Department for Education

NFER Teacher Voice Omnibus February 2012 survey: pupil behaviour

National Foundation for Educational Research (NFER)

Contents

Executive Summary

The Department for Education (DfE) submitted seven questions to the NFER's Teacher Voice Omnibus survey in February 2012. The survey asked a sample of over 1,600 teachers from a range of schools questions on their perceptions of pupil behaviour and their experience of using behaviour management strategies. The survey also explored teachers' perceptions of the training and support they had received in behaviour management. Some of these questions were also included in the Teacher Voice survey in June 2008, which allows comparisons over time for these questions.

- Respondents were largely positive about the standard of pupil behaviour in their schools: 76 per cent of teachers said that the standard of behaviour is 'good' or 'very good', which represents an increase of six percentage points compared with the 2008 survey. Perceptions about pupil behaviour were less positive amongst secondary compared with primary teachers in February 2012: 22 per cent said pupil behaviour is 'very good' compared with 35 per cent of primary teachers.

- Only 6 per cent of teachers felt that pupil behaviour is 'poor' or 'very poor' in their school, which is a decrease of one percentage point since the survey undertaken in 2008.

- The majority of the sample (85%) agreed that they felt well equipped to manage pupil behaviour. This finding is consistent with the previous survey, in which 83 per cent of teachers felt well equipped.

- Half of the sample agreed that appropriate training is available for teachers in their school who are struggling to manage pupil behaviour; an increase of 15 percentage points compared with the 2008 survey. Conversely, a quarter of teachers disagreed, with around a fifth (21%) neither agreeing nor disagreeing.

- Three-fifths (60%) of teachers agreed with the statement that negative pupil behaviour is driving teachers out of the profession. However, this figure represents a decrease of eight percentage points from the 2008 survey.

- The classroom behaviour management strategies used most often by teachers were: praising behaviour they want to see more of (mentioned by 91% of respondents); having a system in place to follow through with all sanctions (85%); and using a reward system (82%).

- There were notable differences by school phase in the strategies used most often: 82 per cent of primary teachers display rules in the classroom compared with 45 per cent of secondary teachers; 77 per cent of primary teachers give feedback (positive and negative) to parents about their child's behaviour compared with 51 per cent of secondary teachers; and a quarter of secondary teachers use detention after school, compared with just one per cent of primary teachers.

- The survey also asked teachers which classroom behaviour management strategies they never use. Three-fifths (60%) of all respondents reported that they never use detention after school, with around a third indicating that they never shout at pupils who misbehave (36%) and that they never send misbehaving pupils to the head teacher or senior staff (32%).

- As with the strategies used most often, there was variation in the strategies never used according to school type. Indeed, 94 per cent of primary teachers said they never use detention after school, compared with 13 per cent of secondary teachers and 51 per cent of secondary teachers said they never send misbehaving pupils to the head teacher or senior staff, compared with 17 per cent of primary teachers.

- Over two-fifths (41%) of teachers rated the training in managing pupil behaviour they had received during initial teacher training (ITT) as 'poor' or 'very poor'; 36 per cent felt it was 'acceptable', while around one fifth were positive in their response, stating that the training had been 'good' or 'very good'.

- Three-fifths of teachers (60%) stated that they had not received any continuing professional development (CPD) in the last 12 months related to managing pupil behaviour. Of those that did receive CPD, 25 per cent did so through formal training in their school, while 15 per cent received informal support from a colleague at their school.

Introduction

The Department for Education (DfE) submitted seven questions to the NFER's Teacher Voice Omnibus survey in February 2012. The questions examined teachers' perceptions of pupil behaviour and their experience of using behaviour management strategies. The survey also explored teachers' perceptions of the training and support received in behaviour management.

This report provides an analysis of the responses to these questions alongside supporting information about the survey. Where appropriate, the results are presented by school phase (primary and secondary), seniority (classroom teachers and senior leaders), teacher age group and years of teaching experience. Some of the questions were also submitted to the Teacher Voice survey in June 2008[1] and, where appropriate, comparisons over time have been made.

