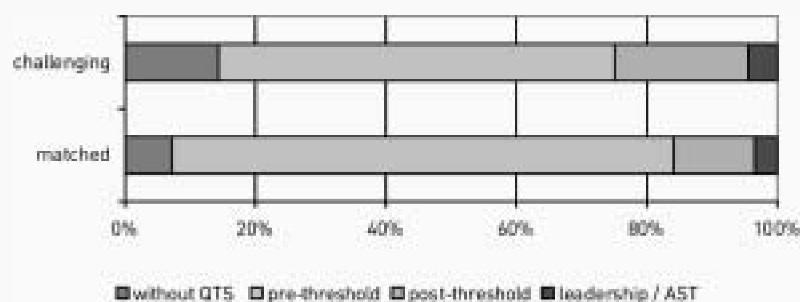
A very significant increase in pay could potentially encourage sufficient teachers into challenging schools, but whether this would be affordable in a tightening fiscal climate is questionable. A scheme similar to the 'golden hello' programme for teachers in shortage subjects could be considered. Interestingly in both the headteacher survey and the teacher questionnaire, pay was rated slightly more important by the matched schools; for the headteachers in terms of retention, and for the teachers with regards to what they would be looking for in their next school. If we are seeking to attract teachers who are not currently working in challenging schools then pay could be an effective incentive. Having said this, the teachers in matched schools were also more influenced by reputation when choosing their current school. And generally it was felt that pay alone would not retain teachers in challenging schools if in other senses the odds were stacked against them.

It appears from our research that more challenging schools are currently using pay as an incentive by using existing flexibilities in the system, such as management points or recruitment and retention points. There was a range of responses from the headteachers across the two groups of schools as to how much they used pay as a recruitment and retention strategy. These

responses were both from headteachers of challenging schools: 'We will pay for additional experience/excellent teaching etc in some way to attract the right staff'; whilst others felt a lack of opportunity to pay more: 'Little as little flexibility'. The Employers' Organisation data showed a higher proportion of challenging schools awarding management points – 34.5 per cent compared with 25.1 per cent of recruits to matched schools – which may have been being used as a recruitment and retention incentive. Recruitment and retention points were also slightly higher; given to 9.1 per cent of recruits to challenging schools and 6.1 per cent of matched schools.

An underpinning trend that emerged from our research was a picture of polarisation in challenging schools. For example, the Employers' Organisation data showed that there were more teachers appointed in challenging schools at the higher end of the professional ladder, in leadership positions, advanced skills teachers (AST) or having passed the threshold (explained below), and receiving pay incentives (see figure 3.2). Equally, there were more teachers appointed without qualified teacher status (QTS), plugging gaps for the challenging schools. This did not correspond to the pattern of teachers leaving, where there was a comparable picture across the two groups of schools. Similarly, nearly a quarter of respondents to the teacher questionnaire from challenging schools were employed on supply, temporary or fixed-term contracts, whereas in the matched schools it was only 1.4 per cent, with the vast majority on permanent or part-time contracts.

Figure 3.2: Salary scales of recruits to permanent posts in sample of challenging and matched schools



Source – Employers' survey data 2004

Performance related pay

The threshold assessment introduced in 2000 was intended to be a performance related increase for high quality, experienced teachers. It resulted in a pay increase of £2,000 per annum to 86 per cent of eligible staff

(Wragg *et al*, 2003). The threshold was the first step on a five point upper pay spine (UPS), which was intended to operate on the basis of successively more selective bi-annual assessments. However, the 2002 exercise of assessment of the first cohort of applicants for promotion from UPS1 to UPS2 resulted in an even higher success rate, and anecdotally it seems likely that this cohort's progress to UPS3 in 2004 will have been equally unproblematic, though it should be remembered that the numbers of teachers benefiting reduce at each stage due to wastage. This forced the government to revise the structure, so that UPS terminates at point 3, with a more difficult transition to an Excellent Teachers Scheme. The outcome is that those teachers reaching UPS3 in September 2004 are earning £31,602 (excluding other allowances ranging from £1,638 to £10,572), compared with £23,193 for experienced teachers in September 1999.

The second structural change in the teachers' pay system has been the shortening of the main scale, which teachers move up by annual increments until qualifying for the threshold. It now consists of six points, so that a teacher in his or her seventh year of teaching is earning £29,385 (September 2004), exclusive of allowances. This represents an acceleration of pay advance due to experience. Before 2000, teachers reached the top of the experience scale after nine years.

Performance related pay, whether linked to the achievements of the individual teacher or the school, was found to be the factor least likely to improve the morale and motivation of teachers in general (Varlaam, 1992). In the context of schools serving students from deprived backgrounds, or with low prior attainment, performance related pay could actually deter teachers from challenging schools if they feared their performance would be judged on student attainment:

> 'There is, indeed, a polarity in the system, particularly in the secondary phase, whereby teachers move to schools in what they perceive to be the more favourable circumstances … This is understandable in terms of teachers' career progression since they can find themselves judged on the academic performance and behaviour of their pupils.' (Smithers and Robinson, 2003)

Careful thought needs to be given to how performance is measured accurately, including sophisticated value added measures, also protecting against creating perverse incentives.

One of the headteachers who responded to our questionnaire highlighted the need for 'greater flexibility to reward good performance'. Similarly, some teachers in our focus groups saw the possible benefits: 'Pay is part of it – you should earn a bit more, maybe with bonuses for good results'. From the focus groups it was clear that pay was also felt to be a push factor if teachers felt that there were inconsistencies or anomalies in terms

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of how salary points were accrued or if they felt there were few opportunities for them to move up the pay scale. Some teachers felt frustrated that their pay did not truly reflect the hours and effort they put into the job, particularly in terms of extra-curricular activities. Increases in pay that were felt to be mismatched with the amount of extra work or responsibility required were also viewed negatively. The discretionary nature of the existing flexibilities, discussed above, leads to a lack of openness in the system, which gives rise to these questions of fairness.

There was consensus from the focus groups that effective measures need to be in place to measure impact in challenging schools that don't allow teachers to be under-ambitious on behalf of their pupils but do allow them to prove and demonstrate progress in different ways:

> 'I don't want the same pressure in relation to attainment if I went to a challenging school, you'd want recognition that achievement can be measured in different ways, as well as recognition of all the non-academic stuff that you do. Achievement should not be measured on percentages but on what we really add'.

Financial recognition for the difference teachers make should seek to take all of this into account and – as the current system has shown – it is hard to implement effectively.

The current move to teaching and learning reviews for teachers presents an opportunity to consider all of these factors. Furthermore the STRB has been asked by the Secretary of State for Education and Skills to look at 'the extent to which other factors should be taken into account in determining career and pay progression (for example, prior successful experience in challenging classroom roles and in challenging schools)' (DfES, 2005b). These are positive moves by the government in relation to the objective of encouraging teachers to work in challenging schools. However, whilst the market is still determined at a school level, with good teachers in demand, the reality of implementing these ideas fairly, and as they are intended, is likely to prove to be very difficult.

Local pay

The third recent and significant change in the system that has led to a rising paybill affects teachers in London, all of whose schools suffer disproportionate recruitment and retention difficulties, relating to the London economy. The replacement of London allowances as an addition to the national pay scale by separate London pay scales in 2003, and the higher rates on these new scales, mean that a starting teacher earns about £3,500 more in inner London than they would elsewhere. The threshold teacher in inner London is earning £34,851 (excluding allowances), some £5,500 more than their counterparts outside this zone.

The effectiveness of this measure can be seen in vacancy rates. Figure 3.3 shows three years (either side of the teacher supply 'crisis' of 2001) where the national rate was 0.7 per cent. In the earlier years the London rate was almost three times the national rate. In 2004, by contrast, the London rate was just double the national rate. Although no causal connection has been shown as yet, this improvement in the relative position of London in the teacher labour market is very likely to be due at least in part to the relatively larger pay rises.

Figure 3.3: London vacancies

Year	1998	1999	2004
National vacancies %	0.7	0.7	0.7
London vacancies %	2.0	2.0	1.4

Source: SFR 09/2004

The effect of this differentiation in London has been significant. In the survey response from those participating in our qualitative research, teachers were divided in their view of whether pay was good at their school. It seems that there continues to be a case for local discretion over pay, with those at our focus groups who were teaching outside of London viewing their pay more positively. Whilst most teachers in challenging schools outside of London felt that pay was good, only one in four teachers at challenging schools in London agreed. The difficulty of filling posts in London in spite of these pay increases is also evident from our analysis. The Employers' Organisation data for the challenging and matched schools in our sample showed London schools recruiting considerable numbers of teachers without QTS (28.6 per cent of all full-time permanent recruits in challenging schools; 17.4 per cent in matched schools); much higher than for schools outside London and higher than the comparable figure for the whole Employers' Organisation survey (7.5 per cent).

A respondent to the headteacher questionnaire suggested government should 'improve teacher salaries – reduce the differential between outer and inner London allowance'. This highlights the local nature of the pay effect with border issues having consequences for the schools affected. In relation to use of pay as a strategy by headteachers, whilst there was no difference between responses from challenging and matched schools, it did appear that London and other inner urban schools were more likely to use pay to attract and retain teachers.

In certain parts of the country inadequate pay is a problem, and a targeted strategy in these local areas could yield positive returns for schools facing challenging circumstances; it also suggests that the blanket approach

to pay across most of the country could result in overpaying teachers in certain local areas. The Secretary of State has asked the STRB whether 'there is scope for movement towards more locally-determined pay' (DfES, 2005b). This could be beneficial in light of our findings.

Conditions of work

Conditions of work are not what inspire teachers into the profession, or indeed to get up in the morning. However, the absence of positive working conditions can be a strong negative driver, pushing teachers to leave the school or profession. In schools facing the most challenging circumstances, the demands of the job are tough enough already. There is no room for extra burdens, adding to the strain on teachers. High profile coverage of poor conditions of work can also deter potential applicants from becoming a teacher. Equally, this sort of negative impression could discourage teachers from applying to teach in challenging schools if they are receiving particular emphasis in the media. It is therefore an imperative that challenging schools have positive working conditions in place. This may mean conditions need to be refined and targeted to have maximum positive effect, to avoid teacher burn out.

The literature in this area confirms the push effect of high workload and a poor working environment. Heafford and Jennison (1998) carried out a particularly interesting study, over 16 years, of a cohort of successful Postgraduate Certificate in Education (PGCE) students. Factors that were detracting from enjoyment were administrative aspects of the job, teaching load, the provision of resources, status and physical working conditions. More recent work by Smithers and Robinson (2003) re-confirms the importance of such factors as workload, wanting a new challenge, the school situation, salary and personal circumstances as the key motivators behind decisions to leave teaching. Of these factors, workload was by far the most important and pay the least.

Workload

Teacher workload has been the subject of considerable focus over recent years. Our findings highlight workload as one of the top reasons pushing teachers to leave their school. There is a consensus from the research around teachers' working hours, with secondary teachers averaging 50.8 hours per week during term time (PWC, 2001). Of particular interest to this project is that no strong pattern emerges in the average hours worked by teachers in schools with different degrees of social deprivation or with different numbers of students with special needs (STRB, 2003). PWC's study found teachers' hours were more intensive than other professionals' and that holiday working was widespread; however, if you spread teachers'

hours across the year they were found to be similar to other professionals in the UK.

Classroom teachers in secondary schools were found to spend only 39 per cent of their time teaching, with one third spent on preparation and marking and seven per cent on administration. PWC found teachers perceived a lack of control and ownership over their work, undertaking many tasks that were not seen as supporting learning. They also felt 'the pace and manner of change was working against achieving high standards and that they were insufficiently supported to meet these changes and were not accorded the professional trust that they merited' (PWC, 2001). In response to these issues, the government set out an agenda of remodelling the school workforce (DfES, 2002a).

Whilst the average number of hours worked may be found not to differ between different types of schools, the amount of administration and accountability associated with 'failing' can place an extra burden on teachers. A number of the schools in our research were either currently in or had been in Special Measures. It was recognised in the focus groups that this could add additional pressure on teachers as their work was put in the spotlight and everything was focused on raising attainment, with an associated paperwork requirement. A number of responses from the headteachers suggested loosening the regulations, with one particularly heart-felt plea:

> 'STOP INSPECTING SCHOOLS – who have over and again proved they know how to lead and raise achievement – let us get on with our work and get away from the choking and inhibiting accountability of meaningless and inaccurate measures as currently used which REDUCE the degree of enterprise which schools facing difficult circumstances feel able to take'.

A number of the headteacher respondents to our survey saw the benefits of reducing teacher workload. Requests included: 'Fund workload agreement and post threshold payments properly – both are undermined', 'Increase numbers to allow more non-contact time'; another echoed this with 'Improve pupil-teacher ratios particularly in schools in challenging circumstances'. In relation to retention, the vast majority of headteachers responding to our survey identified reducing paperwork as 'very important' or 'important' – but this was rated much lower than effective behaviour management and team work. There seemed to be a strong sense that increasing the time and support available to teachers would be a positive step forward.

A clear outcome of the focus groups was the desire for more time within the school day away from classroom teaching. This was partly based on the need for a 'breather' and would also mean more time to plan and prepare for lessons within the school day. This tended to be something that all teachers wanted and could be an effective incentive for attracting teachers

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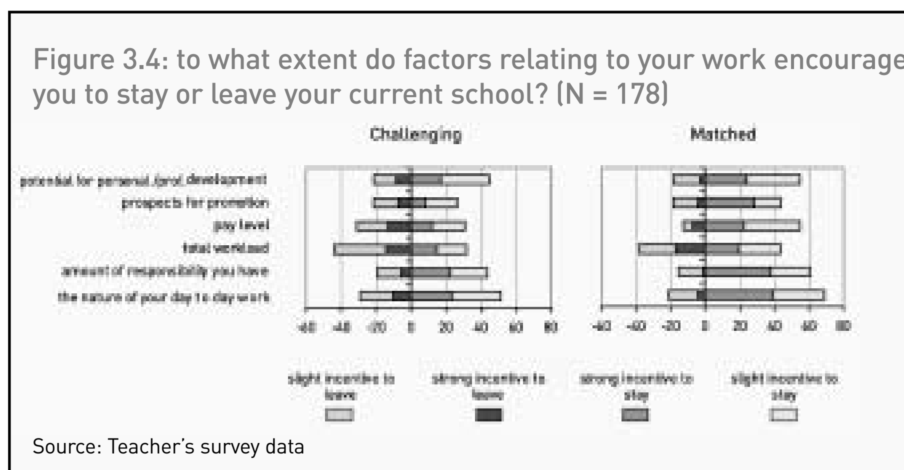
to the most challenging schools and making life easier for them once they were there. Teachers in challenging schools made observations such as: 'The job has got to be deliverable, you need to cut down on the workload and recognise that hours are longer at challenging schools'; 'Less contact time and more time to prepare lessons would be great … it can feel like a production line at times and I don't have a non-contact hour until Thursday each week'.

Workload and pupil behaviour were the factors most frequently identified by teachers in our survey as incentives to leave the school they were working in (though it should be noted that about the same number of teachers saw workload as an incentive to stay in their current school). Behaviour will be considered in chapter five; here the focus is on workload. Workload acted as a stronger negative driver in the challenging schools; however it was identified as the most important push factor for teachers at matched schools (see figure 3.4). Also apparent is that a higher proportion of those in challenging schools consider each factor as an incentive to leave. This reinforces the general picture that emerges from these data of teachers in vulnerable schools being more discontented than their counterparts in other schools.

Figure 3.4: to what extent do factors relating to your work encourage you to stay or leave your current school? (N = 178)



Source: Teacher's survey data

The importance of workload was reinforced by teachers in response to a question on what they would be looking for in another teaching job: lower workload was again highlighted as a key consideration, particularly in this case by those teachers currently at challenging schools, for whom it would be second in importance after leaving for promotion.

These points seem to suggest that reducing the administrative burden and an increase in non-contact time for teachers in challenging schools could be an effective incentive. This would also enable teachers to prepare and recover for optimal teaching in these contexts. The workforce remod-

elling agenda offers some opportunities to achieve this and we will look at what schools can do to maximise the benefits of remodelling in the next chapter. However, an increase in non-contact time would have financial implications that would need to be weighed up against other possible incentives.

Class size

Smaller class sizes are often felt by teachers and parents to be an attractive option. The evidence as to the benefits, however, is still not conclusive. There is a consensus in the literature that a substantial cut in class size can make a difference to the youngest children, especially those with low prior attainment and poor backgrounds (Sullivan and Whitty, 2005). Following on from this, in the contexts we are concerned with – namely secondary schools – the evidence base supporting a reduction in class sizes is still not there. However, identifying the class size effect on educational outcomes is a difficult area to research, and different studies give conflicting results (Chevalier *et al*,). It would therefore be interesting to pilot much smaller class sizes for schools in deprived areas, where meeting the range of needs can be extremely challenging. This would be particularly interesting if teachers were strongly in favour.

