

Teacher Labour Market in England Annual Report 2024: A summary for school leaders



As school leaders, you will be experiencing the challenges around teacher recruitment and retention first hand and understand the substantial risk to the quality of education that they pose.

The purpose of NFER's annual Teacher Labour Market report is to place a spotlight on the progress the school system is making towards meeting teacher supply challenges, as well as pointing towards actions that are likely to have the greatest impact in addressing them.

The report, and the recommendations it sets out, is a key element of our wider commitment to supporting positive change across education systems. Evidence from last year's report was cited in the 2023 School Teachers Review Body (STRB) report which recommended the 6.5% pay increase for all teachers.

What you'll find in this year's summary

Trends will be familiar from **last year's report**, and it remains the case that significant policy actions are urgently required to address ongoing teacher supply challenges.

However, evidence indicates that flexible working and workload reduction continue to be two areas of focus where actions by school leaders can have a positive impact. To support your work in these areas, we have set out new, practical recommendations, based on our latest research.

We also share a summary of key findings, as well as the recommendations we will be making to the government and political parties as a result. You can find the **full report and recommendations on our website**.

Jack Worth
Lead Economist, NFER



Key findings



● Recruitment:

Secondary teacher recruitment this year is forecast to remain far below targeted levels, particularly in chronic shortage subjects (Chart 1).

● Teacher turnover:

Leaving rates continue to rise post-pandemic, although less so for first-year Early Career Teachers (ECTs).

● Pay:

Last year's pay rise stalled, but has not substantially reversed, the deterioration in the competitiveness in teacher pay since the pandemic.

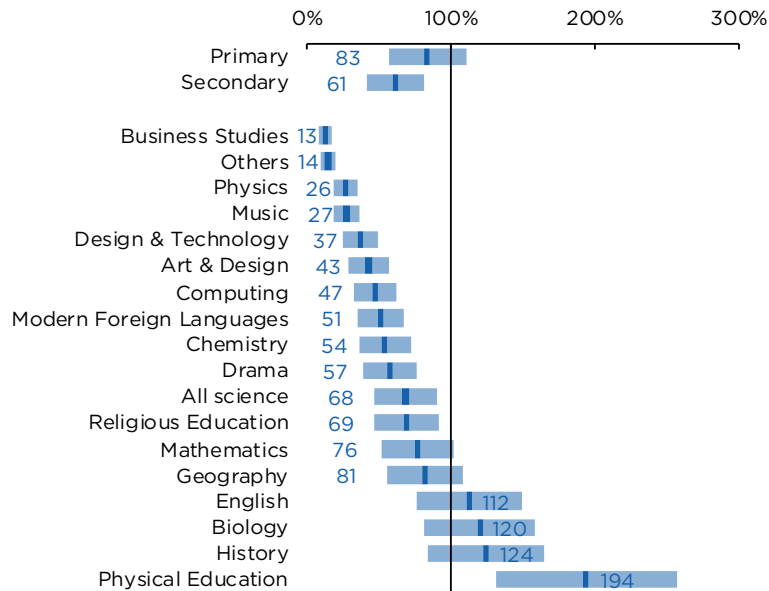
● Workload:

Teachers' working hours increased significantly in 2022/23, compared to the previous year, with teachers reporting that behaviour management and pastoral care are driving higher workload (Chart 2).

● Flexible working:

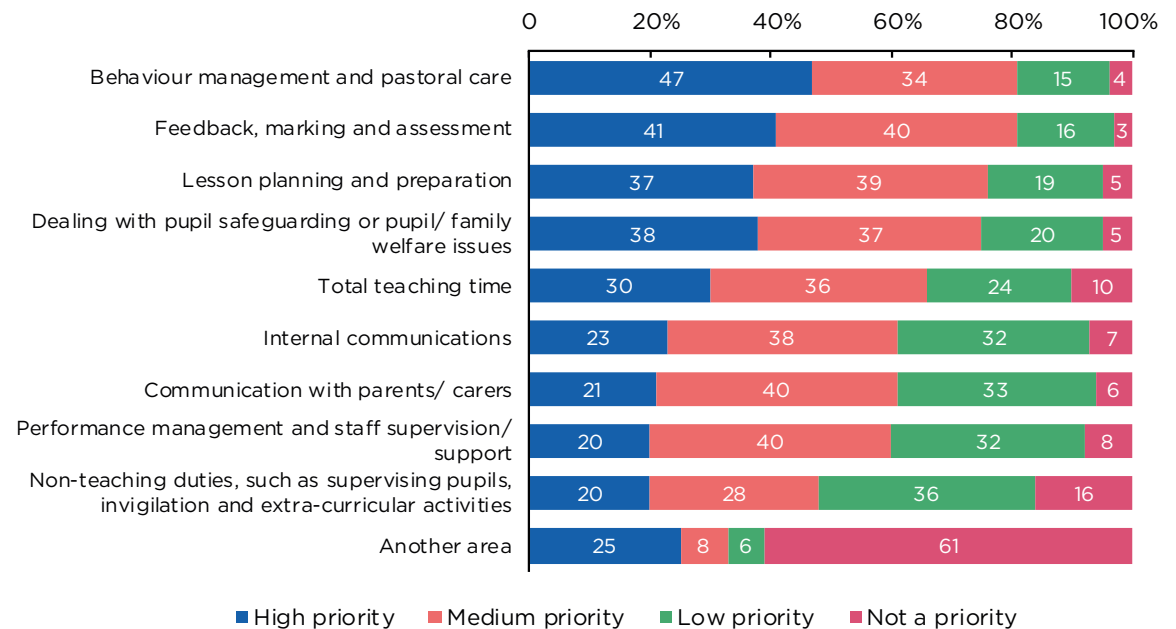
Flexible working arrangements are becoming slightly more common in teaching. However, remote and hybrid working for teachers remains much more limited than for similar graduates.