Context

Standards of pupil behaviour in schools remain a matter of concern for parents, teachers, children and young people. Evidence[2] has shown that, although the majority of schools have good or outstanding behaviour, around 8% have no better than satisfactory judgements by Ofsted and in 2009/10 there were a total of 5,740 permanent and over 330,000 fixed term exclusions for a range of reasons, including persistent disruptive behaviour and physical assault against a pupil or an adult. In addition, in the previous 2008 survey, two-thirds of teachers were of the view that negative behaviour was driving teachers out of the profession; a finding which highlights the importance of ensuring that teachers feel equipped with the necessary knowledge and skills to manage pupil behaviour.

In July 2011, the Government revised and reissued a range of behaviour related advice and guidance documents. This new, simplified advice explains the law clearly and sets out what teachers can and cannot do. The government reforms include working with initial teacher training providers and teaching schools to facilitate the sharing of best practice to tackle poor behaviour via initial teacher training and peer-to-peer support. Within this context, the DfE wished to seek teachers' views on behaviour management within schools, including the use of different strategies.

Charlie Taylor, the Government's expert advisor on behaviour published a set of behaviour checklists for schools in October 2011[3]. The aim of the checklists are to provide schools and

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[1] National Foundation for Educational Research (2008) Teacher Voice Omnibus June 2008 Survey: Pupil Behaviour DCSF Research Report DCSF RW069.
http://publications.education.gov.uk/eOrderingDownload/DCSF-RW069.pdf

[2] Ofsted (2012) Official statistics: Maintained school inspections and outcomes.
http://www.ofsted.gov.uk/resources/official-statistics-maintained-school-inspections-and-outcomes. Department for Education (2012) A profile of pupil exclusions in England.
https://www.education.gov.uk/publications/eOrderingDownload/DFE-RR190.pdf [Accessed: 17 May 2012].

[3] Department for Education (2011) Getting the simple things right: Charlie Taylor's behaviour checklists
http://media.education.gov.uk/assets/files/pdf/c/charlie%20taylor%20checklist.pdf

teachers with some suggestions from which they can choose five to 10 essential actions to promote good behaviour if they wish. The checklists are designed to be used by teachers at the beginning of the school day and after lunch to ensure that the preparations necessary for the promotion of good behaviour are in place. Charlie Taylor also hoped that this process would serve as a reminder to teachers of what they need to do to ensure good behaviour, and as a means of ensuring consistency across a school. The questions in this survey on teachers' use of classroom behaviour management strategies also include some of those outlined in the checklists.

Analysis of findings

The sample

The survey was completed by a sample of over 1,600 teachers and was weighted to ensure representativeness. The sample included teachers from a wide range of school governance types and subject areas. Sample numbers were also sufficient to allow for comparisons between the primary and secondary sectors. Detailed information about the sample is given in the supplementary section at the end of this report.

Age and experience of the sample

As can be seen from Table 1 below, the two age groups with the most respondents were 30-39 years and 50 and over, a pattern consistent with the previous report (July 2008). Just two per cent of respondents were less than 25 years of age.

Table 1. Please indicate your age group?			
	All	**Primary**	**Secondary**
Less than 25 years old	2%	2%	2%
25 - 29 years old	9%	10%	9%
30 - 39 years old	30%	30%	30%
40 - 49 years old	28%	29%	26%
50 years or over	30%	28%	34%
Local base (N)	1665	916	747

Due to rounding, percentages may not sum to 100
Due to the primary, secondary and all teacher categories being weighted separately, the number of primary and secondary respondents may not sum to the number of teachers in total.

Table 2 provides analysis by length of time in teaching. In line with the previous report, the large majority of all respondents (89%) had been teaching for more than five years. Seven per cent had been teachers for between one and five years, while four per cent were newly qualified teachers (NQTs). Responses by school phase were similar.

