

Behavioural Impact of Changes in the Teachers Pension Scheme

*Mark Peters¹, Merryn Hutchings², Gareth Edwards¹,
Sarah Minty², Ken Seeds¹ and Sarah Smart²*

*BMRB Social Research (1) and Institute for Policy
Studies in Education, London Metropolitan
University (2)*

Research Report No
DCSF-RR024

Behavioural Impact of Changes in the Teachers Pension Scheme

*Mark Peters¹, Merryn Hutchings², Gareth Edwards¹, Sarah Minty²,
Ken Seeds¹ and Sarah Smart²*

*BMRB Social Research (1) and Institute for Policy Studies in
Education, London Metropolitan University (2)*

The views expressed in this report are the authors' and do not necessarily reflect those of the Department for Children, Schools and Families.

© British Market Research Bureau 2008
ISBN 978 1 84775 108 9

Table of Contents

Acknowledgements	viii
Executive summary	ix
1 Introduction	1
2 Literature review	2
2.1 Introduction	2
2.2 TPS changes	3
2.3 Retirement decisions	4
2.4 Factors in teachers' retirement decisions	12
2.5 The pattern of teacher retirements	14
2.6 Factors that may impact on the take-up of new pensions flexibilities	19
2.7 Summary	21
3 Research design	23
3.1 Introduction	23
3.2 Quantitative design	23
3.2.1 Sampling	24
3.2.2 Questionnaire	26
3.2.3 Questionnaire packs and the information sheet	26
3.2.4 Questionnaire format and dress rehearsal pilot	26
3.2.5 Main stage fieldwork	27
3.2.6 Coding, data editing and outputs	29
3.2.7 Weighting	29
3.3 Sample profile	30
3.3.1 Employee survey	30

3.3.2	Headteachers as employers survey	32
3.3.3	Local authorities surveys	34
3.4	Qualitative design.....	34
3.4.1	Case studies	34
3.4.2	Follow-up interviews	37
3.4.3	About the interviewees.....	37
3.4.4	Qualitative analysis	37
3.5	Explanatory Notes	39
3.5.1	Interpreting the survey findings	39
3.5.2	Employees and employers (survey data).....	39
3.5.3	Local authorities (survey data)	39
3.6	Data Tables.....	40
3.7	Structure of report.....	40
4	Teacher and headteacher retirements: the current context	41
4.1	Introduction	41
4.2	The school context.....	41
4.2.1	Schools that supported flexibility for older teachers	42
4.2.2	Schools that did not support flexibility for older teachers	44
4.2.3	What caused the differences between schools?.....	45
4.2.4	Other differences that related to the school context.....	51
4.3	Decisions about retirement.....	51
4.3.1	Factors encouraging teachers to remain in teaching	51
4.3.2	Factors encouraging teachers to leave the profession	56
4.3.3	The place of finance in retirement decisions	63
4.4	Understanding of pensions	63

4.5	Summary	71
5	Changes to the Teachers' Pension Scheme	74
5.1	Introduction	74
5.2	Awareness and understanding of TPS changes.....	74
5.2.1	Levels of awareness of TPS changes prior to the survey.....	74
5.2.2	Awareness and understanding of particular changes	80
5.2.3	Sources and provision of information.....	86
5.3	Summary	102
6	Current retirement plans	104
6.1	Introduction	104
6.2	Retirement patterns in schools	104
6.3	Career plans before retirement	108
6.4	Retirement plans	112
6.4.1	Anticipated retirement age	112
6.4.2	Types of pension award	117
6.4.3	Early retirement	119
6.4.4	Plans to retire at 60.....	122
6.4.5	Plans to retire after 60.....	125
6.5	Post-retirement plans.....	127
6.6	Summary	130
7	Impact of the changes to the TPS on teacher behaviour.....	132
7.1	Introduction	132
7.2	Actual impact: behaviour changes so far	132
7.2.1	Teachers who had already acted in response to TPS changes.....	132
7.2.2	Discussions about potential actions	135

7.3	Perceptions of potential impact on teachers and school staffing	139
7.4	Barriers and constraints	155
7.5	Potential impact on school leaders and succession planning	164
7.6	Summary	173
8	Summary and implications for policy	176
8.1	Introduction	176
8.2	Employers.....	176
8.3	Employees	179
8.4	Implications for policy	183
8.5	Summary	186
	References	188
	Appendix A: Questionnaires	192
	Appendix B: Information sheet.....	219
	Appendix C: Technical appendix	221
	Appendix D: Cluster analysis	226
	Appendix E: School case studies.....	232

Index of Tables

Table 2.1: Summary of factors in retirement decisions	11
Table 3.1 Weighted breakdown of returned questionnaires from teachers	30
Table 3.2 Weighted breakdown of returned questionnaires from headteachers	31
Table 3.3 Employees: Total pensionable teaching years and total pensionable years (by gender)	32
Table 3.4 Weighted breakdown of returned questionnaires from headteachers as employers	32
Table 3.5 Case study and follow-up interviews.....	38
Table 4.1 Headteachers as employers: Attitudes to flexibility for teachers (by school phase)	46
Table 4.2 Headteachers as employers: Attitudes to part-time and job-share teachers	48
Table 4.3 Employees: Highest ranked factor encouraging employees to stay in teaching (by age).....	52
Table 4.4 Employees: Highest ranked factor encouraging employees to leave teaching (by age full-time / part-time status)	57
Table 4.5 Employees: Importance of size of teachers' pension / ability to access pension when thinking about retirement	63
Table 4.6 Employees: Attitude to Teachers Pensions information (by age and gender)	68
Table 5.1 All respondents: Levels of awareness of the changes to the TPS prior to the survey	74
Table 5.2 Headteachers as employers: Levels of awareness of TPS changes prior to the survey (by age)	76
Table 5.3 Employees: Levels of awareness of the changes to the TPS prior to the survey (by age).....	78
Table 5.4 Headteachers as employers: Awareness only of increase to employees' and employers' contributions or of other changes as well (by awareness of TPS changes).....	83
Table 5.5 Employees: Awareness only of increase to employees' and employers' contributions or other changes as well (by awareness of TPS changes).....	84
Table 5.6 Local authorities: Sources from which found out about changes to TPS	87
Table 5.7 Headteachers as employers: Sources from which found out about changes to TPS	89
Table 5.8 Headteachers as employers: Communication of information to staff (by age)	93
Table 5.9 Employees: Sources from which found out about changes to TPS.....	96
Table 5.10 Employees: Perceptions of information received about Teachers' Pensions Scheme changes.....	99

Table 5.11 Employees: Understanding of TPS changes after reading survey information sheet (by awareness of changes prior to the survey)	101
Table 6.1 Local authorities: Statements on school leader retirements in local authority	105
Table 6.2 Headteacher as Employer: Anticipated retirements in next three school years as a proportion of number of teachers in school (by school size)	106
Table 6.3 Employees: Career plans before retirement	108
Table 6.4 Employees: Anticipated age leaving teaching (by gender / pensionable teaching service years)	113
Table 6.5 Employees: Anticipated age start drawing pension (by gender / pensionable teaching service years)	114
Table 6.6 Employees: Certainty of anticipated retirement age and age start drawing teacher pension	115
Table 6.7 Employees: Career plans before retirement (by certainty of plans / anticipated retirement age)	116
Table 6.8 Employees: Main anticipated retirement option and 1 st / 2 nd alternatives of employees that unsure.....	117
Table 6.9 Employees: Main anticipated retirement option given in survey, compared with actual retirements in 2005-6 (DfES, 2006b) (excluding those anticipating or taking health or premature retirement)	118
Table 6.10 Employees: What employee will do after leaving teaching (by gender).....	127
Table 7.1 Headteachers as employers: Discussion of potential roles (by school phase)	137
Table 7.2 Headteachers as employers: Discussion of potential roles (by age of teacher workforce)	137
Table 7.3 Employees: Discussion of phased retirement with <u>local authority</u> (by age and by role)	138
Table 7.3b Employees: Discussions of phased retirement with <u>headteacher</u> – (headteachers excluded) by age	138
Table 7.4 Local authorities: The potential impact of phased retirement arrangements	140
Table 7.5 Headteachers as employers: How useful it would be for older and more experienced teachers to take on the following roles.... (by school phase).....	142
Table 7.6 Headteachers as employers: Proportion who agree with the following statements about the impact of more flexible retirement patterns on their school....	144
Table 7.7 Employees: Whether retirement plans have changed as result of changes to the TPS (by age, gender and role)	146
Table 7.8 Employees: Retirement shift patterns (previous versus current retirement plans)	148
Table 7.9 Employees: Retirement shift patterns (previous versus current anticipated age of leaving teaching)	148
Table 7.10 Employees: Retirement shift patterns (previous versus current anticipated age of drawing pension).....	149

Table 7.11 Employees: Whether changes to the TPS made it more likely that will stay in teaching longer than anticipated (by age)	149
Table 7.12 Employees: Whether would consider phased retirement (by age).....	151
Table 7.13 Employees: Proportion interested in each of the following roles in a phased retirement position (by role).....	153
Table 7.14 Employees: Whether anticipate difficulty finding employment in which to take phased retirement (by age and role)	160

Index of Figures

Figure 2.1: Teacher retirements by type of award, 1989-90 to 2005-6 (DfES, 2006b)	15
Figure 2.2: Average benefits awarded by type of award, 2005-6	16
Figure 2.3: Average benefits awarded by type of award and sex, 2005-6.....	16
Figure 2.4: Type of award by sex 2005-6	17
Figure 2.5: Type of award by grade (maintained schools).....	18
Figure 2.6: Primary full-time teachers: age by role, March 2005.....	18
Figure 2.7: Part-time teachers as percentage of total FTE teachers.....	20
Figure 2.8: Percentage of all male and female teachers in each age group who work part-time	21

Acknowledgements

The authors would like to thank all those who have contributed to this project. We are grateful to Gillian Redfearn, Project Manager at the DCSF, together with all members of the Steering Group - Vernon Adamson, David Churchill, Ian Harrop, Kerena Hunter and Ianthe Wright - for their invaluable help and support with the project.

We want to thank all those teachers and local authority staff who took the time to complete questionnaires. We are particularly grateful to the headteachers and all the staff involved in the case study schools, who made the researchers welcome and answered all our questions. And we also thank all those who took part in pilot and follow-up interviews.

Finally, many thanks to Nathan Fretwell, project administrator in IPSE, for his valuable contributions and support.

Information about Teachers' Pensions

Information about teachers' pensions can be obtained from the Teachers' Pensions website. This gives details of the scheme and the various possibilities open to teachers. It also includes a facility for members of the scheme to obtain an on-line estimate of their pension benefits, and one for making specific enquiries.

Alternatively, Teachers' pensions can be contacted by telephone on **0845 6066166**, this is a BT local call rate number.

This report includes an information sheet about the recent changes to the Teachers Pension regulations (Appendix C).

Executive summary

Aims

The main aims of this research were to investigate:

awareness and perceptions amongst teachers and teachers' employers of the changes to the Teachers' Pension Scheme (TPS), which came into force on 1 January 2007; and

the impact of the TPS changes on teachers' decisions to remain in the profession and employers' decisions to support them.

Background

The changes to the TPS took place in a context in which rising life expectancy is leading to moves to encourage people to work longer and to save more for retirement, and many pension schemes are changing in ways that reflect this. This report is concerned with those changes that affect existing members of the scheme: the two that are likely to have the greatest impact are the introduction of phased retirement (enabling older teachers to reduce their hours and/or responsibilities and to draw on some of their accrued pension benefits), and the changes to average salary calculation (through which the pension is based either on the best three consecutive years in the last 10, or on the average salary in the final year).

The potential impact of the pension scheme changes must be considered in the light of current behaviour. The pattern of teacher retirements in the last 20 years shows that the number retiring before the age of 60 has consistently exceeded the number retiring at or after 60. Those in leadership grades and men more often retire before 60 (in comparison with classroom teachers and women) (DfES, 2006b). Some older teachers have moved to part-time work or to supply teaching as ways of reducing their hours or responsibilities (DfES, 2006b; Hutchings *et al.*, 2006a).

Research design

The evidence in this report is based on both quantitative and qualitative research. The following groups were surveyed:

- local authorities: separate surveys were conducted with pensions staff (67 responses – 48 per cent response rate) and HR staff (39 responses – 28 per cent response rate)
- headteachers in their role as employers (672 responses – 34 per cent response rate) (referred to as 'headteachers as employers')

- 'employees' aged 49 to 60 who were members of the TPS: (3865 responses in all, 939 from headteachers - 47 per cent response rate; and 2926 from other teachers - 44 per cent response rate).

Design weights were applied to the achieved samples of employees and of headteachers as employers to correct for the over- and under-sampling during the sample selection phase. The percentages reported throughout the report are based on weighted data. Differences are reported only when they are statistically significant at the 95 per cent confidence level.

Case studies were conducted in twelve schools selected to illustrate diversity in phase, size and location; in each case the headteacher and between two and five teachers aged 49 to 60 were interviewed, and in all but one a governor was interviewed. Local authority advisors and inspectors were also invited to take part, but generally did not agree to do so. Following the survey, a further twelve interviews were conducted with local authority staff, headteachers and other teachers to pursue particular lines of enquiry. In total, interviews were conducted with 21 headteachers, 51 teachers, two school administrators, 12 governors and staff in five local authorities.

Findings

Attitudes of headteachers as employers to flexibility for employees to reduce hours or responsibilities

The TPS changes offer older teachers the opportunity to reduce their hours and/or their responsibilities as they approach retirement, but this will be possible only if schools wish to employ them. The headteachers as employers survey data show that headteachers' attitudes to this varied enormously. While over 80 per cent agreed that they tried to support staff who wished to reduce hours or responsibilities, 49 per cent of primary and 56 per cent of secondary headteachers indicated that they would not be happy to employ more part-time teachers. Half the secondary headteachers interviewed indicated that they were unlikely to support reductions in hours or responsibilities and would do so only if they were 'in the interests of the school', which appeared to be constructed as distinct from, or even in conflict with, the well-being and job satisfaction of the older teachers. In contrast, other headteachers (about half of those interviewed, including headteachers of primary, secondary and special schools) saw meeting the needs of older teachers as part of ensuring quality provision for pupils. Some of these had used a variety of ways of enabling teachers to reduce their hours and/or responsibilities under the previous teachers' pension regulations. These different attitudes seemed to be rooted in the headteachers' ideas about what makes an effective school; they did not relate to their age or the date of their headship

training. Heads of schools that employed a high proportion of part-time teachers¹ were more likely than those with a low proportion to agree that they would be happy to employ more (28 versus 18 per cent). But in the schools with higher proportions of older teachers², retention was less often identified as a priority, and headteachers were more likely to agree that they would like older teachers to move on so that younger ones could be recruited (47 versus 24 per cent with a low proportion of older teachers).

Factors in teachers' retirement decisions

The likelihood of benefiting from the TPS changes may also be affected by the range of factors that teachers take into account in making decisions about retirement. Teachers were asked to select, and rank in order of importance, three factors that encouraged them to stay in teaching and three that encouraged them to leave. The factors that most encouraged them to stay in teaching were enjoyment of teaching (26 per cent selected as the most important); financial commitments that prohibit retirement (17 per cent); not being able to afford to retire, and wanting to build up a larger pension before retirement (each 10 per cent). The qualitative research indicated that for some teachers, the earliest date at which they would consider retiring related to financial commitments (in particular, mortgages, and children's higher education). However, once these had been met, whether work was enjoyable became the central factor. Thus older teachers were more likely than younger to choose school-based factors as encouraging them to stay in teaching, and younger teachers more likely than older to choose financial factors. For some other teachers, finance was less central, and the main reason for staying in teaching was their enjoyment of their role.

The factors that were most frequently ranked first in encouraging teachers to leave were wanting to retire while still healthy and able to enjoy it (selected by 37 per cent as the most important); not enjoying some aspects of their current work (20 per cent); and not achieving a satisfactory work-life balance (11 per cent). The qualitative data identify a perception that at a certain age (generally located in the late fifties), energy will drain away. Eight out of 65 interviewees cited a variety of 'mortality myths' suggesting that those who continue to teach (or who move from full-time work straight into retirement) are likely to die sooner than those who retire early or gradually; however, there is no evidence to support these. Headteachers were more likely than teachers to select not achieving a satisfactory work-life balance as one of the three factors encouraging them to leave (47 versus

¹ Schools in the sample were divided into three groups of approximately equal size based on the proportion of teachers (headcount) that worked part-time; a low proportion was 0 to 15 per cent, and a high proportion over 30 per cent.

² Sample schools were also divided into three groups of approximately equal size based on proportion of teachers (headcount) aged 50 and over; low – 0 to 20 per cent, high – over 40 per cent.

37 per cent) while teachers were more likely than heads to select not enjoying some aspects of current work (58 versus 42 per cent).

Teachers' understanding of their pensions

While 24 per cent of the employee sample said they kept up to date with pensions information, and 59 per cent that they had a broad understanding of how their pension is calculated, the qualitative research found that in many cases awareness was partial or inaccurate. In particular, almost all those who talked about actuarial reduction underestimated the extent of the reduction. More than one in 10 interviewees believed that working part-time would vastly reduce their pension, because they did not understand the calculations correctly. One in six teachers in the survey indicated that they found pensions information 'confusing', or had not yet looked at it. Both the interviews and the survey showed that many teachers investigate their pensions only when they expect to retire in the next year or so; only 12 per cent of those aged 49 to 51 said they kept up to date with pension information, compared to 39 per cent of those aged 58 to 60. Those teachers who have misunderstandings or who find pensions information confusing may be less likely to understand and take advantage of the new options available. The qualitative research found that some teachers had not received annual statements from Teachers' Pensions, and this contributed to their vagueness about their pensions.

Awareness and understanding of TPS changes

Within local authorities, those who worked directly with teachers' pensions generally reported a detailed awareness and understanding of the TPS changes (72 per cent), but HR staff were more likely to report only a general awareness (36 per cent detailed understanding, 49 per cent general awareness). Governors interviewed reported limited or no awareness. Amongst headteachers as employers, 11 per cent said they had a detailed awareness and understanding, while a further 50 per cent reported that they had at least a general awareness. A similar pattern was found among employees, with slightly fewer reporting either a detailed (nine per cent) or general (46 per cent) awareness. Some groups had a greater awareness: headteachers (68 per cent of those aged 49 to 60 reported a detailed or general awareness); men (68 per cent); older teachers (62 per cent aged 58 to 60 versus 46 per cent 49 to 51); and those who were closer to their anticipated retirement date. However, 31 per cent of all employees had a limited awareness, and 13 per cent said that they were unaware that the scheme had changed.

A majority of those surveyed indicated that they were aware of both the increase to contributions and of other changes (69 per cent of headteachers as employers, and 60 per cent of employees). Interviews showed that more were aware of and understood the change to average salary calculations than the introduction of phased retirement. Many saw this simply as a reduction in hours or responsibilities, but did not understand that it also involves drawing part of the pension early. Some

interviewees were 'aware' of changes that had not in fact taken place, such as raising normal pension age to 65 for teachers over a certain age. Thus survey respondents' claims to awareness of changes other than increased contributions must be treated with some caution. Some headteachers in their role as employers and some employees said they knew very little about the TPS changes: some 15 per cent of each group were aware only of the increase in contributions, while 16 per cent of headteachers as employers and 22 per cent of employees indicated that they were 'not aware of many changes at all'.

Sources of information about the TPS changes

In relation to sources of information about the changes, local authority staff were most likely to have learned about the changes from the Employers' Toolkit (81 per cent pensions staff, 62 per cent HR), the TPS website (76 per cent pensions, 46 per cent HR), and from training provided by Teachers' Pensions or the DfES³ (72 per cent pensions, 56 per cent HR). The majority of governors interviewed had heard about the changes only through the research; some felt strongly that they should be provided with more information. The most important source of information for headteachers as employers and for employees was teacher unions (56 per cent, 59 per cent). The next most frequently cited source for employees was talking with colleagues (39 per cent). Among employees, headteachers were more likely than teachers to indicate that they had heard about the changes through written information or official sources, and teachers more likely than heads to say their information came from talk with colleagues (42 versus 28 per cent). Less than a quarter of headteachers as employers and of employees had found out about the changes from the TPS website. Almost a third of headteacher employers had received letters from their local authorities, but only 14 per cent of employees said that they had heard about the changes from the local authority, and just nine per cent of teachers said that they had been informed by their headteacher. These data suggest that communication about the TPS changes has been limited, and that there was no consistent method through which information had been passed to all teachers. Chance and misunderstanding played a role in what information was noticed. In addition, some individuals had received information but had not paid any attention to it. The information sheet provided with the survey and to all interviewees was reported to be clear and comprehensible, and appeared to have increased understanding in many cases. But for some respondents it revealed that they did not understand as well as they had thought.

Teachers' career plans before retirement

Before retirement, 60 per cent of the employees surveyed anticipated that they would continue to work on the same salary scale and for the same hours. Almost a

³ From June 2007, the DfES was replaced by the DCSF (Department for Children, Schools and Families).

fifth (18 per cent) indicated that they would reduce their hours or responsibilities, and only eight per cent (mainly those who were younger) indicated that they would seek promotion. Slightly more of the deputy and assistant headteachers said they intended to seek promotion (12 per cent), with seven per cent of this group looking to achieve headship. Headteachers were less likely than other groups to intend to move to part-time work (six per cent) or to reduce their responsibilities (two per cent, compared with six per cent of teachers).

Teachers' retirement plans

There was some contrast between the data about teachers' retirement plans from the surveys, in which those responding were channelled into a definite choice, and the data from interviews, which indicate very much more fluid and nebulous plans. Far fewer employees indicated that they would retire before the age of 60 than has been the case in recent years: just a quarter indicated that they would draw an actuarially reduced pension (22 per cent), or take premature or ill-health retirement (two per cent, one per cent). This contrasts with the 2005-6 figures (DfES 2006b) which show that 57 per cent of all teachers' pension awards fell in these categories. It is impossible to tell whether this contrast represents a dramatic change in retirement patterns, or simply illustrates the size of the gap between intentions and actions in this respect. It is of course possible that some of those who might otherwise have retired before the age of 60 had decided to extend their working lives by taking phased retirement, but only five per cent of employees indicated that they planned to do so. Some groups were more likely to anticipate retiring before age 60: those in secondary schools, headteachers, men and those with more years of pensionable service.

Employees were asked how definite their retirement plans were. Overall, just 13 per cent indicated that their retirement age plans were certain, and 15 per cent that their type of pension award was certain. Those whose anticipated retirement was some years ahead indicated a higher degree of uncertainty. Those who intended to retire before age 60 indicated a higher level of certainty than those who indicated they would work to age 60 or beyond.

Those who intended to teach to 60 or beyond more often selected school-based factors (such as 'I enjoy teaching') as incentives to stay in teaching than those who anticipated retiring before 60 (69 per cent selected a school-based factor among the three most important, versus 59 per cent of those who intended to retire early). Similarly, those anticipating staying in teaching to 60 or beyond were less likely to identify school-based factors as reasons to leave (e.g. not enjoying some aspects of their work, or unsatisfactory work-life balance) (70 per cent versus 76 per cent of those who intended to retire early). Expectations also played an important role; those who anticipated teaching to 60 or older were far more likely to agree that they had 'always expected' to work until they were 60 or over (17 per cent versus three per cent of those retiring early).

Actual impacts of the TPS changes

The survey was sent out just five months after the changes came into effect, and was too early to capture action in response to the changes. The qualitative research took place over a longer period, and interviews were conducted with four teachers who had changed work patterns in response to the changes (two in case study schools and two in follow-up interviews). Eight per cent of the employee sample had had either formal or informal discussion about taking phased retirement with their headteachers, and two per cent with the local authority. Around one in 10 headteachers indicated that discussions about potential roles for older teachers who opted to reduce their hours or responsibilities had taken place. This had more often occurred in schools with higher proportions of older teachers.

Potential impact of the changes

There was no clearly agreed view among teachers' employers (local authorities and headteachers) as to what the future impact of the changes would be. Some headteachers as employers viewed the changes very positively, identifying potential roles for older teachers working who had reduced hours or responsibilities such as enrichment work with small groups (79 per cent), mentoring less experienced teachers (73 per cent), and taking classes during PPA time (75 per cent of primary headteachers). Sixty-four per cent of headteachers as employers agreed that work-life balance for teachers would be improved, and 50 per cent agreed that there would be greater opportunities for older teachers to pass on their skills and experience. While 41 per cent of headteachers agreed that teachers would extend their working lives, working beyond the age at which they would otherwise have retired, 54 per cent thought that teachers who would otherwise have continued to work full-time to age 60 would now reduce their hours and responsibilities before that age. Headteachers interviewed argued that the changes would benefit the school because those who were no longer able to contribute fully could take on reduced capacity roles in which their skills and experience would be valuable, and they would have more energy and increased motivation. A minority of the headteachers who were interviewed identified the potential for human resource management, and offering positive ways forward to some older teachers who are not coping with their current responsibilities. Some of these identified the potential for encouraging retention, but none linked this specifically to shortage secondary subjects.

Overall, four per cent of the employee sample indicated that their retirement plans had changed as a result of the TPS changes, and a further 23 per cent that they might possibly change. The survey explored these changes. Around a quarter (24 per cent) of all those whose plans had definitely or possibly changed - six per cent of all employees - considered they might stay longer in teaching as a result of the TPS changes, but a similar proportion (25 per cent) - seven per cent of all employees - anticipated retiring earlier than they would otherwise have done. This does not suggest any major impact in terms of extending working lives. Of those

who said that their plans had definitely or possibly changed, 62 per cent said that this resulted from the introduction of phased retirement, 44 per cent from the change to average salary calculation, and 28 per cent from increased flexibility in relation to the lump sum (some indicating more than one of these changes).

Two fifths of all employees indicated in the survey that they would consider phased retirement, but qualitative data showed that many misunderstood what was involved in this, thinking the term referred to any reduction in hours or responsibilities before retirement. Of those who said that they would consider phased retirement, half thought they would reduce both their hours and their responsibilities in such a role; a further 38 per cent that they would reduce only their hours; and just four per cent that they would reduce only responsibilities.

Barriers and constraints

Local authority staff noted that phased retirement can only be taken if the salary is reduced by at least 25 per cent, but that this does not fit well with teachers' work patterns. If this figure were reduced to 20 per cent it would allow teachers to work four days a week in a phased retirement role. Some 14 per cent of those teachers who would consider phased retirement indicated they would like to work four days a week, and they would be unable to do this under the current regulations.

The survey data showed that both local authority staff and headteachers as employers identified cost as a concern. When asked to write on the questionnaire the main difficulties in creating roles for older teachers who reduced their hours or responsibilities, 11 out of 39 local authorities and 41 per cent of headteachers wrote comments about the cost. Older teachers were seen by some as a costly resource in comparison with NQTs or support staff. As reported earlier, some headteachers were also reluctant to allow teachers to move to part-time work, which they saw as creating timetabling problems and reducing continuity for pupils; 49 per cent of primary and 56 per cent of secondary headteachers said that they would *not* be happy to employ more part-time teachers. Some headteachers and governors also indicated reluctance to use the possibilities opened up by the TPS changes proactively in managing staff, because they felt it would not be appropriate to approach teachers and suggest that they reduced their hours or responsibilities.

Almost half the employees who said they would consider phased retirement anticipated having difficulty in finding suitable employment in which to do this. One teacher who had wanted to take phased retirement in her current school had not been allowed to do so. Some teachers pointed out that headteachers are often reluctant for part-timers to fit their work into a small number of whole days because of timetabling difficulties; others echoed the headteachers' concerns about lack of continuity for pupils. A few talked of the difficulties of reducing responsibilities and staying in the same school.

Potential impact on school leaders and succession planning

There was considerable interest among headteachers in system leadership roles; 85 per cent of those headteachers who said they would consider phased retirement (or 30 per cent of all headteachers) said they would be interested in mentoring less experienced school leaders. However, most of those interviewed intended to do this after 'retirement', or saw no need to make use of the new pensions flexibilities. The NCSL (2006) have suggested that one benefit of headteachers taking on system leadership roles would be that their deputies have a chance to 'act up', which might make them in turn more likely to apply for headship. The research showed that such opportunities had had varying impacts (either encouraging or discouraging them to apply for headship, and either increasing or reducing their confidence); if such roles are to be a positive step towards headship it seems important to support acting heads, and mentor them as they move on to headship.

There was some interest among headteachers in co-headship, with 76 per cent of those who would consider phased retirement (27 per cent of all headteachers) identifying such a role as a possibility. The qualitative research investigated a number of existing co-headship arrangements, most of which had the impact of supporting the younger co-head to move to full headship when the other retired. One such arrangement had been explicitly designed as a mentoring arrangement. While none of these arrangements was taking advantage of the TPS changes, it was obvious that these could be useful in promoting similar arrangements.