Chart 1: Forecast of 2024/25 ITT recruitment vs target; based on applications to Feb. 2024



Source: NFER analysis of DfE Apply and UCAS data

Chart 2: Approaches identified as priorities to reduce workload in schools



Source: Martin et al. (2023)

How we source data for our Teacher Labour Market reports

We use Department for Education (DfE) data on teacher training applications and registrations to show how last year's ITT recruitment compared to target and what recruitment is likely to look like this year. We also explore trends in teacher retention, using data from the DfE's School Workforce Census (SWC).

Trends in recruitment and retention are driven by changes in the competitiveness of pay and working conditions in teaching compared to alternative jobs and careers. We therefore analyse trends in teacher pay and conditions primarily using findings from the DfE's Working Lives

of Teachers and Leaders (WLTL) survey, the Labour Force Survey (LFS) and the Global Survey of Working Arrangements (G-SWA).

Further details about the data sources used and definitions are in a methodology appendix separate to the **main report**.

Focus areas for school leaders

When you're considering actions that will support improving recruitment and retention within your own schools, findings continue to point to two key areas that have the greatest potential for impact. We have set out actions, based on evidence from recent NFER research, for you to consider.

Flexible working can come in many forms



There are numerous challenges to flexible working, some of which are inherent to the needs of teaching. However, evidence suggests that even limited flexible working practices can support teacher recruitment and retention.

Things to consider

- Create clear and accessible policies, supported by effective communication, so staff are aware of the various types of flexible opportunities they may explore.
- Ensure that flexible working arrangements are enacted fairly and transparently, supported by processes that allow for discussion and negotiation around how a flexible working arrangement may be accommodated.
- Adopt a creative approach to timetabling, for example, moving assemblies to allow for later starts and allocating PPA time in blocks to allow teachers to complete this at home.
- Consider and set expectations around attendance for non-teaching activities, such as staff meetings, CPD and PPA. What is compulsory and what can be recorded or disseminated in another format?
- You can find more practical recommendations in our **Review of flexible working approaches**.

Take a multi-strategy approach to workload reduction

Barriers to workload reduction can come from a number of external factors, including insufficient funding and a lack of specialist support for specific pupil needs such as SEND. However, effective implementation of a workload reduction plan can still have positive benefits for both teacher and pupils.



Things to consider

- Consider multiple workload reduction strategies that look at a variety of areas, including PPA, access to existing schemes of work / lesson plans, collaborative planning, efficient marking and feedback (i.e. instant verbal feedback), dedicated time for additional responsibilities, effective administration software and reduced data drops.
- Workload reduction strategies may increase workload in the short-term. Consider how you communicate long-term benefits and stagger implementation of new approaches to support teacher engagement.
- With behaviour management emerging as a priority area for workload reduction, consider how behaviour management policies impact workload and whether there are elements that can be removed, reduced or made more efficient.
- Flexible working can have a positive impact on perception of workload (see left).
- You can find more practical recommendations in our research on **Understanding current practice around managing teacher workload**.

Our recommendations for policy makers

As a result of our findings, we are making four key recommendations to the Government:



For full findings and recommendations, you can read this year's **Teacher Labour Market in England – Annual Report 2024** on our website.

1

Reducing teacher workload linked to behaviour management

Government should set up an independent review focussing on how to reduce teachers' workload related to behaviour management and pastoral care, which should consider the role of external support services, such as for special needs and mental health.

2

2024 pay award

Narrowing the gap between teacher pay growth and the wider labour market is key to supporting recruitment and retention. The 2024 pay award should therefore exceed the 3.1 per cent forecasted rise in earnings in the wider labour market.

3

Development of a long-term pay strategy

Political parties should set out their plans to develop a long-term strategy for pay setting which reduces the gap in earnings growth with competing occupations, while ensuring that schools have sufficient funding to enact these pay increases without making cuts elsewhere.

4

Explore compensation for roles that lack opportunity for flexibility

Political parties should consider introducing a Frontline Workers Pay Premium to compensate for the lack of flexible working opportunities in certain public sector jobs. We estimate that this would represent a 1.8 per cent consolidated pay increase for teachers.



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We rely on the input of teachers and leaders to gather robust evidence that is a true reflection of school life. Findings from our Teacher Voice Survey helped inform this year's Teacher Labour Market Report. Join our Survey Panel to add your voice www.nfer.ac.uk/jointeachervoice