Table 2. Please indicate how long you have been in teaching?			
	All	**Primary**	**Secondary**
I am a NQT (newly qualified teacher)	4%	4%	4%
Between one and five years	7%	6%	7%
More than five years	89%	90%	89%
Local base (N)	1672	922	747

Due to rounding, percentages may not sum to 100
Due to the primary, secondary and all teacher categories being weighted separately, the number of primary and secondary respondents may not sum to the number of teachers in total
Source: NFER Omnibus Survey February 2012.

The standard of pupil behaviour

The next question asked teachers about the standard of behaviour in their school. As Table 3 shows, responses were largely positive; 76 per cent of teachers said that the standard of behaviour is 'good' or 'very good'. This represents an increase of six percentage points compared with the 2008 survey. Only six per cent of teachers felt that pupil behaviour is 'poor' or 'very poor'; a decrease of one percentage point compared with the previous survey.

Table 3. How would you rate the standard of behaviour in your school?			
	All	**Primary**	**Secondary**
Very good	30%	35%	22%
Good	46%	47%	44%
Acceptable	19%	14%	26%
Poor	5%	4%	7%
Very poor	1%	1%	1%
Don't know	<1%	<1%	<1%
Local base (N)	1676	923	749

Due to rounding, percentages may not sum to 100
Due to the primary, secondary and all teacher categories being weighted separately, the number of primary and secondary respondents may not sum to the number of teachers in total
Source: NFER Omnibus Survey February 2012.

Consistent with findings from the previous report, analysis by school phase indicates that perceptions about behaviour were *less positive* amongst secondary respondents than their primary counterparts. For example, 22 per cent of secondary teachers said pupil behaviour is 'very good' compared with 35 per cent of primary teachers. In addition, proportionately more senior leaders (88%) than classroom teachers (72%) rated the standard of behaviour as 'good' or 'very good'.

Some differences also emerged when results were analysed by teacher age group. In particular, perceptions of pupil behaviour were most positive amongst respondents aged 50 and over and 40-49 (34% and 32% expressed a view that behaviour was 'very good'). In terms of length of service in teaching, the group that was most positive in their response was those who had been teaching more than five years; 76 per cent of this group rated the standard of behaviour as 'good' or 'very good'.

Attitudes towards pupil behaviour

The next question in the survey asked teachers the extent to which they agreed with a series of statements about pupil behaviour. As shown in Table 4 below, the majority of the respondent sample (85%) felt well equipped to manage pupil behaviour. This finding is consistent with the previous survey, in which 83 per cent of teachers felt well equipped.

In line with the previous report, proportionately more older teachers said that they were 'well equipped' to manage pupil behaviour, though the differences between age groups were fairly small, ranging from 87 per cent of 30-39 year old teachers to 76 per cent of under-25s. Responses by length of time in teaching were largely similar, though proportionally more experienced teachers (86%) felt well equipped compared with NQTs (79%).

Table 4. To what extent do you agree that you feel well equipped to manage pupil behaviour?			
	All	**Primary**	**Secondary**
Agree	85%	89%	80%
Neither Agree nor Disagree	12%	9%	16%
Disagree	3%	2%	4%
Don't know	<1%	<1%	0%
Local base (N)	1675	924	747

Due to rounding, percentages may not sum to 100
Due to the primary, secondary and all teacher categories being weighted separately, the number of primary and secondary respondents may not sum to the number of teachers in total
Source: NFER Omnibus Survey February 2012.

Proportionally fewer secondary teachers than their primary counterparts agreed that they felt well equipped; a finding which is perhaps unsurprising given that they were less positive about the standard of behaviour in their school. In addition, analysis by seniority of respondent indicated that the majority of senior leaders (97%) compared with 82 per cent of classroom teachers felt equipped to manage pupil behaviour.

Half of the respondent sample agreed that appropriate training is available for teachers in their school who are struggling to manage pupil behaviour, as shown in Table 5 below. This represents a 15 percentage point increase compared with the previous survey. Despite views being very similar by school phase in the previous report, in this wave of the survey,

proportionally more primary teachers (54%) than their secondary colleagues (45%) agreed that such training is available.