Implications for policy

These findings have a number of implications for policy and practice, and some suggestions for future strategies and actions have been identified:

- a further modification to the pension scheme which would reduce the salary reduction needed for phased retirement to 20 per cent;
- improved communication about the TPS which is sent directly to teachers; is in simple language; includes worked examples; and aims to counteract common misunderstandings;
- ensuring that all active members of the TPS receive annual statements;
- informing school governors about the changes;
- seeking out those who have taken phased retirement and writing case studies to publicise the arrangement;
- emphasising the importance of teacher well-being and motivation and its impact on pupil learning in all headteacher professional development, and including the new pensions arrangements as potential ways of contributing to the well-being of older teachers;

- encouraging headteachers to discuss the difficulties of approaching older teachers on this topic, and sharing examples of successful human resource management;
- making ongoing efforts to raise awareness of the potential that the TPS changes open up for co-headship arrangements;
- commissioning research to explore the variety and impacts of such arrangements, and to identify key factors in successful arrangements; publicising case studies of the most successful.

1 Introduction

The Teachers' Pension Scheme (TPS) is administered by Teachers' Pensions (TP) on behalf of the Department for Children, Schools and Families (DCSF). BMRB Social Research and the Institute for Policy Studies in Education, London Metropolitan University were commissioned by the DCSF to research the impact of changes to the TPS, which came into force on 1 January 2007. These changes are summarised in Chapter 2.

The main aims of the study were to investigate:

- awareness and perceptions of the TPS changes amongst teachers and teachers' employers; and
- the impact of the TPS changes on teachers' decisions to remain in the profession and employers' decisions to support them.

In relation to measuring the impact of the changes, a distinction has been made throughout the report to the impact that the changes may have had on *behaviour* (e.g. discussions that had taken place between employer and employee) and impact on *perceptions* (e.g. employees' future plans and anticipated impacts). In addition to the above two aims, the research aimed to explore a number of specific research questions related to how flexibilities facilitate new ways of working as well as the barriers that individuals may face. Various communication issues were also addressed in terms of awareness and understanding of the TPS changes.

The research drew heavily on what is already known about retirement decisions and patterns of teacher retirements. In doing so, a range of literature and other data were analysed and have been presented in the literature review that follows (Chapter 2). This research aimed to build on existing and ongoing research work.

The research sought the views of various groups including teachers and headteachers (in their role as employees); and local authorities, school governors and headteachers (in their role as employers). A distinction has been made throughout this report between employers and employees. Within the latter group, there was a particular policy interest in the impact of the changes on school leaders and the teachers of shortage subjects (e.g. maths, science, ICT and design and technology). Details of the research design and methodology can be found in Chapter 3.

2 Literature review

2.1 Introduction

In most OECD countries, arrangements for state and occupation pension provision are changing. The report *Factors Affecting Retirement* (DfEE, 2000a) states that these countries face marked population ageing – that is, the number claiming pension benefits is set to increase considerably, while the numbers entering the working age population supporting pensioners decrease. In addition, life expectancy is rising, and workers are likely to claim their pensions for longer than previously.

In response to these factors, many pension schemes are changing in ways that encourage people to work longer and save more for retirement. This was the main thrust of the Government's Green Paper, *Simplicity, security and choice: working and saving for retirement* (DWP, 2002a). This was followed in June 2003 by a recommendation that all public sector pension schemes should be reviewed to increase normal pension age and to reflect improved longevity and modern working patterns (DWP, 2003).

Teachers' pension arrangements had already undergone changes in 1997 that encouraged teachers to stay in the profession longer and reduced government spending on pensions; from November 1997 LEAs had to pay the additional costs for retirement before age 60, and consequently early retirement packages became less common. (In 1999, actuarially reduced pensions were introduced; this made early retirement more widely available to teachers, but with an actuarial reduction to the pension.) Also in 1997, the ill-health retirement regulations were changed such that teachers had to prove that they were 'permanently unable to teach', rather than that the incapacity should last for the foreseeable future

In response to the 2003 recommendations, a wide-ranging review of the TPS started in November 2003, and a consultation exercise took place between September and December 2004. Negotiations were then put on hold until after the May 2005 general election. Following a series of Public Services Forum Meetings, an agreement between the Government and the TUC on the framework for reform of public service pension schemes was reached in October 2005. A second consultation on a package of reforms to the TPS took place between May and August 2006 (DfES, 2006a). Changes to the TPS came into force on 1 January 2007; these raised normal pension age for new entrants and included a package of reforms for existing members of the scheme. However, following strong union representations, these changes do not include raising the normal pension age for existing members of the scheme.

This research is designed to investigate the behavioural impact of the changes to the scheme on teachers aged 49 and older. In that the majority of the fieldwork has been conducted less than six months after the changes came into force, inevitably the focus is more on perceptions of the likely impact than on actual changes in behaviour.

Section 2.2 sets out the changes to the TPS. The sections that follow review the literature that has been used in designing this research. They consider the various factors taken into account in retirement decisions, and the role of finance and pensions in these; the current pattern of teacher retirements; and a variety of factors that may affect the way that new flexible retirement options are taken up.

2.2 TPS changes

The current changes to the TPS have been devised in the context of concern about the increased life expectancy and the lower proportion of the population in employment. Thus the main change is that the age at which the teachers' pension can be drawn has been raised for new members of the scheme.

There are also significant changes for current members. The two that are likely to have the greatest impact on teachers' retirement decisions are:

a) the introduction of phased retirement arrangements that enable teachers aged 55 and above to continue working as a teacher (or in education, for example as a teaching assistant) and at the same time draw some of their accrued pension benefits; and

b) the new ruling which allows the pension to be based *either* on the best three consecutive years in the last 10, *or* on the average salary in the final year. (This replaces the former procedure in which the best 365 days in the final three years were used.) In this report, we refer to this as the change to average salary calculations.

It is an explicit intention that the second of these changes will do something to ameliorate the discontent of teachers who have lost Management Allowances and have not gained Teaching and Learning Responsibilities, and as a result are concerned that they will have a lower pension (see Hutchings *et al.*, 2006b).

One potential consequence of these provisions is that teachers who would otherwise have retired may now decide to stay in work longer, either taking on a role with less responsibility and lower pay, or working part-time. This would fulfil the general intention of encouraging teachers to work longer. However, it is equally conceivable that the effect may be the precise opposite. Teachers who would previously have continued to work full-time, often in roles with additional responsibilities, on the

grounds that they needed to maximise their pensions, may now decide to take phased retirement or move to part-time work or a role with fewer responsibilities.

While these are the main TPS changes that may impact on career planning, there are also other changes, set out below, that could potentially impact on teachers' retirement decisions.

<i>change</i>	<i>potential impact</i>
The option of taking a larger lump sum and a smaller pension	This may impact on teachers who are still working because they have mortgages to pay off, or who wish to buy property for their retirement. In each case it may enable the teacher to retire earlier than previously expected.
The opportunity to buy £5000 worth of extra pension, AND the lifting of the 15 per cent limit on pension contributions.	While in financial terms there seems little difference between the first of these and the previous scheme through which teachers could buy in extra years, there is a possibility that a teacher with capital available may choose to invest in extra pension and then retire earlier.
The introduction of a five year limit to breaks of service for those on the existing scheme (or if longer breaks are taken, the teacher will join the new scheme and have a retirement age of 65) AND the provision that those currently on career breaks can retain 60 as their pension age if they return to teaching by the end of 2007, regardless of the length of the career break	A potential impact of these provisions could be a larger than usual number of teachers attempting to return to teaching during 2007. It is possible that this group are less aware of the changes and their potential impact than teachers currently in service. However, this research does not include out of service teachers

There are also changes to the TPS that may increase teachers' overall satisfaction with the scheme (including the provision that spouses and civil partners will be guaranteed a pension for life, and increases in the death grant), and others that may reduce satisfaction (such as the increased contribution rate). However, it is unlikely that these changes will affect teachers' career plans.

2.3 Retirement decisions

The probable behavioural impact of pension scheme changes depends on the role that occupational pensions play in retirement decisions. While there is considerable literature on retirement decisions in general, there is very little research specifically about teachers' retirement decisions. In this section we therefore review the wider literature, and then focus on what is known about teachers.

Vickerstaff et al. (2004) highlight the difficulty of defining 'retirement'; they quote Blaikie (1997: 11), who argued that 'retirement is a decidedly malleable concept'. Research has shown that many people 'retire' from one employer and then continue

to work, either in other paid employment or in self-employed capacity. Indeed, they may even 'retire', and then take up a new contract in the same employment (Vickerstaff *et al.*, 2004). Thus some writers differentiate between 'retirement' and 'early exit' (e.g. Lissenburgh and Smeaton, 2003), and others refer to 'definitive withdrawal from the labour market' (e.g. Guillemard, 1997). In this research, we are considering retirement from teaching, rather than from the labour market. However, even this is not clear-cut as teachers may retire and move into supply teaching, for example.

Research about retirement decisions

The factors involved in the decision to retire are complex and inter-related. Key factors in the retirement decision are health and finance related, but other considerations include psycho-social, workplace and socio-economic factors, and gender differences (DfEE, 2000b; Phillipson and Smith, 2005). The retirement process may be deliberate or unplanned, willing or resisted, gradual or sudden, chosen or imposed (Arthur, 2003). It also involves many emotions (Butters, 2002) which may make the transition more difficult to manage.

In a study of retirement decisions among civil servants, Higgs *et al.* (2003) identified seven 'ideal types' of possible routes into retirement. They emphasised that these represented a simplification of the complexity of real-life decision-making in order to emphasise essential features. They identified three types that continue to work until the mandatory age of retirement despite having the option of retiring earlier: those who are financially attached to work; those who enjoy work, and those with a traditional work ethic who had never considered retiring early. The study also identified four types who took early retirement: those who take a financial exit (involving an early retirement package and full pension); those who leave because they are dissatisfied with work; those who leave because of illness or disability of themselves or a dependant; and those who take what they identified as 'third age exit' (involving the pull factors of outside interests and hobbies).

The sections that follow focus on the roles of financial, workplace and other factors in retirement decisions. The extent to which differing pension arrangements may affect retirement decisions is also discussed.

Financial factors

In the Whitehall II retirement study (Higgs *et al.*, 2003) some participants continued to work until the mandatory age of retirement because they felt they could not retire without the highest possible level of pension. Others continued to work because they had financial commitments they could only meet with their current salary, such as mortgage payments or school/university fees. Some simply did not want to reduce their standard of living.

Various factors affect financial attachment to work. Pension schemes rely on years of service and level of income, so women's lower rates of pay and shorter working histories mean that women generally gain lower rates of occupational pension income than men, and may be more financially attached to work in order to gain the level of income they require in retirement (DfEE, 2000b; Phillipson and Smith, 2005).

In contrast, some may choose to retire because financial packages that they are offered 'solve' particular financial commitments (e.g. the lump sum completes the paying off of the mortgage) (Higgs *et al.*, 2003).

Some research has suggested that financial factors are the main consideration in retirement decisions (e.g. Myers, 1983, McGoldrick and Cooper, 1989 and Maule *et al.*, 1996, cited in DfEE 2000b), but other research indicates that financial factors tend not to be the primary driving force, although they provide the constraints within which retirement decisions are made (Arthur, 2003). In that most research has been qualitative and involves small numbers, there is limited evidence about the relative importance of various factors.

However, these decisions do not relate simply to the size or type of pension people expect, or to their financial commitments, but also to their perceptions and understandings of pensions and of their personal financial situation. Vickerstaff *et al.* (2004), researching retirement decisions in three organisations with occupational pension schemes, found that many people delayed getting information about their pension options; there was considerable confusion about how pensions are calculated; and some people were poorly advised. They concluded that: 'A lack of knowledge and understanding of pension policies and retirement options seriously undermines many people's capacity to plan ahead for retirement' (2004: v). Similarly, Byrne and Rhodes (2005) reported that employees often have limited knowledge of both pensions in general and of the details of the particular scheme of which they are a member. Phillipson and Smith (2005) show that while financial security is an important factor in retirement decisions, only a minority of people in their fifties have a clear understanding of the income they will have in retirement. Almost half of the UK population agree that they find it hard to understand financial products and leaflets (Financial Services Consumer Panel, 2006).

Nevertheless, there is evidence from a variety of different countries that illustrates how different social welfare systems, pension arrangements and employment laws and policies can influence financial attachment to work. For example, in countries where there have been policies encouraging and supporting early retirement (e.g. France) early exit from the workforce is more frequent (DfEE, 2000b).

In summary, financial factors are an important part of decisions about retirement. They may encourage individuals to continue to work (e.g. to build up a larger pension) or to retire (e.g. a good early retirement package). However, many

individuals do not have a clear understanding of their financial position when they are making decisions about pensions and retirement, and so these decisions cannot be understood in a purely rational, technical way.

Work factors

Research shows that some people continue to work rather than retire because they enjoy their work (e.g. Higgs *et al.*, 2003; Vickerstaff *et al.*, 2004). Access to further career progression opportunities and training are also factors that act to encourage people to continue to work.

A related issue is the social role of work. Some individuals choose to keep working because they value the social contacts they have in the workplace (this is a particular issue for single individuals), or because they particularly value the self-esteem they get from their employment (DfEE, 2000b; Phillipson and Smith, 2005).

In contrast, some aspects of work encourage people to retire. These include dissatisfaction with organisational and technical changes in work (Higgs *et al.*, 2003); age discrimination (Hirsch, 2003); intensification of work (Hirsch, 2003); and the physical demands of some jobs (Phillipson and Smith, 2005). These factors can lead to stress, which may encourage employees to retire.

Other factors

Health is a key factor in some retirement decisions (Higgs *et al.*, 2003). Both ill health and caring responsibilities are factors in decisions about retiring for a significant number of workers. The 2001 census showed that about one in five of those in their fifties had responsibilities as unpaid carers, and benefits data show that, in 2003, one in seven people between the ages of 50 and state retirement age was claiming incapacity benefit (Hirsch, 2003).

Somewhat different was the type of retirement decision Higgs *et al.* (2003) termed 'Third Age exit'. This described those who took early retirement to become more involved in outside interests and hobbies, including voluntary groups, charitable groups, spending more time with family or travelling. Retirement was a positive choice in order to enjoy things they were less able to do whilst working. This was particularly the case for those who were better off (Hirsch, 2003). In a study of how those who had retired spent their time, Barnes *et al.* (2002) discovered a strong sense of fairness: retirees argued they had contributed to society for a long time and now wanted more choice about how they spent their time.

Linked to this, retirement is generally seen as more attractive if the individual's spouse/partner and other friends have retired (DfEE, 2000b; Phillipson and Smith, 2005).

Studies of retirement decisions show that expectations also play a key role. For many people, the age at which they can draw their pension (either state occupational) is seen as the 'natural' time to retire, and they simply did not contemplate leaving work before this point (Humphrey *et al.*, 2003). The way in which different expectations shape retirement decisions can be seen in comparative research, where one explanation for the substantial level of gradual retirement and working after age 65 in Japan is 'the confucianist work ethic' (Casey, 2004).

In contrast, in the UK, expectations of retiring early have increased. In 2005 the Employers Forum on Age released a report suggesting that more than half of UK workers wanted to retire as soon as possible, and of those who said they hadn't saved enough for their retirement, less than a third were willing to consider working for longer.

Potential for 'downshifting' in the transition to retirement

Vickerstaff *et al.* (2004) note that a major theme of research about retirement patterns has been to investigate the extent of interest in, and potential barriers to, people 'downshifting' their workload prior to retirement. They use this term to include reducing hours worked; reducing responsibilities; leaving the main 'career employer' and finding another job to bridge the gap until retirement age; and moving to self-employment. It should be noted that there is no common agreement about the vocabulary used to describe such patterns; DWP (2002b), for example, use 'flexible retirement' to describe this whole range of options, and restrict the use of 'downshift' to mean only reduction in responsibilities. The NHS refers to 'flexing retirement', which includes 'stepping down' (reducing responsibilities), 'winding down' (reducing hours), and retiring and coming back (Department of Health, 2000).

Vickerstaff *et al.* found widespread support for downshifting among employees. However, not all were enthusiastic; in particular those in management positions often felt it would not be feasible to 'downshift' and remain in the same organisation, and others expressed concern about the potential impact on their pensions. There was 'a common misapprehension that working reduced hours would have a dramatic effect on pension entitlement' (2004: 34). The next section reviews ways in which employers have introduced measures to facilitate flexible retirement options.

The role of pension arrangements in flexible retirement options

The transition to retirement has until recently been conceptualised in most research as a relatively abrupt one. However, this is not and has not always been the case, and governments across Europe have introduced measures to make a gradual transition from work to retirement easier and more frequent (DfEE, 2000a; Casey, 2004).

These kinds of opportunities have previously been limited in the UK, but over the last decade there have been policy moves to encourage firms to provide flexibility in relation to the age at which employees retire, and the nature and intensity of work in the lead-up to final retirement (DWP, 2002). For example, BT offers a range of flexible working options to all employees (including 'wind down' which includes part-time, job-share, term-time working; 'step down' including lower responsibilities; 'time out' which is phased sabbaticals; 'helping hands' which is secondments and 'ease down' which is gradual reduction in hours or responsibilities). They removed their Normal Retirement Age of 60 in 2006 and now assume that individuals will continue to work for BT until they make their retirement plans known. They suggested that in 2005, 83 per cent of employees approaching 60 wished to stay on, compared to only 43 per cent two years previously (People Management, 2005). Loretto *et al.* (2005) suggest that while retail and service industries have had relative success in introducing flexible working, this experience may not be transferable to other sectors with different skills profiles and work routines.

Another example of flexibility is the 'winding down' option included in the Teachers' Superannuation regulations in Scotland (2005, amended 2007). This enables those with 25 years teaching service (which may include five years break in service) to move to part-time work (0.5 or more) for a maximum of four years before retirement whilst protecting their overall final pension entitlement. Each year of part-time work is counted as one full year for pension purposes.

However, while some employers provided flexible options, much of the early research into flexible retirement identified legal and administrative barriers. The majority of these barriers have now been addressed; legislation introduced on April 6th 2006 (colloquially known as 'A-day') included simplification of various tax and pension rules. This has made it possible to draw part of a pension while continuing to pay into the same pension fund, and this is designed to encourage flexible retirement. Such schemes are generally referred to as 'partial pension schemes' or 'progressive retirement' (in the TPS, 'phased retirement').

There is some evidence that employers are not enthusiastic about such flexibility. For example, while BT offered flexible options to workers, they were not planning to offer a partial pension system (DWP, 2006). A survey of pension schemes in 2006 reported that only 10 per cent of schemes intended to introduce partial pensions. A larger proportion of schemes (30 per cent) indicated that they might set up arrangements where employees drew one pension, continued to work and paid into another separate pension. This low provision of partial pension options has been attributed to the highly complex administration such a facility requires (Mercer HR Consulting, 2006).

Progressive retirement arrangements, involving a reduction in working hours alongside the provision of a proportion of the pension, exist in the majority of EU

countries, and Norway (Pedersini, 2001). This progressive retirement can have a range of goals, including: reducing the financial burden on pension schemes, providing equal opportunities to older workers and reducing labour shortages. In some cases progressive retirement schemes are for the period before the statutory retirement age, in others for the period after. The balance between easing the exit of older workers and reducing the burden on the pension scheme varies from country to country (DfEE, 2000b; Pedersini, 2001).

Take-up on flexible pension schemes has remained low, the highest rate (3 per cent) reported in Finland (Fornero and Monticone, 2007). Research in other countries reveals a mixed picture. The effects have varied, in particular according to the extent to which early exit from the labour market is culturally ingrained, and the prevailing pension arrangements. In some countries, the introduction of gradual retirement schemes is thought to have encouraged workers (particularly high earners) to leave the labour market earlier than they would otherwise have done. In addition, partial retirement for older workers can reinforce stereotypes that older workers are less able to cope (Loretto *et al.*, 2005).

The effects of partial retirement schemes can operate in several directions: some workers choose to work part-time instead of full-time, while others work part-time instead of leaving the labour market. In Sweden, the net effect of this has been estimated to be an increase in the number of hours worked (Wadensjo, 2006). In contrast, in France, the majority of employees who use the progressive retirement option also retire early. As there have not been strong financial incentives for preferring partial retirement to full early retirement, many workers have decided to leave their job rather than moving to part-time work, and it is thought that the partial retirement option has been part of creating a culture of early exit. France does have a gradual retirement scheme which is designed to extend workers' activity beyond the statutory retirement age of 60. Take-up of this has been very low (Pedersini, 2001). In Germany, progressive retirement may often result in early retirement as (for example) employees work full-time for two years and have two years off, rather than working part-time for four years. It has been noted in Germany that larger firms are far more likely to use the option of progressive retirement than smaller firms (Pedersini 2001).

A key issue emerging from European research is where responsibility lies for the initiation and implementation of progressive or partial retirement. Usually access to early retirement is seen as a personal choice by the employee and is generally implemented through individual agreements between the worker and the employer (Pedersini 2001).

There are also other concerns about provision of flexible retirement options: communicating available options to staff, concerns that employees will be forced to stay in work, concerns that older workers would block promotion prospects of

younger staff and difficulties in communication between pension funds and HR (DWP, 2006).

The extent to which employees may be interested in specific options for reducing their hours or responsibilities in their current workplace as they approach retirement also depends on the possibilities of engaging in other forms of flexible or part-time work after formal retirement. Analysis of the Labour Force Survey suggested that, in 2003, nearly as many of those leaving full-time permanent jobs between 50 and state pension age entered part-time, temporary or self-employed work as stopped working immediately. Self-employment, which most often provides high job satisfaction is more often taken up by men and those with high levels of qualifications, while women more commonly take up part-time work, with lower rates of pay (Lissenburgh and Smeaton, 2003). A transition to retirement through a bridge job or 'second career' is particularly common in the USA (Hirsch, 2003).

Retirement decisions: summary

While this review has covered some of the major elements of retirement decisions, a key characteristic of retirement decisions is that they are complex combinations of the factors that we have discussed above (Hirsch 2003, Higgs *et al.*, 2003). Table 2.1 summarises the factors that have been identified in research.

Table 2.1: Summary of factors in retirement decisions

Factors encouraging people to stay in employment		Factors encouraging people to retire	
Factors in the workplace	Other factors	Push factors (push out of workplace)	Pull factors (of retirement)
Opportunities for flexible employment before retirement	Partner still working Financial insecurity	Poor health and disability Stress	Financial security (those retiring early have higher incomes) Access to an occupational pension
Enjoyment/satisfaction of work	Being single Gender (financial insecurity more likely to affect women)	Perceived intensification of work Age discrimination	A desire for a new lifestyle ("Third Age Exit") Responsibility as carers (more likely to impact on women)
Access to training and further skill development			Partner / friends who have retired Opportunities for voluntary and/or flexible work (including self-employment) when retired

Pension provision and the availability of flexible retirement are only a small part of a larger decision in which financial considerations are important as a frame for personal and work-related motivations (Hirsch 2003). Other factors, such as social advantage/disadvantage (Hirsch 2003), gender (DfEE, 2000b), and ethnic group (Barnes and Taylor, 2006) affect the extent to which different factors are significant in any individual's retirement decision.

2.4 Factors in teachers' retirement decisions

There is very little research that directly focuses on teachers' retirement decisions. One exception is an investigation by Draper and McMichael (1996) of 14 headteachers taking early retirement in Scotland. While the number of headteachers was small, the research process was rigorous. Focus groups were held in which a wide range of factors that played a part in retirement decision were identified, and from this a set of task sheets were prepared which were completed individually. These sought information about career decisions and the factors that had influenced them; factors in the job and in the teachers' own lives that had encouraged retirement (pushes and pulls); the aspects of their jobs that headteachers perceived as losses; and pre-retirement fears about retirement.

The most significant pressures towards a decision to retire were 'job expansion / overload' and 'bureaucracy'. These included increased paper work; overload; too many initiatives; increased reading required; increased attendance at meetings; and moves towards devolved school management. One headteacher spoke of 'one initiative coming in the door before you've finished dealing with the last one' (Draper and McMichael, 1996: 153). The authors suggest that the headteachers' comments indicate that they had not delegated their management functions sufficiently to make their own lives bearable.

Pulls towards retirement were divided into 'facilitators' (family and financial situations) and 'positive gains'. The facilitators were not identified as strong pulls towards retirement; only two of the 14 saw the size of their pension as a significant factor influencing their decision to retire. The 'positive gains' were identified as much more important factors in retirement decisions. These included having control over time; having opportunities to do other things (learn new skills, travel, read etc.); enjoying time with the family; and enjoying better health and life prospects than would have been the case if they had stayed in teaching. Headteachers commented that actuarial lists showed that those who stayed in teaching longest were more likely to die early than those who took early retirement (Draper and McMichael, 1996). Such beliefs have been reported in a wide range of professions, and research shows that there is no evidence to support them (see, for example, Morris *et al.*, 1994; Trichopoulos, 1996; Tsai *et al.*, 2005)

The main factor in their jobs that these headteachers missed was their relationships with colleagues, and to a lesser extent with parents and the community. Very few expressed concerns about loss of status or not having a time structure to the day. Only three out of 14 anticipated that the loss of income would be hard to cope with.

Another study of headteachers who took early retirement involved interviews with 15 headteachers in England (Flintham, 2003). This study started from the premise that a headteacher has to have an 'internal reservoir of hope' that 'sustains self-belief in the face of external pressures and critical incidents', and 'has to be

replenished by a variety of personal sustainability strategies or there will be individual burn out or drop out.’ (2003: 2). Rather than focusing on the external factors (which included work-life balance, a period of accelerated change in education, and specific critical incidents in school) Flintham focused on the headteachers’ ‘sustainability strategies’, which he categorised as follows:

- ‘strider’ heads – who moved on after successful experience, in accordance with a clear career plan and with a proactive exit strategy, and found the new context reenergising
 - ‘stroller’ heads – who walked away from headship in a controlled manner as a result of concerns over work-life balance, change pressure or philosophical issues
 - ‘stumbler’ heads – who suffered burn-out through the failure of their sustainability strategies to cope, resulting in stress-related or ill-health retirement.
- (Flintham, 2003: 3)

Flintham reported that the headteachers recognised a ‘plateau effect’ after seven to 10 years in headship, and suggests that early departure could have been prevented by ‘re-energising professional development’ at that time.

Further evidence about the factors that teachers take into account in retirement decisions comes from a variety of sources. Smithers and Robinson (2003: 33), investigating factors affecting teachers’ decisions to leave the profession, reported that ‘the picture that emerges is of many teachers having had enough of teaching by their fifties’. Some said that they were able to retire early because they ‘could afford to’ (for example, having paid the mortgage and their children having completed higher education). However, others were prepared to leave without an immediate pension, and were contemplating other employment or self-employment to make ends meet; their priority was simply to leave teaching. Smithers and Robinson do not indicate the relative sizes of these two groups. Similarly, research conducted for the DfES about supply teachers (Hutchings *et al.*, 2006a) found that many supply teachers aged 50 and over had chosen supply rather than regular work because it involved less work outside school hours and a lower total workload.

Research specifically focusing on older teachers highlights the importance of organisational culture in their career plans. Evidence from a variety of sources suggests that many older teachers feel undervalued, and clearly this may act as an incentive to retire. For example, Powney *et al.* (2003: vii) report that ‘older teachers believed that appointment panels may prefer “younger and more energetic” applicants’. Day *et al.* (2006: 115) found that teachers with more than 30 years experience were the most likely to indicate that ‘government policies, excessively bureaucratic results-drive systems, pupil behaviour, ... increased paperwork, heavy workloads and consequent long working hours had had a negative impact on their motivation and perceived effectiveness’. Supportive school cultures were found to be of crucial importance to teachers’ sense of effectiveness.

Similarly Wilkins *et al.* (2004), in a study focusing on older teachers, drew attention to the importance of creating an organisational culture in which older staff are valued, respected and trusted. This involves developing a style of human resource management which is responsive to individuals. For example, it can offer increased, decreased or different responsibilities, and support or development activity tailored to meet individual needs. It can also respond where appropriate to individual needs for flexibility in patterns of working.

The previous section reported that many people delay getting information about their pension options, and are confused about how pensions are calculated. The same issues have been found among teachers. The TES reported that a survey of 2,500 teachers conducted by the DfES and the Prudential in 2005 found that two-thirds of teachers did not think they had sorted out their finances for retirement or did not know whether they had. Two-thirds also criticised information from employers (Northern, 2005).

There is then, some evidence suggesting that teachers who retire early often do so because they are discontented with teaching, and evidence that some older teachers are discontented. While there is little evidence about the relative importance of financial and other factors, the evidence above shows that some teachers identify the 'push' factors that encourage them to leave teaching as the main influence on their retirement decisions, in many cases leading them to leave teaching before normal pension age. The next section reviews data about the pattern of teacher retirement.