Reducing class sizes came up in all strands of our research, with headteacher responses to our survey included comments like: 'Reduce class sizes across all schools' and 'Class sizes maximum 25; class sizes maximum 15 for all practical subjects'. Teachers were, unsurprisingly, also welcoming of opportunities to teach smaller classes. In one challenging school in the North West class sizes were very small in some subjects, particularly in the lowest sets, due to a combination of a low school roll, lack of interest in particular subjects and non-attendance. The teacher recognised that this was not an ideal situation but felt that the small class size did make the job easier. In one of the matched London schools teachers reported that the school had a policy of ensuring that no year 9, 10 or 11 classes were large than 25 pupils. This guarantee of a limit on class size was viewed very positively. Many more teachers reported managing large classes and felt that smaller classes would make their job a lot easier, particularly when pupils had high levels of special educational needs or emotional or behavioural problems. 'Smaller class sizes would make a big difference, particularly when you've got a class where half the pupils are SEN. Currently my classes are around 30 pupils, ideally I'd like half that size' (challenging school).

A related issue emerged around the lack of independent learners in challenging schools, with teachers frequently noting the level of active, direct teaching required to teach children who lack the skills to learn independently. This type of teaching was described as particularly demanding as it

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requires the bulk of each lesson to be actively 'taught', which is particularly difficult in mixed ability classes. 'One of the key differences working in a challenging school is that you have to work harder – you have to plan to be interactive for a whole lesson, you can't set them things to get on with. It's 100 per cent physical'. A smaller class in this context enables teachers to manage the learning more effectively for all the students. Of particular concern to some teachers were those students who would really benefit from more attention but whom teachers just don't get a chance to get to: 'It's the quiet students I worry about, the ones I know would really benefit from just two minutes of my time, but I'm not able to do that when I'm having to control the class. They're the ones that get overlooked in the inclusivity agenda'.

As we have seen, whilst it is hard to measure the actual effects of a reduction in class size in terms of hard evidence, it is a popular proposal with headteachers and teachers in schools. In this context smaller class sizes, such as pilots of radically reduced class sizes of around 12 to 15 students in schools serving challenging areas, could prove to be a positive step. It would allow a step towards tailoring learning to meet the very complex needs of many of these students, as well as presenting a more feasible job for teachers. This line of discussion proved popular among a number of teachers in our focus groups.

However, our line of research did not place the option of a smaller class size alongside the alternative, the deployment of more teaching and learning support assistants to help the students with the greatest needs within the context of teachers leading classes of the traditional size. The significant increase in the numbers of such support staff in recent years is 're-modelling' the workforce to as great an extent as any other initiative. However, the impact of teaching and learning support assistants on pupil attainment is another under-researched area (Blatchford *et al*, 2004). The implementation of these workforce reforms has varied between schools, and we will explore teachers' experience and attitudes to remodelling in the next chapter.

Working environment

Academies and Building Schools for the Future are two of the government's flagship education programmes, which involve significant capital investment to rebuild or refurbish school buildings. Whilst teachers' working environment is clearly not the starting point of either programme, it is another important consideration, specifically cited by teachers as a reason for leaving the school or profession. These programmes present an opportunity in this regard. Teachers feel valued and enabled to get on with their job when there are good physical working conditions to support their professional work with, for example, laptops provided and buildings well maintained. Or as one headteacher responding to our questionnaire stated:

'As bottom of the league, in an awful building in an urban setting I am often surprised we are fully staffed'.

In terms of strategies to raise pupil attainment, headteachers put improving the building or having a new building at the bottom of a list of factors. However, more generally, 25 per cent of headteachers in our survey considered buildings as a very important recruitment factor, and 69 per cent identified them as fairly important. Most headteachers considered that the school building and facilities were of some importance in attracting and retaining staff, though the majority rated these as fairly important, rather than very important. One headteacher elaborated, setting out what the government should do in relation to staffing in order to improve attainment: 'provide properly refurbished new buildings including social spaces to allow the environment to "inspire" and accommodate personalised learning approaches … and personal and group space'.

Schools that provide a good physical working environment, and which are well resourced, act as a positive incentive for teachers. In the focus groups, for example, one teacher commented: 'There are superb facilities and the school is kept really well'; whilst another demonstrating the flip side stated: 'The school environment itself is disgusting … the toilets are horrible and there's lots of graffiti'. Teachers in schools that had received significant investment in both the physical building and resources noted the possible knock-on effect on staff morale. Teachers working in specialist schools related to their own subject were particularly positive about the resources at their school. In one focus group teachers working in a challenging school that was in the process of turning into an Academy suggested this was a factor that drew them to the school and was likely to keep them there (despite the fact that teachers' jobs are rarely guaranteed in the transition to an Academy). Academy status was linked to a sense that the school was 'turning around' and the likely investment in improving working condition was attractive to teachers.

In one of the matched schools in our focus groups it was policy to provide every teacher with their own laptop. Equipment incentives are also attached to schemes such as the Fast Track teaching programme. A number of teachers talked positively about such incentives as an added bonus that might sway their decision about which school to teach in: 'I wasn't happy at the other school I was at. I wanted a similar school in terms of intake and I was also attracted by the free laptop and the fact that it was a technology school – my old school had really poor technology'. Looking after teachers in these ways, ensuring they feel their working conditions support them as professionals, are important aspects of this debate.

The system

Teachers' pay and conditions of work offer some potential incentives to attract and, crucially, not deter teachers from working in challenging

schools. Careful consideration should be given to those that may have the most impact, with pilots testing radically smaller class sizes and increased non-contact time as positive steps, and due consideration to pay differentiation and implementation. Equally, workload factors, particularly the burden of the accountability regime, should be looked at as a serious issue deterring teachers from the profession, and particularly from challenging schools.

However, a significant increase in pay, more non-contact time, or much smaller class sizes are all very expensive proposals. And whilst as headline grabbing measures they might help with recruitment, they are not enough in themselves. If a school is badly run, and the teachers' needs are not being met, then the teachers will not stay and retention will remain a problem. There is clearly no 'silver bullet' at a system level that would deliver the objectives we are seeking. We will therefore consider next the contribution of within-school factors to this agenda.

Conclusions

- Teachers' terms and conditions are just as important as pay, and increasing pay would not solve the issues this report is addressing alone, even if it were affordable.
- Teachers' pay has risen significantly due to wage drift.
- Schools already have the flexibility to use pay as an incentive, although the use of these flexibilities is inconsistent.
- Performance related pay can have perverse effects, which could deter teachers from challenging schools.
- Workload is a particularly important issue in schools facing challenging circumstances, partly due to the accountability regime that disproportionately impacts on challenging schools.
- There is some evidence that the high proportion of students who are not independent learners contributes to the intensity of teaching in challenging schools.
- Smaller class sizes and more non-contact time would ameliorate the situation; however, they are very resource intensive.

4. The school: what makes the difference for teachers?

High quality teachers are schools' most valuable resource. Teachers' job satisfaction is highly influenced by factors organised at the school level. Leadership and vision, high aspirations and a positive academic ethos have all been associated with effective schooling. However, observing the importance of these characteristics is likely to be easier than creating them, particularly in contexts where the prevalent culture does not espouse academic achievement (Sullivan and Whitty, 2005).

We start this chapter with two case studies taken from our qualitative research, which demonstrate how these factors, when they work together, can act as a powerful incentive for a teacher to stay at a school. The case studies also touch on wider factors; at the heart are issues about how the schools are run, which our research found to be of fundamental importance to teachers. This will act as an introduction to a consideration of teachers' job satisfaction, where the research highlights a number of key areas in relation to school level factors which we will then take in turn: leadership and management, encouraging positive staff relations, and embedding a positive culture and ethos across the school.

School level factors are crucially important to teachers, and the positives need to be even more in evidence in schools facing challenging circumstances to enable teachers to cope with the intensity of their roles. Understandably, these schools often find the real crisis of the moment detracts attention away from these fundamentally important issues. This may lead us to consider whether challenging schools need additional resources and capacity in the leadership team to fulfil all their functions successfully, as well as to be leading the way in terms of organisational planning that facilitates collegiality and a positive school culture. Our findings highlight good relations with colleagues as being central to the retention of teachers, with collegiality and support vital in challenging schools.

Case studies

School A is a 'matched' school in London where attainment has improved significantly in recent years. This is despite a challenging intake with, for example, high levels of special educational needs among pupils, low literacy skills and divisions between pupils from different areas and ethnicities. Five teachers from the school were involved in the focus group and all but one had been in teaching for at least 15 years.

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Teachers talked enthusiastically about their experiences and emphasised that 'the crucial element is the strong management'. One teacher suggested that the management had succeeded in making achievement matter for pupils and there was strong vision and commitment among staff to raise pupil aspiration. Morale among staff was felt to be very high, with a sense that they worked as a team to achieve results, backed up by a management keen to take an inclusive approach – 'the team work we do is valued'. The school ethos was seen to be supportive and encouraging rather than dogmatic – 'No one's worried about admitting failure, you're not judged. I don't think you get that everywhere'. Teachers also felt management backed them up on behaviour issues without undermining individual teachers' authority.

The school has benefited from investment in the premises, which has also added to making the experience more positive. All teachers in the focus group from this school felt that teachers were happy at their school, well supported by senior management and by department colleagues. The one NQT in the group was really positive about her experiences and planned to stay. Behaviour management was still an issue and there were some grumbles about pay but only one teacher planned to leave the school in the next three years.

School B is a challenging school in the North West. The school's intake includes a high proportion of children from deprived backgrounds, a range of emotional, behaviour, literacy and numeracy problems and a high percentage of pupils with physical disabilities. Six teachers from the school were interviewed; most had many years' teaching experience.

They felt challenged but were quick to impress that they enjoyed working at the school because they had a clear sense of the management's vision for the future and were committed to the values of the school – 'this is attractive for me, it's a very inclusive school and it provides a very supportive environment; staff pull together as one big team'. Teachers valued the style and approach of the fairly recently appointed headteacher, describing him as 'innovative, an educationalist, he's very caring, creative, flexible, open to new ideas ... previously everything was cast in stone and nothing changed'.

There was a clear sense that the fortunes of the school were changing and teachers were keen to be part of that. Importantly, teachers felt that their efforts were recognised and appreciated – 'He [the headteacher] appreciates what you do ... and he tells you and that raises your morale'. None of the teachers at School B planned to leave in the next three years and the majority felt supported both by management and department colleagues. Most also felt that pay was good.

Job satisfaction

School based factors consistently rank highly in studies looking at teachers' job satisfaction. A large-scale study for the National Commission on Education by Varlaam *et al*, (1992) confirmed the general trend. Teachers ranked 38 items in terms of their job satisfaction. Highest was good relations with pupils, followed by good relations with colleagues, giving pupils a sense of achievement, job security, and being in a well managed school. Asked about negative factors, they ranked some of the factors we considered in the previous chapter: work overload, excessive paperwork and record keeping, stress, poor pay and not being valued by management.

In a useful summary of the research in this area, Spear *et al*, (2000) noted the high degree of consensus within the findings, despite the differences in research methods. They compared 15 studies of teachers' job satisfaction, and compiled a list of 12 factors contributing positively, in order of importance. Working with children was top of the list, followed by good relationships with colleagues, development of warm personal relationships with pupils, intellectual challenge and use of subject knowledge, autonomy and independence, opportunities to be creative or innovative, school organisation and management, pupils' achievements, additional roles and responsibilities, job security, career prospects including pay and conditions, and long holidays. They point out that job security is rated higher in older studies than in more recent ones and note the comparative lack of differentiation due to variables such as age, phase of pupils and the small influence of gender.

There is no literature on a possible differential importance of all these factors between different kinds of schools; of particular interest in this study would be a comparison of more challenging with less challenging schools. There is some literature on the particular intensity of work in challenging schools (Johnson, 1999). However, as these factors are so consistently of importance to teachers, it would suggest that they need to be in evidence in challenging schools, where the inherent nature of the role is so demanding. We will return to working with children and the nature of the pupil intake, key for many teachers, in chapter 6. Crucially here, many of the recurring themes are within the control of the school: leadership and management, staff relations, school culture and ethos. These are difficult areas to address in national policy terms, but it is important to understand what makes the difference for teachers.

Leadership and management

Both leadership and management are critical factors to the success of a school; leadership in that its presence defines the vision and ethos, whilst the absence of good management is often cited as a reason for attrition.

Leadership

The central role of leadership to school improvement is well documented, and the evidence from the international literature demonstrates that 'effective leaders exercise an indirect but powerful influence on the effectiveness of the school and on the achievement of students in most countries' (Muijis *et al*, 2004). Perceptions of the most effective form of leadership have moved on recently, from the model of 'hero' leadership, to advocating an approach where successful leaders are more generous with their power, giving opportunities so all teachers feel empowered to be leaders. It has been suggested that student outcomes are more likely to improve where teachers are empowered in areas of importance to them through distributing leadership throughout the school (Silns and Mulford, 2002).

This model of distributed leadership is supported in the context of effective leadership in schools facing challenging circumstances by a study for the National College of School Leadership: 'The heads in the study had deliberately chosen a form of leadership to move the school forward that empowered others to lead and distributed leadership activity throughout the school' (Harris, 2002). In this study, vision and values, investing in staff development, relationships and community building were all highlighted as key components of successful leadership, which focused on 'cultural rather than structural change'. We would propose that the structural can help enable the cultural, for example through school organisation that encourages relationship building; however, cultural change is the aim. Harris outlined the main leadership task as one of 'coping with unpredictability, conflict and dissent on a daily basis without discarding core values' (Harris, 2002).

Teacher involvement in shaping the school improvement strategy has been found to be a key factor in sustaining improvement in a number of studies (Muijs *et al*, 2004). The recent 'octet' research and development programme, focusing on eight schools facing extremely challenging circumstances, used a 'school improvement group' (SIG) as one of the development strategies. This was on the lines of the IQEA (Improvement the quality of education for all) programme (Hopkins *et al*, 1996) and involved a cross-sectional team of teachers and management, enabling input from different perspectives and ownership across the school. This proved to be a very effective model, a driving force of change. An unintended consequence was that the members of the SIG groups became 'a very attractive proposition to other schools' (Reynolds *et al*, forthcoming). This highlights the clear value of distributed leadership in relation to teachers' professional development.

An analysis of the Employers' Organisation data for our population of schools could suggest challenging schools may not be nurturing their own talent as effectively as the matched schools. The challenging schools were

recruiting more teachers to senior positions, whereas the matched schools were filling more vacancies with NQTs and classroom teachers. This did not correspond to the pattern of teachers leaving, where there was a comparable picture across the two groups of schools. This suggests that there were more internal promotions in the matched schools. Smithers and Robinson (2005) noted that developing staff and filling management posts through internal promotion was a key retention strategy for some of the secondary schools in their case studies. Developing leadership along the lines outlined above could prove to be of real benefit for some of the challenging schools. Also, the teacher questionnaires highlighted having greater responsibility as a factor that teachers were looking for in their next school, providing greater opportunity for them to contribute to the development of the school.

The importance of good leadership and management was clear from the focus groups. Particularly telling was the evidence from schools where this was lacking. The quality of leadership was frequently mentioned by teachers and played a major part in how happy they felt at their school. There was a range of qualities that teachers wanted in the headteacher and senior management team (SMT); key was for them to have vision for the school and to have a visible presence respected by pupils, parents and staff. They also wanted them to be: good at communicating with staff and pupils; approachable; committed to the school; effective at acknowledging and praising teachers' contribution; supportive of teachers and seen to be on their side, particularly in relation to behaviour. This was backed up by the headteacher respondents, who ranked leadership and management third in a list of 12 factors that might enhance retention, with the vast majority identifying this factor as 'very important'. Fourth in the list was middle management, again reinforcing the distributed leadership approach. 'If you feel your school is being led well, with strong leadership and with similar values to your own then that's important. We've had a new head at the school whose come in with a very different style, who's got a real vision … the change is really welcome' (challenging school).

Recent policy developments, particularly the agenda for extended schools, are placing new responsibilities on headteachers, which are particularly pertinent in the context of schools facing challenging circumstances, where the associated demands could be very significant. John Dunford, General Secretary of the Secondary Heads Association, has raised the valid point that the kind of collaborative system being developed demands a new type of headteacher with different skills and strengths. He has suggested consideration be given to designing a new role map for headteachers (in Reed, 2005). Professional development for headteachers that prepares them effectively for all their responsibilities would be beneficial, allowing space to articulate effective leadership in these new contexts, and to train heads for these new responsibilities. It could also productively include a focus on positive retention practices.

Management

'School management … would appear to be the most effective factor for the retention of staff, with the role of the headteacher and organisation of the school seen as particularly significant' (Cunningham, 2000). Unsurprisingly, it has been found that: 'There is often an inverse relationship between management skills and staff stress: good management brings less stress but poor management results in more stress' (Dunham, 1995). Competition for recruitment between schools is likely to be a driver to improve working conditions for teachers and other staff. Teachers are increasingly taking into account working conditions when making choices, including the attitude of the employer and practices in relation to the health and wider wellbeing of the staff. Poor management should not be tolerated in challenging schools; the job is hard enough. Systems need to be clear and fair and, crucially, working smoothly to assist rather than aggravate staff. However, our teacher questionnaire showed those in matched schools were much more likely to see factors relating to management of the school as an incentive to stay than their counterparts in challenging schools.