Table 5. To what extent do you agree that appropriate training is available for teachers in my school who are struggling to manage pupil behaviour?			
	All	**Primary**	**Secondary**
Agree	50%	54%	45%
Neither Agree nor Disagree	21%	20%	21%
Disagree	25%	22%	30%
Don't know	4%	4%	4%
Local base (N)	1669	921	744

Due to rounding, percentages may not sum to 100
Due to the primary, secondary and all teacher categories being weighted separately, the number of primary and secondary respondents may not sum to the number of teachers in total
Source: NFER Omnibus Survey February 2012.

Interestingly, a greater proportion of senior leaders (79%) than their classroom counterparts (42%) agreed that appropriate training is available; perhaps an indication of the need to further promote and raise awareness of training opportunities amongst staff.

Overall, there were no major differences between the various age groups of teachers. However, proportionally fewer respondents (46%) aged 30-39 agreed with the statement compared with all other groups (for example, 53 per cent of under-25s said that appropriate training is available). This finding differs from the previous survey, which showed that proportionally more respondents in the oldest groups (40-49 and 50 and over) were in agreement with this statement.

Exploration of the data by length of time in teaching indicated that NQTs (54%) and those who had been in teaching for more than five years (51%) were proportionally more likely to agree that appropriate training is available; this compares with 43 per cent of teachers with between one and five years' experience.

Discouragingly, Table 6 below shows that three-fifths (60%) of the respondent sample agreed with the statement that negative pupil behaviour is driving teachers out of the profession. This finding does, however, represent an eight percentage point decrease compared with the previous survey. Proportionally more secondary teachers than primary teachers held this view. In both phases however, the proportion of respondents who agreed with this statement had decreased compared with June 2008 (66% compared with 73% and 56% compared with 64%).

Table 6. To what extent do you agree that in your opinion, negative pupil behaviour is driving teachers out of the profession?

	All	Primary	Secondary
Agree	60%	56%	66%
Neither Agree nor Disagree	23%	25%	20%
Disagree	9%	10%	8%
Don't know	8%	9%	7%
Local base (N)	1672	921	748

Due to rounding, percentages may not sum to 100
Due to the primary, secondary and all teacher categories being weighted separately, the number of primary and secondary respondents may not sum to the number of teachers in total
Source: NFER Omnibus Survey February 2012.

Proportionally more classroom teachers (63%) than senior leaders (48%) agreed that negative pupil behaviour is driving teachers out of the profession. This might reflect the former group's experiences at a more operational level.

Analysis by age group of respondent revealed that respondents aged 50 and over and 30-39 years were proportionally more likely to agree with this statement than other age groups (63% and 62% respectively). Under-25s were proportionally least likely to agree with the statement (42%).This pattern is different to that seen in the 2008 survey, where the largest proportion agreeing that negative behaviour is driving teachers out of the profession was in the under-25s age group, where 72 per cent agreed with the statement.

Classroom strategies

Teachers were asked to identify the extent to which they use a series of strategies to manage classroom behaviour. Some of these strategies were outlined in the behaviour checklists published in October 2011 by the Government's expert adviser on behaviour, Charlie Taylor. As can be seen from Table 7 below, the most popular strategies that teacher use *often* include:

- praising behaviour they want to see more of (mentioned by 91% of respondents);
- having a system in place to follow through with all sanctions (mentioned by 85% of respondents); and
- using a reward system (reported by 82% of respondents).

Some notable differences emerged in the strategies used *often* by school phase. In particular:

- A far greater proportion of primary teachers (82%) than their secondary counterparts (45%) display the rules in the classroom.
- Proportionally far more primary teachers (77%) than secondary counterparts (51%) give feedback (positive and negative) to parents about their child's behaviour

- A quarter of secondary respondents use detention after school, compared with just one per cent of their primary colleagues.