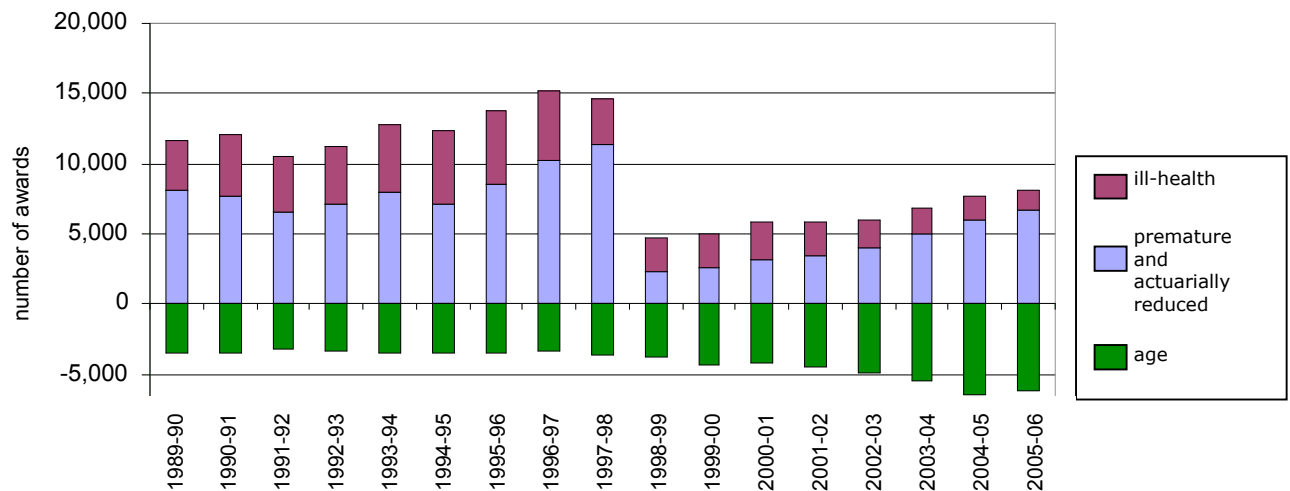
2.5 The pattern of teacher retirements

Figure 2.1 shows the numbers of teachers taking different types of retirement since 1989-90. The recent increase in the total number of retirements must partly be a reflection of the age composition of the teacher workforce. The proportion of full-time teachers aged 50 and over has increased from 20 per cent in 1998 to 30 per cent in 2005 (DfEE, 1999; DfES, 2006b⁴).

Figure 2.1 shows that the number of premature and actuarially reduced retirements dropped significantly after the changes of 1997, through which opportunities to retire early were reduced because LEAs became responsible for the costs involved. However, since 1998, the number of early retirements has slowly increased. Age retirements have increased from around 3,500 a year in the years before 1997, to 6,430 in 2004-5 and 6,180 (provisional figure) in 2005-6.

⁴ Note that 1999 data are for England and Wales, but 2005 data for England only.

Figure 2.1: Teacher retirements by type of award, 1989-90 to 2005-6 (DfES, 2006b)



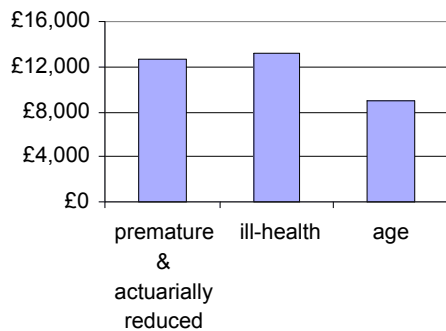
Notes: Premature includes actuarially reduced benefits from 2000-1.
The figures for the last three years are provisional.

Figure 2.1 also shows that the number of teachers retiring before age 60 (whether premature, ill-health or actuarially reduced) has consistently exceeded the number taking age retirement. The number taking ill-health retirement decreased around 1997, when the regulations changed. Before that date, teachers could be granted ill-health retirement and could subsequently teach in schools. The regulations that came into force in April 1997 require evidence that a teacher’s illness or disability is such that he or she will be unable to work again as a teacher in any school (Bowers and McIver, 2000).

The ‘age retirement’ figure is made up of two distinct groups: teachers who have continued to work until they reach normal pension age and have drawn their pension on retirement, and teachers who have left teaching before they are 60 but have not claimed their pensions until they reach 60. The data available do not specify how many teachers are in each of these groups. However, some indication can be gained by comparing the number of ‘age retirement’ pension awards as recorded in the Pensions Statistical System with the number of teachers recorded as leaving due to retirement in the Database of Teacher Records (which identifies those who were in service in one year but were not in service in the subsequent year). In the year March 2004 – March 2005, 6,430 pension awards were made for age retirement, but only 4,440 (headcount) teachers aged 60 and over are shown as having retired in the Database of Teacher Records. This suggests that almost a third of those taking age retirement pensions had left teaching before they reached the age of 60.

The size of pensions awarded is higher for those taking premature or actuarially reduced pensions than those taking age retirement (see Figure 2.2)⁵.

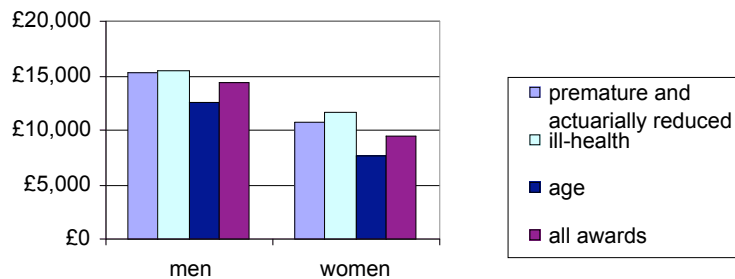
Figure 2.2: Average benefits awarded by type of award, 2005-6 (DfES, 2006b)



One factor in this could be that, as shown above, some of those taking age retirement pensions when they reached 60 had in fact left teaching at a much earlier date, but had not taken their pensions until they reached 60. Their shorter length of service results in a lower pension.

There are some differences in pension awards and patterns of retirement behaviour for different groups of teachers. The average pension award for women is two-thirds the amount of the average award to men (Figure 2.3); this difference is similar whatever the type of award.

Figure 2.3: Average benefits awarded by type of award and sex, 2005-6 (DfES, 2006b)



Women's lower awards in part result from their lower pay (in March 2005, in the 55-59 age group, women teachers' pay was 90 per cent of that of men (DfES, 2006b). This in turn relates to gendered promotion patterns; in March 2005 20 per cent of men but only 13 per cent of women teachers were heads or deputy/assistant heads (DfES, 2006b). However, this is not sufficient to explain the difference in size of pension awards. For all types of awards, two key factors are taken into account in determining the actual sum: salary and length of service. Women's average pension awards are 66 per cent of those of men, and their

⁵ Note that while the data in this and subsequent figures represents only a single year, we have checked to confirm that the patterns identified have been found consistently over the last five years.

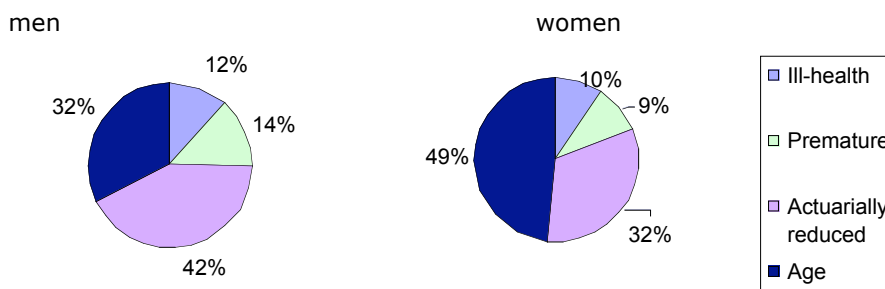
average salary 90 per cent. This means that there must be a substantial difference in the average length of service, and that this difference must be the more important factor in accounting for difference in pension awards.

The published data for length of service indicate the percentage of men and women full-time qualified teachers in different length of service bands. The highest band is 20 + years service; 39 per cent of male and 29 per cent of female teachers fall in this band. However, these data do not show how much service over 20 years teachers have, and this may also be unevenly distributed by gender. Nor do they include part-time teachers, who have shorter service, and the majority of whom are women (NUT, 2001). This lower length of service results from two trends; in comparison with men, a higher proportion of women take career breaks, and a higher proportion of women work part-time (NUT, 2001; Penlington, 2002; Powney *et al.*, 2003; Moreau *et al.*, 2005).

In comparison with men, women teachers are less likely to retire before they are 60. Figure 2.4 shows that 42 per cent of male teachers, but only 32 per cent of female, take actuarially reduced pensions, while 49 per cent of women teachers take age retirement compared with 32 per cent of men (Figure 2.4).

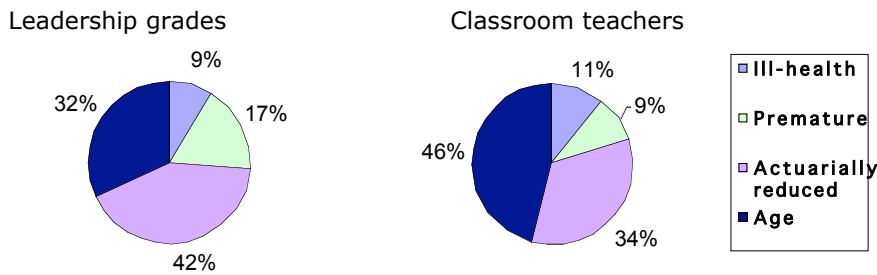
This, combined with the fact the data on size of award set out above, suggests that women may work longer on financial grounds, and echoes the gendered pattern found in more general surveys of retirement plans (e.g. Humphrey *et al.*, 2003).

Figure 2.4: Type of award by sex 2005-6 (DfES, 2006b)



The proportion taking retirement before the age of 60 is also higher among those in leadership posts than among classroom teachers (Figure 2.5). This may reflect the higher salaries of those on leadership grades (which could facilitate earlier retirement), and may also relate to stress and perceived intensification of work (see, for example, Draper and McMichael, 1996; Daniels and French, 2006; Phillips *et al.*, 2007; PriceWaterhouseCoopers, 2007). The OME *Teachers' Workload Diary Survey*, March 2007 (Angle *et al.*, 2007) shows that headteachers worked longer hours than class teachers (primary headteachers 54.2 hours a week, class teachers 51.5; secondary headteachers 57.6, class teachers 48.7).

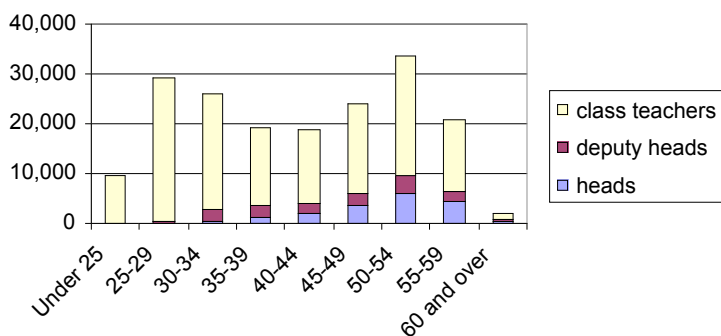
Figure 2.5: Type of award by grade (maintained schools) (DfES, 2006b)



The fact that headteachers are more likely to retire early than other groups is of particular concern in relation to the number of headteachers approaching retirement. The proportion of headteachers aged 50 and over has increased from 41 per cent in 1998 to 60 per cent in 2005 (DfEE, 1999; DfES, 2006b).

When this is reviewed in relation to the age structure of the teacher workforce⁶; there is currently a relatively low number of teachers in the 35 to 44 age range. This suggests that it may be difficult to replace the heads who leave. This is particularly salient in primary schools where those in leadership roles form a higher proportion of all teachers (Figure 2.6).

Figure 2.6: Primary full-time teachers: age by role, March 2005 (DfES, 2006b)



This in turn has contributed to the increased emphasis on succession planning (see, for example, NCSL, 2006), with a view both to developing new models of headship and to increasing the range of leadership development opportunities.

A second group of particular concern are teachers of shortage subjects. While the Secondary Schools Curriculum and Staffing Survey (DfES, 2003) suggested that maths teachers were older than those in other subjects (which would obviously be a

⁶ Here we have used the figures for full-time teachers. It is important to understand that part-time teachers are generally older than full-time (36 per cent of all part-time teachers are over 50 compared with 30 per cent of all full-time teachers), and that they may have different perspectives on retirement (DfES, 2006b, and DCSF data supplied to the research team).

cause for concern), Moor *et al.* (2006) report an age profile very much in line with that of all secondary teachers. There is some evidence, however, that they may be more likely to take early retirement than other teachers. Smithers and Robinson (2005a) suggest that the proportion of maths, science and English teachers leaving could be higher than of those teaching other subjects, but in the absence of national data on the number of teachers in these areas, they were not able to draw firm conclusions. They also show (2005b) that among science teachers, those with physics qualifications are on average older than those with biology qualifications, and that the shortage of physics teachers is thus likely to increase as a result of retirements.

2.6 Factors that may impact on the take-up of new pensions flexibilities

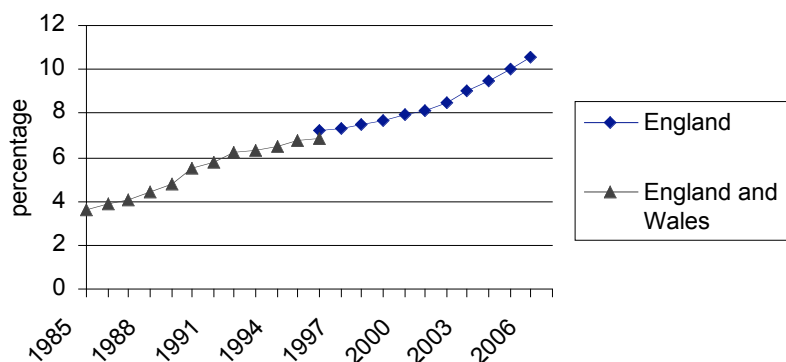
In parallel with changes to the TPS, other current changes in policy and practice are also likely to impact on teachers' career plans. One example is the introduction of cover supervisors. Research about supply teachers (Hutchings *et al.*, 2006a) found that half the supply teachers in the sample were aged 50 and over, with 15 per cent in their sixties. Among the motivations for supply teaching reported by this group were supplementing pensions, and decreasing workload and responsibilities. Many were working only in the school they had retired from or that school and one or two neighbouring schools, and took on only short-term 'emergency' cover. This suggests that many teachers do want to have a post-retirement period with reduced workload and responsibilities. However, only 12 per cent of the group would have preferred a part-time job; the majority of this group saw supply work as ideal. This demonstrates the importance attached to genuinely flexible work patterns as opposed to part-time work. However, the introduction of cover supervisors is likely to limit the availability of such supply work (Hutchings *et al.* 2006a), and thus teachers who would previously have retired and taken up supply work may now be more motivated to shed some responsibilities and/or move to part-time work before retirement. But while supply work may decrease, for those in primary schools there may be new opportunities arising from workforce remodelling such as taking classes while teachers have Planning Preparation and Assessment (PPA) time.

In investigating the impact of changes to the TPS on teachers' career plans, it is important to be aware that the relationship between plans and actions is not straightforward. Thus there are limitations to comparing current plans with previous patterns of retirement, and assuming that the plans will turn into reality. It will be useful, then, to review previous studies of teachers' career intentions. The most recent GTC Annual Survey of Teachers (Hutchings *et al.*, 2006b) asked teachers to indicate, on a list of options provided, whether each one was highly likely, likely, unlikely or highly unlikely. Teachers were also able to indicate 'don't know' or 'not applicable'. These data show that among the 49 to 54 age group, headteachers,

and teachers with longer service, were significantly more likely to expect to retire in the next five years than other groups. These predictions suggest that teachers of different grades anticipate the same pattern of early retirement as is shown by the DfES statistics for actual retirements. However, there was no difference in the proportion of men and of women in the 49 to 54 age group anticipating retiring before the age of 60. It is not possible to tell whether this represents a gender difference between plans and reality, or whether the gendered pattern of retirement (which in turn arose as a result of women teachers' career breaks, and their caring responsibilities) is also shifting.

Finally, it is important to consider whether teachers' employers are likely to make it possible for teachers to shed responsibilities or reduce their hours. In recent years there has been an increase in the proportion of teachers working part-time. This has been a steady rise from 1985, when 3.6 per cent of the full-time equivalent teacher workforce in England and Wales worked part-time, to 2006, when 10.6 per cent of those in England did so (Figure 2.7).

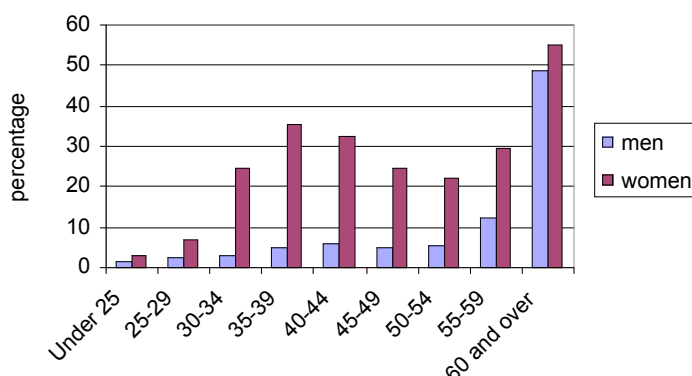
Figure 2.7: Part-time teachers as percentage of total FTE teachers (DFEE, 1999; DfES, 2006b)



The percentage working part-time is higher in nursery and primary schools (12.3 per cent FTE) and special schools and PRUs (13.8 per cent FTE) than in secondary schools (8.7 per cent FTE). In headcount terms, around a quarter of all teachers in primary and special schools are now working part-time, whereas just 15 per cent of those in secondary schools are doing so.

Part-time teachers are not evenly distributed across all age groups; they form a higher proportion of the total number of teachers (headcount) among those in their late thirties and early forties; at this age almost a third of women teachers work part-time. They also form a much higher proportion of those approaching retirement: 17 per cent of all teachers aged 50 to 54; 24 per cent of those aged 55 to 59; and 53 per cent of those aged 60 and over (Figure 2.8).

Figure 2.8: Percentage of all male and female teachers in each age group who work part-time (DfES, 2006b and data supplied to the research team by the DCSF)



It is noticeable that while a higher proportion of women than men work part-time in every age group, among those over 60, around half of both men and women do so. This suggests that there is already a trend for older teachers to move to part-time work.

It is unclear how far the increasing proportion working part-time results from teachers' wishes or those of employers. But it will be important to ascertain how far employers welcome the idea of more part-time workers, and are able to find suitable roles to use their skills and expertise.

2.7 Summary

The changes to the Teacher' Pension Scheme took place in a context in which rising life expectancy is leading to moves to encourage people to work longer and to save more for retirement, and many pension schemes are changing in ways that reflect this. This report is concerned those changes that affect existing members of the scheme: the two that are likely to have the greatest impact are the introduction of phased retirement (enabling older teachers to reduce their hours and/or responsibilities and to draw on some of their accrued pension benefits), and the changes to average salary calculation (through which the pension is based either on the best three consecutive years in the last 10, or on the average salary in the final year).

Research into retirement decisions shows that a wide range of factors are taken into account. Among these, financial factors are important, and certainly provide constraints within which decisions are made, but are not necessarily the most important factors. It has been found that many people do not have a clear understanding of their pensions and this may undermine their capacity to plan financially for retirement. Where pension schemes have been altered to encourage partial retirement responses have been mixed; in some cases people have left full-time work sooner, and in others working life has been extended. There is limited

research into teacher retirement, but studies that exist suggest that discontent with work is often an important factor.

The potential impact of the pension scheme changes must be considered in the light of current behaviour. The pattern of teacher retirements in the last 20 years shows that the number retiring before the age of 60 has consistently exceeded the number retiring at or after 60. Those in leadership grades and men more often retire before 60 (in comparison with classroom teachers and women). Some older teachers move to part-time work or to supply teaching as ways of reducing their hours or responsibilities.

3 Research design

3.1 Introduction

The project involved quantitative and qualitative research methods. Each of these is discussed below. BMRB lead the quantitative survey, while the Institute for Policy Studies in Education (IPSE) oversaw the qualitative work. After both strands of fieldwork had been completed the analysis of findings was integrated for this report.

The broad aims and objectives of the study are discussed in chapter one. There were also a number of research questions, which the research aimed to explore. These were:

- To what extent were previous pension arrangements a barrier to teachers' operating in a reduced capacity (either on reduced hours or in a post of less responsibility)?
- To what extent are teachers aware of the new flexibilities?
- What is likely to be the impact of the scheme on teachers' career choices and retention within the profession? We are particularly, although not exclusively, interested in the impact on school leaders and on teachers of shortage subjects (maths, science, ICT and design and technology).
- Is there any particular group of teachers who are most likely to take advantage of the changes?
- Do the flexibilities facilitate new working arrangements/career choices for teachers such as job share/mentoring arrangements for less experienced colleagues, outreach or advisory work?
- To what extent are teachers' employers aware of scheme changes?
- Are employers using the new flexibilities to support good human resource management? What are the barriers and facilitators to this and are there existing examples of good practice?
- To what extent does employer attitude affect opportunities for taking up a 'reduced capacity' post?

3.2 Quantitative design

The quantitative aspect of the survey was conducted using postal self-completion questionnaires. Questionnaires were sent out to four different sample groups (see below).

3.2.1 Sampling

Four different samples were selected for the survey:

1. 'employees' (teachers);
2. 'employees' (headteachers);
3. 'employers' (headteachers as employers);
4. local authorities – consisting of i) contacts who dealt with pensions issues and ii) contacts whose responsibility was in Human Resources (HR). See further discussion below.

Employee sample

The employee sample file was drawn from the General Teaching Council (GTC) database. This database contained the records of individual teachers and headteachers. Data were supplied in accordance with both Section 14 of the Teaching and Higher Education Act 1998 and Schedule 2 of the Data Protection Act 1998.

The eligible sample was defined as all employed teachers and headteachers aged 49 to 60 who worked in publicly funded primary, secondary or PRU/special schools in England and who were currently or had previously paid into the TPS.

We selected a sample of 6,600 teachers (to achieve around 2,500 returned questionnaires) and 2,000 headteachers (to achieve around 750 returned questionnaires). The sample was stratified by school phase, age (broken down into 49 to 54 and 55 to 60) and gender. Disproportionate stratification was applied to boost specific minority groups (such as PRU/special school employees and male primary teachers) to ensure their views would be adequately represented in the survey findings. See technical appendix (Appendix C) for more details.

These sample members are referred to as 'employees' throughout the survey or 'teachers' and 'headteachers' when we are talking about them individually.

Headteacher as employer sample

The headteacher as employer sample was drawn from the Edubase database. This was provided to BMRB Social Research by the Department for Children, Schools and Families. This database contained the records of schools and their headteachers.

The eligible sample was defined as all headteachers who worked in publicly funded primary, secondary or PRU/special schools who were not selected for the employee sample (above).

We selected a sample of 2,000 headteachers (to achieve around 750 returned questionnaires). Once again, disproportionate stratification was applied to boost certain groups (such as secondary school headteachers) to increase the potential for sub-group analysis. See Appendix C for more details.

These sample members are referred to as 'headteachers as employers' (or just 'headteachers') throughout the survey.

Local authorities

There were two separate local authorities samples (described in more detail below) selected for the survey. This was because pre-survey interviews showed that the range of topics that were to be investigated did not generally fall within the remit of any individual. Consequently two different questionnaires were devised, each focusing on a different set of issues.

'Pensions' sample

All local authorities in England were selected for the survey (less any involved in the survey pilot – see below). Details of each local authority and the person at the authority responsible for (teachers) pensions were provided to BMRB by the Department for Children, Schools and Families.

However, it was discovered during survey piloting that the person listed in the database was often no longer employed at the local authority or no longer dealt with (teachers) pensions. In some cases, we were informed of more suitable respondents. As a result, BMRB telephoned each of the authorities before main stage fieldwork to determine whether the named contact was still at the local authority and, if they were, whether they were the relevant person to receive the questionnaire. The sample was then updated with any new details before the despatch of the main stage questionnaires.

These sample members are referred to as 'local authorities (pensions)' throughout the report.

HR sample

As with the local authorities (pensions) sample, the local authorities (HR) sample was drawn from all authorities in England.

Because we did not have any personal details of the individual in charge of human resources at schools within each local authority, we addressed (at the pilot stage) the questionnaire packs to the 'Head of Education, Human Resources'. However, it subsequently transpired that at many local authorities such a post did not exist and the questionnaire was not completed. As a result, we conducted a sample builder exercise before main stage fieldwork. This entailed calling each authority to

determine the most relevant person to fill in the questionnaire. After this we were able to send the questionnaire to a named contact. For the majority of cases (93 out of 140) this contact was the same person mentioned above (i.e. the person in charge of pensions).

These sample members are referred to as 'local authorities (HR)' throughout the report.

3.2.2 Questionnaire

Separate questionnaires were designed for each sample group discussed above (except for the case of employees – the same questionnaire was sent to teachers and headteachers). Each of the questionnaires was developed by BMRB Social Research and IPSE in consultation with the Department for Children, Schools and Families. All four questionnaires can be found in the Appendix A.

The content of each questionnaire varied although there was overlap between and within subject areas. The four questionnaires also varied in length. The employee questionnaire consisted of a 12-page booklet; the headteacher (as employer) questionnaire was made up of eight pages; and the local authority (pensions and HR) questionnaires were four pages.

3.2.3 Questionnaire packs and the information sheet

In addition to the questionnaire a pre-paid envelope and covering letter (explaining the survey) was sent out to each sample member. An information sheet was also sent out detailing the main changes to the TPS (see Appendix B). It was felt that some sample members may have had limited or no awareness of the TPS and would not have been able to complete some, or all, of their questionnaire without any background information. The information sheet was developed by IPSE in collaboration with the DCSF Pensions Unit and piloted before main stage fieldwork.

3.2.4 Questionnaire format and dress rehearsal pilot

BMRB conducted an initial dress rehearsal pilot survey, which took place between 22nd March and 17th April 2007. This was used to help in the design of the main stage questionnaires in terms of question wording, questionnaire order and the general layout of the questions. However, prior to designing the pilot postal questionnaires much effort was made to ensure the questionnaires were as clear, well-presented and as easy to follow (and complete) as possible. Consideration had been given to question order, optimum font size, spacing, use of colour/shading, how best to provide routing instructions and the type of paper that the

questionnaires would be printed on. This was done to encourage as high a response as possible.

A total of 445 pilot questionnaires were sent out:

- 300 'employee' questionnaires (175 were sent to teachers and 125 to headteachers);
- 125 'employer' questionnaires (for headteachers);
- 10 pension related questionnaires (sent to a local authority employee responsible for teachers);
- 10 staffing related questionnaires (sent to someone responsible for human resources within each local authority).

Following the pilot stage we called a number of sample members and asked them about the questionnaire they had completed focussing mainly on the issues mentioned above with regards to:

- the presentation and layout of the questionnaire;
- whether there were any questions that were difficult to understand;
- whether the response options were sufficient;
- how easy the questionnaire was to complete;
- whether there were any difficult questions;
- the amount of time taken up in filling in the questionnaire;
- the usefulness of the information sheet.

In addition to these telephone calls we also analysed the returned questionnaires to see if sample members had answered questions incorrectly, whether they had failed to answer valid questions or not followed routing instructions and whether there were any high instances of item non-response.

Various changes were then made to each of the questionnaires prior to main stage fieldwork.

3.2.5 Main stage fieldwork

Fieldwork for the main stage took place between Wednesday 9th May and Monday 23rd July 2007.

A total of 10,880 questionnaires were sent out:

- 8,600 'employee' questionnaires (6,600 were sent to teachers and 2,000 to headteachers);
- 2,000 'employer' questionnaires (for headteachers);
- 140 pension related questionnaires (sent to a local authority employee responsible for pensions);
- 140 staffing related questionnaires (sent to someone responsible for human resources within each local authority).

Because of the large number of questionnaire packs sent out the printing and despatch of questionnaires was staggered; questionnaire packs (containing the questionnaire, a covering letter, information sheet and pre-paid envelope) were sent to respondents between 9th and 16th May.

To maximise response, a full reminder pack was sent to all sample members who had not returned their initial questionnaire approximately three weeks after the initial send out. All sample members who had not sent back their questionnaire after receiving the reminder pack were then sent a reminder letter (approximately three weeks after the full reminder pack).

Additionally, extra telephone calls were made to local authorities (both pensions and HR sample members) to check that they were the most relevant person to fill in the questionnaire (after they had a chance to look through it). If they thought they were not the best placed person to complete it then we asked them to pass it over to a colleague who was. We also called these sample members to remind them to return the questionnaire as soon as possible; it was a struggle to achieve the target response rates amongst these groups because of their lack of awareness of the changes to the TPS (and this lack of knowledge is echoed in the survey findings).

The total number of returned questionnaires was as follows:

- 4,150 employee questionnaires (3,152 were sent back by teachers and 998 by headteachers)
- 683 employer (headteacher) questionnaires
- 70 pension related (local authority) questionnaires
- 41 staffing related (local authority) questionnaires.