The impact that a school can make by self-consciously and self critically orchestrating a positive staff retention strategy should not be underestimated (Totterdell *et al*, 2002). And just as teachers become more savvy about what they expect from a school, headteachers need to be fussy about the teachers they recruit. It is incredibly hard to have the confidence to do this, although it is often a trademark you find in successful schools, and is imperative to the factors discussed later in this chapter, in terms of staff relations and school culture and ethos. The difficultly some challenging schools have in recruiting and attracting quality applicants underpins this understandable lack of confidence (see figure 4.1). There was little difference between challenging and matched schools in terms of the numbers of applicants, though it was only among the vulnerable schools that it was reported that some advertisements did not result in a single application. However, there were apparently differences in relation to quality, as indicated by the ability to shortlist and appoint. The challenging schools far more frequently reported not shortlisting and not appointing.

Figure 4.1: Applications and appointments, headteacher survey, (N = 20)

	Challenging schools	Matched schools
Applications per advertised post	6.7	7.6
% advertised posts where shortlist possible	64%	84%
% advertised posts where appointment made	55%	79%

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Tellingly, in our school survey we asked headteachers to rank 11 strategies that might contribute to raising pupil attainment. 'Having different teaching staff' attracted wide-ranging responses; a third of the challenging schools ranked this very low, but the other two-thirds ranked it in the top three. In contrast, this was the lowest ranked strategy in the whole list among the matched schools, none of them considering it important.

Some teachers' accounts of their motivations for teaching and their desire to have an impact indicate the need to emphasise the extent to which teachers working in challenging schools can make a real difference, rather than just 'do a job'. Recent recruitment drives to attract teachers to the profession that have focused on emphasising teaching as an inspiring and rewarding job could be replicated to focus specifically on attracting good teachers to the most challenging schools. In the process there is an opportunity to emphasise the potential to be fast-tracked to opportunities for professional development, creativity and autonomy that can be heightened when working in the most challenging schools. Some teachers in the focus groups were looking explicitly for a school with expertise and a track record in particular areas, for example special educational needs, pastoral support or raising achievement of particular minority ethnic groups. 'You need to pitch the school at people who'd be successful in it – highlight the positives: you are never bored; it's interesting and challenging; its good for team players and you have an opportunity to create your own agenda' (challenging school). This was also evident in the responses to the teachers' survey.

In one of the challenging schools in the North West a number of teachers referred to the initial letter they had received when they applied for a job at the school. The positive tone of the letter, and the sense of vision and challenge the headteacher had set out, was appealing. This is linked to the draw of working at a school that is seen to be 'going places' even if it faces significant challenge in the process. 'When I read the tone of the letter I was really impressed, there was a real sense of where he wanted the school to go but also honesty about the challenges it faced and emphasising the fact that not everyone would be up to the job' (challenging school).

The strong sell on values can be linked to the need for a 'pat on the back' once in the job. Feeling valued is crucial to a teacher's experience at a school, particularly at the most challenging schools where teachers can feel as if they are battling against the odds. Pay is clearly one way of rewarding and recognising teachers but is not enough in itself. Teachers, like anyone else, look for and welcome other forms of praise for the time and effort they put in. Some linked this to their perception that the status of teaching was in decline and suggested that this recognition was needed at national as well as school level. 'Getting credit, being recognised for what you do is really important … recognition can be more important than the financial reward' (matched school).

Staff relations

Staff need to feel part of a team, with clear roles and responsibilities. They all need to understand how their work contributes to the bigger picture and feel that their work is valued with successes celebrated. Also, they should have access to leadership and management and be given new challenges when appropriate. We are seeing in schools an increasing diversity of roles – from teaching assistants to social workers – which places an increasing premium on effective management, good organisation and communication to ensure maximum benefit from these resources and positive relations between staff. Nowhere is this more true than in those schools in the most challenging circumstances, where the daily struggles often leave staff with little time or energy for praise, thanks and to care for each other. Collegiality, workforce remodelling and multi-agency working are all explored with these thoughts in mind.

Collegiality

'Collegiality and effective team work' was rated as very important in retaining high quality teaching staff by almost all the headteacher respondents to our questionnaire; joint highest on a list of 12 factors. Due to the fundamental importance of these aspects of the job, all efforts should be made to encourage their development within schools that are up against it in other ways. A teacher commenting in the focus group stated: 'Even in the most challenging school the staff can be supportive and that support and back up is crucial'. People skills are clearly of paramount importance for leaders and managers. School organisation can add to this in that management can help facilitate collegiality and opportunities for staff to support one another. It was clear from the focus group survey responses that teachers' views on the extent to which they were supported by senior management varied considerably across all schools, and it was evident that the absence of these factors can be mitigated by a strong, supportive department and good relationships with colleagues. More than four in five teachers in the focus groups felt well supported by department colleagues, even if they lacked support from the SMT.

Informal support networks are also important in shaping a teacher's experience at a school, and developing policy to aid and strengthen such networks would be of benefit. Teachers described feeling isolated from their support networks for much of the day, with little time at break and lunch to catch up with colleagues and discuss issues or challenges they were facing. In turn, there was concern that moving to a challenging school could be tough; it might require a steep learning curve and a period of quickly having to acquire and adjust to using new skills. There were a number of suggestions made about how to strengthen the capacity of informal support networks in order to ease the transition. One was to protect non-

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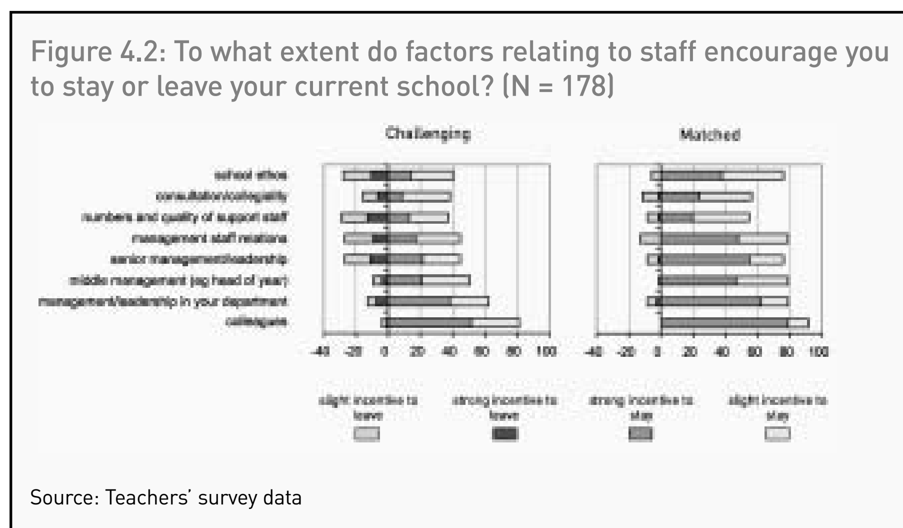
contact time and schedule the school timetable in such a way to allow groups of teachers to have common periods of non-contact time where they could come together. Another suggestion was to introduce new teachers to challenging schools as part of a group, perhaps with time spent in advance preparing for them for the likely challenges they might face. This was felt to offer new teachers at a challenging school a ready made support network. Systems can clearly facilitate staff collaboration, allowing opportunities for collegial relations to develop, and these need to be in place in challenging schools.

In addition to placing collegiality and effective team working at the top of the list of retention factors, a number of respondents also commented on their importance as additional factors in attracting staff: '"Ethos", "feel", how they perceive close potential colleagues', 'Staff relationships and well-being', 'A social scene – a bright enthusiastic staff encourages retention', were among the headteachers' observations. The teacher respondents identified their colleagues as the strongest incentive to stay at the school (see figure 4.2). At the pre-interview and interview stages of the recruitment process, teachers' decisions about whether to accept the job were mainly swayed by the staff they met. This echoes the finding of a much larger survey of teachers' view about retention (Dalgety, Hutchings and Ross, 2003) which analyses responses from 2,800 teachers. In that survey colleagues emerged as the most important factor promoting retention.

Figure 4.2: To what extent do factors relating to staff encourage you to stay or leave your current school? (N = 178)



Source: Teachers' survey data

In the focus groups, many teachers emphasised the importance of good staff morale and being able to draw on support and guidance from colleagues. Teachers who were happy at their current school frequently mentioned the fact that they liked their colleagues and enjoyed working as part

of a team. In challenging schools in particular, teachers who felt comfortable in the job tended to emphasise the sense of camaraderie and common purpose they shared with other teachers. In some instances teachers stressed the importance of having 'someone to sound off to' when things went wrong and having the time and space to share problems as well as techniques for dealing with them. In the vast majority of schools most teachers did feel supported by department colleagues but there were some cases of teachers who felt isolated and unsupported. This was a particular problem for those just starting out in their teaching career. Some teachers also implied that particular staff were treated as 'favourites' and given better development opportunities and support than others; this in turn caused resentment.

Workforce reform in schools

The evidence in relation to the effectiveness of the recent workforce reforms, aiming to remodel the school workforce, is still not conclusive. There is surprisingly little evidence in relation to some of the big themes such as workforce reform or class size. In response to our headteacher questionnaire, one headteacher proposed that each teacher should have a teaching assistant. The headteachers were also asked to rate key factors in retaining high quality teaching staff in their school. 'Reducing teachers' paperwork' and 'support in the classroom' both scored highly across all schools. Strategies that might contribute to raising pupil attainment were also rated, and headteachers in matched schools placed 'employing more support staff' second in their list, whilst heads of challenging schools had 'training and supporting existing support staff' in their top five. So there is some support for workforce remodelling.

From the focus group discussions it was again clear that the support teachers get in the classroom is important. Many would welcome more support from teaching assistants, learning mentors and so on, and felt that this support was stretched in their school. There were significant differences both between and within schools as to the extent of this support. Teachers in non-compulsory subjects often felt unsupported, and most teachers felt there were simply not enough classroom support staff. Teachers also emphasised the need to have good quality teaching assistants rather than simply 'minders'. In one challenging school in London, for example, teachers felt that the school had difficulty attracting good quality teaching assistants and that they were poorly trained once they arrived at the school. There were also calls for more specialist support staff.

More positive examples were also discussed. For example, teachers working in a school where an effective cover supervisor system was in place valued the fact that their non-contact time was protected: 'The cover system

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is very good, you only have to do half covers so you're never too burdened'. This was backed up by a colleague: 'The cover supervisors have worked really well. At my last school I counted 42 covers I'd taken in one year. Here I've only done two this year because of the cover supervisors'.

Teachers having a classroom assistant in all their classes would be an effective support; similarly a commitment to no lunch time or break duties and the removal of other burdens from teachers, with clear responsibilities assigned to others, would benefit teachers. It is important to highlight the need for all staff roles to be valued, especially in light of the pay issues for teaching assistants, and also all roles aligned with the vision and aims of the school.

Wider ideas of workforce remodelling, for example employing a human resource expert on the leadership team, could add value in relation to a number of the ideas suggested here. However, all these suggestions rely on sufficient resources being available.

Multi-agency working

Multi-agency working, particularly with the drive behind extended schools, has been increasing across schools. In chapter 6 we will consider how this can help to meet wider pupil needs, which is their key aim. Here we are concerned with how multi-agency working can support teachers. Extended schools, linked to workforce remodelling, offer a potentially powerful tool. Its success does depend upon effective links being made with workforce remodelling; there is concern that, without this, extended schools could place more requirements on teachers. With professionals on site from a range of backgrounds in a full service extended school, this should reduce the need for teachers to deal with crises outside their area of expertise. Some of the behaviour and education support teams (BESTs) have proved effective in this way. The government's agendas on Children's Trusts and Every Child Matters (HMG, 2004) are placing these issues at the forefront. They offer real opportunities, but also present considerable challenges.

We asked headteachers what policies the government should adopt in relation to staffing in order to improve attainment. Multi-agency working was identified as having potential benefit in this regard. One headteacher requested: 'Direct funding to schools in order to deploy additional staff such as counsellors, nurses, education welfare officers'.

There was a mixed picture, from the focus groups, about the extent to which teachers felt that their school was currently effective at working with other agencies and professionals. Some schools were clearly more proactive in working with others such as social services, the police and educational psychologists. A number of teachers commented that often other professionals' knowledge and expertise about particular students did not filter down to classroom teachers. Some teachers suggested that they did not

always feel well-informed or well-equipped to respond to the needs of particular pupils who displayed a range of emotional, behavioural and learning needs. Information provided by, for example, a social worker in contact with the family, could prove invaluable. The problem appeared to be one of poor communication between 'frontline teachers' and other agencies, and also a lack of resource and capacity for external agencies to work effectively in schools.

While most teachers working in challenging schools recognised the need for multi-agency working, it was also noted that it can present challenges and needs to be well-managed. One teacher from a challenging school in London described how his school had been very proactive in working with other agencies and bringing a range of new expertise and non-statutory agencies into the school. While the move was broadly positive he noted that there were some clashes in terms of cultures and direction. A similar situation was described in another challenging school, where the use of other agencies and professionals was sometimes felt to undermine teaching when pupils were taken out of the classroom. In a third challenging school, in the North West, a different type of multi-agency working was in place. A 'task force' had been established, made up of various local stakeholders to help steer the direction of the school and develop recommendations on key issues. Again, whilst seen as a positive initiative, in practice it needed to be well-managed and staffed by effective 'consultants'.

Clearly, there needs to be more effective communication back to frontline teachers, carefully managed to ensure sensitivity to confidentiality issues, as our research did highlight some teething problems in this area of information sharing. Team working with a range of professionals needs to be effectively facilitated, potentially managed by an extended schools coordinator or another member of non-teaching staff. If this can be made to work, the potential good relations with other professionals would support teachers, removing aspects of their job not directly associated with teaching and learning. Training together, including all staff in a whole school ethos, seems a sensible way forward and this is currently being attempted. As is common in 'joined up working' proposals, whilst they offer significant potential gains, they are much easier said than done.

School culture and ethos

Bringing this section together, effective leadership and management and positive staff relations are the cornerstones of a vibrant school culture. CPD enables this to be taken to another level, with the school becoming a professional learning community, which we will come onto in the next chapter. As we have seen, the school culture and ethos is crucial in terms of morale and motivation. A positive culture needs to be fostered, as the alter-

native can be a strong motivator for leaving the school or profession. And as we will see in chapter 6, the benefits of a positive ethos and positive relations have been found to stretch to include improved student behaviour (Reed, 2005).

Due to the fundamental importance of these factors, it would seem sensible for a member of the senior leadership team to have explicit responsibility for ensuring teachers are supported in terms of professional satisfaction, enabled to do their job effectively and valued as people, and that school factors are not squashing their enthusiasm for teaching, but rather fostering it. Whether this person should have a teaching background or be a human resources specialist is likely to be down to the individual school.

Furthermore, whilst the desire has to come from within the school, the 'Well-being programme' (see box below) has a great deal to offer in relation to many of the factors discussed here. It would be beneficial if all schools facing challenging circumstances were offered the opportunity to participate in the programme or other similar projects. Caring about staff and valuing them as expert professionals should not be seen as an 'add on', rather it should be embedded in the systems and school ethos.

The teacher 'Well-being' programme

The Well-being programme, which started in Norfolk in 1999, is aimed at creating healthy working environments for all employees and works inclusively, seeking to attend to the needs of all staff. It adopts a 'bottom up' approach, where staff work together to determine the approach their school should take. This ensures ownership by staff and long-term sustainability of a healthy working and learning environment. Volunteer facilitators are recruited from each school and trained in how to bring people together and empower them to focus on what they would like to change and, crucially, how they will do it. It encourages school and individual self-evaluation and audit as a key process of implementation and for reviewing its effectiveness. It concentrates on encouraging staff in schools to think differently about working together, to encourage and promote effective communication and support, the promotion of emotional intelligence and personal and social development in education.

The programme is now up and running in over 1,000 schools. Positive outcomes are suggested from evaluation in areas such as improved recruitment and retention, decreased teacher absence rates, improved staff motivation and improved workplace communication.

For more information go to: www.worklifesupport.com
or www.teachersupport.info

What has been identified as critical for teachers in terms of good school organisation is in fact a list of factors that are synonymous with good management practice in any profession. The importance of wellbeing factors offers a potentially powerful way forward, they can be very effective and are valued by teachers, yet compared with ideas raised in the previous chapter they are relatively inexpensive. As for school culture, the term 'challenging collegiality' seems to encapsulate exactly what the aim should be: very importantly supporting one another, but also more than this, challenging one another in a constructive way, for example pushing forward the best teaching and learning strategies. This provides a good link into our next chapter where teachers' learning is explored.