Table 7. To what extent, if any, do you do any of the following for managing pupil behaviour? Strategies used often			
	All	**Primary**	**Secondary**
Display the rules in the classroom	65%	82%	45%
Have a system in place to follow through with all sanctions	85%	91%	77%
Give feedback to parents about their child's behaviour - good and bad	65%	77%	51%
Use a reward system	82%	91%	72%
Praise the behaviour you want to see more of	91%	97%	84%
Use a classroom seating plan	65%	62%	70%
Have a plan for children who are likely to misbehave	61%	65%	56%
Shout at pupils who misbehave	4%	2%	8%
Remove misbehaving pupils from the classroom	11%	5%	18%
Send misbehaving pupils to the headteacher or senior staff	4%	5%	3%
Use detention after school for misbehaving pupils	11%	1%	25%
Local base (N)	1678	924	750

Respondents gave responses for more than one strategy so percentages may sum to more than 100
Percentages are calculated from number of respondents offered the question.
Due to the primary, secondary and all teacher categories being weighted separately, the number of primary and secondary respondents may not sum to the number of teachers in total
Source: NFER Omnibus Survey February 2012.

Some differences emerged by seniority of respondent with, for example, 80 per cent of senior leaders reporting that they display the rules in the classroom compared with 61 per cent of their classroom counterparts. A similar pattern emerged in terms of giving feedback to parents about their child's behaviour; 80 per cent of senior leaders use this strategy often, compared with 62 per cent of classroom teachers.

Proportionally more respondents who had been teaching for more than five years *often* have a plan for children who are likely to misbehave (62% compared with 52% who had been teaching between one and five years and 47% of NQTs). Analysis by age group of respondent showed a similar trend in so far as a greater proportion of older teachers said that they use this strategy.

Other variations by length of time in teaching included:

- Teachers who had been teaching more than five years often display the rules in class (66% compared with 60% who had been teaching between one and five years and 45% of NQTs).
- Twenty-two per cent of NQTs reported often using detention after school (this decreased to 15% for teachers with 1-5 years teaching experience and 10% for teachers with more than five years' experience).

The three most frequently reported strategies that teachers use *sometimes* with those pupils who misbehave (Table 8) are:

- removal from the classroom (79% of the respondent sample)
- sending pupils to the headteacher or senior staff (64% of respondents)
- shouting at pupils (59% of the respondent sample).

Table 8. To what extent, if any, do you do any of the following for managing pupil behaviour? Strategies used sometimes			
	All	**Primary**	**Secondary**
Display the rules in the classroom	25%	17%	35%
Have a system in place to follow through with all sanctions	14%	9%	21%
Give feedback to parents about their child's behaviour - good and bad	34%	23%	48%
Use a reward system	15%	8%	23%
Praise the behaviour you want to see more of	8%	3%	15%
Use a classroom seating plan	25%	27%	23%
Have a plan for children who are likely to misbehave	36%	32%	39%
Shout at pupils who misbehave	59%	55%	64%
Remove misbehaving pupils from the classroom	79%	82%	75%
Send misbehaving pupils to the headteacher or senior staff	64%	77%	45%
Use detention after school for misbehaving pupils	30%	5%	62%
Local base (N)	1678	924	750

Respondents gave responses for more than one strategy so percentages may sum to more than 100
Percentages are calculated from number of respondents offered the question.
Due to the primary, secondary and all teacher categories being weighted separately, the number of primary and secondary respondents may not sum to the number of teachers in total
Source: NFER Omnibus Survey February 2012.

There was some variation in responses by primary and secondary respondents, which included:

- Using detention after school – used by over three-fifths (62%) of secondary teachers compared with around one in twenty (5%) primary teachers.
- Sending misbehaving pupils to the headteacher or senior staff – used by 77 per cent of primary teachers compared with 45 per cent of their secondary counterparts.
- Giving feedback to parents about their child's behaviour – mentioned by nearly half of secondary teachers, compared with just under a quarter of their primary counterparts.