Although a total of 4,944 questionnaires were returned, not all of these had been filled in correctly / filled in at all. Additionally, some of the employee sample members were not eligible to take part in the survey (for example, some employees had mentioned that they were teaching at a private school). This meant

the number of *eligible* questionnaires returned was as follows (the response rates of eligible returned questionnaires are in brackets):

- 3,865 employee questionnaires – 2,926 teachers (44 per cent) and 939 headteachers (47 per cent);
- 672 employer questionnaires (34 per cent);
- 67 pension related local authority questionnaires (48 per cent);
- 39 staffing related local authority questionnaires (28 per cent).

See Appendix C for detailed fieldwork figures.

3.2.6 Coding, data editing and outputs

Verbatim responses provided at questions that allowed sample members to write in their own response (as opposed to crossing boxes) were backcoded into existing response codes or new answer codes were created.

Additionally, because some employees did not always follow routing instructions correctly or provided more than one response at single-coded questions (common errors in self-completion questionnaires), the data had to be edited so that it was as consistent with the structure of the questionnaires as possible.

After the data had been edited and fully coded, four SPSS datasets were produced and checked. Each dataset contained the data from each of the four questionnaires along with relevant sample information.

3.2.7 Weighting

A two stage weighting approach was carried out:

- Design weights were applied to the employees and headteachers as employers achieved samples to correct for the over – and under – sampling that was conducted during the sample selection phase.
- Once the design weights had been applied, the data was further interrogated for evidence of non-response bias. However, it was decided that it would not be necessary to derive non-response weights as the achieved sample closely resembled that of the survey population.

The percentages reported throughout the report are based on weighted data.

3.3 Sample profile

Below is a summary of the key characteristics of each of the weighted sample types.

3.3.1 Employee survey

Table 3.1 provides a weighted breakdown (i.e. the design weight has been applied) of returned questionnaires from **teachers** by school type, age and gender. These variables were used in the sample stratification process (see Appendix C).

Table 3.2. provides a weighted breakdown of returned questionnaires from **headteachers** by school type, age and gender. Again, these variables were used in the sample stratification process (see Appendix C).

Table 3.3 provides a breakdown of all employees (both teachers and headteachers) by gender based on total pensionable teaching years and overall total pensionable years (i.e. total pensionable teaching years and any other pensionable years from other forms of employment). The proportions for total pensionable teaching years are very similar to total pensionable years when looking at overall figures as well as the breakdown by gender. In addition, males were generally more likely to have had more pensionable years compared with their female counterparts (both teaching and total).

Table 3.1 Weighted breakdown of returned questionnaires from teachers

School type	Age		Gender			
Primary / Nursery 1,564 45%	49-54		Male		Female	
	888	57%	74	8%	814	92%
	55-60		Male		Female	
	676	43%	63	9%	613	91%
Secondary 1,685 48%	49-54		Male		Female	
	957	57%	376	39%	581	61%
	55-60		Male		Female	
	728	43%	333	46%	395	54%
Special and PRU 232 7%	49-54		Male		Female	
	136	59%	30	22%	106	78%
	55-60		Male		Female	
	96	41%	25	26%	71	74%

Table 3.2 Weighted breakdown of returned questionnaires from headteachers

School type	Age		Gender			
Primary / Nursery 303 79%	49-54		Male		Female	
	165	54%	53	32%	112	68%
	55-60		Male		Female	
	138	46%	46	33%	92	67%
Secondary 56 15%	49-54		Male		Female	
	32	57%	19	59%	13	41%
	55-60		Male		Female	
	24	43%	17	72%	7	28%
Special and PRU 25 7%	49-54		Male		Female	
	16	64%	9	54%	7	46%
	55-60		Male		Female	
	9	36%	5	53%	4	47%

The majority of employees were employed on a full-time basis; 3,134 (81 per cent) of employees returning their questionnaire worked full-time, 530 (14 per cent) were part-time and 66 (two per cent) worked as supply teachers. There were also 135 employees that did not provide their employment status.

Finally, almost a quarter of employees (902) taught a shortage subject for at least half of their weekly timetable. This can be broken down further by type of shortage subject taught:

- 195 employees (five per cent) taught Maths
- 185 employees (five per cent) taught Design and Technology
- 173 employees (five per cent) taught English
- 158 employees (four per cent) taught Science
- 90 employees (two per cent) taught a Modern Language
- 52 employees (one per cent) taught ICT
- 43 employees (one per cent) taught Religious Education

Table 3.3 Employees: Total pensionable teaching years and total pensionable years (by gender)

		Male		Female		All	
Total pensionable teaching years	0-19 years	173	12%	749	33%	922	25%
	20-29 years	397	28%	922	41%	1,319	36%
	30+ years	855	60%	586	26%	1,441	39%
	TOTAL	1,425	100%	2,257	100%	3,682	100%
Total pensionable years	0-19 years	172	12%	804	34%	976	25%
	20-29 years	420	28%	952	40%	1,372	35%
	30+ years	897	60%	620	26%	1,517	39%
	TOTAL	1,489	100%	2,376	100%	3,865	100%

3.3.2 Headteachers as employers survey

Table 3.4 provides a weighted breakdown of returned questionnaires from **headteachers as employers** by school type and school size (the latter was broken down differently for each school type to take into account average numbers of pupils)⁷. These variables were used in the sample stratification process (see Appendix C).

Table 3.4 Weighted breakdown of returned questionnaires from headteachers as employers

School type	Size					
		Up to 100		101 - 300		301+
562 84%	68	12%	308	55%	186	33%
	Up to 500		501-1000		1001+	
63 9%	5	8%	24	38%	34	54%
	Up to 50		51 - 100		101+	
47 7%	22	47%	15	32%	10	21%

⁷ Although the school size referred to in Table 3.4 deals with number of *pupils* within the school, it should be borne in mind that there are references throughout the report to school size (when analysing the employer survey), which are based on the number of *teachers* in the school.

Some additional variables were created for the analysis of the headteacher as employer data.

Proportion of teachers in school aged 50 and over: In the survey, schools were asked to state the total number of teachers and the number who were aged 50 and over. This enabled us to calculate the proportion that were 50 and over. The schools in the sample have then been divided into three groups of approximately equal size for the purposes of analysis:

Low – 0% to 20% of teachers aged 50 and over

Average – 21% to 40%

High – 41% to 100%

Proportion of teachers in school employed on a part-time basis: In the survey, schools were also asked to state number of teachers employed on both a full-time and part-time basis. This enabled us to calculate the proportion of the total number of teachers in the school who were employed on a part-time basis. The schools in the sample have then been divided into three groups of approximately equal size for the purposes of analysis:

Low – 0% to 15% of teachers employed on a part-time basis

Average – 16% to 30%

High – 31% to 100%

School size: By combining the school phase variable from the Edubase database and the data on the total number of teachers in a school from the survey, we derived a school size variable. Again, for the purposes of analysis, both the primary and secondary schools in the sample have been divided into three groups of approximately equal size.

Primary

Secondary

Small – fewer than 8 teachers

Small– fewer than 41 teachers

Medium – 8 to 15 teachers

Medium – 41 to 70 teachers

Large – 16 or more teachers

Large – 71 or more teachers

It was not possible to derive a school size variable for special schools in the same way as the numbers involved were too small.

Finally, a school challenge variable was created for the analysis of the employer data. This was used to compare responses provided by headteachers based on the type of challenge that their school (where the headteacher is based) faced. The key elements that make up this variable are:

- the proportion of pupils at the school eligible for free school meals;
- the proportion of pupils at the school with special needs;

- the proportion of pupils at the school not speaking English as a first language;
- the level of achievement at KS4 (secondary schools) or KS2 (primary schools).

The technical appendix (Appendix C) provides further details of how this variable was derived.

Appendix D reports on a cluster analysis of the data from the headteachers as employers sample.

3.3.3 Local authorities surveys

As mentioned in Section 3.2.6, there were 67 eligible pension related local authority questionnaires and 39 eligible staffing related local authority questionnaires returned. There were 29 authorities who returned both questionnaires.

3.4 Qualitative design

The qualitative strand of the research was made up of two complementary approaches:

- (a) case study visits
- (b) follow-up interviews

In addition we conducted nine pilot interviews to help inform the design of the questionnaires and the interview schedules: two with local authority staff; three with headteachers; three with teachers; and one with a governor. We have drawn on these in the report where relevant; in particular we have referred to the local authority pilot interviews, because so few local authority staff agreed to be interviewed in the case studies.

3.4.1 Case studies

We have carried out case studies in 12 schools (six secondary, four primary and two special). These were chosen to cover a range of schools, including different:

- school types (including a school in a 'soft' federation, an academy, voluntary aided/controlled and community schools, a Catholic school);
- sizes (from fewer than 100 pupils to more than 2000);
- government office regions, and both rural and urban locations;

- school neighbourhoods, including inner urban, suburban, rural, and some schools in areas to which many people choose to move on their retirement.

Some of the schools were selected on the basis of having substantial proportions of older teachers; there seemed little point in approaching schools where there were not enough teachers in the relevant age range. However, in the final sample, the proportions of teaching staff aged 50 and above ranged from 12 per cent to 73 per cent).

Two of the schools were selected because they had (or were planning) co-headship arrangements in which one of the co-heads was reducing hours before retiring fully. Such arrangements for older teachers could be facilitated by the TPS changes, and it therefore seemed worth investigating these two arrangements.

As well as the differences between schools that were criteria for selecting the sample, the final sample also varied in:

- levels of deprivation (free school meals well below average and well above average);
- proportion of teaching staff that worked part-time (which ranged from 4 per cent to 32 per cent headcount).

We found that the majority of schools that agreed to take part had at least good ratings from Ofsted; most had average or above average attainment levels; and average or above average contextual value added. It is perhaps inevitable that schools with these characteristics are more likely to volunteer to take part in such research. Even so, we noted that some headteachers appeared uncomfortable that their teachers might report negative experiences or feelings in relation to working in the school.

In each case study school we interviewed:

- the headteacher in his/her role as human resource manager, and, if relevant, also as an older teacher;
- in two larger schools, key administrative staff such as business or personnel managers;
- the chair of governors and/or the chair of the employment sub-committee of the governors (with the exception of one school where the relevant person was not prepared to take part);
- between two and five teachers aged 49 and over. The number depended on the number of teachers in that age bracket in the school, and their availability on the day the fieldwork was conducted. Where possible we tried to interview teachers of shortage subjects, although this was limited by the

extent to which these teachers were in the appropriate age group and willing to take part.

We had also hoped to interview a relevant person in the local authority, and where possible we approached the advisor or inspector who was responsible for that school. These contacts were often reluctant to be interviewed. One who declined wrote: *'I am afraid to confess that I don't understand my own pension let alone the impact of new proposals. I would be of no use.'* We responded indicating that we were interested in his knowledge of the school rather than of pensions, but did not receive a further reply.

Before the case study visit, each interviewee was sent a letter explaining the purpose of the research and a copy of the information sheet. Generally interviews were conducted face-to-face during a visit to the school; however, the majority of the governors were interviewed by telephone.

In these case study interviews we investigated school level factors:

- the way that information had been passed on by the headteacher to the staff, and the extent to which individual teachers have assimilated this;
- the extent to which information from unions and teacher associations was communicated and used;
- whether pensions information was displayed in the staffroom;
- the extent to which TPS changes had been a focus of conversation in the staffroom;
- the extent to which they had been formally addressed in senior management meetings, and with the governors;
- the role (if any) of the Local Authority in communicating with schools about TPS changes and effective human resource management in relation to these, including, for example, whether this had been discussed at headteachers' forums;
- the potential effect of the TPS changes on the pattern of staffing and allocation of specific roles in each school.

We also investigated each interviewee's individual perspective. This included:

- their retirement plans, and the factors they took into account in thing about when to retire;
- their understanding of the pension arrangements in relation to their own pension;
- their awareness of and understanding of the TPS changes, and how they had heard about these;

- the extent to which they thought the changes might impact on their own plans, and their perceptions of the wider impact of the changes.

3.4.2 Follow-up interviews

Case study visits have been supplemented by eight telephone interviews with teacher and headteacher respondents to the survey selected to represent perspectives that were found in the survey but not represented in the case study data. In particular, we selected respondents who indicated that they had changed their plans as a result of the pension scheme changes, or who planned to take phased retirement. In addition, we conducted four follow-up interviews with employers selected from the survey, two from Local Authorities and two headteachers. One additional interview was conducted with a deputy head in her forties who had been appointed to a co-headship in one of the case study schools. This has been used only in relation to the relevant case study, and not in relation to general issues about retirement and pensions.

The interview schedules used for the case studies were modified as appropriate for each of these interviews.

3.4.3 About the interviewees

The total number of interviewees is summarised in Table 3.5. The numbers teaching various secondary shortage subjects are shown below.

English	9	Design and Technology	2
mathematics	5	ICT	1
science	3	RE	1
Modern Foreign Languages	3	Music	0

3.4.4 Qualitative analysis

For each case study school we have written a summary of the information collected. This has enabled us to identify commonalities and differences across the schools. These case study summaries are included as Appendix E. Each case study school is referred to by a letter of the alphabet (e.g. Secondary B, Primary H); in the main report where data refers to school arrangements (rather than the plans or understanding of an individual) the schools are identified in order that readers can refer to the relevant section in the appendix.

All interviews have been fully transcribed and entered into the software programme, NVivo. These have been coded to fit in with the themes of the report. Where interviewees are referred to by name, these are pseudonyms.

Table 3.5 Case study and follow-up interviews

		Case study school interviews											Follow-up interviews	Total		
		A	B	C	D	E	F	G	H	J	K	L			M	
headteacher under 49	m	1														1
	f															0
headteacher 49-54	m			1								1	1	1		4
	f								1					2		3
headteacher 55 and over	m				1			1	1		1			2		6
	f		1			1	1							1		4
teacher 49-54	m		1	1	2	2			2	4						12
	f	1	1		1	2	1	1			1	3	2	1		14
teacher 55 and over	m	2		1			2	1	1	1			1	1		10
	f	2	1	1				2			1	1	1	2		11
governor		1	1	1		1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1			11
LA								1						2		3
admin			1										1			2
TOTAL		7	6	5	4	6	5	7	5	7	4	6	7	12		81

Summary: all interviewees

	Pilot	Case study	Follow-up	Additional interview	TOTAL
headteachers	3	12	6		21
teachers	3	43	4	1	51
school administrators		2			2
governors	1	11			12
local authority staff	2	1	2		5
TOTAL	9	69	12	1	91

The additional interview was with the prospective co-head at Primary G, a deputy head in her forties.

3.5 Explanatory Notes

3.5.1 Interpreting the survey findings

When interpreting the findings for this survey, the following issues need to be borne in mind:

- the survey is based on a sample only, rather than the total population, of employers and employees. This means that all findings are subject to sampling tolerances. In the report, differences are reported only when they are statistically significant at the 95 per cent confidence level.
- the survey was based on information recorded at a particular point in time (between May and July 2007). The circumstances of the individuals concerned, their knowledge of TPS, etc may be affected by the specific timing of the survey.

3.5.2 Employees and employers (survey data)

Teachers and deputy or assistant headteachers only completed the employee survey so any reference to 'employees' includes both of these in addition to the headteachers who completed the employee survey. Headteachers who completed the employer survey are called 'headteachers as employers' within headings and tables and are referred to as 'headteachers' elsewhere in the relevant sub-sections.

3.5.3 Local authorities (survey data)

As mentioned above, the survey of local authorities was divided into two separate questionnaires: section A and section B. Section A focused primarily on the impact of the TPS changes on teachers (as experienced by local authorities), whilst section B examined the impact on school staffing arrangements as a whole.

For ease of reporting, we have referred to findings from section A as local authorities (pensions) and findings from section B as local authorities (HR). As mentioned in Section 3.2.1 there may be some overlap where a single local authority employee completed both questionnaires.

Findings from the survey of local authorities should be treated with caution due to the low base sizes involved. Where applicable, we have reported data from the local authority surveys in terms of number of respondents and proportions (rather than referring to percentages).

3.6 Data Tables

The report includes tables showing findings analysed by various characteristics (e.g. age, school phase). Each table shows the weighted and unweighted base totals (except for the local authorities, where no weighting has been applied). The percentages in the report tables are based on the weighted totals.

In some cases the percentages do not always add up to exactly 100 for each column. This is because multiple responses are possible in some cases. In all other cases, where the column total may be 99 per cent or 101 per cent, this is due to rounding of individual percentages to the nearest whole number. The following symbols have been used throughout:

- * Less than 0.5 per cent
- No observations

3.7 Structure of report

The report has been structured around the core themes and research objectives. Each chapter begins with an introduction, which sets out the policy context and the key issues that will be addressed. Chapter 4 considers the context into which the TPS changes have been introduced, examining how willing schools are to encourage flexible patterns of retirement; the factors that teachers take into account in retirement decisions, and teachers' understanding of their pensions. Chapter 5 then reviews teachers' awareness and understanding of the TPS changes, and how they learned about these. Chapter 6 focuses on teachers' retirement plans, and Chapter 7 examines the actual and potential behavioural impact of the TPS changes.

The team liaised regularly over the quantitative and qualitative findings in order that findings from both strands of the research should be incorporated into the report. Where appropriate, hypotheses generated by one set of data have been investigated and tested in the other set of data, producing robust findings.

The qualitative data and quantitative data are reported in parallel.

When reporting the survey findings, the order starts with employers and moves on to employees. This allows the broader context to be outlined before discussing the specific. This approach also helps build up a picture of how information is gathered and disseminated and the impact that the TPS changes have had.

The report ends with a summary and discussion of key policy implications. This includes summaries for each survey group: teachers, headteachers, governors etc. The data are therefore analysed the other way from the preceding chapters (which are structured around the core objectives). Policy implications are discussed in the context of the key findings emerging from all strands of the research.

4 Teacher and headteacher retirements: the current context

4.1 Introduction

The changes to the TPS are designed to extend teachers working lives by offering greater flexibility that will allow older teachers to reduce their hours and responsibilities as they approach retirement. This chapter explores data relating to various aspects of the context into which the changes have been introduced. As in all chapters, we focus first on the employers' perspective, and then turn to that of the employees.

The first section, then, reviews the context within schools. If the new flexible retirement options introduced by the TPS changes are to be taken up, schools will need to support those teachers who wish to reduce their hours or responsibilities. We therefore explore the variation in the extent to which school leaders already support part-time working and flexible retirement patterns for older teachers, as this may indicate how they will respond in the future.

Next the chapter turns to the employees. There are two key issues here that may impact on take-up of the new flexible options: the extent to which pension arrangements are taken into account in teachers' retirement decisions, and their awareness and understanding of the pension regulations. Thus the next two sections of the chapter focus on the various factors that teachers consider in their retirement decisions, and teachers' understanding (and misunderstandings) of their pension arrangements.

4.2 The school context

It was evident from both the survey and the case studies that headteachers had varied views about enabling older teachers to reduce their hours or their responsibilities as they approached retirement. In four of the twelve case study schools (one secondary, one primary and two special) this was already an established practice, and new flexibility introduced by the TPS changes simply added to the existing repertoire. At the other extreme were three case study secondary schools in which reduction of hours and/or responsibilities was not a regular or supported practice, and the headteachers indicated that they would not encourage such practices. Each of these views is considered in turn in the sections below. In the remaining case study schools (two secondary and three primary) the headteachers indicated general support for flexibility, but interviews with them and with the teachers suggested that this was not an established practice.

4.2.1 Schools that supported flexibility for older teachers

A minority of the case study headteachers argued in interviews that making it possible for older teachers to shed responsibilities or move to part-time work could 'rejuvenate' older teachers, and thus the school would benefit from their experience, and four of them offered examples of such flexibility existing in their schools. In Primary G, for example, the headteacher had for many years encouraged flexibility in employment; three of the interviewees had moved between part-time and full-time work, or changed the number of days they worked part-time, to suit their particular circumstances. The headteacher said that he actively encouraged such flexibility: '*We're very much into semi-retirement at our school*'. He argued that the presence of older teachers on the staff was beneficial '*because of their experience*', but recognised that older teachers get '*tired*'. Making it possible for them to work part-time contributed to their effectiveness:

You can rejuvenate some of them by giving them a part-time job ... and you can have a very effective 0.5 teacher because they've got the weekend and a couple of days to recover.

Box 4.1 sets out examples of practice in Primary G. These reductions in hours predated the changes to the TPS.

Box 4.1: Flexibility for older teachers: reducing hours

Maureen Hicks⁸ was a full-time teacher and Key Stage 1 Literacy Subject Leader. She decided to drop the subject leadership and she mentored a teacher for a year who then took on that role. Maureen was then a full-time teacher without the extra responsibility. Subsequently she reduced her hours from full-time to 0.4. She did that for one term, then returned to full-time work to teach the new reception class formed in April; this was something she had always wanted to do. She would then revert to 0.4 for two terms, and again take a reception class full-time in the next summer term.

Another teacher in the same school, Rosa Clarke reduced her hours from full-time to 0.8. When she reached age 60, she officially retired and drew her pension. After one day's break in service, she returned to work 0.4 in the school on a new contract, while at the same time drawing her pension. Other teachers who had retired from this school continued to work there on a voluntary basis, or undertook occasional supply teaching.

It became clear from the case studies that in certain schools there was a long-standing pattern of older teachers reducing their hours. In that the pensions of part-time teachers are calculated on the basis of their full-time equivalent salary, the impact of moving to part-time work is to reduce the pension only slightly because the number of years' service will be less than if the teacher had worked full-time.

⁸ As stated in Chapter 3, all names used are pseudonyms.

A more complex way of moving to part-time work was found in four of the case study schools. Teachers retired, drew their pensions, and then returned to work in the same school on a new part-time contract. The hours they could work were limited by the regulation that stipulates that total income should not exceed the previous full-time salary. This pattern was found both among teachers who had reached the age of 60 (as Box 4.1 showed), and among younger teachers. The headteacher of Primary G used precisely this strategy in a planned move to a co-headship, which is described fully in Chapter 7. He was already 60, and he had arranged to retire, draw his pension, and then enter a new part-time contract. The headteacher of Secondary E talked about a teacher who had taken an actuarially reduced pension at age 55 and who would then return to work on a part-time basis. Similarly the headteacher of Secondary C referred to three teachers in his previous school who stepped down from their main full-time post and after a 'little gap' they came back and were able to work part-time. He used this example to argue that the previous pension arrangements were not a barrier to those who wished to reduce hours or responsibilities – but he described the impact of this as 'a nightmare' in terms of timetabling.

Those headteachers who were sympathetic to requests from older teachers to reduce hours tended to be similarly sympathetic to requests to shed responsibilities. One of the teachers described in Box 4.1 had reduced both hours and responsibilities. However, under the previous pension arrangements, shedding responsibilities could have a much greater impact on the level of the teacher's pension than reducing hours, because it affects the level of final salary. As a result, schools tended to have found other solutions to support older teachers. Two headteachers described situations in which they had 'created jobs' for specific older teachers to enable them to continue earning the same amount while moving them out of the key roles that they had formerly held (see Box 4.2).

Box 4.2: Creating roles for older teachers to change their responsibilities

Example 1: *Some years ago we had a teacher here who was coming up to retirement and she had worked, she'd been a good servant of the school over some years but she had a significant position that really I needed to move her out of, and I created a job for her. She didn't lose money, ... I created a job for her which was getting her to do other things but of course under TLRs that would not have worked. We are lacking flexibility now to do that and therefore it is difficult.*

Example 2: *One of the assistant heads does a lot of our community work so he teaches a lot less, he has a lot less other onerous duties in school but what he does is he does a lot of our going out to the tenants' associations and things like that and it's what he enjoys doing and it's something that he's able to enjoy doing but it actually means the other things he doesn't have to do so much of. So we've created if you like a post really for him because if he wasn't here that would be done a little bit differently.*

(Secondary headteachers)

Another way of changing older teachers' responsibilities while retaining their skills and experience is to enable them to move to senior support staff roles. Examples of this strategy were offered in four case study schools, three secondary and one special. Typically the teachers involved had had senior posts, often as part of the leadership team. (Box 4.3)

Box 4.3: Teachers moving to support staff roles

1. A secondary assistant headteacher who was feeling '*a certain level of stress*' moved across to a role in which he was responsible for the school timetable and administration of exams. He did this before the age of 60, and has not drawn his teachers' pension.
2. A senior member of secondary school staff retired at age 55 and took an actuarially reduced pension. He supplemented this by working in a support staff role coordinating international work and business links in the same school.
3. A special school assistant headteacher took her pension at 60, and was employed three days a week as business manager. This enabled her to spend time with her husband who had retired, and while she earned much less, it supplemented her pension.

4.2.2 Schools that did not support flexibility for older teachers

At the other end of the scale were three secondary case study school headteachers who said that they would be reluctant to agree to teachers moving to part-time work, and who were also negative about requests to reduce responsibilities. One governor also argued that with a high number of part-time staff it became '*very difficult to build a team*'. But such views were generally justified in terms of the potential impact on the pupils' education; the headteachers expressed the view that the use of part-time teachers was almost always disadvantageous for pupils. For example, the headteacher of Secondary C said: '*on educational grounds I don't think it's a good idea to encourage anybody to take part-time and work their way down*'. All of those working in secondary schools also saw it as creating additional constraints in timetabling (though not all said that this a reason to deny requests to work part-time):

Sometimes with part-time work the constraints are imposed from the post holder that they want to work part-time but they only want to work these days or these times. (Secondary headteacher)

It transpired that [the candidate] has to do Mondays and Tuesdays, and we cannot offer Mondays because of the other part time arrangements so it does provide constraints upon your time table. (Secondary headteacher)

The head of Secondary D argued that '*the constraints that [part-time work] puts on the timetable are such that that problem impacts across the whole curriculum.*' He

identified just one instance where a teacher with health problems had moved to part-time work; this was described as a last resort: *'we had done everything we could to support her, and the final thing was to allow her to go part-time.'* But in general, reducing hours would be considered only *'as long as it was in the interests of the school, because the interests of the school must always come first'* (Secondary D).

The headteachers in this group seemed to be constructing staff contentment and well-being as something that was distinct from, or even in conflict with, *'the needs of the school'*. The *Independent Study of School Leadership* (PriceWaterhouseCoopers, 2007) noted that one of the most important ways in which school leaders contribute to teaching and learning is through their impact on the motivation and well-being of the staff. However, they commented that *'many school leaders have not embraced the people agenda as fully as has been the case in other sectors'* (2007: vi). The wide range of attitudes to staff well-being found among our case study sample appears to bear this out.

And those headteachers who were less supportive of reductions in hours were also less supportive of shedding responsibilities. Box 4.4 gives an example.

Box 4.4: Lack of support for flexibility to reduce responsibilities

Margaret King taught science in a secondary school, and had both pastoral and curriculum responsibilities, as well as a heavy teaching load. She said she had investigated the feasibility of reducing her responsibilities, because of the *'huge amount of work'*, and the impact on her long-term health. She reported that she was told that both areas of responsibility had become part of her job description when she took them on. If there was nobody suitable to take over the role on the existing school staff, the post would be advertised externally, and so her job *'would not exist'*. She said, *'Now I am not sure whether you can do that, but that was basically what was said to me. And it was actually said to somebody else as well.'* She concluded that it was not worth *'having a fight'*. As a result, she was intending to move to a less demanding role (probably part-time) in another school. She also said that she thought that it would not be possible to move to part-time work in the school she worked in, because the SLT would not agree.

A member of the school leadership team in that school argued that if older teachers were to reduce their hours or responsibilities this would be *'a job for the boys situation'*, and argued that this was *'long-term not the way to go forward'*. He said that for such a move to be arranged, there would have to be *'a good reason for keeping someone'*.

4.2.3 What caused the differences between schools?

The survey data indicate that there are no differences between primary, secondary and special schools in relation to attitudes to flexibility for teachers, for example in moving from part-time to full-time work. Similarly, the case study schools included examples of both primary and secondary schools which supported or did not

support such flexibility. The range of attitudes to such flexibility is illustrated in Table 4.1. This shows that while the vast majority of headteachers as employers indicate that they try to support staff who wish to change their hours and/or responsibilities (82 per cent), only just over a quarter agreed that staff do move from full-time to part-time and vice versa. This suggests that either that teachers do not request such moves, or that the headteachers support the theory but are less happy about the practice of supporting flexibility.

Table 4.1 Headteachers as employers: Attitudes to flexibility for teachers (by school phase)

c	Primary (%)	Secondary (%)	Special and PRU (%)	All (%)
In this school, staff often move from full-time to part-time, or vice versa				
Strongly agree	4	2	1	4
Agree	24	30	20	24
Neither Agree nor Disagree	35	27	33	34
Disagree	23	26	28	23
Strongly disagree	12	11	16	12
Not stated	3	3	3	3
We try to support staff who wish to change their hours and / or responsibilities, and to retain them within the school				
Strongly agree	20	25	26	21
Agree	61	61	55	61
Neither Agree nor Disagree	14	11	15	13
Disagree	2	1	3	2
Strongly disagree	1	*	*	1
Not stated	2	3	1	2
weighted	562	63	47	672
unweighted	368	228	76	672

Based on all headteachers as employers
Source: Headteachers as employers survey

The case studies suggest that the attitude of the headteacher was the most important factor affecting the flexibility offered to teachers (see Box 4.5).