Conclusions

- We know a great deal about the characteristics for effective schooling but less on how to create them.
- School level factors are difficult to address in national policy terms.
- Distributed leadership has been found to be the most effective leadership model, but it may be less prevalent in challenging schools.
- With the new responsibilities that are falling to schools, particularly in relation to childcare and supporting services for families, a new type of headteacher could be needed.
- The workforce reforms, when they are well implemented, can provide effective support for teachers, particularly protecting non-contact time and guaranteed classroom assistants.
- Multi-agency working has much to offer, but poor communication back to frontline teachers limits the potential benefits.
- Colleagues represent a strong incentive to stay at a school and existing staff can also influence recruitment.
- Challenging collegiality is the aim, with supportive working relationships and colleagues constructively challenging one another and evaluating their practice.

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5. The teachers: a learning profession

Teachers have a right to be well trained, with high quality learning opportunities throughout their career. They also have a responsibility to embrace this learning, always seeking to improve their professional practice. Teachers need to be trained effectively from the outset of their careers and, as in any other profession, their commitment to learning needs to be maintained, pushing forward to new possibilities and breakthroughs in teaching and learning. At present there is very little differentiation of training, and the issue of whether specific training and development should be on offer to prepare teachers better for challenging schools will be explored. And whilst ITT is crucial, it may represent just one year at the start of a teacher's career. Learning on the job, through CPD, offers a more powerful opportunity than ITT, however it is currently a much greater problem, with a great deal on offer seen as inadequate. The research for this project highlights CPD as potentially the most powerful lever for challenging schools, and also indicates that developments in ITT could make a significant contribution to this agenda.

Motivations into teaching, specifically into teaching in challenging schools

Does a strong a priori commitment lead to higher levels of retention, as one might intuitively expect? The work of Chambers and Roper (2000) finds no correlation between a 'less than firm commitment to the teaching profession' on entry to ITT and likeliness to withdraw. The teachers in our focus groups could be grouped into two main categories in their motivations for entering the profession: those who 'fall' into it and those who make a conscious decision to teach. In this second category some teachers still describe the job as a vocation, whilst others suggest it is something that they had always set their mind on. This category includes career changers, who tend to be more reflective about what teaching offers in terms of tangible rewards and challenge, compared with other jobs they have undertaken. This second group is more likely to articulate altruistic motives and a positive account of 'wanting to make a difference', with career changers among the most vocal in highlighting the sense of fulfilment they get from teaching.

These two broad categories crudely divide motivations for becoming a teacher, but it is important to note that teachers may develop different motivations, once in the job, for staying in the profession. Those who 'fall into' teaching may develop a passion for the job and a sense of teaching as a positive career choice where they have an impact, for example: 'I was

advised in a career interview at university to teach, so I just fell into it – I love it to pieces but it didn't cross my mind to do it' (matched school).

'Making a difference' was interpreted in a variety of ways. For some teachers in the focus groups it meant helping young people to learn and develop as individuals and the profile of the pupil intake was not relevant to them. Other teachers, however, were clear that it meant working with children from the most disadvantaged backgrounds and working in schools located in deprived and challenging areas. Their motivation was in helping young people in these areas to get a good start in life, raising their aspirations and helping them to achieve 'despite the odds'. One teacher in a challenging school argued that a teacher in a school with a more affluent, middle class intake was merely a 'facilitator', as children in such schools were likely to thrive, regardless of your skills or knowledge as a teacher. 'I made an active decision about what type of school I wanted to work in – one where the kids were less well-off … I definitely started out with an altruistic interest in working in those schools' (challenging school).

One approach to this issue is therefore to seek to differentiate teachers by their motivations and priorities; there is some international evidence that realisation of motivating aspirations brings long-term commitment to teaching (Brown, 1992; Yong, 1994). In light of this, and in the context of challenging schools, it might make sense to seek to build upon those who may be motivated to teach disadvantaged students. Howson adopts this line in arguing that to be a successful teacher in schools with significant social problems it is necessary to be there willingly:

> '… you need to identify, right from the word go, people who are actually socially responsible and wish to take on the challenge of working in those sort of schools, and give them the training and the support to enable them to be successful with those sort of children' (House of Commons Education and Skills Committee, 2004).

In our teacher survey, about 20 per cent of all teacher respondents appeared to have a particular motivation to work in challenging schools. These teachers indicated not only that they had chosen their current school because it was challenging, but also that they would choose to teach disadvantaged pupils in the future.

An interesting case study in this respect is offered by UCLA's Center X, which explicitly aims to attract teachers motivated in this way, taking 'a specialized approach to urban teacher preparation that is sensitive to the context of high-poverty communities within Los Angeles' (Quartz *et al*, 2001). Early results are demonstrating a positive effect on teacher retention. The Education and Skills Select Committee was suitably impressed:

> 'Challenging schools have particular problems with retention and recruitment. We believe that one of the best ways to help them retain

teachers is to seek out those trainees who are keen to work in challenging schools and to provide them with specially tailored training and a network of post-qualification support. We were impressed by the work of Center X at UCLA, which trains and supports teachers in this way, and we recommend that similar programmes are developed here' (House of Commons Education and Skills Committee, 2004).

There are some ITT providers in this country pursuing courses in a similar vein. We came across work of this kind both at the Institute of Education and at Manchester University, and there are likely to be other examples at the local level.

Initial Teacher Training

The extent to which haemorrhaging of teachers takes place in the first few years of teaching suggests that ITT has some part to play, as it implies training is not preparing teachers effectively for their first posts. Furthermore, the factors involved in problems with retention seem to be magnified in schools facing challenging circumstances, which has made these schools vulnerable to a lack of focus on the issue:

> 'Policies that address this shortage typically focus on supply-side solutions such as recruitment. Yet there is increasing evidence that getting more teachers into the career pipeline only scratches the surface of a complex problem. The pipe itself leaks and it does so in ways that further disadvantage high-poverty schools where the shortage is most acute' (Quartz *et al*, 2001).

Seeking to get behind this issue, this section explores 'practice shock' amongst teachers, their expectations and the reality, the value of school involvement in ITT and a consideration of motivations and the different routes into teaching. It concludes with some of the policy implications that can be drawn from the evidence.

Expectations and reality: the value of learning on the job

One of the most palpable links between ITT and retention is the problem of unrealistic expectations amongst trainees and newly qualified teachers, which result in 'practice shock' (Stokking *et al*, 2003). Research has demonstrated how many trainee teachers may not be prepared for or able to relate to the 'realities of life' that exist in schools facing challenging circumstances. In particular it seems that idealistic expectations of teaching in challenging schools can be very quickly shattered (Rushton, 2000).

Strategies already exist to allow people to get a feel for teaching before they embark on ITT. However, the scope of these 'tasters' has been questioned, and it is suggested that these courses are so short (two to three days)

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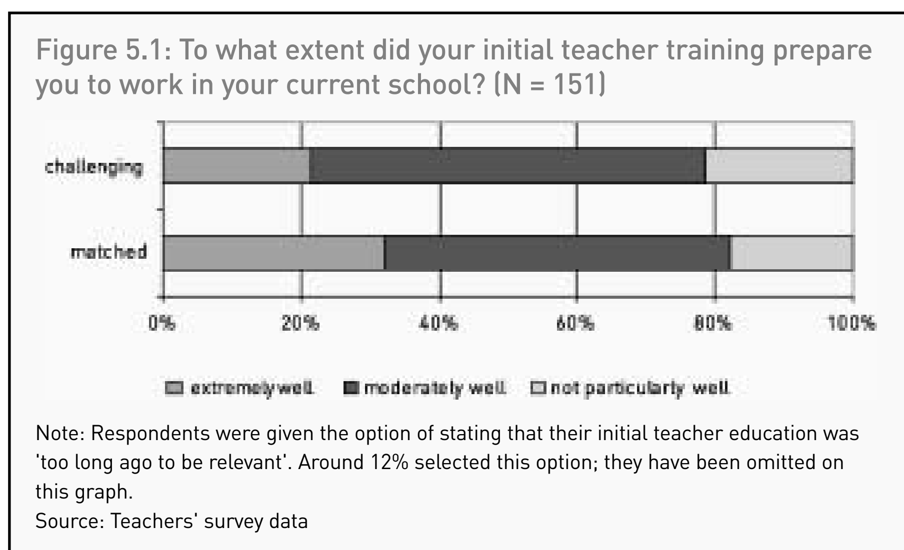
that they cannot possibly convey the level of demands expected over a block of several weeks' teaching experience (Chambers and Roper, 2000). A different strategy is to manage more carefully the exposure of trainees on ITT to the realities of classroom teaching as part of their training to allow them to adjust expectations before they begin teaching.

There is evidence that the school-based element to teacher training has benefits far beyond amending false expectations. More generally, it is a common view that this more practical kind of teacher training is an extremely important component. In Hobson's survey, 91 per cent of student teachers deemed 'learning from trial and error in the classroom' as 'very valuable' with the other 9 per cent declaring it 'quite valuable'; by some distance the most 'valued' part of ITT (Hobson, 2002).

Our research found very few teachers felt extremely well prepared by their ITT, with those in challenging schools feeling slightly less well prepared than their counterparts in matched schools (see figure 5.1).

Figure 5.1: To what extent did your initial teacher training prepare you to work in your current school? (N = 151)



Note: Respondents were given the option of stating that their initial teacher education was 'too long ago to be relevant'. Around 12% selected this option; they have been omitted on this graph.
Source: Teachers' survey data

This was backed up by the focus groups, where hardly any teachers working in challenging schools felt that their teacher training had prepared them well for the job. In part this was taken as inevitable and it was suggested that ultimately it is 'on the job' training that matters most. The eight teachers in the focus groups who had undertaken the Graduate Teacher Programme (GTP), five of whom were based in challenging schools, were largely positive about how well this had prepared them to work in their current school. This suggests that the GTP route may be a good option for attracting teachers to work in challenging schools. We will come back to this later.

School involvement in ITT

Training teachers can also bring distinct benefits to schools, with significant numbers of teachers taking their first jobs in the school where they did one of their ITT placements. Smithers and Robinson's case studies emphasise the positive effect on recruitment of involvement in teacher training (Smithers and Robinson, 2005). School based ITT is a potential way of getting trainee teachers to experience schools for themselves, which, for challenging schools, offers a chance to circumnavigate a poor reputation and break down the effects of any negative 'word on the street' which might deter potential teachers. There is also much to be gained in terms of teacher retention. Participation in the training of teachers can be a significant opportunity for CPD, which has positive implications for the morale of teachers within a school. In particular, the freeing up of time and opportunities for reflection offered by mentoring students were widely commented on.

Whilst this is the general picture, it is notable that there are dissenting voices. Brooks (2000) provides statistics (admittedly from a limited survey) to show how ITT places burdens on subject mentors' and headteachers' time. There is a clear feeling in the literature that the quality of school based ITT is highly variable (Hobson, 2002), and the ability to provide it depends heavily upon the circumstances of the school. Schools facing challenging circumstances, with an environment in which the day to day business of 'fire-fighting' is prevalent and those with additional accountability requirements, which might follow from concerns about performance, might struggle to take part in ITT. The guidelines that make it difficult for schools in special measures to qualify to receive NQTs, Teach First or a salary grant for GTP trainees, places a barrier between them and these potentially valuable recruitment opportunities. A headteacher responding to our school survey, on a question asking what policies in relation to staffing would improve attainment, commented: 'Permit schools in special measures to employ NQTs'.

The careful induction of NQTs offers an important means of reducing the potential for 'practice shock' and supporting them through the vulnerable embryonic stages of their teaching career. Universal induction for NQTs was introduced in September 1999. However, the variability of induction provision is of concern (DfES, 2002b). The Early Professional Development Programme (EPD), for teachers in their second and third years, was piloted between October 2001 and July 2004 in 12 LEAs. Whilst EPD received a positive evaluation, the programme was not rolled out nationally, and funding ceased at the end of the pilot. One potential remedy for the variability in the quality of induction and support across schools is for the schools to build links with each other, forming clusters in which NQTs can gain access to others teaching their specialist subjects and induction mentors can share ideas and experiences. Teachers in our focus group who discussed this idea thought it would prove popular.

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Teacher training programmes

There are a number of routes into teaching, and this is not an exhaustive list, it simply aims to give a sense of some of the programmes mentioned in the report:

- **Traditional routes into teaching** – university based courses that include school placements and include the one year Postgraduate Certificate in Education (PGCE), and the four year undergraduate Bachelor in Education (BEd) qualification.
- **Fast Track** – a university based PGCE course aiming to attract future school leaders into teaching. It targets high achieving graduates, including those who have come into teaching from another career. They receive additional incentives, including extra funding, additional training and a laptop. They are expected to undertake two posts in different schools before progressing to a management position. When the scheme was first introduced one of these placements had to be a challenging school; this requirement was subsequently dropped.
- **Graduate Teacher Programme (GTP), Registered Teacher Programme (RTP), Overseas Trained Teacher Programme (OTTP)** – offer employment based routes into teaching, where trainee teachers receive a salary and qualify for the profession whilst working in a school. Their training is delivered through a number of slightly different models. These routes are particularly targeted at career changers, and increasing their capacity is a current priority for the government due to their early success.
- **Teach First** – a relatively new scheme, introduced in 2003, attracting high achieving graduates to teach in challenging schools in London. The graduates commit to teaching for two years. They learn on the job, receiving a lot of training and support, and at the end of the first year they are assessed for QTS. Teach First is about to enter its third year, it is planning to expand to other cities and the first group of teachers is deciding whether to stay beyond the agreed two years.

More details on all of these programmes and others can be found at www.tta.gov.uk

Routes into teaching

Intuitively, the cost of training to the trainee should be a major concern, but the reasons for making the choice to teach are extremely well documented and rarely dwell upon this, instead generally focusing on intrinsic aspects of teaching (Thornton and Reid, 2000). However, despite the limited evidence, it is difficult to believe that the decision in 2001 to offer free postgraduate training made no difference to individuals considering the profession. It simultaneously removed a barrier to entry into teaching, and made the choice of teaching more attractive in relation to other options. Certainly, the impact of employment based training has been to open a pathway into teaching for those who would otherwise face financial restrictions. However, the employment based routes do have their critics because, although, as we have seen, the school based experience is fundamentally important, many of the higher education institutions providing teacher training would argue that the theoretical dimensions of education are neglected.

Having said this, the chance to be fully employed whilst training has opened up ITT to a large number of mature entrants, and they have been welcomed into teaching for a number of reasons. In the first place, they often have very different qualities from the 'typical' graduate entrant, 'These people are often in their second or third career and they bring a range of valuable skills and experience into schools' (House of Commons Education and Skills Committee, 2004). The employment based routes to QTS, and the mature entrants they attract, may have positive impacts on retention. Across different ITT routes, those who consider themselves most likely to enter teaching on completion of their training came from the school based training routes (Hobson *et al*, 2004).

The 'maturity' of the entrants is an important part of this positive effect on retention. The same research found that, in general, younger respondents were less likely to state that they would be in teaching in five years' time. Those aged 40-44 were more confident that they would be, potentially suggesting a greater degree of commitment. "As one case study trainee puts it: 'it's a long-term career change … it's longer than ten years. This is the career change; I'm not now going to have a chance to do another one." (Male, 40–44, PGCE, secondary)', (Hobson *et al*, 2004).

Ethnic diversity presents another significant issue to the teaching profession. The proportion of teachers from minority ethnic communities is below the proportion of the minority ethnic population of the country. Whilst no figures are currently held nationally, IPSE has estimated that the number of black and other minority ethnic teachers represents 2.4 per cent of the teaching force compared with 9.1 per cent of the working-age population, and 12.9 per cent of the school population (House of Commons Education and Skills Committee, 2004). The context in which many schools operate means that minority ethnic teachers are an asset to the profession, but the above shows that it is an asset that is currently in short supply: in 2000–2003, 2.9 per cent of teachers in London schools were black, compared with 19.6 per cent of children (London Development Agency, 2004).

The Center X programme, mentioned above has been successful in this respect, attracting a diverse teacher population (Quartz *et al*, 2001). This model offers us a potentially different route into teaching, which would build on some of the emerging themes. A crucial element of Center X's approach is the provision of training tailored to the specific needs of urban and high poverty communities (and, therefore, often ethnic and linguistic minorities). The closest programmes we currently have in this country are Fast Track and Teach First – designed to attract 'high flying' ambitious graduates into teaching – and also to some degree focusing on schools in challenging circumstances.

What is interesting about Teach First is that it combines two of the key issues that have arisen in the literature. It attempts to use support through peer groups, by placing groups of at least four trainees in a school, and it

emphasises the benefits of this to teacher retention. Some Fast Track courses are also trialling this approach. Secondly, Teach First plays specifically on the differentiation of motivations, stressing the moral aspects of teaching in a challenging school (as did Fast Track at its inception, although this was subsequently toned down). A headteacher responding to our survey reflected on this, arguing the case to: 'Provide thoughtful incentives for teachers to work in challenging schools. For example, the original Fast Track scheme required a placement in a challenging school'. It is worth noting that Teach First has had considerable success in its approach, overtly appealing to graduates' altruism, with well 1,000 applicants for around 200 places for each of its first three years.