Table 9 shows the data on the strategies that teachers said that they never use. Three-fifths of all respondents *never* use detention after school as a strategy to manage pupil behaviour. Analysis by school phase revealed that proportionally far more primary teachers (94%) reported never using this strategy compared with their secondary counterparts (13%). In contrast, a considerably larger proportion of secondary teachers (51%) said that they never send misbehaving pupils to the headteacher or senior staff compared with their primary counterparts (17%).

Exploration of the data by seniority of respondent revealed that, for example, proportionally more senior leaders than classroom teachers reported *never* shouting at pupils who misbehave (48% and 33%) or giving detention after school (69% and 57%).

Table 9. To what extent, if any, do you do any of the following for managing pupil behaviour? Strategies never used

	All	Primary	Secondary
Display the rules in the classroom	9%	1%	18%
Have a system in place to follow through with all sanctions	1%	1%	1%
Give feedback to parents about their child's behaviour - good and bad	1%	<1%	2%
Use a reward system	3%	1%	4%
Praise the behaviour you want to see more of	<1%	<1%	<1%
Use a classroom seating plan	9%	11%	6%
Have a plan for children who are likely to misbehave	3%	2%	5%
Shout at pupils who misbehave	36%	42%	28%
Remove misbehaving pupils from the classroom	10%	12%	7%
Send misbehaving pupils to the headteacher or senior staff	32%	17%	51%
Use detention after school for misbehaving pupils	60%	94%	13%
Local base (N)	1678	924	750

Respondents gave responses for more than one strategy so percentages may sum to more than 100
Percentages are calculated from number of respondents offered the question.
Due to the primary, secondary and all teacher categories being weighted separately, the number of primary and secondary respondents may not sum to the number of teachers in total
Source: NFER Omnibus Survey February 2012.

Training and support

The next question explored teachers' perceptions of the training in managing pupil behaviour they had received during initial teacher training. As Table 10 shows, responses were mixed. Over two-fifths (41%) felt that it had been 'poor' or 'very poor'; 36 per cent felt it was 'acceptable', while around one fifth were positive in their response, stating that the training had been 'good' or 'very good'. This finding suggests that there is considerable scope to further improve the training provided during initial teacher training.

Table 10. How would you rate the behaviour training you received during your initial teacher training?

	All	Primary	Secondary
Very good	3%	1%	4%
Good	16%	15%	18%
Acceptable	36%	36%	36%
Poor	27%	28%	25%
Very poor	14%	15%	13%
Don't know	4%	5%	4%
Local base (N)	1672	923	746

Due to rounding, percentages may not sum to 100
Due to the primary, secondary and all teacher categories being weighted separately, the number of primary and secondary respondents may not sum to the number of teachers in total
Source: NFER Omnibus Survey February 2012.

As Table 11 shows, three-fifths (60%) of respondents indicated that they have not received any continuing professional development (CPD) in the last 12 months related to managing pupil behaviour. Of those who have, one quarter (25%) did so through formal training at their school, while 15 per cent received informal support from a colleague at their school.

Table 11. In the last 12 months, have you received any form of continuing professional development (CPD) related to managing pupil behaviour?

	All	Primary	Secondary
No	60%	60%	60%
Yes, through formal training at my school	25%	23%	29%
Yes, through informal support from a colleague(s) at my school	15%	15%	14%
Yes, from a colleague(s) from another school	1%	1%	1%
Yes, through my local authority	3%	4%	2%
Yes, on an external course	3%	4%	2%
Other	2%	1%	2%
Local base (N)	1676	924	749

Respondents were able to select more than one response so percentages may sum to more than 100
Due to the primary, secondary and all teacher categories being weighted separately, the number of primary and secondary respondents may not sum to the number of teachers in total
Source: NFER Omnibus Survey February 2012.

When responses to this question were analysed by age group, it was found that the youngest age group (under-25s) were the ones who tended to have received support,

particularly through informal support from a colleague at their school (43%) or formal training at their school (41%).