Box 4.5: Lack of support for flexibility to reduce hours

The proportion of part-time staff in Secondary C is very low in comparison with other secondary schools nationally. The headteacher expressed resistance to having many part-time teachers. He felt that it was disruptive, made timetabling difficult and was ultimately detrimental to the pupils' education. A colleague in a senior position agreed: *'Professionally I think part-time is not an asset, because it restricts what is possible.'*

Conversely, the governor and some teachers could see benefits to employing part-time teachers in terms of recruitment and staff goodwill. The governor explained that *'you've got the good will of those teachers and that goes an awful long way, good will is priceless'*, arguing that if teachers were happy in their jobs the school would benefit. She also suggested that there are advantages to having job-share teachers in that each contributes more than the fraction for which they are employed: *'if you have a job share you get more than one teacher.'*

It might have been expected that there is an optimum proportion of part-time teachers, and that schools that already employ large numbers would be reluctant to take on more. However, this was not the case. The survey showed that while one quarter (23 per cent) of headteachers as employers agreed with the statement that they 'would be happy to employ more teachers on a part-time / job-share basis', those in schools that already employed a high proportion of part-time teachers⁹ were more likely than those in schools with a low proportion to agree (28 versus 18 per cent). Similarly schools with a high proportion of part-time teachers were more likely than those with a low proportion to agree that 'staff often move from full-time to part-time, or vice versa' (43 per cent high proportion decreasing to 15 per cent low proportion).

Among the case study schools, those that already had higher numbers of part-time teachers were generally supportive of older teachers moving to part-time work. In Secondary A, for example, almost a third of the teachers (headcount) worked part-time – well above the national average for secondary schools of 15 per cent. However, the headteacher, while acknowledging the timetabling constraints and his concerns that the school was the '*at the wrong side of critical mass*' in terms of numbers of part-timers, also indicated that if staff requested to move to part work, he would try to enable them to do so. Similarly Primary G, (where there was considerable flexibility for older teachers, described in Box 4.1) had an above average number of teachers working part-time.

However, headteachers in schools where fewer part-timers were employed more often expressed unwillingness to support older teachers who wished to reduce their hours. Obviously it is not possible to tell from this whether the context influenced the views of the headteacher, or the headteacher came to the school with well-developed views about part-time teachers. But in one case study school (Special M) the headteacher indicated that when he had first arrived in the school he had been concerned about the number of part-time teachers, but he had changed his views and now saw it as an asset.

What we do with flexibility in terms of the staff is just fantastic. I was concerned about the impact on children's learning when I first came ... There is no doubt about it, the energy level the two part-time people are able to generate outweighs any continuity issues ... The other very positive thing is that they spark off each other ... The kids really benefit from it.

⁹ Schools with a high proportion of part-time teachers' are those with 31 per cent or more of teachers working part-time; 'low' is defined as 0 per cent to 15 per cent and average as '16 per cent to 30 per cent' (See Section 3.3.2).

The survey explored headteachers' attitudes to employing part-time teachers in some detail to try to tease out why some headteachers were reluctant to encourage this mode of work (see Table 4.2). The issue of timetabling was the main constraint identified. Whilst a half of headteachers (54 per cent) did agree that using part-time / job-share teachers had helped them to cover specific areas of the timetable (such as shortage secondary subjects), three-fifths (60 per cent) also agreed that 'employing part-time teachers makes timetabling more difficult'. Secondary headteachers were less likely than primary headteachers to agree with the former statement (34 and 57 per cent respectively), but more likely to agree with the latter (84 per cent secondary, 57 per cent primary), highlighting the greater obstacles encountered in employing teachers on a part-time basis at secondary school level. Overall, 49 per cent of primary and 56 per cent of secondary headteachers as employers said they would *not* be happy to employ more part-time teachers.

Further, there was no clear consensus, across all school phases, as to whether the additional costs of employing job-share teachers act as a barrier to their employment, or whether 'children benefit from being taught by a wider variety of teachers including part-time and job-share' – although secondary headteachers were more likely than their primary counterparts to disagree with the latter statement (49 versus 29 per cent).

For all statements relating to employing part-time or job-share teachers, there were no differences based on schools with a high/low proportion of teachers aged 50 or above.

Table 4.2 Headteachers as employers: Attitudes to part-time and job-share teachers

	Using part-time teachers helped cover areas of timetable (%)	Employing part-time teachers makes timetabling more difficult (%)	Children benefit from being taught by wider variety of teachers (%)	Would be happy to employ more teachers on part-time basis (%)	I prefer not to employ job-share teachers because of additional costs (%)
Strongly agree	15	20	3	2	3
Agree	39	40	27	21	18
Neither agree or disagree	23	20	34	25	42
Disagree	14	15	23	37	28
Strongly disagree	6	2	8	12	5
Not stated	4	4	4	3	4
weighted	672	672	672	672	672
unweighted	672	672	672	672	672

Based on all headteachers as employers
Source: Headteacher as employers survey

Another factor in the school which could potentially impact on headteachers' attitudes to flexibility for older teachers is the proportion of older teachers already in the school. Chapter 2 pointed out that a large number of teachers are now in their fifties and are likely to retire in the next 10 years. Among full-time qualified regular teachers, 30 per cent of those primary and secondary schools are aged 50 and over, as are 45 per cent of those in special schools (DfES, 2006b). Among *all* qualified teachers in service (i.e. including those who work part-time), the proportions are slightly higher: 30 per cent in primary, 31 per cent secondary schools and 46 per cent in special schools (DfES, 2006b and data on part-time teacher ages supplied by DCSF). However, this 'bulge' of older teachers is not evenly distributed geographically; in London a smaller percentage are aged 50 and over (GTC, 2006; DfES, 2006b¹⁰). Among the schools in the pensions survey, the mean proportion of teachers over 50 was a third (34 per cent), but ranged from 0 to 100 per cent.

The relationship between schools with a high proportion of older teachers and headteachers' attitudes to flexibility was by no means clear cut. The surveys revealed that headteachers of schools with a high proportion of older teachers were more likely than those with a low proportion to agree with the statement that 'with an ageing teacher population, I would be happy for some to move on so that we can recruit younger staff' (47 per cent those with a high proportion, decreasing to 24 per cent of those with a low proportion) and to disagree that 'retention is a greater concern than recruitment' (67 per cent high proportion decreasing to 41 per cent low proportion). Thus those schools that already had a 'bulge' of older teachers were more likely to want them to move on and to recruit younger teachers. This implies that they would be unlikely to support measures focused on retention. This was borne out in their responses to the statements about retention. They were more likely than those with few older teachers to disagree with the statement 'staff often move from full-time to part-time' (46 per cent high proportion, 34 per cent low proportion), and less likely to indicate that 'we try to support staff who wish to change their hours and/or responsibilities, and to retain them within the school' (71 per cent high proportion, 88 per cent low proportion.)

The case study schools were asked to provide age data, and this shows considerable variation. The secondary schools had percentages of teachers aged 50 and over ranging from 12 to 44 per cent, for example, and one primary and one special each had over 70 per cent of their teachers aged 50 and over. Thus the extent to which the schools were facing a 'retirement bulge' varied enormously. In

¹⁰ DfES data supplied to the research team show that 26 per cent of full-time regular qualified teachers in London are 50 and over, while the proportion in other regions ranges from 30 to 33 per cent. Similarly GTC (2006) figures show that only 30 per cent of all qualified teachers in service in London are aged 50 and over, while the equivalent figures for other regions range from 34 per cent to 37 per cent.

these schools the relationship between proportion of older teachers and attitudes to flexibility did not reflect the trends described above. Those schools with the highest proportions of older teachers were generally led by headteachers who seemed particularly aware of and responsive to their needs, and supportive of flexibility in patterns of work.

Another factor that is related to headteachers' attitudes to older teachers and their needs is the extent to which they valued their skills and experience. When asked in the survey whether their school had any particular policies or practices to enable it to benefit from the skills and experience of older teachers, four-fifths (80 per cent) of headteachers said they had nothing in place, with no differences by school phase or the proportion of older teachers (aged 50 or above) at the school.

The relatively small number – one seventh (14 per cent) – who said they did have something in place were asked to provide further information by writing in the details of their particular policies or practices. One third (32 per cent) of these headteachers with policies or practices in place detailed mentoring or coaching schemes, 15 per cent reported they used retired teachers as supply teachers and one in 10 (10 per cent) stated that they allowed older teachers to continue in a part-time role. However, no details were provided about job-share schemes.

It is clearly possible that the very different views of the headteachers about flexible working options for older staff could relate to their own age and in particular, to the training for headship which they experienced. However, two case study headteachers who were particularly supportive of flexibility were at opposite ends of the scale in relation to their ages and the dates they took up headship. One was 60, and had been a headteacher for 30 years; the other was 41 and had only just recently been appointed. Nevertheless, the survey showed some differences related to headteacher age. Older headteachers, for example, were less likely than younger teachers to agree with the statement that 'with an ageing teaching population, I would be happy for some to move on so that we can recruit younger staff' (25 per cent of those aged 55 or over increasing to 33 per cent of those aged under 40). However, younger headteachers were more likely than their older counterparts to agree that 'we try to support staff who wish to change their hours and/or responsibilities, and to retain them within the school' (86 per cent aged under 40 decreasing to 76 per cent aged 55 or over).

The survey findings also revealed some differences related to gender. Women, for example, were more likely than men to agree that 'in this school, staff often move from full-time to part-time, or vice-versa' (30 versus 21 per cent).

Overall, then, the survey suggests that the schools most likely to support flexible retirement patterns will be those led by women, where there are already a large number of part-time teachers, but not a disproportionate number of older teachers.

4.2.4 Other differences that related to the school context

In addition to the difference in headteachers' attitudes to older teachers reducing their hours or their responsibilities, there were a number of other differences that relate to school context. For example, the case studies suggested that in schools with a large number of older teachers, staff were more likely to have conversations about pensions, and to have experienced colleagues retiring. Such talk was an important source of pensions information (or in some cases, misinformation) for many interviewees. This will be reviewed in Chapter 5.

There also seemed to be differences between schools in the patterns of teacher retirements that had taken place (in some schools most teachers worked to 60, while in others the norm was to retire early); such observed patterns inevitably impact on other teachers' thinking. These differences will be discussed in Chapter 6.

In designing the samples for the survey and case studies, we had speculated that there may be differences in teacher retirement (and thus the likely impact of the TPS changes) that relate to factors in the school context such as neighbourhood, pupil intake (including level of eligibility for free school meals); attainment levels, and so on. These factors will be considered throughout the report.

4.3 Decisions about retirement

We turn now to consider the context in relation to employees and their decisions about when to retire. As Chapter 2 showed, such decisions take into account a wide range of factors. This section explores survey responses and interview data about these factors, considering first those that encourage them to stay in teaching and then those that encourage them to leave the profession.

4.3.1 Factors encouraging teachers to remain in teaching

In the survey, employees were asked to select from a list provided the three factors that were most important in encouraging them to stay in teaching, and to rank these in order of importance. Table 4.3 shows the percentage of teachers in each age group selecting factors as the most important to them.

Table 4.3 Employees: Highest ranked factor encouraging employees to stay in teaching (by age)

	49-51 (%)	52-54 (%)	55-57 (%)	58-60 (%)	All (%)
SCHOOL BASED FACTORS	33	36	37	49	37
Enjoyment of teaching	25	25	25	34	26
Still have a lot to offer teaching	3	6	7	7	6
Enjoy social aspects of work	*	1	3	4	2
Enjoy status of current role	1	1	2	3	2
Hope to take on new challenges or roles at work	2	2	1	1	2
FINANCE RELATED FACTORS	39	39	37	25	36
Financial commitments that prohibit retirement	22	20	12	9	17
Cannot afford to retire	11	10	10	6	10
Want to build larger pension	6	9	14	10	10
OTHER FACTORS	15	13	9	8	10
I'm not old enough to retire	13	10	3	1	7
Always expected to work until 60 or above	1	2	2	5	2
Partner still working	1	1	2	2	1
NOT STATED	14	13	18	18	15
Weighted	1018	1176	1127	544	3865
Unweighted	842	1002	1354	667	3865

Based on all employees.
Source: Employee survey

Factors have been grouped as school-based, finance-related and other. The school based or financial factors were the most prominent in encouraging employees to remain in teaching.

School based factors

Survey data about the school based factors show that:

- Over a third (37 per cent) selected a school based factor as their *main* reason for staying in the profession;
- Two thirds (65 per cent) selected a school based factor as one of the three most important factors; and
- Five per cent selected *only* school-based factors.

'I enjoy teaching' was by far the most frequently selected factor encouraging employees to stay in teaching; a quarter specified this as their main reason. In comparison, the other school-based factors were selected as most important by relatively few teachers. Next most frequently selected was 'I still have a lot to offer in teaching' (six per cent).

Older employees (aged 58 to 60) were more likely than their younger counterparts (aged 49 to 51) to choose a school-based factor as their main reason for staying in teaching (49 versus 33 per cent), as were part-time compared with full-time

employees (42 versus 36 per cent). There were no other differences amongst sub-groups in the choice of most important factor.

Females were more likely than males to select at least one of the school-based factors (67 versus 61 per cent). Headteachers and deputy or assistant headteachers were more likely than teachers to select *only* school based factors (nine versus four per cent).

Teachers' responses in the interviews echoed those from the survey data. However, the qualitative data provide a more detailed picture of which aspects teachers enjoyed most about their work. We spoke to very few teachers who did not enjoy at least some aspect of their job. Many spoke of their love of teaching and the enjoyment they got from helping children to learn. One teacher explained:

I had some Year 10 this morning and they are a low ability group doing ionic bonding and seeing them actually understand and be able to do electron transfers, this is fantastic! I came out with a really good feeling. And so I think the best part of the job must be seeing the delight when children do achieve. (Secondary science teacher, f, 53)

For many of the teachers it was classroom teaching which was identified as a part of their job from which they derived greatest satisfaction.

I think the things that you enjoy are the basic things. When you have a really good lesson, for me that's my biggest kick and this morning, when you have a tiring lesson where they weren't thinking, it's a downer. So I think just really to carry on in teaching, I think just having a really good lesson is the thing. (Secondary teacher, f, 54)

Others spoke of their reasons for becoming teachers, explaining that it was not to do with money, it was a vocation: '*the reason you become a teacher is making a difference really*'.

Working with the children, that's still the nicest part. Wages have never been important to me, I mean they are important, but the actual work is the most important thing. I love working with young children. (Primary teacher, f, 58)

Some of those interviewed spoke of the challenges which they were still keen to take on before they left the profession. Senior leaders appeared to look forward to new challenges in their job more than classroom teachers; this was borne out by the survey data which show that while 16 per cent of headteachers and 12 per cent of deputy and assistant headteachers chose this factor among their three, only five per cent of teachers selected it. Some spoke about wanting to see new initiatives and plans through to the end before leaving their schools. For example, one headteacher said he hoped to stay at his school until the new sixth form had

opened. He was reluctant to leave the school at such a '*fantastically exciting stage in its development*'. Another spoke about her love of the school, and said it would be '*a tremendous wrench, I think, leaving here, to leave such a high powered job and working at this pace.*'

Some of those interviewed had taught in the same school for many years, or for their whole teaching career. They obviously felt great affection and loyalty towards their schools and had built up a rapport with the communities in which they worked. One had been headteacher of the same school for 30 years, and still felt that there was more work for him to do in the school. Other teachers had taught generations of the same family. One teacher who planned to continue teaching into his sixties referred to '*being part of a successful community really, everybody knows you and you are known outside the institution as well.*'

The social aspect of work was important to teachers. Some of those interviewed spoke warmly of working as part of a team and of the satisfaction they gained from passing on experience to younger colleagues. Enjoying the company of fellow teachers was particularly important for those teachers who were single.

For a minority of teachers their professional status encouraged them to stay in teaching. The survey showed that this was far more important to headteachers (21 per cent selected 'I enjoy the status gained from my current role' among their three factors) than deputy and assistant headteachers (14 per cent) and teachers (five per cent). Some interviewees explained that they would miss this when they left the profession. A primary teacher argued that, '*The way you feel about yourself, your self-worth, all my life, has been judged by my job*'. Similarly, a secondary maths teacher (f, 57) said: '*I like my professional status and I worry about retiring and becoming a nobody.*' However, she went on to say that while status was important, it was not as important as finance: '*Were I to win money, my premium bond or my lottery, both of which I have, I would chuck it tomorrow.*'

Financial factors

In the survey, three finance-related factors were listed. Analysis shows that:

- Over a third (36 per cent) selected a finance based factor as their *main* reason for staying in the profession;
- Two thirds (65 per cent) chose a finance based factor as one of the three most important factors; and
- Seven per cent selected *only* finance based factors.

These findings were almost identical to those in relation to school based factors (above). This illustrates the diversity in employees' perspectives.

The factor identified as the most important was, 'I have financial commitments that prohibit retirement e.g. mortgage, children's education' (selected as most important by 17 per cent). 'I cannot yet afford to retire' and 'I want to build up a larger pension' were each selected by one in 10 respondents.

Teachers were more likely than headteachers to select a financial issue as their main reason for staying in the profession (38 versus 29 per cent), as were full-time compared with part-time employees (38 versus 32 per cent). A financial factor was also more likely to be chosen by younger (49 to 51) compared with older employees (58 to 60) (39 versus 25 per cent). These differences were also found in relation to whether any financial factor was identified among the three most important.

In the interviews, teachers highlighted the importance of finance in terms of their decision as to when to leave teaching. For some teachers, finance was the most important factor. One teacher explained that retirement decisions involve weighing up different factors: '*It isn't 100 per cent the money but it is over 50 per cent, the money, and certainly it is the enjoyment of teaching most of all*' (Secondary teacher, f, 56).

Some of the teachers interviewed would very much have liked to have retired early, but financial considerations made them stay in teaching.

Oh it's financial, it's nothing else at all, really it's just financial. To be honest you know if somebody said, right, here is a lump of money, I would go now. (Special school teacher, f, 57)

This was particularly the case for those teachers who had fewer years of pensionable service. For these teachers, finance was often an over-riding concern.

It's because I'm not going to get an enormous pension as it is, and if I stay full-time to 60 I think I'll have 22 years service which gives me about a 25 per cent of retirement salary and it's not huge. (Secondary teacher, f, 56)

In one of the case study schools, all four of the teachers interviewed said that they were staying in teaching only to maximise their pensions.

Teachers also talked about the importance of the size of the actuarial reduction, were they to retire early. A number of teachers said that this had acted as a barrier preventing them from retiring:

Well I'm 56 this year so obviously retirement's not far off. To be frank if I could retire now I would, but I'm obviously, with the actuarial reduction, it irks me that having done 32 years they knock such a large chunk off. (Secondary teacher, m, 55)

Financial commitments were also seen as important. Some interviewees currently had children at university and spoke of their plans to retire in relation to when their children's courses would finish, while others had planned the date of their retirement around when they predicted their children would be financially independent:

In four years' time my son, if he doesn't do medicine, will have finished university so that will be a break point that gives me the chance to think about what I want to do. (Special school headteacher, m, 53)

The other major financial factor which prevented teachers from retiring was their mortgage. One 50 year old secondary teacher said, *'If I could pay off enough of the mortgage, I'd retire at 60'*. As well as financial commitments to first homes, some teachers also had mortgages on second homes abroad, which they had bought as long term investments, but which they were tied to in the meantime.

My mortgage would have been done and dusted by next year if we hadn't bought this property [abroad] so it's changed the scenario for retirement because that's a factor now. (Secondary teacher, m, 52)

Box 4.6: Staying for financial reasons: Secondary teacher, m, 50

Tom Mason had taken some breaks in his career and estimated that he had about 25 years pensionable service altogether. He had very little awareness of or interest in teachers' pensions. For him, finance would be *'the major factor'*, and it was this which was keeping him in teaching:

Everything is encouraging me to leave. I'll retire as soon as I financially can, but because I don't want to take a reduced pension, because I don't think I can make ends meet.

He planned his retirement around his mortgage payments, and went on to expand on the aspects of teaching which make him want to leave:

I hate the obsession with targets and figures, I hate all the fiddles that go on, I hate the whole atmosphere of trying to outdo other schools and compete. I dislike the pathetic circle of publicity that schools go through, all of that.

4.3.2 Factors encouraging teachers to leave the profession

As well as asking about reasons for staying in teaching, the survey included a list of factors that could encourage teachers to retire. Employees were asked to select the three they considered the most important, and to rank them, in exactly the same way as for the previous list. The highest ranked factors are shown on Table 4.4.

Table 4.4 Employees: Highest ranked factor encouraging employees to leave teaching (by age full-time / part-time status)

	49-54 (%)	55-60 (%)	Full-time (%)	Part-time (%)	All (%)
HEALTH RELATED FACTORS	39	39	40	34	39
Want to retire when healthy and able to enjoy it	38	37	39	32	37
Health is poor	2	2	2	2	2
SCHOOL BASED FACTORS	35	30	32	35	33
Don't enjoy some aspects of current work	20	20	18	28	20
Not achieving satisfactory work-life balance	13	8	13	6	11
Would like to move to more flexible work / self-employment	1	2	2	1	2
FAMILY RELATED FACTORS	7	9	7	10	8
Want to spend more time with family	5	5	5	6	5
Partner has already retired	1	3	2	3	2
I have responsibilities as a carer	1	1	1	1	1
FINANCE RELATED FACTORS	3	4	3	4	3
Feel future is financially secure	2	2	2	1	2
I have already built up an adequate pension	1	1	1	2	1
OTHER FACTORS	4	5	4	5	4
Want to pursue hobbies / interests	2	4	3	3	3
Want to move to another area / country	2	1	2	2	2
NOT STATED	12	15	13	13	13
weighted	2194	1671	2982	673	3865
unweighted	1844	2021	3134	530	3865

Based on all employees
Source: Employee survey

Factors related to health and school were most frequently identified (39 per cent, 33 per cent). Smaller proportions identified factors related to family (eight per cent), finance (three per cent), and hobbies (also three per cent). The interviews with teachers echoed these findings.

Health related factors

In both the survey and the interviews, employees highlighted the importance of health related issues, and the influence that this would have over their decision as to when to leave teaching. Analysis of the survey data show that:

- Two fifths (39 per cent) mentioned a health related factor as the *main* reason encouraging them to leave teaching; and
- Nearly seven in 10 (69 per cent) mentioned a health related factor (amongst their top three factors encouraging them to leave).

The factor most frequently selected as the main reason for retiring was 'I want to retire while healthy and able to enjoy it' (37 per cent). In contrast, only two per cent selected 'My health is poor'.

Full-time employees were more likely than their part-time counterparts to select a health related factor as the main issue encouraging them to leave teaching (40 compared with 34 per cent). This was also the case for deputy and assistant headteachers compared with teachers (46 versus 38 per cent). Deputy and assistant headteachers were also more likely than teachers to identify a health related factor as one of the three most important (73 versus 68 per cent). There were no differences based on age.

Echoing the survey data, many of the teachers interviewed identified a desire to leave teaching while they were still healthy enough to enjoy it. There was a perception among those interviewed that their health would deteriorate the longer they spent teaching. It was almost as if it was inevitable that at some point the stress of teaching would become too much and their health would suffer. This was discussed by teachers of all ages, not just those who were very near to retirement.

Health was said to be more important to teachers' retirement decisions than the size of their pensions.

Once you get to a certain age and your health deteriorates, quite honestly the money doesn't do anything for you. (Secondary teacher, m, 55)

I think obviously your own health, because at the end of the day that's the most important thing. And I think if you felt that you weren't enjoying the job and it was making you ill and stressed and so on, then I think I would consider having a slightly less pension ... rather than ploughing on to 60 or beyond just to gain that little bit more. (Secondary teacher, f, 51)

There was also a belief that those who stayed longer in teaching were more likely to become ill: a secondary teacher (f, 54) referred to '*the number of people who've had sudden health problems and haven't lived to enjoy their retirement.*'

Eight interviewees (mainly male senior leaders) alluded to '*statistics*' or '*research*' that demonstrated that the longer teachers remained in teaching, the more likely they were to die prematurely, or, in some cases, that working full-time up to retirement was likely to result in early death. This '*evidence*' was used by teachers as a way of rationalising their belief that they should retire early, *before* they got ill. As we explained in Chapter 2, such beliefs have been reported in a wide range of professions, and research shows that there is no evidence to support them (see, for example, Morris *et al.*, 1994; Trichopoulos, 1996; Tsai *et al.*, 2005). For examples of mortality myths, see Box 4.7. The last example illustrates a slightly different belief, arguing that going from full-time work straight into retirement was associated with higher mortality.

Box 4.7: References to mortality data

I like a challenge and I don't get stressed per se about the job but I'm quite conscious that if I worked to 65 the projected length of life for a teacher who works to 65 is 18 months. Apparently, in terms of average. (Secondary teacher, m, 52)

You know yourself from all of the research you do that if you retire at 60 the chances are you'll be dead by 72, you know. Why stay on till you're 72 to die the next day that you walk out the door? (Secondary headteacher, m, 52)

Because we're an educated bunch, most people know actuarial statistics and when you look at the data about mortality and longevity, you know, if you teach beyond 60 the statistics are not exactly going in your favour really so I think that will always be a feature really. (Special school headteacher, m, 53)

I mean, there is a lot of evidence that a lot of people that sort of stay up until the bitter end, fulltime, full whack don't last terribly long into retirement. I think that is more true of men than women actually, the last time I read the research. (Secondary headteacher, f, 51)

Also related to health was the issue of energy, which was brought up repeatedly during the interviews. Teachers spoke of losing energy as they get older, becoming 'burnt out' and 'worn out'. Many suggested that this would happen around age 57 or 58. This was not strictly speaking to do with ill health, but rather to do with ageing, and a perception of getting old. Teachers emphasised throughout the interviews that adequate levels of energy were vital to being an effective teacher, and that the older teachers become, the less energy they have.

You know, I'm conscious of the fact that I just haven't got the stamina I used to have. I'm getting very, very tired; it's a tiring job at the best of times. And I can't do it. Which is, I think, the point at which you stop. (Secondary teacher, f 56)

There was also a feeling that energy was related to competence and that if they did not have the right levels of energy then they would not be able to do the job effectively:

What I see very often as people get old is that they get tired, very good teachers get tired, and their impact in the classroom on a day to day basis becomes less and less effective. (Secondary headteacher, m, 56)

Those teachers who had already reduced their hours or responsibilities in the lead up to their retirement spoke of being 're-energised' or 'reinvigorated'. Spending less time in the school had helped them to preserve some of their energies and they felt they were able to go back into the classroom and deliver more effective lessons.

School based factors

School based factors were important in influencing employees to leave teaching. In the survey, employees selected a number of negative aspects of the profession that affected their levels of job satisfaction. In summary:

- A third of employees (33 per cent) identified a school based factor as their *main* reason encouraging them to leave teaching;
- Almost three quarters (72 per cent) selected a school based factor as one of the three most important; and
- Two per cent identified *only* school based factors.

'I do not enjoy some aspects of my current work (e.g. paperwork, initiatives, pupil behaviour)' was the most frequently selected school based factor encouraging employees to leave the profession (a fifth of employees selected this as the most important factor). One in 10 selected 'I am not currently achieving a satisfactory work-life balance' as the most important, and a further two per cent indicated a preference for other forms of work by selecting 'I would like to move to more flexible work or self-employment or voluntary work' as the most important.

Employees who worked in special/PRU schools were less likely than those at primary or secondary schools to select a school based factor (26 versus 33 per cent of both primary and secondary school employees). Teachers were more likely to select a school factor as the most important (35 per cent) than headteachers (29 per cent), deputy and assistant headteachers (24 per cent) and supply teachers (23 per cent). This pattern was also repeated in relation to specific factors. For example, 58 per cent of teachers selected 'I do not enjoy some aspects of my current work (e.g. paperwork, initiatives, pupil behaviour)' as one of their three factors, but only 42 per cent of headteachers and 37 per cent deputy or assistant headteachers did so. However, headteachers were more likely than teachers to select 'I am not currently achieving a satisfactory work-life balance' among their three factors (47 per cent headteachers versus 40 per cent deputy and assistant headteachers and 37 per cent teachers). Thus it appears that different aspects of the job are seen as concerns by those in differing roles.

Younger teachers (49 to 54) were also more likely than their older counterparts (55 to 60) to select a school based factor (75 versus 69 per cent).

In interviews, teachers identified a wide range of factors relating to the school that encouraged them to leave teaching; these will be explored here. Some of these echoed those discussed above in relation to the survey, while others emerged only in the qualitative data.