It is also interesting that, whilst retention beyond the stipulated two year period is hoped for, Ross and Hutchings (2003) note 'Teach First is a recognition of the value of attracting people into the teaching profession for a limited period rather than as a life-long career.' Clearly there is a tension between the universally accepted value of experience and continuity in teaching, and the reality of a mobile labour market in which linear career progression is the exception rather than the norm. Nonetheless, whilst this makes it more likely that schools will lose experienced teachers it also creates the possibility, exploited by the GTP and RTP, of attracting other experienced workers who are seeking to change careers.

The potential to identify trainee teachers at PGCE stage to work in challenging schools was discussed in some of the focus groups. One specific target group may be career changers (who are also more likely to opt for the GTP route). This could have benefits in putting extra focus on skills that teachers in such schools may be likely to draw on (eg behaviour management) and in creating a pool of teachers ready to be deployed to the most challenging schools. But drawbacks were also identified. A trainee teacher may be put off working in a challenging school if they are thrown 'in at the deep end' before they have had a chance to develop their skills and authority. Without effective in-school support a trainee who opts for a challenging school is likely to feel vulnerable.

There is also scope to invest in training teachers to cope effectively in the most challenging schools. Aside from focusing on specific areas of expertise, such as behaviour management, special educational needs or pastoral support, there is also potential to focus on 'coping' skills such as stress and time management. These would clearly benefit all teachers but may be of most value in challenging schools. 'I would need to develop different skills to go to a really challenging school though' (matched school).

Implications for ITT policy

There is a sense that there are potentially some quick wins with ITT: for example, developing programmes such as Fast Track to have more of an

explicit focus on schools facing challenging circumstances, with reference to the Center X model, and learning some of the lessons from Teach First's marketing success. Also, the number of teachers who take their first job in the school where they did their teaching placement highlights the need for effective links between challenging schools and providers of ITT. This could link in to an incentive system for teachers interested in working in these schools, to provide support and encouragement. Similarly, it may be that incentives are needed for challenging schools to get involved in ITT, potentially requiring a boost in their senior leadership capacity to enable them to do so well. The long-term benefits could make this up front investment worthwhile.

Another interesting angle that may be worth pursuing, due to its potentially powerful impact in relation to retention, is an element of a locally targeted recruitment drive to ITT, attracting future teachers from the local area. If you were to attract Londoners to teach in London schools, for example, then the issue of them moving away after their training, or maybe after a few years in the profession, could be reduced. The sense that the teachers reflected the school and community population would also increase; another desirable outcome. Combining this with the on the job training models of the employment based routes, plus support during first years of teaching, could offer a very interesting way forward for schools facing challenging circumstances.

Continuing Professional Development (CPD)

Recent research from the GTC shows that more than 80 per cent of teachers felt they were not having their needs for CPD met (NFER, 2004). This evidence was supported by a recent report by the Teacher Training Agency (TTA), which was very forthcoming on the current problems with CPD, particularly for a government agency. The report states: 'The common judgement is that the quality of CPD is also patchy, at best. A fundamental concern is that too much CPD is organised on an ad hoc basis, limiting its impact on schools and pupils. A second concern is the reduced focus on subject content in recent years, although a strong subject orientation has proved over time to be one of the most important components of effective CPD' (TTA, 2005). It goes on to list some of the findings from its consultation that back up this view, include the following:

- CPD is too often short term, reactive and lacking in strategic vision.
- Teachers are too rarely engaged in a systematic analysis of their CPD needs.
- Teachers and schools too rarely assess the type of CPD that is likely to be most effective in meeting identified needs.

- Too much CPD fails to take account of participants' existing knowledge and experience.
- The failure to follow through and sustain CPD is at the centre of its failure to have a lasting impact.
- Teachers too often undertake CPD in relative isolation, with little support and feedback.
- Most schools do not have established processes for evaluating the impact of CPD at school, teacher or pupil level.
- There is very uneven access to CPD and in most areas, there is inadequate information about quality external providers (TTA, 2005).

The picture this report paints is stark and clear about the size of the challenge. CPD is of interest to those at all levels in the education system: the teacher, the school, the LEA and the government. A systematic focus on CPD enables teachers to see themselves as learners, reflecting and continuing to develop effective teaching practices, and has a positive effect on retention. More resources may be necessary to make CPD a reality for all schools, ending what is largely accepted as the current variability across the education system. Coupled with these extra resources there needs to be a culture shift for teachers in many schools. Barber (1996) argues that professional development should not be founded on 'narrowly conceived ideas about INSET but the idea of the teacher as a life-long learner who is a member of a research based profession'. As in other professions, teachers have to see it as part of their responsibility to stay up to date with developments and research.

The government's intentions to make CPD a central part of every teacher's experience were made clear in the recent evidence to the School Teacher's Review Body (DfES, 2005b). This was published alongside the evidence of the teacher union partners. Recent developments in this area have also seen the Secretary of State for Education and Skills asking the TTA to take on a new remit for CPD. The focus will be on leadership of the system, ensuring schools and LEAs are more informed to make better choices in relation to CPD (DfES, 2005b). The government is clearly on board and committed to the CPD agenda, however the TTA is being expected to deliver its extra responsibilities within existing budgets.

Our research indicated that there is potentially an issue associated with some teachers' appetite for professional development opportunities. Some of the headteacher respondents perceived their teaching staff had low levels of enthusiasm to learn and develop as a teacher. Headteachers especially highlighted the issue with those who had been in the profession for more than a few years and it was particularly apparent in challenging schools. Headteachers of challenging schools felt that 20 per cent of newly or recently

qualified teachers and 50 per cent of teachers who had taught for three years or more were not enthusiastic to learn and develop, whereas in the matched schools the figures were 5 per cent and 20 per cent, respectively. The fact that teachers get increasingly negative about CPD as their career develops suggests that their confidence increases and therefore their feeling of needing to learn decreases. However, it could also be that their experiences of CPD have not been very positive. Also, this does not align with many teachers' views in the questionnaires, which was that they did want to learn, so there may be other reasons for the headteachers' perceptions.

Of importance to this project is the possible link between CPD and retention: 'Teachers who collaborate, learn together, share ideas and model best practice are more likely to remain in teaching. They feel valued and supported in their development and in their work' (GTC, 2002). And, as we have seen, CPD is a government priority for teachers, not in terms of 'going on more courses' but rather: 'Central to improvements in teaching and learning is excellent professional development for all teachers – with more emphasis on classroom observation, practice, training, coaching and mentoring' (DfES, 2004b).

In the next section we look at best practice in this area, highlighting what we should be aiming for and how schools in challenging contexts could lead the way in terms of CPD. We then go on to consider issues of variability and suggest how benefits from CPD can be maximised, particularly in relation to encouraging recruitment and retention in challenging schools.

Professional learning communities

The need for schools to become learning communities is supported by an increasing body of research: 'While pupils' learning would be the ultimate goal, a thriving professional learning community would offer school staff the opportunity of a rewarding and satisfying work environment and could, therefore, contribute to resolving issues of teacher recruitment and retention' (Stoll *et al*, 2003). Schools engaged in this way are open to change and experiment, seeking to improve through enquiry into existing practices and evidence-based adoption and adaptation of innovation (Joyce *et al*, 1999). Everyone in school is a learner: 'you can tell it is a good school when teachers talk about teaching; observe each other's practice; plan, organise, evaluate – together; ultimately teachers teach each other' (Brighouse, 2004). Creating this type of learning community involves a serious focus on continuing professional development. Improving schools have been found to spend more time on professional development than stable schools (Freeman, 1997).

Distributed leadership has been identified as a crucial factor in building learning communities, as has a shared vision, respect and trust among colleagues, all of which builds on ideas discussed in the previous chapter;

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also important is the existence of physical spaces where staff can meet to engage in reflective dialogue (Louis and Kruse, 1995). The issue of space was often raised during the focus group discussions, either as a positive or, equally, when it was absent or not used. Building small school improvement teams has been highlighted as effective practice, increasing teachers' sense of belonging and minimising alienation (Joyce *et al*, 1999). Key to making this work in a school is the CPD coordinator role, which was found to be crucial but often underdeveloped in terms of support (Hustler *et al*, 2003).

If this it what we are striving for, the present reality in many schools facing challenging circumstances has a long way to go, with many not giving sufficient attention to staff development over time. Chapman and Harris (2004) point to the 'resulting erosion of professional confidence and capability' which can be a major barrier to improvement in schools facing challenging circumstances; if the school is in 'special measures' teachers can also become the prime focus of blame. Furthermore, 'there is evidence that students in disadvantaged areas find themselves in classes with the least experienced and least qualified teachers' (McKenzie, 2004), all the more reason to place CPD at the heart of the school culture in these contexts.

The variability of experience in relation to CPD is extensive across the board: 'The context of school, LEA and region had a considerable degree of influence on perceptions and experience of CPD as well as access to CPD, but this is not just an issue to do with size or location of school and could operate at a very localised level' (Hustler *et al*, 2003). It is not that surprising that challenging schools may have their focus on the short-term crisis, and developing staff may fall down the list of priorities. However, in the long run this is likely to create more problems for the school. The school has significant power to influence their fortunes in this regard:

> 'As any teacher who has worked in more than one school will attest, the training and development culture may be quite different from one establishment to another. In some schools teachers' ongoing professional development is seen as integral, given great significance and very closely linked to the school development plan ... In this sense "good schools" are said to make "good teachers" as much as the other way around' (Earley and Bubb, 2004a).

In the school survey, headteachers ranked 11 strategies that might contribute to raising pupil attainment. The most highly ranked for challenging schools was 'Training and developing existing teaching staff', with one headteacher adding: 'Give schools enough funding to allow staff the time and capacity to "coach" and work alongside each other'. In relation to retention, headteachers across the board recognised the importance of CPD, with two thirds considering it to be very important and the remain-

ing third classifying it as fairly important. Again, headteachers of challenging schools placed it higher than those in matched schools. It was volunteered as an additional factor in attracting staff, with one headteacher commenting, for example, that: 'in-service training is always raised at interviews'.

The focus groups supported this emerging picture, with working in a school where you feel valued and where there is clear investment in your professional development being seen as a strong incentive for most teachers. Some teachers at the focus groups talked positively about the opportunities available to them to pursue training and the extent to which they were supported and enabled to develop new skills by their departmental colleagues. The clear differences between (and sometimes within) schools in the extent to which such opportunities were available were apparent.

When opportunities to develop or gain promotion are limited or when they are seen to be unfairly distributed, teachers are likely to feel less loyal and committed to staying at the school. Challenging schools in some cases appear to offer greater opportunities for career progression but the intensity of the job and high workload was felt by some to act as a barrier to pursuing professional development opportunities.

Maximising benefits from CPD

It is not enough to simply tick the professional development box; to be effective it needs to be linked to school and individual goals, and embedded in the workplace (Joyce *et al*, 1999). There is a significant and growing body of research on what effective CPD should involve and this is clearly important when teachers' time is so in demand and valuable, to ensure maximum benefit. For example, Cordingley has led an EPPI Centre international review of effective collaborative CPD, aimed at enabling teachers to 'select development activities that are likely to have the greatest impact on teachers and their teaching' (DfEE, 2000).

It is also important to recognise that CPD can take many forms. The current focus is on classroom observation, coaching and mentoring, which can be very effective and is also relatively inexpensive. Effectively delivered more traditional courses are a key component, if appropriate to teachers' needs. The option of academic or further study should also be on the menu for teachers as, whilst it can be harder to pinpoint the direct effect on pupil attainment, this is a very short-term view. Teachers need to feel ownership of their CPD. A school's CPD strategy should encompass what teachers' identify as their learning needs, as well as the school's priorities.

In 2004 the National Foundation for Educational Research (NFER) conducted a large-scale survey of a representative sample of 10,000 teachers for the GTC, which received a 44 per cent response rate. Findings showed:

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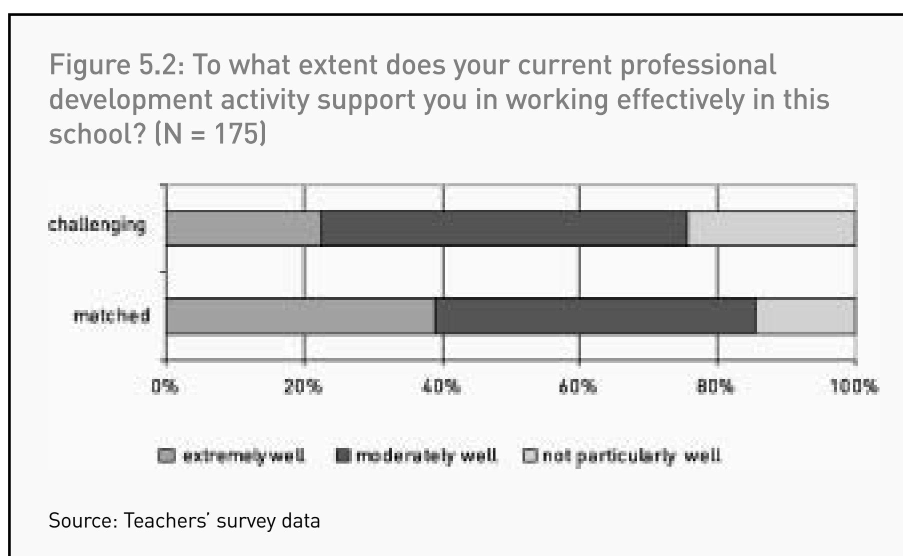
'Teachers' main experiences of professional development activities are working with colleagues within their own school as part of collaborative learning experiences or by taking part in school self-evaluation processes. Fewer than one third of teachers experience such development activities frequently and such activities are more likely to take place in primary schools than in secondary schools' (NFER, 2004). The key message from this study was that teachers were keen to develop but did not want to give up their time for training that did not meet their criteria.

This was supported by our research. It was particularly the case for teachers in challenging schools, with only just over 20 per cent considering their CPD needs as well met, notably less than in matched schools. Teachers' comments suggested that there were particular concerns about the suitability of the CPD available to the context in which they were teaching.

Figure 5.2: To what extent does your current professional development activity support you in working effectively in this school? (N = 175)



Source: Teachers' survey data

As part of the TTA's new remit, mentioned earlier, it could consider models looking at different structures of CPD, targeted either at the whole organisation or at department level, potentially suggesting a shift in the balance towards these kinds of activities. An equally positive step forward would be to provide shared professional learning time, ideally within the school day, allowing for more within-school practice. It would allow departments to work together on subject based or whole school issues, helping to build this culture of challenging collegiality we are striving for – where teachers are supporting one another, with the best departments also challenging colleagues about teaching and learning.

Also popular with teachers is an increase in flexibility: 'Some schools offer teachers flexibility in how they spend their CPD time. Many CPD

opportunities are arranged for after school, either within the school or nearby at the LEA professional development centre. Teachers agree to attend at least 15 hours of CPD outside the school day, and they log this. In recompense the school allows those teachers to do what they like on three of the five statutory INSET days. Staff like this flexibility in meeting their specific needs when they want. It is seen as preferable to a "one size fits all" approach to school training days' (Earley and Bubb, 2004a).

Some teachers working in challenging schools also called for greater investment and focus on their individual professional development, something that can easily fall off the radar when a school with poor attainment moves into fire-fighting mode. It was suggested that schools could be grouped together in a region with a nominated personnel and professional development adviser available for teachers. Such a system might also make the process of teachers moving between schools in a particular area easier and more open and could potentially facilitate job swaps and exchanges between teachers. One teacher suggested 'managed staff moves' in the same way that there are managed moves for pupils. It was implied that schools can be isolated from each other and poor at working together. 'Overall the management of teacher's professional development is very poor, at national level and not just school level. … Schools could be grouped in a consortium with a designated person or team to act as an external adviser or personnel manager … many schools at the moment don't have anyone with personnel or HR skills' (challenging school).

This sense of collaboration between schools on CPD would open up a range of opportunities, and could, for example, start with colleagues in the same subject area having time out to shadow one another in different schools. This is an area that could be incorporated as a role for EIPs, the model set out by the DfES for collaboration amongst groups of schools. However, there is no clear sense that schools will embrace this model. Moreover, these partnerships are being charged with an increasingly long list of things to deal with, ranging from potentially acting as joint commissioners of alternative provision, to formulating admissions protocols and delivering a broader 14–19 curriculum. CPD could be a good opportunity for EIPs to 'cut their teeth'. It would certainly be easier to collaborate on CPD than on admissions.

A strong theme that emerged in the discussions was the high levels of energy required to teach, particularly in the most challenging schools. A range of ideas was suggested to enable teachers to get some form of respite and gain experience and skills in another setting. It was felt that these opportunities should be linked to CPD and should enable teachers to develop and refresh their skills and experience. Respite might come in the form of a sabbatical or career breaks. Teachers would be given time off to pursue other interests such as travel, do further training or gain experience in another industry. Job swaps between schools were also suggested as a form of respite. These could work in

two ways: to give teachers working in challenging schools a rest and experience of working in a different setting and to give teachers who might be effective in challenging schools a 'taster' of what it would be like to work in such schools: 'I'd love to go to another school and then be able to come back, you'd learn loads' (matched school).

These options could be managed as part of the EIP's CPD collaborative. They could also be developed at a national level, with programmes and incentives for staff from matched schools to go on secondments or to do placements in challenging schools. This sort of approach would potentially draw in more teachers who might not otherwise consider working in a challenging school, offering the safety net that enabled them to feel able to take the plunge.