Conclusions and implications

The findings from this series of questions indicate that the majority of all teachers were positive about the standard of behaviour in their school. That said, some differences emerged by school phase and seniority of respondent: perceptions of pupil behaviour were less positive amongst secondary teachers than their primary counterparts and classroom teachers than senior leaders. Further investigation would be required to explore the reasons for the variation.

Encouragingly, the findings have shown that over four-fifths of respondents felt well equipped to manage pupil behaviour; a trend which also emerges by age group and length of time in teaching (and is consistent with the previous report). This suggests that professional development, alongside guidance for teachers, may contribute to increased confidence in their ability to manage behaviour.

The findings have shown that there has been a steady decrease in the proportion of teachers who agree that negative pupil behaviour is driving teachers out of the profession. Nonetheless, three-fifths of teachers perceived this to be an issue. However, as mentioned in the previous report, the data does not enable us to quantify the proportions of teachers who might be driven out for this particular reason. Similarly, other reasons for leaving the profession such as workload and change of career have not been explored.

A range of strategies were being used to manage pupil behaviour in the classroom. Praising behaviour teachers want to see more of, having a system in place to follow through with all sanctions and using a reward system were most commonly used. As might be expected, detention is rarely used in primary schools, but is used regularly by around a quarter of secondary respondents and sometimes for around two-thirds of respondents.

Respondents were divided in their views about whether appropriate training is available for teachers in their school who are struggling to manage pupil behaviour. This merits further investigation to explore the types of training considered effective and the extent to which training is tailored to need (for example, of the institution). Furthermore, analysis by seniority revealed that a greater proportion of senior leaders than their classroom counterparts reported that appropriate training is available. While the reasons for such variation were not explored in this survey, this might suggest the need for increased awareness raising activity within schools.

Supporting information

How was the survey conducted?

This report is based on data from the February 2012 survey. A panel of 1686 practising teachers from 1269 schools in the maintained sector in England completed the survey. Teachers completed the survey online between the 17th and 29th February 2012. During the survey period, a team of experienced coders within the Foundation coded all 'open' questions (those without a pre-identified set of responses).

What was the composition of the panel?

The panel included teachers from the full range of roles in primary and secondary schools, from headteachers to newly qualified class teachers. Fifty five per cent (921) of the respondents were teaching in primary schools and 45 per cent (765) were teaching in secondary schools.

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

There was an under-representation of schools in the highest quintile in terms of eligibility for free school meals in the sample of primary schools. In the sample of secondary schools and for the overall sample (primary and secondary schools) there was under-representation in the highest quintile and over-representation in the lowest quintile in terms of eligibility for free school meals. To address this, weights were calculated using free school meals factors to create a more balanced sample. Due to the differences between the populations of primary schools and secondary schools, different weights were created for primary schools, secondary schools and then for the whole sample overall. The weightings have been applied to all of the analyses referred to in this commentary[4].

Tables S.1, S.2 and S.3 show the representation of the weighted achieved sample against the population. Table S.4 shows the representation of the weighted teacher sample by role in school.

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[4]   The sample was not weighted for missing free school meal data

Table S.1   Representation of (weighted) primary schools compared with primary schools nationally

		National Population %	NFER Sample %
Achievement Band (Overall performance by KS2 2011 data)	Lowest band	19	15
	2nd lowest band	18	18
	Middle band	17	18
	2nd highest band	21	23
	Highest band	25	25
	Missing	0	0
% eligible FSM (5 point scale) (2010/11)	Lowest 20%	20	20
	2nd lowest 20%	20	20
	Middle 20%	20	20
	2nd highest 20%	20	20
	Highest 20%	20	20
	Missing	0	0
Primary school type	Infants	9	10
	First School	5	4
	Infant & Junior (Primary)	77	73
	First & Middle	0	0
	Junior	7	11
	Middle deemed Primary	0	1
	Academy	2	2
Region	North	31	24
	Midlands	32	30
	South	37	47
Local Authority type	London Borough	11	13
	Metropolitan Authorities	21	21
	English Unitary Authorities	18	20
	Counties	51	47
Number of schools		16798	801