Many interviewees explained that the over-riding factor in deciding when to retire would be the extent to which they were still enjoying teaching, and whether they still considered themselves to be effective teachers:

I was very tired and I suppose I was fearful of getting crabby. Do you know what I mean? I didn't want to be a rock star that went on too long.
(Special school teacher, f, 59)

Again you get past your sell-by date if you try and do it for too long.
(Secondary headteacher, f, 55)

Teachers referred to colleagues who had 'stayed too long', and they explained that they would rather leave earlier than become like them.

The specific aspects of their job that interviewees did not enjoy were identified as: dissatisfaction with changing government initiatives; increasing amount of planning and paperwork; a target driven culture; and falling standards in pupil behaviour. 'Change fatigue' was an issue identified by a number of teachers, and contributed to the levels of stress felt by teachers. There was a feeling that changes were imposed without there being the time to assimilate and implement them properly:

The profession is still becoming more and more stressful with all the government changes all the time ... and you get to the point and you think I haven't got the energy to do it any more. Now I think more and more I'm aware of more staff going early if they can than possibly I was when I started teaching. (Secondary teacher, f, 54)

Planning featured in many interviews; some teachers suggested that this was a particular issue for older teachers who had started their careers in a very different climate. Planning was identified in relation to work-life balance, in that many of those interviewed were doing at least some of their planning in their own time, outside of school. There was a perception that more time spent planning meant less time was being spent actually teaching:

I enjoy least the fact that I feel I've got less and less time to do what I came into the job to do, which is prepare decent lessons, teach decent lessons, talk to the children, and I'm spending far more of my time doing other paper exercises. (Secondary teacher, m, 55)

Teachers explained how much of their life outside school was taken up by school related tasks and how they struggled to find time to fit other things around school work. One headteacher said she worked '70 hours every week minimum', and a secondary teacher explained, 'My school work dominates my life, evenings, weekends, if we want to go out at all at weekend, I have to plan and think ahead.' Some suggested that they would achieve a more satisfactory work-life balance if they took phased retirement working part-time, or if they retired completely.

Pupil behaviour was also an issue. Some saw it as a '*sign of the times*' and felt that it was related to changes in society as a whole, with pupils generally being less respectful and worse behaved than they had been in the past. Others linked it to themselves, in the sense that as they got older, they found they were less tolerant of poor pupil behaviour which would not previously have bothered them:

I'm less patient, less tolerant of bad behaviour but I think that is generally as you get older you become like that and so that does reflect. ... I'm quite a calm teacher and I have got lots of patience but I do know that I'm not as patient as I used to be. (Primary teacher, f, 51)

Other factors

Teachers also identified a number of factors which 'pulled' them into retirement. These included a desire to spend more time with family and friends, and a desire to have more time for hobbies and travel. One teacher retired early at 56 so as to move to America to be nearer his daughter and her family. Some explained that they had made their retirement decisions in conjunction with their partners, and many couples planned their retirement dates specifically so as to coincide: '*My husband's a couple of years younger than me so he thinks he'd like to go to 55 so that we might actually retire together*' (Secondary teacher, f, 54). A small number of teachers also said they needed to retire in order to care for other family members. Plans for after their retirement are explored further in Chapter 6.

While many teachers indicated that they were staying in teaching for financial reasons, only a small number of teachers said that their financial security encouraged them to leave teaching. This applied mainly to headteachers, particularly those in large schools, whose salary was greater than that of class teachers. For them, the issue of maximising their pension was of less importance:

Well I'm lucky with the pension because I think compared to the private sector we've got a lot to be grateful for, and because this is one of the biggest schools in the country, so as a headteacher to some extent I've hit the jackpot really. (Special school headteacher, m, 53)

A few teachers explained that investments made with retirement in mind would enable them to retire earlier. One had also inherited money: '*not millions or anything but we've got enough to tide us over and I've got ISAs and we've got things that we can use that we can draw out on in savings*' (Secondary headteacher, f, 58).

There were also some teachers whose pension would be so low that they saw no point in staying in teaching simply for the sake of increasing their pension. One had decided to leave 10 months early on an actuarially reduced pension because she felt that staying would have made little difference:

The financial side is dire and it's not any better if I stay another 10 months. It's 19 point whatever and if I stay on its 20/80s; neither of which are adequate and they never will be adequate even if I worked until I was 80 and so there is no point in bothering. (Special school teacher, f, 59)

4.3.3 The place of finance in retirement decisions

We have shown that financial factors were far more often identified as reasons for staying in teaching than for leaving. In a separate question, employees were asked 'In relation to the whole range of factors that you may be taking into account in thinking about your retirement, how important is a) the size of your pension, and b) the arrangements about how and when you can access it?' The majority of employees indicated that these factors were very important (71 per cent for size, and 66 per cent for access) (see Table 4.5).

Table 4.5 Employees: Importance of size of teachers' pension / ability to access pension when thinking about retirement

	All (%)
Size of pension	
Very important	71
Somewhat important	25
Not very important	3
Not at all important	*
Not applicable/Not stated	1
Ability to access pension	
Very important	66
Somewhat important	27
Not very important	4
Not at all important	1
Not applicable/Not stated	2
weighted	3865
unweighted	3865

Based on all employees.
Source: Employee survey

Headteachers and deputy or assistant headteachers were more likely to find pension size a very important factor as were male employees compared with their female counterparts (75 versus 69 per cent). Part-time employees were less likely to find either factor very important (both 54 per cent).

4.4 Understanding of pensions

The final section of this chapter explores employees' general understanding of teachers' pensions; the next chapter will focus specifically on their awareness and understanding of the changes. As we have seen in the previous sections, finance considerations play a significant part in employees' retirement decisions, with the amount of pension received and when it can be drawn, both major influences. For

teachers to make informed retirement decisions they require a certain level of knowledge and understanding of the TPS; both the questionnaire and the interviews investigated this. The qualitative research uncovered a very wide range of levels of understanding, and we review this before turning to the survey data.

A few interviewees did have a clear understanding of how the pension was calculated, and some had worked out exactly how much they would get:

I got a calculator out last night and I was looking, and adding up all the stuff and it looks as if I would be, if I took into account the state pension, the stakeholder and the AVC, and my statement I've got from this teachers thing I would be earning just under half what I earn now, which I think is quite good. (Special school teacher, f, 54)

These interviewees were in the minority. Some interviewees remembered how the teachers' pension was calculated, but were unclear what they might get, because they were not sure what their final salary might be, or because they did not know how many years of contributions they had. Others had no idea at all; one interviewee confessed that on hearing about the interview she had asked a colleague to find out how the pension was determined:

When I heard that we were going to have this meeting I think I asked the question, 'How does it work out, this pension business?' Someone said what happens is if you work 40 years, you get half your final salary and it's index linked. (Secondary teacher, f, 50)

Interviewees' level of knowledge about their state pension benefits was also variable. There were interviewees who made no mention of the state pension, and those who had factored this into their retirement plans. For some interviewees, there was confusion between the changes made to the state pension and those made to TPS.

As well as a lack of information, the qualitative work uncovered a number of misunderstandings, some of which are listed here. As participants often did not realise that their understandings of pensions were inaccurate, these misunderstandings emerged during the course of the interviews. We indicate here the number of interviewees that made incorrect statements of each type, but these figures must be understood as the minimum numbers of those holding the misconception. These misunderstandings are important, because they illustrate the extent to which some teachers did not understand their pensions, but also, importantly, because some teachers had made or were planning career and retirement decisions on the basis of their misunderstanding.

If someone works part-time their pension is calculated as a fraction of their part-time salary (seven teachers). (In fact, if someone works part-time

they build up years of service more slowly than if they were full-time, but their pension is based on their full-time equivalent salary.) One part-time teacher offered to embrace the researcher who informed her that this was not the case. Some part-time teachers intended to work full-time for their last few years because they thought this would vastly increase their pensions, and others were reluctant to go part-time because they thought this would vastly reduce their pension.

The lump sum and pension can be taken separately (six teachers). (In fact, the lump sum and the pension must be taken at the same time; both are actuarially reduced if taken before 60.) Several teachers said that if they retired early they planned to take their lump sum and not their monthly pension. In some cases they thought that the lump sum would then be actuarially reduced, but the pension would not be.

The size of the pension is related to the monetary value of contributions made during the years of teaching (one teacher). (In fact the total pension is dependent on the number of years service and the final/‘average’ salary.) When speaking about shedding responsibilities (moving from a headship position to a teaching position in the last years of teaching) one interviewee commented that this would mean *‘You wouldn’t lose too much on your pension contributions, you can continue to pay at your current rate can’t you?’*

A ‘full’ pension is two-thirds of final salary (three teachers). (In fact, the maximum total pensionable service that can be used in the calculation of retirement benefits is 45 years, giving a full pension of nine sixteenths.) At least one teacher said he expected to get two-thirds of his final salary on retirement, and other teachers said they felt they had been cheated out of a promised two-thirds.

You have to take your pension when you stop teaching (four teachers). (In fact you can leave teaching before 60 and choose not to draw your pension until 60). Several interviewees wanted to leave teaching and not draw their pension until they were sixty, and asked the interviewer if this would be possible.

Actuarial reduction is punishment for leaving early. (In fact, there is a cost to early retirement because the pension is likely to be paid for longer than expected; actuarial reduction is the member bearing some or all of that cost). Some teachers remembered when it had been possible to leave before 60 on a full pension and saw actuarial reduction as a sanction for leaving early. Other teachers described it in very negative terms, using words such as *‘punitive’*, *‘knocking a large chunk off’*, *‘detrimental’* and *‘losing a lot of pension’* to describe actuarial reduction. Only one teacher commented that although he would lose money in his total pension, he would gain money by getting pension between 57 and 60. This teacher described taking a long time to come to this realisation. Many other teachers had not thought this deeply about actuarial reduction.

For each year of 'early retirement', the actuarial reduction is five per cent of the pension you would have received at 60, up to a maximum of 25 per cent at age 55. (In fact, for a teacher who would have 40 years service at age 60, one year's actuarial reduction would decrease the final pension by approximately nine per cent, and five years by 35 per cent. The five per cent figure refers to the reduction in comparison with the pension that would normally be awarded for their years of service at the point they left, but by continuing to 60 they would increase their years of service.) This misunderstanding was very widespread; all those who talked about levels of actuarial reduction quoted a reduction of five per cent for each year before 60 (six teachers). Some had made their decision on whether early retirement was financially viable based on the idea that they were losing five per cent of the benefits they would have had at 60.

My partner is not entitled to my benefits when I die. At least one teacher told us that she had not realised before that her husband had any right to her pension. Other teachers were confused about what their partner might get when they died. This confusion appears to have risen partly because of the different dates from which family benefits automatically apply for married men (1972), married women (1988), civil partners (1988) and nominated partners (2007).

Part-time teachers were automatically included under the previous regulations. (In fact, under the previous regulations, part-time teachers had to opt into TPS). While some part-time teachers had specifically checked that they were still contributing to their pension, others were not aware that they had needed to opt in and out. One interviewee just assumed that she was contributing. At least two women had not paid in for some years of their careers because they had not realised the need to opt in.

Pension contributions were made during my career break to have children. (While women receiving statutory maternity pay continue to be a member of the scheme and their pensionable service increases; however a longer break without statutory or contractual pay results in leaving the scheme). Some women were clear that they had not been contributing while they had their career break for children. Two were unclear about whether or not they had, and one seemed to believe that she might have done: *'I had some maternity leave in 1986. While I wasn't working I opted to pay a stamp which you can do. I don't know whether that's teachers' pensions'* (Special school teacher, f, 53).

There is an age at which I will be forced to retire. (Four teachers believed they would be required to leave at 60, 65 or after 40 years service) (In fact, there is no compulsion to leave TPS; service can be accrued until age 75 – or 70 in the pre-2007 regulations - as long as the maximum number of 45 years has not been exceeded, however, if a member retires after 75 they will not receive a lump sum). Several teachers were unsure how long they would be allowed to stay in teaching, should they wish.

I can stay on until 60, but I could stay on longer I suppose couldn't I? But anyway, can I stay on till 63? (Secondary teacher, f, 51)

As is obvious from this list, some interviewees had a number of misunderstandings about their pension, and at worst, these misunderstandings had already shaped their decisions in relation to their pension. In some cases, these misunderstandings also hindered their understanding of the pensions changes.

As well as very different levels of knowledge, interviewees also displayed very varied levels of confidence about their knowledge. FSA research suggests that consumers are generally less confident about the information, advice and choices they make in relation to pension products than any other financial product (Financial Services Consumer Panel, 2006). We found that interviewees' confidence was sometimes, but not always, related to their knowledge and awareness. There were interviewees who had very little confidence, but when pressed, seemed to have understood the basic facts about their pension. Others expressed absolute confidence in understandings that were entirely incorrect.

Interviewees also had a number of worries and emotions associated with talking about their pension. For some, pensions were an issue of considerable anxiety. Some interviewees made reference to being 'burnt' by endowment policies, or to the failure of other pension schemes, to illustrate their doubts or concerns about the TPS.

Other interviewees were angry about the fact that they had been allowed to take out some of their pension when they had previously taken a break from teaching. Some were philosophical about this; others felt resentment over the perceived misinformation and losing out on something that would now be very valuable.

There was also a certain amount of embarrassment and shame among interviewees, who felt that they ought to understand their pensions better. For example, one researcher's field notes record:

This was a very authoritative and generally confident lady. When she was talking about her job, she leant forward, looked me in the eyes and spoke clearly and calmly. When I asked her about pensions, she leant back in the chair, folded her arms and seemed uncomfortable and defensive. The first thing she said when she came into the room was, 'I don't know much about my pension'.

A primary headteacher described the idea that people don't think about pensions as '*an awful thing to say*', even though '*you perhaps should, but you don't*'.

Several interviewees described being somewhat baffled by the language that was used to explain pensions, as this quotation illustrates:

It was 'if you've done, and if you've done this, and minus one eightieth, and de de'. And it sort of went on like this and in some ridiculous way there was some sense in there, but again it was like a load of formula. And so it was, put that away till you need to worry about it. (Secondary teacher, f, 54)

We found that for some interviewees a way of keeping up to date with pensions information was through annual statements of benefits. Two interviewees said they had not received any statements at all; some interviewees had not received statements for some time, and others had received statements that were several years out of date because of problems in their local authority. Two teachers reported having noticed problems through looking at their annual statements, such as part-time service or service in another school not being recorded. Others felt the statements were hard to understand:

One of the things that somebody said to me the other day was, when we have our letter from county that tells us what the lump sum's going to be, and what our pension's going to be, is that if we carried on to 60 or is that now? That's not even clear; I don't know what the answer is. I can't do it for this year, but say next year, is that what I'd get in a year's time or is that what I'd get in three years time? (Secondary teacher, f, 56)

Returning to the questionnaire responses, we find that a quarter of employees said they kept up to date with pensions' information while three fifths of employees said they had a broad awareness as to how their pension was calculated (see Table 4.6). Employees who said they kept up to date were more likely to be older (increasing from one in 10 employees aged 49 to 51 to four in 10 aged 58 to 60). They were also more likely to be headteachers or deputy/assistant head teachers (both 30 per cent compared with 21 per cent of teachers).

However, bearing in mind the misconceptions held by those who believed they understood their pension, and the levels of discomfort among interviewees who felt they did not understand, it seems likely that the 'broad awareness' category (see Table 4.6) may include a great mix of levels of understanding.

Table 4.6 Employees: Attitude to Teachers Pensions information (by age and gender)

	49-51 (%)	52-54 (%)	55-57 (%)	58-60 (%)	Male (%)	Female (%)	All (%)
Keep up to date with pensions' information	12	19	32	39	35	20	24
Have broad awareness of how pension is calculated	62	63	55	50	56	60	59
Find pensions information confusing	16	12	9	7	5	14	12
Not yet looked at the pensions' information	8	5	3	3	3	6	5
Not stated	1	1	1	2	2	1	1
weighted	1018	1176	1127	544	1050	2815	3865
unweighted	842	1002	1354	667	1489	2376	3865

Based on all employees
Source: Employee survey

Overall, 12 per cent of respondents said that they found pensions information confusing. This was a view frequently expressed by interviewees, sometimes in relation to talks about pensions, or their pensions statements (see above) but also more generally in relation to pensions information from TPS or unions.

Opinions were somewhat divided on the subject of the website; some interviewees had found it helpful, others complained that it was difficult to find what they were looking for, and others were not aware that it existed.

There was also a concern expressed by several teachers that they would only be allowed to make detailed enquiries about their pension a set number of times; these teachers felt they did not want to 'waste' these questions while they were still a long way from retirement.

A greater proportion of younger employees (49 to 54) said they found pensions information confusing, and a smaller proportion said they had a good understanding and knew how much they would receive compared to older employees. Although levels of understanding for both males and females improved with age, older females (55 to 60) were more likely than their male counterparts (55 to 60) to say they found pensions information confusing (10 versus four per cent).

Five per cent of questionnaire respondents said that they had not yet looked at pensions information. In some cases this was because they felt that their retirement was a long way off (see Box 4.8).

Box 4.8: 'It's literally this last couple of months that it has hit us'

Several teachers said they had become more interested in pensions as they had approached retirement:

It's only just over this last, literally this last couple of months, ... that it has hit us that actually in five years time you know I am going to be approaching 60. And so we ... really been thinking, quite seriously if you like. Before that we had got everything planned and everything but it all seemed a long way away. But now we have suddenly realised it is not very far away at all. (Special School teacher, f, 54)

When you get to a certain age with retirement looming and then any article that has got the word pensions written on it you read because it suddenly becomes really important to you. And so I'm aware of them I've read them all. (Primary headteacher, m, 59)

One 59-year-old secondary headteacher explained that she had been to a retirement seminar several years ago, but although it was very good, she had not taken much in because 'at that time I hadn't got retirement in my mind, I knew it was going to happen within however long, but I didn't retain it ... whereas if I was going to do it now it would be so immediate.' And a 51-year old primary teacher argued that 'You can have a staff meeting and be given the literature but it's not until you have to think about when you are going to retire that really you start reading the small print and think, oh yes.'

Others were so happy in their work that they did not wish to consider retirement; others felt too busy to investigate pensions issues properly. There were some interviewees who were very fatalistic about pensions: they could not be sure they would live that long, or they believed they would get the same amount of pension whether they looked into it or not (Box 4.9 for more detail).

Box 4.9: Reasons interviewees gave for not thinking about pensions

Some interviewees did not want to think about a time when they would not be teaching because they enjoyed their work, or because *'the school is my family'*. One explained her lack of knowledge about pensions by saying, *'I can't imagine not working; I think that's the thing'* (Secondary teacher, f, 50). Other interviewees felt too busy to take notice of information about pensions. As one put it, *'It's just lack of time. [Teachers] just do everything in the day for our job and we don't think about the future, it's not very good'* (Primary headteacher, f, 51). Others felt pensions were uninteresting, and therefore did not wish to investigate further:

I've no interest in [the TPS] whatsoever. I've got a vague understanding of it, but I can't think of anything less interesting than pension schemes. [So have you calculated how much you're likely to get?] Yeah, I got an estimate a couple of years ago, which I can't remember what it was, but I got a lump sum and then an estimate. I have looked at it now and again. ... It doesn't make any difference. Your lump sum is not going to get any bigger or smaller because you know about it, is it? (Secondary teacher, m, 50)

And some interviewees were very fatalistic, believing that there was not point in worrying about pensions because they did not know what might happen:

And I'd like to spend some time travelling around the world and doing things like that, you know, rather than thinking about 'Well, what's my pension going to be when I reach 60 or 65?', because, you know, there are no guarantees in life, you know. So I think that's something that I'd like to do is travel the world and maybe, you know, work with some schools abroad. (Secondary teacher, m, 49)

I come from a very short-lived family and I've always resented paying for a pension that I'm not going to have. Seriously. I smoke, so I haven't added to my possibilities (Secondary teacher, f, 57)

Personal financial advice can help in the explanation of options, ultimately allowing employees to optimise their retirement plans. A quarter of employees (28 per cent) said they had received such advice in the last five years. The likelihood of saying they received this increased with age (24 per cent amongst 49 to 51 year olds increasing to 35 per cent amongst 58 to 60 year olds). Males and females were just as likely to have said they received this advice, regardless of age.

Employees who had received financial advice were less likely than those who had not to have found information about the TPS changes unclear (19 versus 28 per cent).

The FSA has found that many consumers are confused about the role of financial advisors and the way in which they work (e.g. for one company, for several companies, or across the market) (Financial Services Consumer Panel, 2005). Although we did not ask directly about this, the qualitative data suggest that the same was true of some teachers in case study schools. Those teachers who had taken financial advice were usually referring to advice taken when advisors (generally from Prudential) had come to the school or to advice accessed through union seminars. Of those who mentioned getting financial advice outside school, several had found their financial advisor through acquaintances (a friend who was an independent financial advisor, a sister or brother-in-law). For some (especially those who had spoken to advisors who visited the school) this financial advice had only covered the decision about whether or not to pay into an AVC. In these cases, interviewees did not always have a clear understanding of other pensions options, or of the pensions changes.

There also seemed to be a presumption among teachers that they did not need financial advice unless they were about to make the decision to retire, or take phased retirement. So one 49-year old teacher explained *'If I was really thinking about doing something like this [phased retirement], I would seek advice from somewhere, I'd talk to somebody before I made moves, I think, to clarify it all.'* And a 59-year old headteacher who was planning to retire at Christmas, six months after the interview said:

What I intend to do is, probably over the holidays or early autumn is I'll get some financial advice. Just find someone who is an expert on teachers' pensions actually and who can just give me some independent financial advice and then I'll be all right.

4.5 Summary

This chapter focused on various aspects of the context into which the TPS changes have been introduced. The aim was to identify issues that are likely to impact on the extent to which teachers make use of the new flexible retirement options.

Headteachers' attitudes to flexibility for employees to reduce hours or responsibilities

The TPS changes offer older teachers the opportunity to reduce their hours and/or their responsibilities as they approach retirement, but this will be possible only if schools wish to employ them. The headteachers as employers survey data show that headteachers' attitudes to this varied enormously. While over 80 per cent

agreed that they tried to support staff who wished to reduce hours or responsibilities, 49 per cent of primary and 56 per cent of secondary headteachers indicated that they would not be happy to employ more part-time teachers. Half the secondary headteachers interviewed indicated that they were unlikely to support reductions in hours or responsibilities and would do so only if they were 'in the interests of the school', which appeared to be constructed as distinct from, or even in conflict with, the well-being and job satisfaction of the older teachers. In contrast, other headteachers (about half of those interviewed, including headteachers of primary, secondary and special schools) saw meeting the needs of older teachers as part of ensuring quality provision for pupils. Some of these had used a variety of ways of enabling teachers to reduce their hours and/or responsibilities under the previous teachers' pension regulations. These different attitudes seemed to be rooted in the headteachers' ideas about what makes an effective school; they did not relate to their age or the date of their headship training. Heads of schools that employed a high proportion of part-time teachers were more likely than those with a low proportion to agree that they would be happy to employ more (28 versus 18 per cent). But in the schools with higher proportions of older teachers, retention was less often identified as a priority, and headteachers were more likely to agree that they would like older teachers to move on so that younger ones could be recruited (47 versus 24 per cent with a low proportion of older teachers).

Factors in teachers' retirement decisions

The likelihood of benefiting from the TPS changes may also be affected by the range of factors that teachers take into account in making decisions about retirement. Teachers were asked to select, and rank in order of importance, three factors that encouraged them to stay in teaching and three that encouraged them to leave. The factors that most encouraged them to stay in teaching were enjoyment of teaching (26 per cent selected as the most important); financial commitments that prohibit retirement (17 per cent); not being able to afford to retire, and wanting to build up a larger pension before retirement (each 10 per cent). The qualitative research indicated that for some teachers, the earliest date at which they would consider retiring related to financial commitments (in particular, mortgages, and children's higher education). However, once these had been met, whether work was enjoyable became the central factor. Thus older teachers were more likely than younger to choose school-based factors as encouraging them to stay in teaching, and younger teachers more likely than older to choose financial factors. For some other teachers, finance was less central, and the main reason for staying in teaching was their enjoyment of their role.

The factors that were most frequently ranked first in encouraging teachers to leave were wanting to retire while still healthy and able to enjoy it (selected by 37 per cent as the most important); not enjoying some aspects of their current work (20 per cent); and not achieving a satisfactory work-life balance (11 per cent). The

qualitative data identify a perception that at a certain age (generally located in the late fifties), energy will drain away. Eight out of 65 interviewees cited a variety of 'mortality myths' suggesting that those who continue to teach (or who move from full-time work straight into retirement) are likely to die sooner than those who retire early or gradually; however, there is no evidence to support these. Headteachers were more likely than teachers to select not achieving a satisfactory work-life balance as one of the three factors encouraging them to leave (47 versus 37 per cent) while teachers were more likely than heads to select not enjoying some aspects of current work (58 versus 42 per cent).

Teachers' understanding of their pensions

While 24 per cent of the employee sample said they kept up to date with pensions information, and 59 per cent that they had a broad understanding of how their pension is calculated, the qualitative research found that in many cases awareness was partial or inaccurate. In particular, almost all those who talked about actuarial reduction underestimated the extent of the reduction. More than one in 10 interviewees believed that working part-time would vastly reduce their pension, because they did not understand the calculations correctly. One in six teachers in the survey indicated that they found pensions information 'confusing', or had not yet looked at it. Both the interviews and the survey showed that many teachers investigate their pensions only when they expect to retire in the next year or so; only 12 per cent of those aged 49 to 51 said they kept up to date with pension information, compared to 39 per cent of those aged 58 to 60. Those teachers who have misunderstandings or who find pensions information confusing may be less likely to understand and take advantage of the new options available. The qualitative research found that some teachers had not received annual statements from Teachers' Pensions, and this contributed to their vagueness about their pensions.

This chapter has, then, identified issues that may prevent teachers benefiting from the new flexible options. These include some headteachers not prioritising retention of older teachers, or not supporting those who wish to reduce hours or responsibilities; and teachers finding pensions information difficult to understand, and so not making themselves aware of the options available. We consider in the next chapter how teachers' lack of awareness, understanding and confidence in relation to their pensions seem to have affected their understanding of the recent TPS changes.

5 Changes to the Teachers' Pension Scheme

5.1 Introduction

In this chapter, we look at the levels of awareness and understanding of the changes to the TPS apparent amongst respondents. The survey findings focus on *perceived* awareness and understanding as reported by employers and employees, whilst the qualitative data reveal some of the misconceptions that exist in reality.

We begin by reviewing findings about perceived awareness and understanding of the TPS changes in general from the survey. We describe the different levels of awareness among different kinds of local authority staff, governors, headteachers in their role as employers, and teachers, and each group's awareness of the details of the changes. This includes descriptions of some misunderstandings that emerged from the qualitative work. We also set out the ways in which different respondent groups found out about the TPS changes, and how the various forms of communication relate to levels of understanding and awareness.

5.2 Awareness and understanding of TPS changes

5.2.1 Levels of awareness of TPS changes prior to the survey

All respondent groups in the survey were sent an information sheet, which summarised the changes to the TPS, along with the questionnaire. However, in order to ascertain levels of awareness prior to the survey, all respondents were asked how much they knew about the changes *before* receiving the questionnaire and information sheet. Table 5.1 shows levels of awareness across the different respondent groups.

Table 5.1 All respondents: Levels of awareness of the changes to the TPS prior to the survey

	Local authorities - pensions (%)	Local authorities - HR (%)	Headteachers as employers (%)	Employees (%)
I had a detailed awareness and understanding of the changes	72	36	11	9
I had a general awareness of the changes made	24	49	50	46
I had a limited awareness of the changes made	-	10	29	31
I had no awareness of the changes made / I was not aware the scheme had changed	2	3	8	13
Not stated	3	3	3	1
weighted	-	-	672	3865
unweighted	67	39	672	3865

Based on all respondents Source: All surveys

Local authorities

As would be expected, local authority respondents' reported awareness levels were correlated with the extent to which teachers' pension arrangements played a part in their work.

Nearly all local authority (pensions) respondents said they were aware of the changes: seven in 10 (48 out of 67) stated that they had a detailed awareness and a further quarter (16 respondents) that they had a general awareness. Only one local authority (pensions) respondent was not aware that the scheme had changed. Amongst this respondent group, a half (35 respondents) said that teachers' pensions were central to their work and a further two-fifths (25 respondents) reported that teachers' pensions were a minor part of their work.

However, only seven out of 39 local authority (HR) respondents stated that teachers' pensions were a central part of their work and 16 respondents that they were a minor part of their work. So two-fifths (16 out of 39) of local authority (HR) respondents reported that they did not work directly with teachers' pensions. As might therefore be expected, levels of awareness were slightly lower amongst this respondent group: around a third (14 out of 39) said they had a detailed awareness and a half (19 respondents) that they had a general awareness of the TPS changes. There were four local authority (HR) respondents amongst this group who only had a limited awareness and one respondent who was not aware that the scheme had changed.