If we can get CPD right in schools, this feeds into a positive spiral, as CPD works on many levels: it attracts teachers to the school, helps to retain them and helps to improve their practice, and in turn helps the whole school improvement agenda. Lewis makes this link in an analysis of a particular school where there were clear recruitment and retention issues at a local and school level: 'From a pragmatic point of view it was felt that developing imaginative CPD practices, such as a school-based MA, with action research as its focus would help attract new staff to the school and retain expertise of a number of highly valued experienced staff who might otherwise take advantage of a "buyer's market" elsewhere and at the same time take advantage of the greater critical engagement that MA-level study would require within the school' (Lewis, 2004). This virtuous circle of teachers as learners is one we should strive to capitalise on in challenging schools.

Teachers' learning

The strong evidence to support the impact of CPD in particular, and also the opportunities in ITT on this agenda suggests that schools facing challenging circumstances should be put at the top of the list for the TTA as it develops its new remit. It may mean that challenging schools need more support initially to get strong CPD and ITT up and running, with potentially some extra funding; the benefits if this really took off could be significant to the teachers as well as to pupils' learning. The one area where more research would be beneficial is around how teachers learn. We know some teachers, older teachers in particular, are reluctant, and issues around how you teach teachers to be mentors, and pass skills on to other teachers would facilitate development and provide a better knowledge and understanding of this key area.

Conclusions

- There is appetite for routes into teaching that explicitly target those motivated to teach in challenging schools, open to a wider potential audience than Teach First.

- Schools facing challenging circumstances could benefit from involvement in ITT, however, there are barriers to address.
- A model where clusters of schools worked together to provide excellent support for their NQTs and for teachers during their first few years, would be effective.
- CPD in challenging schools is not consistently meeting teachers' needs.
- However, CPD is one of the most important levers for challenging schools in recruiting and retaining staff.
- Collaboration between schools on CPD could be a powerful tool, potentially organised by EIPs, facilitating managed secondments or placements of teachers, in addition to sharing learning with others in another school.
- More research is needed to provide a better understanding of how teachers learn to inform developments in teachers' CPD.

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6. The students: managing behaviour; meeting needs

The students, the enjoyment gained from working with children, and having that breakthrough of understanding, are all fundamental to why many teachers go into the profession and also what keeps them there. Research on factors producing job satisfaction and high morale, or the reverse, is in line with that on career choice. Typical is the study by Bloomfield and Sellinger (1994) of the motivation of maths teachers. The teachers were from a number of countries and at all points in their careers, but there was strong consensus on the importance of positive pupil responses. The title, *Magic Moments in Mathematics Teaching*, encapsulates their attitudes. The intrinsic features of the job, and particularly working with children, are far more important to teachers than extrinsic factors. Heafford and Jennison's (1998) 16-year longitudinal study of a cohort of successful PGCE students, found job enjoyment to be related to working with children in classrooms, the use of subject knowledge, teaching able pupils, pastoral work and out of school activities. It is important to state this at the outset in our discussions on students, as so much of this debate is dominated by accounts of poor pupil behaviour. This is not to belittle these issues, but to emphasise the need to remember that providing good learning opportunities for students is what teaching is fundamentally all about.

Having said this, our research illustrates that many teachers are generally unhappy with behaviour. As highlighted in previous chapters, the research into factors affecting teachers' decisions to move schools suggests pupil behaviour is one of the key factors, particularly in secondary schools (Smithers and Robinson, 2003 and 2005). In schools facing challenging circumstances there is generally a lower incidence of 'satisfiers', for example taking pleasure from students' success (Kyriacou *et al*, 2003), and a higher incidence of 'dissatisfiers', including workload and bad behaviour. Overall, this can lead to a more severe test of desire and commitment than might be found in less challenging schools. For example, the desire to spread subject knowledge is a commonly cited reason for entering teaching (Barmby and Coe, 2004). In several accounts it is considered the most important consideration, particularly for secondary teachers, and again a desire less easily satisfied in challenging schools.

Teachers in struggling schools have been found to spend less time on curriculum matters and extra curricular activities (Gerwitz, 1998). Brighouse (2003) warns that 'High quality teachers will be attracted to and retained by schools in which it is enjoyable to teach'; a view corroborated by findings that many teachers move around voluntarily in search of

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'schools that make good teaching possible'. Revealingly, a study in the US found that 'one of the most striking features of the data is that all of the Movers transferred to schools serving populations wealthier than in their original schools' (Johnson and Birkeland, 2003a). Smithers and Robinson found the same to be true in England, with secondary school teachers tending to be moving to schools with better examination results than those they were leaving (Smithers and Robinson, 2005).

Also of key importance here is the increasing drive to tailor education to suit individual students, which will prove far from easy when students have such a range of complex needs. Especially in the classrooms of challenging schools, these differentiation strategies need to work alongside and be aligned with parental and community involvement, and the Every Child Matters agenda (HMG, 2004), to achieve a real sense of the whole student and where they are coming from. This chapter seeks to cover these areas, starting with a consideration of students, and in particular behaviour issues, followed by a brief look at the wider context of parents, the community and how the opportunities of collaboration could help to meet student needs. However, it needs to be said that there is only scope to touch on some of these areas, as they could each be the subject of a report in themselves.

Students

Best practice in terms of effective behaviour management needs to be in place in challenging schools, alongside positive opportunities to engage students and channel their energy in positive directions. A substantial piece of research is about to be published by ippr looking at behaviour and exclusions issues in much greater detail (Reed, 2005).

Managing behaviour

Problematic behaviour is a major, often growing, source of discontent amongst teachers and an impediment to good teaching and learning in some schools. At the same time, there is a large amount of research exploring the long-term harmful effects of exclusion for the individual, for example the correlation with criminal behaviour or homelessness in later life, and also in relation to the costs to society (Reed, 2005). Reed highlights research that shows the attitudes of staff, and in particular those of the senior management team and headteacher, are a primary factor in explaining the different behaviour outcomes between similar schools. This is a telling finding for the focus here on teachers.

There is strong evidence within the literature that the experience of, and skills necessary for, classroom teaching differ significantly between schools and even within schools (for example Gerwitz, 1998). There is little doubt about the adverse effect that poor pupil behaviour has on the mentality and performance

of teachers in general, and young teachers in particular. This is naturally a concern for teaching bodies. The National Association of Schoolmasters Union of Women Teachers (NASUWT) laments that 'The level of pupil indiscipline, violence and increasing levels of verbal abuse have a critical bearing on teacher motivation. These realities of daily life in school have impacted upon the workload of teachers and the stress of work in the classroom' (NASUWT, 2003).

Similarly, the Secondary Heads Association (SHA) reflected: 'There have always been challenging pupils in schools, but the very poor behaviour of a minority is widely felt to be more burdensome on teachers, and indeed upon other pupils, than ever before' (House of Commons Education and Skills Committee, 2004). Relating back to the previous chapter, the SHA noted that dealing with bad behaviour was the aspect of teaching that with which young teachers had most difficulty, and was an issue that should be dealt with much more fully in ITT. New teachers still have to learn all their strategies for avoiding, containing and reducing bad behaviour during their first years of teaching. Many young teachers feel as if they are failures if they find some classes difficult.

Does this suggest that the current training provisions for classroom management are inadequate? According to the TTA's own survey of NQTs' perceptions of ITT, 63 per cent described the training they received as good or very good in terms of 'maintaining a good standard of behaviour'. A further 29 per cent saw it as adequate but this is hardly overwhelming endorsement, and compares unfavourably with the attitudes expressed about other parts of ITT. Furthermore, it is highly likely that the numbers who found it inadequate would grow if the responses from NQTs in schools facing challenging circumstances were isolated. Harrison (2003) also argues that there is a significant need for dedicated behaviour training material for trainees, NQTs, trainers and mentors and adds that 'in some provision the priority given to subject knowledge was seen as one of the constraints to finding more time to devote to the preparation of trainees to manage behaviour'.

Reed identified a number of factors impacting positively in schools: leadership prioritisation, staff buy-in to behaviour approach, with strong inter-staff relationships based on a shared ethos, lead behaviour professionals who were part of the senior team and regular opportunities for CPD that covered behaviour (Reed, 2005). These suggest practical measures that can be taken to improve behaviour management in schools in challenging circumstances. Reed's research also found that factors such as staff experience, both in their career and at the school, were important, signifying the importance of retention in challenging schools. The view that for some teachers 'you've either got it or you haven't' in terms of behaviour management skills resonated in Reed's study, particularly in the reflections of the students.

The evidence from our research was overwhelming in relation to the impact of behaviour management on the recruitment and retention of high

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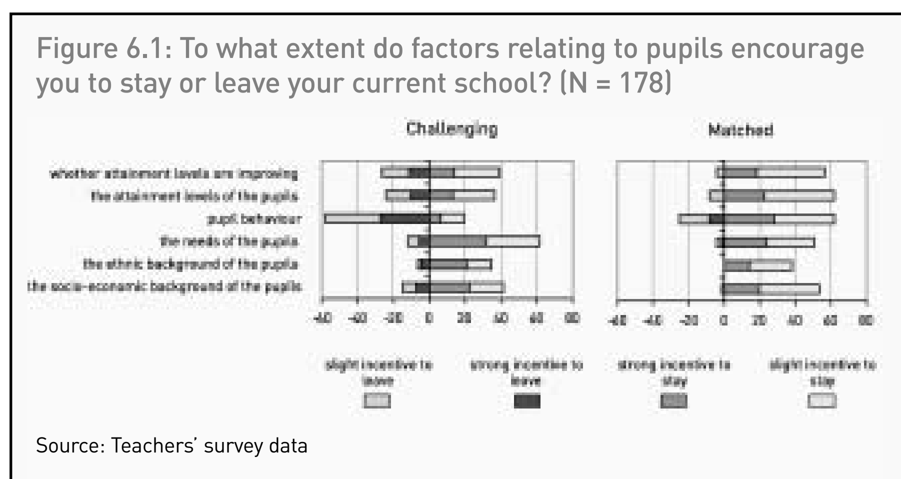
quality teachers. For the headteachers, 'effective behaviour management' was joint top of a list of key factors in retaining staff at their school, with virtually all the headteachers rating it as very important (matched only by 'collegiality and effective team working'). And the heads were right to place such great emphasis on the issues, as for the teachers themselves it was the strongest incentive to leave a school, along with workload. For those teaching at challenging schools it was the strongest push factor of all (see figure 6.1). Also, when identifying what would be important factors to look for in their next school, teachers consistently identified 'a school where behaviour management is more effective' with 65 per cent of teachers across all schools rating it as important; fifth in the list.

While pupil behaviour clearly acts against staff retention in challenging schools, it is significant that over 60 per cent of the respondents in these schools identified 'the needs of the pupils' as reasons to stay in the school; this was higher than in the matched schools. This suggests a sense of vocation or mission plays a role in staff retention.

Figure 6.1: To what extent do factors relating to pupils encourage you to stay or leave your current school? (N = 178)



Source: Teachers' survey data

In the focus groups, the majority of teachers identified behaviour as an issue that got in the way of teaching, but the problem appears more acute in challenging schools (not least because of the paperwork it generates). It was suggested that poor behaviour and poor attainment are directly correlated. Poor and challenging behaviour results in part from the profile of pupils, for example, a high proportion of pupils with special educational needs (SEN) or emotional and behavioural difficulties (EBD); a highly mobile pupil population; tensions between different groups (eg according to ethnicity or area); or a continuous stream of new pupils through the year (eg asylum seekers and refugees). Some were quick to suggest that a proportion of their pupils should not be in mainstream education (this was particularly the case when schools lacked alternative on-site or off-site pro-

vision): 'We have 25 or 30 kids who should not be in mainstream education but they have nowhere else for them to go' (challenging school).

The extent to which behaviour is a problem is also dependent on the effectiveness of behaviour management systems. Some of the teachers in challenging schools explicitly highlighted the need for more effective and consistent behaviour management, and all teachers emphasised the need for effective behaviour management as a key element they wanted in a school. This involves a system for disciplining pupils that works and was linked strongly by many teachers to good school management, committed to sanctions when necessary and a visible headteacher and SMT. Teachers want to know that they will be backed up when there is a problem or incident and that sanctions that they impose are followed through. Some felt compromised when there was nowhere to send a child who was severely disrupting a lesson. Lack of additional support in the form of teaching assistants or learning mentors was also felt to add to the challenge of managing behaviour. It was clear that in some schools little time was invested in helping teachers develop their own capacity and skills to manage difficult behaviour. Teachers working in challenging schools where staff turnover was high and there was a high proportion of supply and/or foreign teachers felt that this could have a negative impact on a school's ability to manage behaviour effectively. 'A more consistent approach to dealing with behaviour would make life easier. The kids are too laissez faire – they hang around outside after break is over; they sense they own the place … they call the shots and the power is all wrong' (challenging school).

There is clearly potential for greater focus on the development of behaviour management skills and effective training in this area, not just for new teachers but also existing teachers. It was evident that many younger teachers felt ill-equipped to deal with some of the most problematic behaviour. An individual teacher's ability to deal with behaviour is also dependent on the extent to which the school as a whole has an effective system of sanctions in place. If more teachers are going to consider challenging schools they need to be sure they will feel 'backed up' by management on behaviour issues: 'If I was to work in a challenging school I'd need to know that there was a strong support network in place. You need to know that the back up is going to be there if there's an incident' matched school. 'The school would need to have very clear boundaries on behaviour – there needs to be common standards and consistency' (matched school).

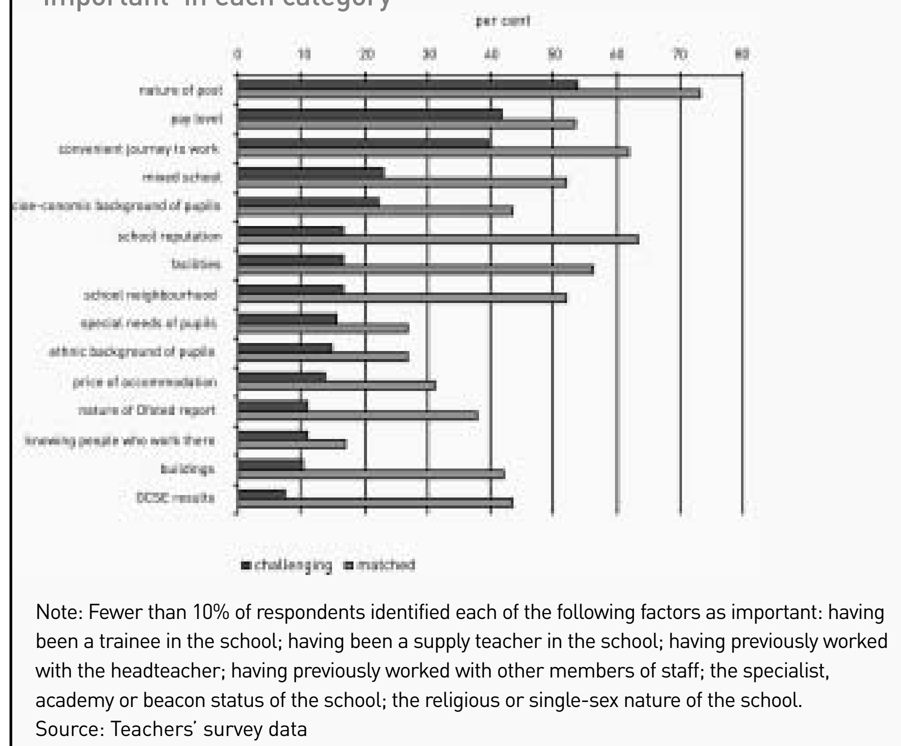
Our research suggests that whilst some teachers are more naturally adept at behaviour handling strategies, if a school has a strong, consistently applied whole school policy on behaviour within a positive supportive environment for teachers and pupils, and where students are clear on the consequences of their actions, combined with effective CPD provision, the majority of teachers can flourish. Those teachers more comfortable or confident can be flexible within this framework; with all teachers feeling sup-

ported, clear on the rules, and able to operate effectively within the accepted system. A whole school approach to effective behaviour management, with CPD approached through department or whole school methods would appear to be a positive step forward. The importance of this should not be underestimated, with the majority of teachers across all schools wanting more support in relation to these issues than they currently receive.

Why this school?

Practical motivations underpin any decision about where to teach and can limit the extent to which a teacher is able actively to choose the type of school they want to teach in. Key, practical considerations were identified from the focus groups including for example, where there are jobs available, where a job is offered, location and travel to work distance. In the teachers' questionnaire we asked respondents to indicate the importance of a whole range of factors in attracting them to the school. Again practical considerations, such as a convenient journey to work, rate highly, and in a later question on retention, convenient journey to work and location were amongst the strongest incentives to stay at a school.