Due to rounding, percentages may not sum to 100
Some information is not available for all schools and some schools included more than one respondent
Source: NFER Omnibus Survey February 2012

Table S.2   Representation of (weighted) secondary schools compared with secondary schools nationally

		National Population	NFER Sample
		%	%
Achievement Band (Overall performance by GCSE 2010 data)	**Lowest band**	16	16
	2nd lowest band	20	19
	Middle band	19	22
	2nd highest band	18	21
	Highest band	19	19
	Missing	7	4
% eligible FSM (5 point scale) (2010/11)	**Lowest 20%**	20	20
	2nd lowest 20%	20	20
	Middle 20%	20	20
	2nd highest 20%	20	20
	Highest 20%	20	20
	Missing	1	0
Secondary school type	**Middle**	6	3
	Secondary Modern	3	1
	Comprehensive to 16	26	22
	Comprehensive to 18	32	42
	Grammar	5	6
	Other secondary school	0	0
	Academies	28	26
Region	**North**	29	24
	Midlands	33	31
	South	38	44
Local Authority type	**London Borough**	13	14
	Metropolitan Authorities	21	21
	English Unitary Authorities	19	19
	Counties	47	46
Number of schools		3255	468

Due to rounding, percentages may not sum to 100.
Some information is not available for all schools and some schools included more than one respondent.
Source: NFER Omnibus Survey February 2012.

Table S.3   Representation of all schools (weighted) compared with all schools nationally

		National Population	NFER Sample
		%	%
Achievement Band (By KS2 2011 and GCSE 2010 data)	**Lowest band**	18	16
	2nd lowest band	18	18
	Middle band	17	20
	2nd highest band	20	22
	Highest band	24	22
	Missing	1	1
% eligible FSM (5 point scale) (2010/11)	**Lowest 20%**	20	20
	2nd lowest 20%	20	20
	Middle 20%	20	20
	2nd highest 20%	20	20
	Highest 20%	20	20
	Missing	0	0
Region	**North**	30	24
	Midlands	32	30
	South	37	46
Local Authority type	**London Borough**	11	13
	Metropolitan Authorities	21	21
	English Unitary Authorities	18	20
	Counties	51	46
Number of schools		20017	1269

Due to rounding, percentages may not sum to 100
Some information is not available for all schools and some schools included more than one respondent
Source: NFER Omnibus Survey February 2012.

Table S.4   Comparison of the achieved (weighted) sample with the national population by grade of teacher

Role	Primary schools				Secondary schools			
	National Population		NFER Sample		National Population		NFER Sample	
	N*	%	N	%	N*	%	N	%
Headteachers	16.8*	10	86	9	3.2*	2	13	2
Deputy Headteachers	11.7*	7	103	11	5.3*	3	23	3
Assistant Headteachers	6.5*	4	54	6	11.4*	6	72	10
Class teachers and others	131.8*	79	682	74	160.0*	89	643	86

Population N is expressed in thousands
Due to rounding, percentages may not sum to 100
Sources: NFER Omnibus Survey February 2012, DfE: School Workforce in England (including pupil: teacher ratios and pupil: adult ratios), January 2010
http://www.education.gov.uk/rsgateway/DB/SFR/s000927/index.shtml [12 March 2012].

How accurately do the findings represent the national position?

Precision is a measure of the extent to which the results of different samples agree with each other. If we drew a different sample of teachers would we get the same results? The more data that is available the more precise the findings. For all schools and a 50 per cent response, the precision of that response is between 47.61 per cent and 52.39 per cent. For secondary schools the same precision is + and – 3.54 percentage points and for primary schools it is + and – 3.23 percentage points.

With the weightings applied to the data, we are confident that the omnibus sample is broadly representative of teachers nationally and provides a robust analysis of teachers' views.