While the survey collected the perceptions of pensions and HR staff in local authorities, the case studies aimed to investigate the perceptions and understanding of inspectors, advisors or SIPs who work closely with individual schools. As we have explained, this was largely unsuccessful because those approached did not feel that they had anything to contribute. One said he did not understand his own pension, let alone the changes; and one who was interviewed said he had heard about the TPS changes only through the research.

This suggests that awareness of the pensions changes is often concentrated in certain departments within the local authority and, in some cases, has not reached those who deal regularly with schools, such as advisors or SIPs.

Governors

Of the governors contacted, some were reluctant to be interviewed in relation to pensions. In response to our letter one wrote:

I have no knowledge of the Teachers' Pension Scheme other than the information you provided. I would not be able to offer any views as I think this is outside the scope of my remit. (e-mail from Chair of Governors)

In fact, this governor did subsequently agree to discuss issues of staffing at his school, explaining 'I have a bit of a mental block as far as pensions is concerned. One day I will probably regret it!' All of the governors spoke knowledgeably about their schools; however, this knowledge did not extend to the TPS.

None of the governors remembered being formally notified of the changes to the TPS. For at least four out of the eleven interviewed, our information sheet, and the interview were the only information they said they had ever had about the changes.

Headteacher as employers

Overall, one in nine headteachers (11 per cent) who responded to the employer questionnaire said they had a detailed understanding of the TPS changes, while a half (50 per cent) of headteachers reported that they had at least a general awareness. Three in 10 (29 per cent) headteachers had only a limited awareness of the changes, and eight per cent were unaware that the scheme had changed.

Looking at different types of headteachers, there was variation in perceived awareness levels by both age and gender. As might be expected, there was a clear correlation between awareness and age: older headteachers were more likely than younger headteachers to say they had a detailed or general awareness of the changes (71 per cent 55 to 59 decreasing to 41 per cent 20 to 39). Table 5.2 shows the results in detail.

Table 5.2 Headteachers as employers: Levels of awareness of TPS changes prior to the survey (by age)

	20-39 (%)	40-49 (%)	50-54 (%)	55-59 (%)	All (%)
I had a detailed awareness and understanding of the changes	10	6	9	17	11
I had a general awareness of the changes made	31	51	51	54	50
I had a limited awareness of the changes made	39	36	31	17	29
I had no awareness of the changes made / I was not aware the scheme had changed	19	6	8	6	8
Not stated	1	1	1	6	3
weighted	71	155	211	196	672
unweighted	57	173	222	185	672

Based on all headteachers as employers
Source: Headteachers as employers survey

Male headteachers were more likely to say they had a detailed or general awareness of the TPS changes than females (68 versus 58 per cent). Further, amongst female headteachers, phase of school also impacted upon awareness levels, as those working in the secondary sector were more likely than their primary counterparts to report at least a general awareness (77 versus 57 per cent).

However, there were no differences apparent by school phase amongst male headteachers.

Turning to expected retirement patterns, headteachers who anticipated a very small number (less than one per cent) of teachers working in their school would retire in the 2006-07 school year were less likely than those who expected a greater number (one per cent or above) would retire to say they were at least generally aware of the changes (57 and 70 per cent respectively). This difference was not apparent, however, for the 2007-08 and 2008-09 school years, where the impact of the anticipated numbers of teachers retiring in schools on perceived levels of awareness was more mixed.

There were no differences apparent in perceived awareness levels amongst headteachers by the proportion of teachers aged 50 or over in their school.

Among the heads that we interviewed in the case studies, there was a considerable spread of awareness of the TPS changes; from those who were simply aware that there had been changes to those who had experience of staff members changing plans because of the changes. None of the headteachers described themselves as aware of all of the details, and one gave himself *'three out of 10 for awareness'*.

It is clearly worrying that around a third of headteachers indicated that they have little or no awareness of the TPS changes, both because their own retirement planning and decisions may be made on the basis of limited awareness of TPS changes, and because their awareness of possible retirement options for their staff (and thus the impact of the changes on the school) must also be limited.

Employees

Amongst employees, only in nine (11 per cent) said they had a detailed understanding of the TPS changes, whilst 46 per cent of this respondent group stated that they had a general awareness. The remainder had a limited awareness (31 per cent) or were unaware that the scheme had changed (13 per cent). A number of different factors impacted upon perceived awareness of the changes – age, proximity to anticipated retirement, total number of pensionable years, gender, role of teacher and school phase – and we now look at each one in turn.

Reflecting the findings for headteachers as employers, there was a similar correlation between perceived awareness and age amongst employees. Older employees were more likely than younger to say they had a detailed or general awareness of the changes (63 per cent aged 58 to 60 decreasing to 46 per cent aged 49 to 51). Table 5.3 displays the detailed findings.

Table 5.3 Employees: Levels of awareness of the changes to the TPS prior to the survey (by age)

	49-51 (%)	52-54 (%)	55-57 (%)	58-60 (%)	All (%)
I had a detailed awareness and understanding of the changes	6	9	11	11	9
I had a general awareness of the changes made	40	45	50	51	46
I had a limited awareness of the changes made	36	34	28	24	31
I had no awareness of the changes made / I was not aware the scheme had changed	17	12	11	12	13
Not stated	1	1	1	2	1
weighted	1018	1176	1127	544	3865
unweighted	842	1002	1354	667	3865

Based on all employees
Source: Employee survey

Among the interviewees, there was no clear pattern of awareness associated with age; however, as discussed in Chapter 4, the closer an interviewee perceived themselves to be to retirement, the more likely they were to be aware of the changes. Thus an interviewee who was almost sixty was unaware of the changes, because he had always planned to work until 65, while several 54 year-old interviewees were aware of the changes because they had been planning to retire at 55 (and putting money into an AVC to make this possible).

This pattern is also reflected by the survey results. The mean distance from anticipated retirement age of those who were not aware the scheme had changed was 6.1 years, but the mean distance from anticipated retirement age of those who had a detailed understanding of the changes was 4.4 years.

There was also a correlation between perceived awareness and total number of pensionable years: employees with a greater number of pensionable years were more likely than those with a smaller number to state that they had at least a general awareness of the changes (66 per cent 30 pensionable years or more decreasing to 42 per cent less than 10 years). These differences in awareness by pensionable years were apparent even after controlling for age, suggesting that those with a greater investment of years in the TPS had more interest in finding out about the scheme. This is supported by some interviews. For example, one headteacher who had transferred her service out of the TPS several years earlier when working for the local authority, but who had subsequently accrued a further four years in TPS, felt that the changes (especially phased retirement) were of little interest to her because her teachers' pension would be so small anyway.

Turning to gender, the survey results again reflect those for headteachers as employers, as male employees were more likely to report that they were aware of the TPS changes than females (even after controlling for total number of pensionable years). Around seven in 10 (68 per cent) male employees said they

had a detailed or general awareness compared with a half (50 per cent) of females. There is evidence from other sources that women may be less interested in pensions than men because some expect to depend on a wider range of income sources in retirement (ABI, 2007). Women have also been found to be less confident than men in relation to financial information in general (FSA, 2006).

Levels of perceived awareness amongst employees also varied to some extent by teacher role. Around seven in 10 (68 per cent) headteachers and two-thirds (65 per cent) of deputy or assistant headteachers said they had a detailed or general awareness compared with a half (52 per cent) of teachers. These differences by teacher role were apparent even when controlling for age and anticipated proximity to retirement. Further, when controlling for gender, differences by role of teacher were also still apparent amongst female employees: female teachers were less likely to say they had a detailed or general awareness of the changes (47 per cent) than female headteachers (65 per cent) and female deputy or assistant headteachers (60 per cent). However, the findings showed that there were no differences between male teachers and male headteachers (or male deputy or assistant headteachers) in awareness levels.

The findings also revealed that part-time employees and supply teachers were less likely to say that they had at least a general awareness of the TPS changes than full-time employees (44 and 40 per cent versus 58 per cent respectively); and whilst the survey data show that part-time employees and supply teachers had fewer years of pensionable teaching service than full-time employees, the differences in perceived awareness were apparent even when taking this into account. However, as part-time employees and supply teachers are generally in school less often than their full-time colleagues, they inevitably have less access to school based communication about the changes and this may therefore at least partly explain the differences in awareness noted above.

School phase also had an impact on perceived awareness levels: three-fifths (61 per cent) of secondary employees and a similar proportion of special and PRU school employees (59 per cent) said they had a detailed or general awareness against a half (50 per cent) of their primary counterparts. As with teacher role, these differences by school phase were apparent even when controlling for age. Further, when controlling for gender, differences by school phase were also still apparent amongst male employees: male primary employees were less likely to report that they had a detailed or general awareness of the changes than male secondary or special and PRU employees (63 versus 70 and 71 per cent respectively). However, the findings revealed that there were no differences between female primary and female secondary (or special and PRU) employees.

The sub-group findings described above reveal that the levels of perceived awareness of the TPS changes amongst employees were affected by a number of different variables. We therefore used CHAID analysis to further unpack these

various factors. This demonstrated that differences in perceived awareness levels were most pronounced when analysing by gender (i.e. of all the different factors impacting upon awareness described above, the biggest differences apparent were between male and female employees). Further, amongst *male* employees, proximity to retirement was the factor which subsequently provided the greatest differential in awareness levels (with male employees who anticipated retiring in less than four years having the most general or detailed awareness of the TPS changes). Amongst *female* employees, by contrast, role of teacher was shown to be the subsequent key discriminator (a greater general or detailed awareness was apparent amongst headteachers and deputy or assistant headteachers than amongst teachers).

Two further potential influences on levels of perceived awareness were also considered. Firstly, the factors that employees said would most encourage them to remain in teaching (as discussed in Chapter 4). However, an analysis of awareness levels by those employees who selected entirely financial factors against those who chose entirely school based factors revealed no differences in perceived awareness levels. Secondly, awareness levels amongst employees who taught specific shortage subjects in some capacity were also examined; the data show that employees who taught science (63 per cent), technology (65 per cent), ICT (64 per cent) and music (73 per cent) were all more likely than average to have at least a general awareness of the TPS changes.

Overall, the fact that 13 per cent of employees surveyed were unaware of the changes to the TPS, and almost a third of employees had only a limited understanding, with those perceiving themselves to be furthest from retirement the least aware, is consistent with other research evidence that people delay getting information about their pension and have limited knowledge of the details of their occupational scheme (Vickerstaff *et al.*, 2004; Byrne and Rhodes, 2005). However this limited awareness of the changes is worrying, given that all of the employees who responded to the survey were within 10 years of retirement age, and close to a half were already old enough to take early or phased retirement.

We move on in the next section to look at the extent to which the various groups surveyed and interviewed were aware of the details of the changes.

5.2.2 Awareness and understanding of particular changes

Local authorities

When asked in interview which changes were most important, local authority responses differed; this was generally related to their particular work or interest. Several local authority interviewees focused on the administrative changes: the automatic inclusion of part-time staff and running a separate scheme for new

teachers. Others with more of a role in workforce planning talked more about the average salary changes and, in one case, phased retirement. This particular interviewee stressed the need to be aware of phased retirement because of its complexity.

Two-thirds (44 respondents) of local authorities (pensions) said that they had *provided* information to teachers that included details of changes to contributions *and* other changes. Only four respondents said they had only provided information relating to the increase in contributions.

Both in terms of general awareness, and awareness of particular changes, survey and interview data suggest that awareness in local authorities is patchy. Most pensions departments have a full awareness; however, this is most often in terms of local authority procedures and advising individual teachers. Some departments dealing with teacher supply, teacher retention and school staffing were also aware of the changes, and their implications for both teacher employment and school staffing. In some cases, this awareness was because of discussions between those working on teachers' pensions and school staffing/school advisory services; these often took place simply because of proximity of offices. For example, one interviewee explained that while she worked on teachers' pensions, a colleague in the next door office advised schools on teacher retirements and staffing, and so she had been able to explain the changes to her colleague. A similar arrangement in another local authority meant that teachers' pensions and school staffing were dealt with in the same office. The interviewees in this local authority were aware of the possibilities of the changes both for individuals and schools. They had several ideas about how they might creatively respond to the changes in local schools.

In contrast, other local authorities had outsourced responsibility for pensions' administration, or combined it with other pension schemes (e.g. the Local Government Pensions Scheme). Expertise about the TPS changes was therefore completely separate from advisory functions. Where we interviewed people associated with arrangements of this type there seemed to have been very little sharing of knowledge about the pensions changes, and some advisors were unaware of them. We have noted in Chapter 3 that we had considerable difficulties in recruiting local authority HR respondents to complete the questionnaire, and in finding local authority representatives to interview in relation to case study schools. This may be due in part to the splitting of these roles so that pensions are not seen as relevant to school staffing and information about the TPS changes had not been shared. In authorities where these kinds of arrangements were in existence, some teachers expressed frustration about the difficulty of getting good advice. One headteacher explained, *'For a while teachers' pay was contracted out. They didn't talk to HR, who didn't talk to pensions. You had to fill in the same form three times.'*

Governors

We have shown that the governors interviewed were generally unaware that changes had been made to TPS, and so inevitably they did not know the detail of changes. Two governors were aware of the change to average salary, but not of the introduction of phased retirement. The extent to which the governors understood the changes was linked in part to their level of confidence in relation to pensions and their knowledge of TPS. Thus teachers and ex-teachers, and a pensions scheme trustee, seemed to grasp the changes relatively quickly, but those with no idea of the original conditions of TPS tended to have more difficulties in understanding.

Headteachers as employers

Headteachers as employers, and employees who had reported having some awareness of the TPS changes prior to the survey, were further asked whether they had only been aware of the increase to employees' and employers' contributions or other changes as well. Overall, seven in 10 (69 per cent) headteachers and three-fifths (60 per cent) of employees said that they were aware of changes to employees' and employers' contributions *and* other changes (whilst 15 per cent of headteachers and 16 per cent of employees said that the only change of which they were aware was the increase to contributions).

Given that these proportions reported by headteachers as employers and employees are similar to the proportion of local authorities (pensions) who reported that they had *provided* information to teachers that included details of changes to contributions *and* other changes, it might suggest that levels of awareness amongst school staff may be linked to the provision of information by local authorities. However, as discussed further in Section 5.2.3, the evidence supporting such a link is inconsistent.

As might be expected, there was a clear correlation between levels of awareness and whether headteachers were aware of changes other than the increase to contributions. Almost all (99 per cent) headteachers as employers who had reported having a detailed awareness of the TPS changes said they were aware both of changes to contributions *and* of other changes, compared with around four-fifths (78 per cent) of those who said they had a general awareness and around two-fifths (43 per cent) who said they had a limited awareness. Table 5.4 displays the full results by levels of awareness.

Reflecting the findings for levels of awareness, male headteachers were more likely than females to say they were aware of changes to contributions *and* other changes (75 per cent males versus 67 per cent females). Further, older headteachers (aged 50 to 59) were more likely than younger headteachers (aged 20 to 49) to report

that they were aware of changes to contributions *and* other changes (74 and 61 per cent respectively).

Table 5.4 Headteachers as employers: Awareness only of increase to employees' and employers' contributions or of other changes as well (by awareness of TPS changes)

	I had a detailed awareness and understanding of the changes (%)	I had a general awareness of the changes made (%)	I had a limited awareness of the changes made (%)	All (%)
The only change I was aware of was the increase to employees' and employers' contributions	1	13	22	15
I was aware of changes to employees' and employers' contributions AND other changes	99	78	43	69
I was not really aware of many changes at all	*	7	35	16
Not stated	1	2	1	2
weighted	71	335	195	619
unweighted	79	338	190	624

Based on headteachers as employers who had some awareness of TPS changes.
Source: Headteachers as employers survey

A greater awareness of both the changes to TPS contributions *and* other changes was also reported amongst headteachers of schools where the proportion of teachers over 50 was high (more than 40 per cent): 77 versus 63 per cent where the equivalent proportion was low (20 per cent or less).

Looking at anticipated retirement patterns, headteachers who anticipated only a small proportion (less than one per cent) of teachers in their school would retire in the 2006-07 and 2007-08 school years were less likely than those who anticipated a greater number (one per cent or more) would retire to state that they were aware of both the changes to TPS contributions *and* other changes (65 versus 80 per cent 2006-07, 67 versus 77 per cent 2007-08). However, such a difference by anticipated retirement was not apparent when looking at the 2008-09 school year.

Interviews revealed considerable variation in the changes that headteachers regarded to be most important. Several concentrated on the changes that had been brought in for new teachers. Most headteachers needed to be reminded about the details of the changes. Many then had some understanding of the average salary change, and felt that it could be of use to their staff. However, even on this headteachers were sometimes confused:

You know, at 50, there is a decision to be made. You can still get a higher pension – can't you? If you retired at 50, or is it 55? You'd get actuarially reduced at 55. You can't get anything at 50. If you went part-time at 50 and you were a senior manager No, say you went to 53, and you were a senior manager at 50 to 53, whereas if you did that under the previous regime your pension would be on the lower salary ... If you went till 60. Yes. I'm getting a bit muddled. (Primary headteacher, f, 56).

Headteachers' understanding of phased retirement was partial. Generally they understood the basic concept but not the detail, and struggled to see situations where it might be useful. In part this seemed to be because they did not envisage taking phased retirement themselves. Even if they planned to do some part-time work, they intended to wait and take a full pension at 60. Only one headteacher had any experience of enquires about phased retirement, and this had been to agree to a proposal brought to her by a teacher and her business manager.

Employees

As with headteachers as employers, there was also a clear correlation between levels of awareness and whether employees were aware of more than just the increase in contributions. Nine in 10 (90 per cent) employees who had reported having a detailed awareness of the TPS changes said they were aware of changes to contributions *and* other changes compared with three-quarters (75 per cent) of those who said they had a general awareness and three in 10 (30 per cent) who said they had a limited awareness. Table 5.5 displays the full results by levels of awareness.

Table 5.5 Employees: Awareness only of increase to employees' and employers' contributions or other changes as well (by awareness of TPS changes)

	I had a detailed awareness and understanding of the changes (%)	I had a general awareness of the changes made (%)	I had a limited awareness of the changes made (%)	All (%)
The only change I was aware of was the increase to employees' and employers' contributions	4	15	21	16
I was aware of changes to employees' and employers' contributions AND other changes	90	75	30	60
I was not really aware of many changes at all	3	9	48	22
Not stated	3	1	1	1
weighted	346	1778	1208	3333
unweighted	420	1891	1115	3426

Based on employees who had some awareness of TPS changes
Source: Employee survey

Following the patterns for levels of awareness seen amongst different types of employees, older employees (aged 55 to 60) were slightly more likely than younger employees (aged 49 to 54) to state that they had were aware of multiple changes (63 per cent 55 to 60 aware of changes to contributions *and* other changes versus 59 per cent 49 to 54). Further, employees with a greater number of pensionable years were more likely than those with a smaller number to state that they were aware of more than the increase to contributions alone (66 per cent 30 pensionable years or more versus 55 per cent less than 10 years).

In addition, male employees were more likely than females to say that they were aware of changes to contributions *and* other changes (72 versus 56 per cent).

There were also some differences by school phase and teacher role: secondary headteachers were much more likely to report that they were aware of both the changes to contributions *and* other changes (84 per cent) than primary teachers (51 per cent), special and PRU teachers (59 per cent) or special and PRU headteachers (64 per cent). Further, amongst deputy or assistant headteachers, those working in the secondary sector were more likely to say they were aware of both the changes to contributions *and* other changes than either their primary or special and PRU counterparts (73 versus 63 and 59 per cent respectively). In addition, part-time employees and supply teachers were less likely to state that they were aware of more than the increase to contributions alone than full-time employees (56 and 54 versus 61 per cent respectively). However, as with levels of awareness, these differences by school phase and teacher role can be at least partly accounted for by gender.

The questionnaire did not seek to establish *which* changes teachers were aware of in addition to the increase in contributions. The interview data revealed that more teachers were aware of the change to average salary calculations than of the introduction of phased retirement. Interviewees had generally understood how the average salary changes would work; however one teacher said that he understood that as a result of the changes he would receive a smaller pension, because the pension would be calculated using an average, rather than his higher final, salary.

There was considerable confusion around phased retirement. When doing follow-up interviews we targeted those who had indicated on the questionnaire that they would definitely take phased retirement. However, it emerged that many of the survey respondents we contacted had understood phased retirement as any reduction in hours or responsibilities (sometimes taking account of the change to average salary), but did not realise that it involved drawing part of their pension early. When we clarified the exact nature of phased retirement for interviewees they asked questions such as *'Would you have to take your lump sum at that point?', 'Does it mean less pension?'* and *'Which bit of pension is actuarially reduced?'* A local authority interviewee recounted her experience of similar enquiries:

[The teachers ask] *'Well, what is the phased retirement, how does it work, what would I need to drop down to?'* and the only other thing I would say in connection with that is that initially I think the information on the Teachers' Pensions website wasn't as clear as it could have been and the literature – if they take phased retirement, it is obviously on an actuarially reduced basis when they dip into the pension and it is both a lump sum and the annual pension that will need to be accessed because we've had that question asked a lot.

Generally speaking, interviewees struggled to see how phased retirement might be of use to them, struggled to understand that only a part of the pension is actuarially reduced (partly due to more general confusion about the nature of actuarial reduction), and did not realise that contributions would continue to be made to the remaining part of the pension during phased retirement.

It also became clear in interviews that when teachers indicated they were aware of changes, in some cases they were referring to the changes that applied to new entrants to the profession. Where these changes were mentioned, teachers believed that they were less favourable for the new teachers. Some interviewees had not realised that there were any changes to the arrangements for their own pensions. Thus, one headteacher explained *'I hadn't taken as much cognisance of it, because I knew there were certain things that wouldn't affect me, because I had joined prior to the changes'* (Secondary headteacher, f, 55).

A further misunderstanding was that at least nine interviewees believed that the plan to raise normal pension age from 60 to 65 for all those under a certain age had been implemented. Consequently some of this group were under the false impression that they themselves would have to work to 65. A 53-year old teacher commented that the average salary changes would not yet affect her because she was not yet in her last 10 years of teaching. When asked about this, she explained: *'I think I've got to go to 65, or I will significantly have a reduced pension, is my understanding of it'* (Special school teacher, f, 53). This interviewee and others were delighted to learn that they did not have to work until 65. A local authority representative confirmed that she had dealt with several teachers who were under the impression that their age of retirement had been raised from 60 to 65. Therefore it is possible that some who reported awareness of changes in addition to raising the contribution rate were 'aware' of changes that had not in fact taken place.

5.2.3 Sources and provision of information

We have shown that there was a considerable range of awareness and understanding of the TPS changes among survey respondents and interviewees. We turn now to consider the ways in which survey respondents and interviewees had found out about the changes.

Local authorities

Local authorities were most likely to report having found out about the changes to the TPS from the Employer Toolkit (four-fifths – pensions, three-fifths – HR), followed by the TPS website (three-quarters – pensions, close to a half – HR) and training provided by the DfES, teachers' pensions (seven in 10 – pensions, close to three-fifths – HR). Table 5.6 presents the findings in full.

Table 5.6 Local authorities: Sources from which found out about changes to TPS

	Local authorities – pensions (%)	Local authorities – HR (%)
Employer Toolkit	81	62
Teachers' Pension Scheme website	76	46
Training provided by DfES, Teachers Pensions	72	56
DfES / Prudential DVD	42	39
Information from unions	6	15
Training provided by Local authority	3	8
From colleagues	-	8
Other	6	-
Not stated	2	-
unweighted	67	39

Based on all local authorities
Source: Local authority surveys

Two local authority interviewees commented that local authorities had not had sufficient time to understand the changes before schools were informed. This had meant that they were initially unable to help teachers with some queries. Some local authorities also expressed concern that they had not been notified about the DfES/Prudential DVD.

We have noted in previous sections that awareness of the pensions changes among local authority staff was greater among those for whom pensions was a major part of their job. Those dealing with school staffing or in advisory roles generally had a more limited awareness. This may be in part due to the information sources available. The only sources of information that interviewees believed were targeted at local authority HR services were (some of) the DfES/TPS seminars, though in the survey a lower proportion of HR respondents than of pensions respondents reported attending these.

We found in trying to recruit questionnaire respondents and case study interviewees that many local authority employees could not see the relevance of the TPS changes to their roles. This might highlight the need for information targeted particularly at local authority employees and advisors entitled perhaps 'New Staffing Flexibilities' explaining the implications of the pensions changes for schools in non-technical language.

Four-fifths (54 out of 67) of local authorities (pensions) said they had provided some form of information to teachers about the TPS changes (in addition to that provided by the DfES and the unions). We noted in Section 5.2.2 that two thirds of LA (pensions) respondents had provided information about changes to contributions and other changes. We look in this section at the form that information took.

Around two-fifths (25 respondents) said they had sent a leaflet to each school and a fifth (14 respondents) a leaflet to each teacher. Providing information with payslips was a method reportedly used by around a third (24 respondents) and on-line information by a quarter (18 respondents). Twelve respondents said they had disseminated information by means of posters in schools.

Three-fifths (24 out of 39) of local authorities (HR) said they had provided information to schools about the potential impact of the TPS changes on *school staffing*. One half (19 respondents) said this had been in the form of written information; three in 10 (11 respondents) said the information was provided via a website. Only small numbers reported having relayed such information at a headteachers' meeting / training session or at a governors' meeting / training session (seven and three respondents respectively). Further, only two authorities (HR) said they had provided training to schools about the impact of the changes, although around a quarter (nine out of 39) said they intended to offer such training in the future.

Several local authorities felt that they were well placed to communicate the details of the changes to individual teachers, groups of teachers, and schools. However, these interviewees had not been able to communicate information about the details of the changes as they would have wished because of the resource implications. One local authority had chosen to prioritise supply teachers, peripatetic teachers and hospital teachers in their communication about the pension scheme changes.

Two local authority interviewees reported that many schools had not seen the DVD. They believed some schools had thrown it away because it had Prudential on it and *'some teachers haven't been quite impressed with Prudential in the past years and the products they're delivering'*, or because it said *'What to do when you leave school,'* and so headteachers assumed it was for pupils. After finding out about the DVD through a seminar, one local authority interviewee described sending a letter to all schools to inform them that they should have received the DVD, and that it was useful and informative.

Governors

For at least four out of the eleven governors interviewed, our information sheet and interview were the only information they had ever received about the TPS changes. One said, of the interview, *'This has been really interesting for me, because I've learnt more than I'd have learnt from any other source, so I think there is an issue about that.'* A further two had heard about the changes through informal discussions with the head, one had read about the changes in the press and another had heard about them through an acquaintance. The most well informed governors were two secondary governors who, on hearing about the research, had decided to investigate the changes. One *'went to Google to find Teachers' Pensions'* and the other, an ex-teacher, rang her trade union and asked for advice.

This interviewee was very frustrated that she had not been informed about the changes in her role as governor, arguing that *'I think we should know under what terms and conditions our teachers are working, don't you?'* (Secondary governor).

She was also very concerned that her lack of awareness might be mirrored in her staff:

I don't really think teachers understand what's happening. I don't think individual teachers have received something themselves. ... I would have thought that my head would have said 'We've got this, do you want to have a look at it?' and never a word. And I don't remember anyone saying 'Guess what we did in our staff meeting, we watched this flipping video about pensions!' Nobody has said a thing. (Secondary governor)

None of the governors had participated in any discussion of the pensions changes at governors' meetings. This lack of communication suggests a need for information to be provided to governors.

Headteachers as employers

In this section we examine three functions of information and communication provided to headteachers: one, informing the headteacher about the changes to his/her own pension; two, suggesting to the headteacher ways in which the pensions changes might affect the staffing of the school; and three, encouraging the headteacher to notify staff about the pensions changes.

We look firstly at the sources of information identified by headteachers as employers who reported some knowledge of the TPS changes. Headteachers reported finding out about the TPS changes from a number of different sources. Table 5.7 shows the sources most often indicated.

Table 5.7 Headteachers as employers: Sources from which found out about changes to TPS

	All (%)
Information from unions	56
Mentioned at headteachers' meeting	32
Letter from local authority	31
Teachers' Pension Scheme website	23
DfES / Prudential DVD	23
weighted	619
unweighted	624

Based on all headteachers as employers
Source: Headteachers as employers survey

Information from the unions was the most frequently selected (56 per cent said this), followed by the changes being mentioned at a headteachers' meeting (32 per

cent) and a letter from the local authority (31 per cent). Younger headteachers were also less likely than average to cite a letter from the local authority (13 per cent) or information from the unions (33 per cent).

The headteachers interviewed recalled very varied ways in which they had heard about the changes; these broadly reflected the survey findings. The majority said they had received written information from the unions (mainly NAHT or ASCL) or attended union seminars. A further source of information was the personnel companies employed by some schools.