Figure 6.2: What attracted you to this school? Percentage of teachers on permanent contracts responding 'very important' or 'important' in each category



Note: Fewer than 10% of respondents identified each of the following factors as important: having been a trainee in the school; having been a supply teacher in the school; having previously worked with the headteacher; having previously worked with other members of staff; the specialist, academy or beacon status of the school; the religious or single-sex nature of the school.
Source: Teachers' survey data

The nature of the pupil intake is also clearly a key consideration for teachers, with a number of these factors ranking highly in responses (see figure 6.2). The socio-economic background of students, special educational needs and ethnic diversity, all appear high on the list. There is a strong link in the data between preferring to teach disadvantaged pupils and preferring to teach pupils from minority ethnic backgrounds. The teachers from minority ethnic backgrounds were more likely than white teachers both to want to teach pupils from disadvantaged backgrounds, and to see ethnic diversity as a positive aspect of a school. For teachers at matched schools, factors such as GCSE results, nature of the Ofsted report, and school reputation all score significantly higher than with their counterparts at challenging schools.

Headteachers were asked whether they thought potential applicants for teaching posts took pupil attainment into account in deciding whether to apply for a post. All those in challenging school believed this was a factor: 'To a large extent, good results give a good field to recruit from'. This was linked to the official and media discourse: 'Staff are reluctant to work in schools where attainment is low (even if it has high Value Added) because the media frequently implies that they are not doing a good job'. The responses from the matched schools were more mixed. Some headteachers claimed that pupil attainment was 'not at all' taken into account, or was of 'no real significance' to applicants' decisions. Others shared the views of those in challenging schools: 'It takes a special person to want to work in a challenging school. There is some GCSE related snobbery in the education system!'

Headteachers saw school reputation as the key factor in attracting staff to their school, with four out of five rating it as 'very important'. In comparison, no other factor on our list was rated as very important by more than two out of five headteachers. Teachers in matched schools concurred with the headteachers, with 63 per cent considering school reputation to be important, whereas only 17 per cent of teachers from the challenging schools group did so. We asked those teachers that selected school reputation as important to indicate what the reputation was at the time they joined the school. Among the staff in challenging schools, some stressed the poor reputation, others emphasised the upward trajectory, and a minority gave more positive responses: 'My personal experience with children from the school led me forward to work with them'.

There is therefore some evidence that particular teachers are attracted to challenging schools, or more particularly, to the pupils in such schools. However, many would prefer higher attaining pupils; when teachers were asked what they would be looking for in their next school, 'pupils with higher attainment' was rated important or very important by almost half, in both challenging and matched schools. This is supported by the latest

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research, which concluded that secondary school teachers are more likely to move to a school with better exam results than the one they are leaving (Smithers and Robinson, 2005).

What school a teacher chooses to work in also links back to the debate on behaviour. The level of 'challenge' teachers are prepared to take on in a school is a variable that can influence this decision, and this is linked to the level of altruism that underpins their motivations to teach. 'Challenge' in this context is defined primarily in terms of the level of problem behaviour at a school. The fact that challenging schools with low attainment are commonly perceived to face a significant challenge in relation to behaviour makes this a significant deterrent to those teachers who would face behaviour management issues. Teachers differ in the extent to which they are prepared to take on managing behaviour as a core component of their job. Those teachers who appear most comfortable working in schools with challenging intakes are clear that managing behaviour is an inevitable part of the job and something that they feel able to develop the necessary skills to deal with. A number of teachers in the focus groups working in challenging schools had pursued qualifications and training in behaviour management. Some emphasised the need to develop effective and positive relationships with pupils. 'As a teacher you can develop tricks, strategies etc [to deal with difficult behaviour] but it is also about your ability to build effective relationships with pupils' (challenging school).

However, not all teachers are willing to work in a school where dealing with the challenge of difficult behaviour is likely to take up as much of their time as classroom teaching. Some are more likely to emphasise their role as a subject teacher and it is in this area that they want to be stretched. These teachers tend to imply that responsibility for behaviour management rests higher up the school hierarchy. This group of teachers includes some younger teachers who have not yet developed effective behaviour management techniques (but may do so with more experience). It also includes more experienced teachers who are reluctant for managing behaviour to be a major part of their job and are not willing to put themselves in 'the firing line'. 'Managing behaviour comes first, not your subject here. I'm looking to change school' (matched school).

In some cases teachers described personal experience of being the victim of poor pupil behaviour. In the examples shared the teachers felt unsupported by senior management and the incident was not resolved effectively. Some suggested that teachers can be challenging and can be expected to tolerate levels of abuse and aggression that would not be accepted in other jobs. In the focus groups, some teachers who were motivated to work in challenging schools where pupils may be more likely to exhibit difficult behaviour articulated how they would understandably set limits on what they are personally willing and able to tolerate.

Parents, families and the wider community

'Home-school relations seem a constant foundation upon which the success of schools is built or crumbles' (Hallgarten, 2000). For schools in disadvantaged areas it has been argued that for true school improvement to occur, schools must become broader communities, involving parents and local businesses, in addition to the teachers and heads (Joyce *et al*, 1999). Students spend only 15 per cent of their time at school; support from parents is crucial in reinforcing rather than undermining teachers' efforts in the classroom. The complex contexts in which many schools facing challenging circumstances operate necessitate active prioritisation of parental involvement and engagement and empowerment strategies, particularly with the hard to reach or at risk groups.

'Parental/school relations were seen in most schools as playing a critical role in either supporting or undermining the school's ability to effectively enforce behaviour policy and, in particular, sanctions' (Reed, 2005). Reed also found that wider community characteristics, such as the proportion of lone parent and reconstituted families, level of educational aspirations or community conflict, not evident in the data, played a significant role. 'In schools where low educational aspiration was an issue, low parental aspirations appeared to be both transmitted directly to pupils, thereby increasing disaffection, and undermining support to the school in resolving behavioural issues where they did occur' (Reed, 2005).

Investing time and effort into building positive community relations pays dividends, as schools cannot be seen in isolation from their communities. A supportive community gets behind school efforts – valuing the teachers and supporting their aims. As a bottom line all teachers should take an active role in being visible in the local community, adding to an understanding and a sense of interrelationship between school and community. Reed quotes a headteacher from her study who states: 'If we can't manage behaviour we have failed … Throwing them out raises standards in the school but not in the community' (Reed, 2005).

There is evidence of these different school contexts manifesting themselves directly upon the teacher, making varying demands upon him or her. Lupton identifies an anti-learning culture that prevails in 'white working class areas', a phenomenon which seems to have been present for some time (Lupton, 2004a). The barriers to learning in such cases are often poor family attitudes towards both education and authority (coupled with low expectations of social mobility through education) and variable norms of acceptable social behaviour. Where schools have concentrations of students 'from disrupted or violent families' who subsequently have 'unwillingness to trust and the need for emotional support and reassurance' (Lupton, 2004a), some training in counselling/emotional support might be appropriate to complement and work in conjunction with learning support assis-

tants and social workers who have already been brought into many schools. The increased use of multiple agencies in schools demonstrated the broad acceptance that a variety of skills and abilities is required to meet the many demands that can arise in a classroom.

The subtleties of these local contexts can be critical and generalisations therefore can be unhelpful. Lupton emphasises that schools facing challenging circumstances operate in differing contexts, making the point that socio-economic circumstances may often be no more important in this respect than cultural context. Frequently, inner city schools with high minority ethnic populations are characterised by high levels of deprivation (as crudely measured by the number of pupils eligible for free school meals). Within this are some schools that enjoy 'pro-school characteristics … Muslim and African Christian pupils particularly came from disciplined homes where they were expected to observe rules and treat adults respectfully. As a result they adapted relatively well to the disciplined environments of school and most parents were supportive of school behaviour policies and sanctions' (Lupton, 2004a). A knowledge of the culture of the majority of the students could overcome barriers to achievement, particularly given that 'communicating and consulting with the parents of pupils' is one of the specified duties of a teacher (DfES, 2004c).

This picture was supported by Reed's research, which found 'high educational motivation was seen to sustain good standards of behaviour and parental support amongst groups of pupils who face particular challenges. This was identified as a particular feature amongst asylum seeker families and some ethnic minorities'. Reed goes on to quote a member of support staff who observes: 'We find our EAL [English as an additional language] parents are very supportive when the local parents are not so' (Reed, 2005).

Parents and the local community who are encouraged to be involved in the school act as a positive driver in a number of forms, from aspirations to community perceptions. This ultimately offers additional sources of capacity for the school and in time attracts a more mixed student intake. Teachers who were able to improve student commitment and attitudes were characterised by positive attitudes towards parents (Coleman, 1998).

Collaboration: both inter-school and inter-agency

Tailoring education to individual student needs cannot be realised by autonomous schools as relatively small organisations acting on their own, particularly in deprived areas where student needs are complex, both in terms of educational and wider issues. This section looks at what teachers in challenging schools want in a wider sense, highlighting the need for partnership working to achieve these wider ends. Collaboration, particularly in this broad sense, is a significant and complex area, and so here it is only

possible to indicate the importance of the collaboration agenda to this debate. Some of the key motivators and barriers to collaboration will be raised briefly, along with the particular benefits for schools facing challenging circumstances, and the teachers in these schools.

Tackling the broader issues

Teachers at our focus groups highlighted the limits of the impact of initiatives and incentives specifically aimed to encourage high quality teachers to work in the most challenging schools. Broader factors impact on how able and effective teachers are likely to feel working in such schools. Of critical importance here is the curriculum and in particular the 14–19 curriculum offer. 'Making the curriculum more relevant to the needs and interest of pupils in this school' was ranked in the top five strategies that might contribute to raising pupil attainment by all the schools that responded to our survey. For challenging schools it was second in the list, only after 'training and developing existing teaching staff'.

Similarly, in the focus groups, the first key wider factor noted by a number of teachers was the need for challenging schools to be able to provide an inclusive and flexible curriculum that met the needs of their intake. Teachers emphasised the need for schools to be able to offer a broad range of courses, including vocational subjects, in order to engage the full spectrum of needs, interests and skills of the pupils they taught. 'My biggest challenge, more than dealing with behaviour and "attitude" is dealing with low ability and trying to find a way to make the course fit their ability and needs…' (challenging school). Embracing partnership working (school to school) has real benefits for a good, relevant educational experience for all students, for example it would allow schools to offer this much broader curriculum.

The second area frequently raised and impacting disproportionately on challenging schools was admissions. Several headteachers commented on the benefit that changes in the admissions system would have, particularly in relation to staffing to improve attainment. For example, one heartfelt plea was simply: 'abolish the selective system'. Again at the focus groups, a central priority for teachers working in the most challenging schools was tackling the politics and biases of school intake and local selection processes. A number of teachers noted the impact that the dynamics of local school selection procedures can have on the profile of pupils at a school. Challenging schools can suffer when neighbouring schools are able to find ways to select particular pupils and when low school rolls require them to take any pupil offered throughout the year. 'One thing that keeps our school dysfunctional is intake politics. We're in a neighbourhood with lots of church schools and our intake becomes very skewed as a result. Also if you're undersubscribed you have to take any pupil you're offered

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throughout the year … It would be very useful to have a fair and reliant system of managed moves for pupils but schools in our area don't do very well at talking to each other … partly because they don't want to take our pupils!' (challenging school).

Again, schools could effectively work together, collaborating through the EIPs, to the benefit of challenging schools on admissions, although as yet this is not on the agenda. As previously highlighted, EIPs have a long list of areas on which they are to be encouraged to collaborate. Moreover, the drivers for competition between local schools, for example in the form of league tables, are not being altered. However, partnerships do offer a real opportunity, particularly in relation to the areas highlighted here, curriculum and admissions, but also, as we saw in the previous chapter, in relation to CPD.

The size of the challenge in making this step towards closer school to school working should not be ignored, with our research showing collaboration at the bottom of headteachers' list of priorities, and very rarely raised by teachers. Also some of these collaboration strategies, particularly those associated with admissions, will clearly only have their maximum benefit if all schools take part. It remains unclear how and to what extent the government is prepared to enforce collaboration of this kind. The potential wide reaching benefits of collaboration mean it is definitely worth us really pushing for, especially in terms of some of these fundamental broader issues.

Children's Trusts

The benefits for teachers of collaboration in a wider sense, in terms of the Every Child Matters agenda (HMG, 2004), was considered in chapter 4; the benefits for students, in terms of meeting their wider needs, is crucial in the context of challenging schools. In some ways these schools could be seen as a difficult place to start for Children's Trusts. However, whilst this could be true, the students at these schools are likely to have the most to gain. If the aim is for services tailored around the pupil, rather than the pupil working around the professional divisions in the system, many of these interactions could successfully be focused around challenging schools. Extended schools are a good model here and teachers may be attracted to working in community hubs of this kind, with the associated support they involve. Furthermore, those teachers who engage in these extra-curricular activities become more committed to the school and develop better relationships with the students as the students recognise this additional effort and commitment to them as people.

Students

The case for action in relation to improving behaviour management, particularly in schools facing challenging circumstances, is confirmed by our

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research. However, it is important that society and the media do not demonise students. Consideration needs to be given to the wider community and cultural context, looking for positive opportunities to engage students. Collaboration between schools, and EIPs as a model for this, potentially offers exciting opportunities to increase equality across schools' intake as well as in terms of widening the curriculum offer to meet individual students needs better. The challenges they present, however, cannot afford to be ignored. The motivation must be the potential impact progress in these areas would make for the students and staff, particularly in challenging schools. Similarly, multi-agency working and Children's Trusts can help schools to meet students' wider needs. The roll out of extended schools could productively target schools facing challenging circumstances as a priority, to assist this aim.

Conclusions

- Effective behaviour management is of critical importance to the retention of teachers.
- In schools with a strong shared behaviour policy that is consistently implemented, combined with a culture where teachers feel supported and valued, underpinned by good CPD, the majority of teachers feel enabled to handle behaviour issues.
- A culture of challenging collegiality needs to be built, through establishing shared non-contact time for subject departments, so they can work together on whole school or subject specific issues, including behaviour management.
- Teachers choose a school giving due consideration to practical factors, and pupil intake plays a part for many, but the majority of teachers would opt for schools with higher attaining pupils.
- There is evidence that collaboration between institutions offers some real benefits for schools facing challenging circumstances.
- However, it also presents a significant challenge, as collaboration was found to be at the bottom of the list of priorities for headteachers, and therefore needs a great deal more work.

7. Conclusions

Equality of opportunity remains an elusive aim when those students with a disadvantaged start in life continue to receive a worse deal from our education system, as this research suggests. This issue is, rightly, a priority for the government. Yet the lack of explicit focus on ensuring that schools facing challenging circumstances have a high quality, stable teaching staff seems strange when we know the importance of teacher effects. Finding ways to encourage high quality teachers to work in, and stay working in, challenging schools could be the key to unlocking many of the issues faced by schools facing challenging circumstances. If this objective could be achieved the benefits would be far reaching.

This research has confirmed the existing evidence in this area that points to challenging schools experiencing higher teacher turnover. It backs up the recent research that suggests most teachers leave a school for one with higher attaining pupils. It has also highlighted the importance of a number of key issues. In relation to training and developing teachers for the profession, and for work in challenging schools in particular, the research suggested that:

- Continuing Professional Development (CPD) was found to be of utmost importance, yet at the same time is currently less effective in challenging schools.
- Initial Teacher Training (ITT), which is crucially a powerful recruitment opportunity for schools, is not being fully utilised in challenging schools.

Equally important are the 'push' and 'pull' factors for teachers. Certain factors encourage teachers to choose a particular school, to stay if the positives are in place but where the negatives are most likely to push them away.

- Collegiality – a sense of team work and a supportive environment amongst school staff – was consistently highlighted as the strongest incentive to stay in a school.
- Workload was, unsurprisingly, a crucial factor, deterring teachers from schools, with accountability felt to be adding to workload in challenging schools.
- Effective behaviour management, when not in place, was found to be a strong negative driver, the strongest for schools facing challenging circumstances.

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- Central to all of this debate was how well the school was run, fundamentally the quality of leadership and management in and across the school.

Teachers' experiences in a school are so tied up with these factors that when schools get these factors right it can be incredibly motivating for teachers. However, when these factors are absent there is no question that this stimulates attrition. This research has clearly indicated that teachers in challenging schools are not as content as those in less challenging schools.

A picture that has emerged from the evidence is the polarisation that occurs in relation to teachers in schools facing challenging circumstances. For example, in these schools more senior teachers were appointed at the same time as more unqualified or supply teachers, whereas in matched schools there were more experienced teachers recruited but fewer at these extreme ends. This did not correspond to the pattern of teachers leaving, where there was a comparable picture across the two groups of schools. Similarly, if you look at the class of the teachers' degrees, in challenging schools more of the appointed teachers had achieved a first and more had lower seconds, compared with their counterparts in the matched schools, where most had obtained upper seconds. The length of teaching experience reflected a similar pattern.

The implications of the evidence

Just as teaching in the most challenging schools can involve the most extreme challenges in teaching, so the teachers in these schools should be rewarded by conditions that represent the positive extremes in terms of professional support. These should include: a manageable workload (with more non-contact time and strong systems of support), excellent CPD and a real prioritisation of work-life balance factors. This would ensure teachers are at their peak and able to perform their challenging teacher roles in this context, maximising teaching and learning opportunities. Their task on a daily basis is to break the link between socio-economic disadvantage and educational underachievement: our leading professionals should not be bogged down by the issues that distract them from their core professional task. This is not to say that all schools and teachers should not benefit from these good conditions. High quality teachers in the most challenging schools lead the way in terms of breaking through and enabling achievement which surpasses all expectations. The working conditions they operate in should forge the way forward in setting expectations for teachers' conditions of work.

Many schools in deprived areas are doing well already, exceptionally well, hence the phrase 'success against the odds'. Imperative here is to find ways to enable greater capacity in schools facing challenging circumstances to put in place the factors that make the difference to teachers, especially in relation to CPD. There are clearly funding implications here. Themes have

emerged around attracting teachers and matching teachers with schools where they would succeed, with ITT, placements and secondments all having a part to play. Also of importance is creating a positive culture and environment, enabling a real school wide focus on effective behaviour management, with strong systems, consistently applied, which benefit all teachers. Underpinning this debate is the need to shift the nature of teacher status and find ways to recognise the valuable work done by teachers in schools facing challenging circumstances, appreciating them for doing these tough jobs as would be the case in other professions.

Workload, accountability and the 'standards agenda'

It is imperative to get the conditions right in schools facing challenging circumstances, so they are not a deterrent for teachers. Many teachers spoke of the need for more 'space' within the school day due to the intensity of their role in challenging schools. Smaller class sizes were very popular where schools had managed to achieve this – and a desire for much smaller class sizes was frequently mentioned. The lack of consensus in the research on the impact of smaller class sizes on attainment was discussed and the costs of more non-contact time or a significant reduction in class sizes are not insignificant. However, workload was confirmed as one of the strongest drivers pushing teachers away from schools. The accountability regime was felt more acutely in challenging schools with the additional burdens it places on teachers, squeezing out space for other things. This all stems from the 'standards agenda' where league tables, accountability and a very narrow articulation of 'success' ensure challenging schools will often remain under pressure. We suggest significantly smaller class sizes should be piloted in schools facing challenging circumstances, with evaluation informing whether long term this should be a more wide spread offer for challenging schools.

Effective behaviour management and empowering students

Behaviour was highlighted as a real issue across all of our research. It is clear that teachers feel the pressure from behaviour most acutely in challenging schools and effective behaviour management must therefore be a priority. Teachers can crack behaviour issues in challenging schools that have a strong behaviour management system, signed up to by staff and pupils, which includes a lead behaviour professional on the SMT. This system must be part of a wider school culture, with consistent expectations and backed up by strong CPD to be really effective. It can also be valuable if schools look into ways to engage students more actively, particularly those who are disaffected. Projects such as the National College of School Leadership's (NCSL) student leadership scheme have had considerable success and are worth exploring for challenging schools. They offer an effective way of empowering students by channelling student energy productively.

Curriculum

Students are more engaged if what they are learning suits their needs, meets their interests and is well taught. Reform of the curriculum is obviously a research project in itself and the important 14-19 debate rumbles on. The irrelevance of the curriculum in challenging schools was frequently raised. The headteachers of challenging schools placed it second overall on the list of things they would change out of a long list and the matched schools rated it fifth, so it is clearly important across the board. In aiming to deliver a more appropriate 14-19 curriculum the prioritisation of schools facing challenging circumstances would be a positive way forward with this agenda.

Continuing Professional Development

The Teacher Training Agency's (TTA) new remit confers responsibility for CPD to the TTA and this new focus offers an opportunity that could benefit teachers in schools facing challenging circumstances. There are many things that would potentially improve CPD:

- In terms of within school practice, a move to provide shared professional learning time within the school day, with departments working together on whole school issues.
- Related to this, the structure of CPD needs to be evaluated, ensuring it is embedded in the school culture and targeted at the whole organisation, with departments tackling whole school issues, for example behaviour management, thereby building a shared professional learning community.
- There is also a real opportunity to bring new teachers into challenging schools by developing CPD options that provide opportunities and incentives for staff from matched schools to do secondments or placements in challenging schools.
- One area where more research is needed is in trying to understand more about how teachers learn and pass on their knowledge to other teachers. Some teachers are reluctant to learn, older teachers in particular. There is a need to build more capacity for mentoring, with issues around how you teach teachers to be mentors and to pass skills on to other teachers. Growing this knowledge would help to maximise the effectiveness of teachers' CPD.

Initial Teacher Training

The significant number of teachers who take their first job in schools where they trained means schools facing challenging circumstances need to be well placed to benefit and capitalise on this. It is imperative that barriers

are removed so challenging schools can participate in ITT. Building effective links between challenging schools and ITT providers should be prioritised and it may involve boosting capacity to enable schools to engage effectively. There is a sense from the research that there are potentially some quick wins with ITT. These include developing programmes such as Fast Track to have more of an explicit focus on challenging schools, appealing to those motivated to 'make a difference' in challenging schools, and learning some of the lessons from Teach First's success at marketing. Maximising the participation of schools facing challenging circumstances in the employment based training routes, would also be beneficial.

Collaboration

Building on from CPD and ITT, the collaboration agenda offers opportunities in both of these areas. Collaboration between schools focused on CPD could offer tangible benefits, with, for example, colleagues in the same subject area being offered time out to shadow one another in different schools and reflect on their practice. Also crucial during the first years of teaching is strong support and the importance of support networks. There is potential for running these more effectively across a group of loosely federated schools, with an assistant headteacher given oversight. This type of activity could be organised through the proposed EIPs, although whether schools will embrace these is yet to be seen. Incentives to collaborate and realise the opportunities of EIPs need to be developed, and collaboration over CPD and ITT could offer some good projects for partnerships to cut their teeth on. Ideally, collaborative relations would build partnerships and enable them to move on to tackle much more difficult problems, such as admissions, which potentially would have a much more profound impact. However, whether we can expect groups of schools to solve problems that successive governments have failed to address remains to be seen.

Challenging collegiality

Teachers are schools' most valuable resource and they need to know this. They need to feel valued and supported, working in a school with a positive ethos and a culture of challenging collegiality. For schools facing challenging circumstances, with the intensity of the role and where the demands can be relentless, the need for this is even more apparent. These school level factors, whilst hard for national policy to influence, are critical for teachers. They are fundamentally what encourage teachers to stay or pushes them to leave. There are a number of little things that can make a significant impact, such as the staff room environment, timetabling so teachers in the same department share non-contact time and the positive benefits of programmes such as the 'Well-being' programme. Challenging collegiality is also about teachers pushing one another, benefiting their professional

development, as teachers in subject departments constructively challenge colleagues to improve their teaching and learning.

Multi-agency working

There is real potential in multi-agency working, demonstrated by the best practice examples of initiatives such as the Behaviour Education Support Teams (BESTs). The benefits are particularly clear for challenging schools where many of the students have complex lives. Identifying this best practice is easier than emulating it, and many schools are currently experiencing teething problems. So, are challenging schools going to realise the full benefits of this agenda or do they have too much on their plate? Building capacity to take this agenda forward is imperative in the short term to get systems and the new multi-agency cultures working in schools. This up-front investment will pay dividends in the long term.

Pay

The importance of pay is clear, although it is far from a total solution to this issue, as without the other factors in place teachers will simply not stay in challenging schools even if they are better paid. To a certain extent some schools are already using pay as an incentive, and there is a question of whether this should be more open or formalised in a system level way for teachers in challenging schools. There is also some evidence that in certain local areas more pay is needed to match with local job opportunities and, potentially, in some areas less pay might suffice. The School Teachers Review Body is considering evidence on the impact on these areas and should be aware of any adverse effects of pay systems for challenging schools, particularly performance related pay.

Status of teaching

Those motivated into teaching are not persuaded by status, but low status is a reason cited for putting others off the profession and a reason for leaving once there. We need to understand how status is constructed and influence this for the benefit of the profession generally and also specifically for teachers in challenging schools. Pay is one way of showing value, it is also important to feel trusted, valued and supported from the ultimate employer, in this case government. A strongly perceived lack of professional autonomy undermines status and there was a consensus that the status of teaching could still be improved. As for teaching in challenging schools, this needs to be recast as leading the way in the profession to facilitate recruitment and retention in these schools. Breaking the link between deprivation and low educational attainment should be valued as the greatest achievement in teaching; it would then follow that teachers in challenging schools were considered as having the highest status.

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Resources

All of these conclusions point to the need to resource schools facing challenging circumstances at a higher level to provide capacity to implement these ideas. Some concerns have been mooted that the new funding formula will leave challenging schools worse off and every effort needs to be made to ensure this is not the case. Everything has to work in schools facing challenging circumstances, so that teachers can get on with the difficult job of teaching. This report has proposed that challenging schools need to be leading the way with positive conditions and support in place and this is likely to involve a significant increase in funding, notably difficult in a tighter fiscal climate. In addition to the resource intensive initiatives, we have also tried to highlight initiatives that should be relatively inexpensive but represent positive ways forward, in particular in relation to CPD. All of this will contribute to improving the life chances of the young people in these schools, and, equally, to the lives of the teachers who work there.

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Appendix A: Our primary research

Population of schools

We selected our population of challenging schools as those schools at risk of missing the government's targets: schools with less than 25 per cent of students achieving the benchmark of five GCSEs at grades A*-C in four out of the last five years, including 2004. This gave us a population of 96 schools outside of London. This measure would have only given us 11 schools in London and as we were interested in the particular issues faced by schools in the capital, we boosted the London sample to include schools that had not reached 25 per cent of students achieving five GCSEs at grades A*-C in three out of last five years (not necessarily including 2004), giving us 24 London schools in total.

We matched this group with schools similar in terms of type and ethos, factoring out other factors that affect teachers' choices. The matched schools were in the same travel to work area and had the same features in terms of faith/non-faith, single-sex/mixed, with/without a sixth form. The rationale for this was to eliminate a range of possible reasons why a teacher might prefer working in one school rather than another, and focus on attainment. In every case the matched school had significantly higher attainment, although we also avoided those schools that were extremes in terms of exceptionally high attainment.

Table 1: Mean percentage of 5 A*-C GCSEs 2000-2004 for schools in each group

	5 A* - C 2000	5 A* - C 2001	5 A* - C 2002	5 A* - C 2003	5 A*- C 2004
challenging - London (N=24)	19%	19%	18%	20%	23%
challenging - outside London (N=96)	17%	17%	18%	19%	18%
matched - London (N=24)	42%	44%	47%	49%	54%
matched - outside London (N=96)	47%	48%	51%	52%	53%

While all the matched schools were geographically close to the challenging schools, DfES statistics show that the characteristics of the pupil intakes differed in relation to factors such as free school meal eligibility and special needs (Table 2).

Table 2: Percentages of pupils eligible for free schools meals, with special educational needs and with first languages other than English

A: % eligible for free school meals
B: % special educational needs with statements
C: % special educational needs with no statements
D: % whose first language is other then English

	A	B	C	D
challenging - London (N=20)	42.1	2.9	27.9	34.4
challenging - outside London (N=96)	34.8	3.8	27.8	9.5
matched - London (N=23)	27.2	3.1	15.8	31.7
matched - outside London (N=96)	13.9	2.7	12.9	8.0

We were not, then, attempting to find out what enables pupils to achieve better in one school rather than another: the focus was on teacher choices of where to work, and the patterns of teaching workforce that result from these choices.

Table 2 shows that, on average, the challenging schools had a higher percentage of pupils eligible for free school meals than the matched schools. Within each group (challenging and matched) the London schools had higher eligibility. The challenging schools also had twice as many pupils with unstatemented special educational needs, though similar proportions of statemented pupils. The proportion of pupils whose first language was not English was higher in London, but did not vary between challenging and matched schools.

Working with the Institute for Policy Studies in Education

Working with the Institute for Policy Studies in Education (IPSE) we undertook:

- A school survey
- An analysis of Employers' Organisation data
- A teachers' questionnaire

The **school survey** attempted to collect and compare data at school level, by sending out a short questionnaire to headteachers. To reduce the burden on schools, we asked them to send us a copy of the data they had already submitted which would have been collected by their LEAs in the previous month. We asked the schools for supplementary information, including responses to advertised vacancies, and we asked them to fill in a short questionnaire giving their views about attracting and retaining staff. The

response to this questionnaire was extremely disappointing: only 20 schools sent in returns. Half were from challenging schools, half from matched. Results for this part of the research can clearly only be seen as suggestive.

We have turned to the data collected by the **Employers' Organisation** (NEOST) to give us an overview of staffing in our two groups of schools. We used aggregated data supplied by NEOST for all the schools in our sample that responded to its survey.

The NEOST survey asks schools to give numbers of male and female full-time and part-time staff, distinguishing permanent and fixed-term or temporary contracts. It then asks for details of each member of staff who resigned or was recruited during the calendar year 2003, indicating type of contract, sex, age, salary scale, main teaching subject, origin or destination and, for leavers, length of service in the school. This data therefore provides some indications of whether turnover of teaching staff is higher in 'vulnerable' schools and information about the characteristics of the staff they are able to recruit. This data was sorted into four groups: challenging schools in London and elsewhere, and matched schools in London and elsewhere.

We have also undertaken a **teachers' questionnaire** of all teachers in five challenging and five matched schools, in order to achieve a broad overview of their career patterns, motivations and job satisfactions. We received responses from eight of the ten schools, a total of 179 returned teacher questionaires.

Working with ippr's People and Policy team

We have also carried out qualitative research (conducting 11 focus groups with teachers), working with the People and Policy team based at ippr. Qualitative research is useful in allowing in-depth exploration of experience, attitude and opinion, and complements the quantitative analysis.

We held six focus groups with teachers from challenging schools and five with teachers from matched schools. They were geographically spread, with seven in London, two in the North West and two in a town in the South East. In total 73 teachers from 16 schools took part. There was a good mix of gender, age, ethnicity, time in teaching, numbers of schools worked in, subjects taught, qualifying routes and teaching positions. Teachers were self selecting, and incentives were paid.

To find out more: The primary research reports can be found at www.ippr.org/education and the full reports can be downloaded free of charge.

Appendix B: Creating a culture of professional development

A wish list of ways to create Tipping Points to establish a culture [in no particular order]

This brief paper arose in response to a question asked by Tim Brighouse –'What are the Tipping Points to create a culture of professional development in a school?' The responses were collated by the ten member team of regional CPD advisers seconded to the Department for Education and Skills (DfES).

Establish a culture and ethos

- Set out to achieve Investors in People – the audit and assessment give clear action points and highlight existing culture
- Highlight the range of possible CPD models
- Raise whole staff awareness of national strategies and establish a link between them and whole school improvement
- Record individual and team CPD as resources in school improvement plans and link them to performance management processes
- Identify funding and focus it on supporting identified CPD needs
- Ensure there is a focus on teaching and learning through structured and rigorous lesson observations with consistent system for feedback and judgement
- Ensure there is a culture of valuing staff in large and small ways – eg
    - give staff a laptop
    - ensure staff working environments/staffrooms/toilets are good places with secure space for personal belongings
    - have more experienced staff mentoring new staff
    - give public praise and thanks for staff success and achievements of all kinds
- Ensure school's statement of values makes reference to the central role of staff (sometimes only refers to children)
- Build in collaborative opportunities for CPD activities

- Arrange structured induction for all new staff and staff who are changing roles
- Organise exit strategies for transition to new staff
- Establish succession plans
- Establish opportunities to hear the 'student voice'
- Work with the governing body to ensure understanding of the culture and impact of CPD
- Engage parents and help them understand the need for CPD

Practical developments

- Whole day discussion with all staff to review school aims
- Whole day discussion with all staff to identify what it feels like to work in the school
- Ensure a member of leadership team has strategic responsibility for CPD for all staff
- Ensure all team leaders are aware of their responsibility for CPD for their team members
- Ensure there is effective admin support for performance management and CPD systems
- Create AST posts as well as leading teachers etc
- Use rapid cycle improvement process, working within collaborative groups to address concerns
- Fund mini action research projects within school: give time to reporting back on work/research undertaken
- Fund accredited opportunities, eg MAs
- Initiate ITT placement(s) if not in place, supported by strongest teacher
- Structure team meetings for all around CPD opportunities, not admin and business
- Re-engineer other aspects of staff time to promote learning and collaboration, eg staff meetings, Professional Development days, flexible models of timetabling
- Create 'I have learned...' flipchart in staff space that is added to regularly and is on display in staff work environment
- Create opportunities for staff to try out leadership skills, eg chairing

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meetings, leading aspects of a staff CPD session, presenting reports, interviewing staff

- Ensure leaders undertake their own CPD and publicise this
- Establish use of Professional and Career Development on-line tool in Teachernet
- Sign up cohorts for Chartered London Teacher (in London)
- Interview staff to establish their professional aspirations, hopes and concerns and what motivates them.
- Encourage staff to engage with external bodies, eg subject associations
- Establish an easily accessible staff professional development database/library with key websites highlighted and PC access
- Make full use of range of staff talents and interests, eg speed reading to summarise reports
- Hold an annual staff conference – off site
- Use Professional Development days effectively to develop in-house and visit effective practice in other schools