The majority of the heads interviewed could not remember the pensions changes appearing on the agenda at headteachers meetings, although one primary head had heard about the changes solely through a pensions advisor visiting the local primary headteachers' forum (in this case the pensions advisor had focused solely on their personal financial needs). However, headteachers mentioned that when they got together for headteacher meetings they tended to discuss their retirement plans with each other, and pensions changes might be talked about as part of this.

The proportions that said that they learned about the changes from the TPS website and the DfES / Prudential DVD were similar (23 per cent). All other sources were cited by fewer than 10 per cent of headteachers.

Younger headteachers were less likely than older headteachers to say they had learnt about the changes from the TPS website (four per cent aged 20 to 39 increasing to 33 per cent 55 to 59). Interview data suggest that headteachers who had used the website had done so firstly in relation to their own pension; younger headteachers were less likely to be thinking about their personal pension, and so were less likely to go to the website. Headteachers working in the primary sector were less likely than their secondary or special and PRU counterparts to report that they had found out about the changes from the Teachers' Pension website (22 versus 34 and 29 per cent respectively).

The sources of information discussed and remembered by the headteachers we interviewed were first and foremost those providing information about their personal pensions. A few headteachers also talked about how they had been made aware of the potential impact of the TPS pensions changes on school staffing, and it is to this that we now turn.

As well as asking headteachers how they found out about the TPS changes, the survey asked headteachers if the local authority had provided them with any information about the potential impact of the changes on school staffing. A fifth of headteachers (20 per cent) said that their local authority had provided them with such information. Just over half said they had not had any information of this sort, and a third said that they did not know. The proportion reporting receiving such information is considerably lower than the proportion of local authorities who

reported providing such information to schools (three-fifths). This may be because some local authority (HR) respondents were not aware of the precise information that had been disseminated by their authority, or because the authorities that disseminated information were the smaller authorities, and so the information reached proportionately fewer heads. It is also possible that the information was sent but not read, or the source not noted. Several headteachers alluded to this in interview:

To be honest I am not sure about that because I am deluged with paper and the last thing I do is actually make sure who has actually sent me what. (Secondary headteacher, m, 56)

So possibly that but as I get an in tray six inches deep each morning it's difficult to identify precisely the source of any information. (Secondary headteacher, m, 46)

A greater proportion of older headteachers than younger headteachers reported that their local authority had supplied information about the impact of changes on staffing: a fifth (22 per cent) of headteachers aged 50 to 59 said that they had received such information compared with a sixth (16 per cent) of headteachers aged 20 to 49. It may be that because of their personal interest in possibilities for retirement, these headteachers were more likely to recall receiving information relating to pensions.

Even though a greater proportion of secondary headteachers said that they were aware of the TPS changes than primary headteachers, those working in the primary sector were more likely than their secondary or special and PRU counterparts to state that their local authority had provided information about the potential impact of the TPS changes on school staffing (21 per cent primary versus 13 per cent secondary, 13 per cent special/PRU).

Turning to the different ways in which headteachers said local authorities had provided information about the impact of the changes on school staffing, one in nine (11 per cent) of all headteachers said that authorities had employed a written format and a similar proportion (12 per cent) that information had been given at a headteachers' meeting / training session. Six per cent reported obtaining information from local authorities via a website and only two per cent by means of a governors' meeting / training session. There was little variation in the provision of information by local authorities reported by different types of headteachers, although those working in the primary sector were slightly more likely to cite information given at a headteachers' meeting / training session (13 per cent versus seven per cent secondary and special/PRU sector headteachers).

The third possible function of information provided to headteachers was to encourage them to pass on details of the TPS changes to staff. The survey asked headteachers about their actions in providing information to staff.

Three-fifths (61 per cent) of all headteachers said they had communicated information about the changes (other than increased employee / employer contributions) to their staff. Headteachers in charge of schools with a low proportion (20 per cent or less) of teachers aged 50 or over were less likely to report that they communicated information than those in schools with a high proportion (more than 40 per cent) of teachers aged 50 or over (54 per cent low increasing to 70 per cent high). Further, headteachers who anticipated that 10 per cent or more of their staff would retire in 2006-07 were more likely than average (82 per cent) to report that they had disseminated information about the changes.

Headteachers were most likely to report that they had provided information to staff at a staff meeting (36 per cent), followed by putting up a poster in the staff room (26 per cent). One eighth (12 per cent) said that their teaching staff had watched the DfES / Prudential DVD to learn about the changes. Other methods of communication were mentioned by fewer than 10 per cent of employers.

From conversations with local authority representatives, headteachers and teachers it was clear that the DfES/Prudential DVD had often been ignored or shelved. Six of the case study headteachers said they had not received the DVD, and three said they might have done but did not remember. Only three remembered receiving it, and of these, only one had watched it herself. When informed about that the DVD had been from Prudential, one primary head commented: *'Prudential? Teachers don't like Prudential. Prudential aren't the most helpful people ... I looked at buying an extra year, they were not interested, at all, most unhelpful, they weren't going to make any money from me'*. Even in two schools that publicised the DVD to teachers, few teachers had seen it or remembered it, as shown in Box 5.1.

Box 5.1: School responses to the DVD

'Some people were finding the DVD quite hilarious'

One Headteacher had received the DVD and decided to show it *'because I always try to do what I'm asked to do'*. She didn't have time to watch it before showing it to staff, and had not realised the extent to which it was targeted at older teachers. She said:

People who were young, like some of my NQTs who were there, were finding it quite hilarious. And so it wasn't easy to maintain a positive atmosphere in the meeting, because some people it didn't apply to. Other people were desperate to hear what it had to say. (Primary headteacher, f, 51)

However, the DVD had not made much impression on the teachers that we interviewed at this school. One was not convinced she had seen it, explaining *'I really can't tell you whether it was a slideshow or whether it was straight off the DVD, I don't know'*. The other said *'I don't think it was anything new, so that's possibly why I don't remember it much'*.

'The DVD didn't really say anything'

One headteacher had given the DVD to her partner, and she reported:

Well, he might have said it was a load of rubbish, I don't know. That's one of his common phrases but what he meant was it didn't really say anything. It wasn't anything special. (Secondary headteacher, f, 59)

This head had put a notice in the staff bulletin about the DVD and given it to the personnel manager. We interviewed three teachers in this school: all were unaware of the DVD, although one expressed interest in it: *'I didn't know that there was a DVD in existence and I'd quite like to see that myself. Are there copies of it for the school or just one?'* (Secondary teacher, m, 54).

Logistical considerations appeared to impact upon the variation in the methods deployed to communicate information for different types of headteachers. Headteachers in charge of schools with a high proportion (more than 40 per cent) of teachers aged 50 or over were more likely than average to say that they had communicated information at a staff meeting (50 per cent). Further, headteachers in charge of schools with a high proportion (30 per cent or more) of part-time teachers were more likely to say that their teaching staff had watched the DfES / Prudential DVD to learn about the changes than those in schools with a low proportion (15 per cent or less) of part-time staff (17 per cent high decreasing to eight per cent low).

Headteachers' age was also a factor in the provision of information to staff. Younger headteachers aged 20 to 39 were less likely than average to say they had communicated information (49 per cent). More specifically, younger headteachers were less likely than average to report that they had communicated information at a staff meeting (23 per cent), put up a poster in the staff room (16 per cent) or say that their staff had watched the DfES / Prudential DVD (eight per cent). Table 5.8 shows the results in detail by headteachers' age.

Table 5.8 Headteachers as employers: Communication of information to staff (by age)

	20-39 (%)	40-49 (%)	50-54 (%)	55 or over (%)	All (%)
<i>Any</i>	49	64	63	62	61
At a staff meeting	23	34	34	44	36
Put up a poster in the staff room	16	28	27	30	26
Teaching staff watched the DVD	8	12	14	13	12
Weighted	71	155	211	196	672
Unweighted	57	173	222	185	672

Based on all headteachers as employers
Source: Headteachers as employers survey

Several case study headteachers had gone to some lengths to ensure pensions information was disseminated, including organising seminars and inviting pensions

advisors into school. One headteacher expressed disappointment that his staff had not been more interested in this kind of seminar when it had been provided. In each school, the training had been attended mainly by older teachers approaching retirement. In both cases the provider was a private sector organisation. A senior leadership team member in one of these schools commented that, following a meeting over a decade ago run by Prudential at which some rather aggressive AVC selling had taken place, *'those sort of meetings weren't popular in school for a long time'*. Such suspicions may have been partly responsible for poor attendance, and for the fact that other schools had not organised such training. One of the follow-up schools had included pensions information in a *'staff well-being day'*. This was perhaps a more successful approach, though as we did not interview teachers in that school we could not investigate their reactions. (See Box 5.2).

Box 5.2: Pensions information as part of a staff well-being day

Several schools recounted inviting in financial advisors to talk to staff. One headteacher spoke of the importance she attached to providing her staff with information about pensions: *'I made sure we had stuff [about pensions] in school ... I make sure there is a drip feed of information'*. She had therefore invited a pensions advisor to her staff well-being day.

Last Christmas I invited [a financial advice company who specialise in working with teachers]. They came as part of our staff well-being CPD day, ... financial well-being and emotional well-being and physical well-being and we sort of built it all around that. ... We did some sort of physical well-being stuff – we had dance mats, you know, sort of things, you know, nail painting and aromatherapy. ... [The company] came in and talked about how the pension scheme had changed and who it might affect and why, you know what the options were. They gave a very clear explanation and then followed up with individual and small group tutorials for those that felt they needed it. (Secondary headteacher, f, 51)

This headteacher described working together with her local authority (who were *'particularly good'*) and the professional associations represented in her school to support staff in making decisions about retirement and well-being.

Other headteachers saw their role as passing on any information the school received by displaying it on notice boards. Some explained that they did not feel it was appropriate for them to talk to staff about their pensions either because this was seen to be a very personal issue, or because they did not have the necessary financial expertise. There was also a view that teachers should take responsibility for themselves in such matters (see Box 5.2 for more detail).

Box 5.3: School attitudes to disseminating pensions information

'I don't agree with spoon-feeding staff'

One headteacher explained that he didn't see his role as speaking directly to staff, but *'It's more a case that stuff has been received from the teacher pension agency and from their unions, which I pass onto them, and so I mean they have been getting all of that stuff. I*

mean there are things up on the notice board [about the changes]' (Primary head, m, 59).

A personnel manager in a large secondary school argued even more strongly that it was not the school's responsibility to communicate pensions information to staff:

I don't agree with spoon-feeding staff. I think they have responsibility themselves to find out. They can be made aware, they are made aware through the provider, obviously if there are other queries and questions then we answer them for them. But it is their responsibility to find out what the implications would actually be in terms of increased length of service and working longer and that kind of thing. That includes for them to work out if they need to make AVCs or anything else. So it's not a case of us being the complete oracle, it's a case of them having to find out stuff for themselves. (Secondary school personnel manager)

'I'm not a finance consultant'

Several heads suggested that they avoided discussions about pensions with their staff. In some cases, this was due to their lack of confidence in their own knowledge:

I try not to get, I mean my advice to them is 'talk to a financial advisor, talk to your professional association', and so in actual fact, ... I didn't get involved in that sort of discussion [about how many years pensions contributions staff have]. (Special school headteacher, m, 52)

I'm a teacher, I'm not a finance consultant, I'm not an administrator of office practice, I'm not a health and safety expert, I'm not a personnel expert, but all those things are being put onto schools to do. (Primary headteacher, m, 57)

'Talking about your pension is a very private thing'

Heads also suggested that teachers might feel that talking about pensions with them was too personal:

I think if they came to me which, talking about your pension is very often a private thing, a personal thing; you might not want to talk to anybody in the school. You might just go to your bank manager or your financial adviser or whatever. (Secondary headteacher, m, 46)

The data in this section show that while information disseminated has made some headteachers aware of the pensions changes, there has been much less success in making them aware of the potential impact on school staffing, or in encouraging them to disseminate such information to teaching staff. Some headteachers did not feel any responsibility for passing on information; others did not feel confident or able to pass it on. There is a real need for effective signposting of information; the effects of a lack of signposting are illustrated by the limited use of the DVD.

Employees

Employees reported that they had learnt about the changes to the TPS from a number of different sources. Table 5.9 shows those sources mentioned by at least 10 per cent of all employees.

Table 5.9 Employees: Sources from which found out about changes to TPS

	All (%)
Teacher union	59
Talk with colleagues	39
Teachers' Pension Scheme poster or leaflet	24
Newspaper	19
Teachers' Pension Scheme website	19
Employer (local authority)	16
Pensions' advisor	14
Weighted	3865
unweighted	3865

Based on all employees.
Source: Employee survey

Overall, employees were most likely to report that they had found out about the TPS changes from a teacher union (59 per cent), followed by having a discussion with colleagues (39 per cent). One quarter (24 per cent) said they had learnt about the changes from a TPS leaflet or poster. Although a third of headteachers reported mentioning pensions changes in a staff meeting, less than 10 per cent of employees reported having heard about the changes from a headteacher. The interviews shed some light on this: data suggest that where heads had made mention of the changes in the staff meeting it was often to alert teachers that the changes had taken place, and to advise them to investigate union or TPS materials, rather than to tell them about what the changes are.

There were some differences between employee groups in the sources they identified. Male employees were slightly more likely than female employees to cite a teacher union as the source of their information (68 and 55 per cent respectively). Supply teachers were less likely than average to cite a teacher union as a source of information, but more likely than average to mention their (local authority) employer. The supply teachers in this research are those paying into the TPS, who are more likely to be working for the local authority. (Those working through supply agencies cannot join the TPS.) At least one local authority particularly targeted the supply teachers they employed in their provision of information.

The second most frequent way of hearing about the changes was through discussion with colleagues. Teachers and deputy or assistant headteachers were much more likely than headteachers to say that they had learnt about the changes by talking to colleagues (42 and 36 versus 28 per cent respectively). This perhaps emphasises the need highlighted earlier for headteachers to ensure they pass on information to staff (because their staff are depending more on word-of-mouth). Primary employees were less likely than their secondary or special and PRU counterparts to report that they had found out about the changes talking to colleagues (34 per cent primary against 45 per cent secondary, 42 per cent special and PRU). The extent to which pensions information was exchanged between staff

varied considerably between schools, and in some cases it was clear that misinformation had been exchanged (see Box 5.4)

Box 5.4: The effect of school culture on discussion of pensions with colleagues

In Special school M, a teacher commented that she felt awkward discussing teachers' pensions in the staffroom, because there were so many support staff there who did not have access to such a good pension scheme.

In contrast, case study notes from Secondary A record:

It was clear that as a result of the high proportion of older teachers and some recent retirements, teachers in this school had sometimes talked with each other about pensions. This did not necessarily mean they had a clear understanding; their information often came from other teachers rather than official sources. One said, *'We've had people here retire ... some have retired early and some have retired on time and I've asked them what's the rate and I've remembered it.'*

A further contrast was provided by Primary K, a very small school where three of the four teachers were approaching retirement, but did not really discuss it, as it was felt to be a private issue for teachers to deal with themselves.

The third most frequent way of hearing about the changes was through a TPS poster or leaflet. Teachers and deputy or assistant headteachers were less likely to indicate that their information had come from a TPS poster or leaflet (23 per cent teachers and 22 per cent deputy or assistant headteachers against 35 per cent headteachers). Similarly, teachers and deputy or assistant headteachers were less likely to identify their local authority employer (14 and 16 versus 27 per cent headteachers); this again perhaps emphasises the need for headteachers to pass information on to other teachers.

One fifth (19 per cent) of respondents had found out about the changes from the TPS website; however there were significant differences between different employees in this group. Male employees were more likely to mention the TPS website (30 per cent, 15 per cent females). Older employees aged 55 to 60 were more likely than their younger colleagues aged 49 to 54 to say that they had learnt about the changes from the TPS website (24 per cent 55 to 60, 15 per cent 49 to 54). Further, teachers were also less likely to mention the website (17 per cent) than headteachers (24 per cent) and deputy or assistant headteachers (25 per cent). Primary employees were less likely than their secondary or special and PRU counterparts to report that they had found out about the changes from the TPS website (14 versus 24 and 19 per cent respectively). In addition, part-time employees were less likely to say that they had found out about the TPS changes from the website (16 per cent) than full-time employees or supply teachers (23 per cent in both cases).

The qualitative data indicate that interviewees who visited the website were those who considered themselves to be close to retirement, who were actively planning for retirement and who felt they had a good understanding of TPS. Survey data suggest that the mean distance from anticipated retirement age of those employees who had learned about the changes through the website was 4.1 years compared with 5.6 years for those who had not used the website. Employees who said that had learnt about the TPS changes from the TPS or DfES website were much more likely than average to say that they had at least a general awareness of the TPS changes (87 and 86 versus 64 per cent respectively).

Older employees were also more likely than younger to indicate that a pensions' advisor had been a source of information (17 and 12 per cent respectively). The qualitative data suggest that individuals who had take financial advice generally considered themselves close to retirement or were particularly active in planning for retirement, and took particular interest in pension information. The survey shows that employees identifying a pensions' advisor as a source of information were also more likely than average to state that they had at least a general awareness of the changes (79 and 75 per cent respectively).

A few interviewees, both headteachers and teachers, talked about how useful they had found pensions seminars put on by the school, the union, or the local authority (see Box 5.4).

Box 5.4: Pensions seminars

We actually booked up the County Council retirement course and it was pretty good ... and there some things that were being mentioned there, about forward planning, you know, sort of financial forward planning and because I was a mathematician and I'm fairly up on these things, to be fair, a lot of things that were mentioned on this retirement course I knew about but even I got hit with one or two nice little ones that I didn't know about. And I think really, there ought to be more teacher specific courses, I mean I went on this flaming course about a month before I retired so I'd already had to make the decision about taking up a teachers' pension but I think really, the Teachers' Pension Scheme ought to have seminars for people who are like 10 years away from retirement because you really do need – and certainly the people I talked to in school, quite a few of them were unprepared for it – so a few more courses, they don't have to be school specific, it could be an area, you know, Saturday morning or something, and those people who are interested could go along, but there's quite a few financial things that people need to get sorted out. That's one thing they ought to seriously think about. (Secondary mathematics teacher, m, 56)

In the survey employees who said that they were aware of the TPS changes were asked 'How clear and easy to understand is the information that you have previously received about the Teachers' Pension Scheme changes?' Only nine per cent said that it was 'very clear'. The majority of teachers in this group (62 per

cent) said that it was 'fairly clear', while 22 per cent said it was 'not very clear' and four per cent 'not clear at all' (Table 5.10).

Table 5.10 Employees: Perceptions of information received about Teachers' Pensions Scheme changes

	49-51 (%)	52-54 (%)	55-57 (%)	58-60 (%)	Male (%)	Female (%)	All (%)
Very clear	6	9	10	12	14	7	9
Fairly clear	57	62	64	65	65	60	62
Not very clear	28	21	20	16	16	24	22
Not clear at all	5	4	3	3	2	4	4
No information received	3	2	2	2	1	3	2
Not stated	2	2	2	1	2	2	2
weighted	834	1030	1000	469	973	2360	3333
unweighted	713	903	1222	588	1376	2050	3333

Based on all employees aware of changes to the TPS
Source: Employee survey

There was a relationship between age and employees' perceptions of the information they had received: 57 per cent of 49 to 51 year olds described the information received as 'very clear' or 'fairly clear' rising to 77 per cent for those aged 58 to 60. Regardless of age, males were more likely to say they found the information 'very clear' or 'fairly clear' compared with females (79 versus 68 per cent). See Table 5.10.

There was an association between finding the information clear and easy to understand, and understanding the TPS changes: seven in 10 (71 per cent) employees who were aware of the changes to the TPS said they found information about the changes clear and easy to understand. Similarly, perceptions of the clarity of information about the changes were linked with the ways in which employees kept abreast of pensions' information and changes. For instance, employees who found the information to be 'very clear' were most likely to have said they kept up to date with pensions' information (68 per cent). In contrast, employees who said the information was 'not clear at all' were most likely to have said they found pensions information confusing (47 per cent); these respondents were also least likely to have said they kept up to date (10 per cent) or say they had a broad awareness of how their pension was calculated (37 per cent). This suggests that information received about the changes was more easily understood by those with a prior knowledge about their pension. Those who found pensions information confusing (12 per cent of employees), or had only a broad understanding of their pension (almost 60 per cent of employees) were less likely to say the information about the changes was clear. Thus, for many employees, the information provided about the pension scheme changes was not particularly effective.

Moreover, many teachers did not prioritise reading the information that they received, possibly because of the difficulties they found or anticipated in understanding material, or because of a lack of time and motivation. Some had filed the information; others spoke about collecting articles about pensions, but not having time to read them; others had passed leaflets on to their partners. Even where sessions were provided in case study schools, some had not attended: one 54-year old interviewee said, *'I know I should have gone, I was just too busy, isn't that awful?'*

The information sheet

The previous section has summarised the sources of information through which teachers had found out about TPS changes prior to the research. All those who were interviewed or sent questionnaires also received our information sheet (see Appendix C). We asked respondents to re-assess their understanding after reading this sheet. One sixth (17 per cent) of employees reported that, after completing the survey questionnaire and reading the accompanying information sheet, they fully understood the changes to the TPS. A further 56 per cent said they 'mostly' understood the changes and a fifth (21 per cent) that the changes had been 'partly' understood. Only three per cent stated that they did not understand the changes or were not sure.

Given, therefore, that around three-quarters (73 per cent) of employees said that they mostly or fully understood the changes after reading the survey information sheet – compared with 55 per cent who said they had at least a general awareness prior to the survey – this would suggest that the information sheet was successful in considerably raising levels of awareness and understanding amongst employees.

Several interviewees were very positive about the information sheet. In particular they said that they liked it because it was not too long, it included clear worked examples, and it enabled them to compare the financial consequences of the different options. One interviewee explained:

[The information sheet] *just says it all in 2 sheets of A4, and I think if anybody who is 50 and over got one of those, you know, they would be – it makes sense and they can see the different options* (Primary headteacher, f, 55)

These findings suggest that there is scope for further increasing awareness and understanding of the TPS changes through additional information and publicity that clearly explains the changes.

Table 5.11 illustrates the understanding of the TPS changes reported amongst employees once they had read the information sheet, by levels of awareness prior to the survey.

Table 5.11 Employees: Understanding of TPS changes after reading survey information sheet (by awareness of changes prior to the survey)

	I had a detailed awareness and understanding of the changes (%)	I had a general awareness of the changes made (%)	I had a limited awareness of the changes made (%)	I was not aware the scheme had changed (%)	All (%)
Fully understand	63	18	6	7	17
Mostly understand	34	69	53	40	56
Partly understand	2	10	35	36	21
Do not understand	-	*	2	8	2
Not sure	-	*	1	5	1
Not stated	-	3	3	5	4
weighted	346	1778	1208	495	3865
unweighted	420	1891	1115	401	3865

Based on all employees
Source: Employee survey

Three-fifths (63 per cent) of employees who said they had a detailed awareness of the changes prior to the survey reported that they fully understood the changes after reading the information sheet. However, a third (34 per cent) of this group said that they now mostly understood the changes, suggesting perhaps that their perceived prior awareness was not as comprehensive as they had thought. There were some interviewees in this category. As one commented about the sheet '*I think what this is saying is I haven't fully understood it, I haven't read it that thoroughly and I might want to go away and do that*' (Special school teacher, f, 53).

Seven in 10 (69 per cent) employees who reported that they had a general awareness before the survey said they now mostly understood the changes, but around a fifth (18 per cent) of this group said they now fully understood the changes (although one in 10 reported that, after reading the information sheet, they only had a partial understanding).

As might be expected, the largest impact of the information sheet on improving understanding of the TPS changes was apparent amongst employees who stated that prior to the survey they had a limited awareness of the changes or were not aware the scheme had changed. Around three-fifths (59 per cent) of employees who had previously said that they had a limited awareness and around a half (47 per cent) who had said that they had not been aware the scheme had changed reported that they now mostly or fully understood the changes. Further, similar proportions in both these groups (35 per cent limited awareness, 36 per cent no awareness) now said they had a partial understanding of the changes.

Interestingly, levels of understanding of the TPS changes after reading the information sheet did not seem to impact upon different types of employees in any

significant way, as the same patterns were apparent as seen for awareness levels. So older employees were more likely than younger employees to say they now mostly or fully understood the TPS changes (79 per cent 58 to 60 decreasing to 68 per cent 49 to 51). Further, a greater understanding of the changes after reading the information sheet was reported amongst males (81 versus 70 per cent females), headteachers (82 versus 71 per cent teachers) and secondary employees (76 versus 71 per cent primary employees).

5.3 Summary

In this chapter we have reviewed the survey findings about local authorities', headteachers' and teachers' perceived awareness and understanding of the TPS changes. We have also reviewed some misunderstandings that emerged in the qualitative work, and discussed the ways in which different respondent groups found out about the TPS changes.

Awareness and understanding of TPS changes

Within local authorities, those who worked directly with teachers' pensions generally reported a detailed awareness and understanding of the TPS changes (72 per cent), but HR staff were more likely to report only a general awareness (36 per cent detailed understanding, 49 per cent general awareness). Governors interviewed reported limited or no awareness. Amongst headteachers as employers, 11 per cent said they had a detailed awareness and understanding, while a further 50 per cent reported that they had at least a general awareness. A similar pattern was found among employees, with slightly fewer reporting either a detailed (nine per cent) or general (46 per cent) awareness. Some groups had a greater awareness: headteachers (68 per cent of those aged 49 to 60 reported a detailed or general awareness); men (68 per cent); older teachers (62 per cent aged 58 to 60 versus 46 per cent 49 to 51); and those who were closer to their anticipated retirement date. However, 31 per cent of all employees had a limited awareness, and 13 per cent said that they were unaware that the scheme had changed.

A majority of those surveyed indicated that they were aware of both the increase to contributions and of other changes (69 per cent of headteachers as employers, and 60 per cent of employees). Interviews showed that more were aware of and understood the change to average salary calculations than the introduction of phased retirement. Many saw this simply as a reduction in hours or responsibilities, but did not understand that it also involves drawing part of the pension early. Some interviewees were 'aware' of changes that had not in fact taken place, such as raising normal pension age to 65 for teachers over a certain age. Thus survey respondents' claims to awareness of changes other than increased contributions must be treated with some caution. Some headteachers in their role as employers and some employees said they knew very little about the TPS changes: some 15

per cent of each group were aware only of the increase in contributions, while 16 per cent of headteachers as employers and 22 per cent of employees indicated that they were 'not aware of many changes at all'.

Sources of information about the TPS changes

In relation to sources of information about the changes, local authority staff were most likely to have learned about the changes from the Employers' Toolkit (81 per cent pensions staff, 62 per cent HR), the TPS website (76 per cent pensions, 46 per cent HR), and from training provided by Teachers' Pensions or the DfES (72 per cent pensions, 56 per cent HR). The majority of governors interviewed had heard about the changes only through the research; some felt strongly that they should be provided with more information. The most important source of information for headteachers as employers and for employees was teacher unions (56 per cent, 59 per cent). The next most frequently cited source for employees was talking with colleagues (39 per cent). Among employees, headteachers were more likely than teachers to indicate that they had heard about the changes through written information or official sources, and teachers more likely than heads to say their information came from talk with colleagues (42 versus 28 per cent). Less than a quarter of headteachers as employers and of employees had found out about the changes from the TPS website. Almost a third of headteacher employers had received letters from their local authorities, but only 14 per cent of employees said that they had heard about the changes from the local authority, and just nine per cent of teachers said that they had been informed by their headteacher.

These data suggest that communication about the TPS changes has been limited, and that there was no consistent method through which information had been passed to all teachers. Chance and misunderstanding played a role in what information was noticed. In addition, some individuals had received information but had not paid any attention to it. The information sheet provided with the survey and to all interviewees was reported to be clear and comprehensible, and appeared to have increased understanding in many cases. But for some respondents it revealed that they did not understand as well as they had thought.

6 Current retirement plans

6.1 Introduction

We have examined the factors influencing employees' decisions as to when to retire; levels of understanding towards the TPS; and awareness and understanding of the recent changes to the scheme. This chapter focuses on current and anticipated retirement patterns in schools, and the current retirement plans of teachers and headteachers. The direct impacts of the TPS changes are not considered; these will be dealt with in the following chapter.

This chapter begins by exploring retirement patterns in schools. It then considers employees' plans for the rest of their careers until they retire. It then turns to retirement, examining survey data about the ages at which teachers expect to leave teaching and to draw their pensions, and the type of pension awards they anticipate. Then, drawing on the interview data, it explores the views of those who plan to retire early; those planning to leave teaching at 60 and those who plan to teach until 61 and beyond. The chapter finishes by examining teachers' post-retirement plans.

6.2 Retirement patterns in schools

Local authorities

Looking at the survey data, almost three-quarters of local authorities (HR) (29 out of 39) expected there to be a 'bulge' of headteacher retirements in the next five to 10 years (see Table 6.1). When considering deputy or assistant headteacher retirements, half (20 out of 39) indicated there would be a 'bulge' in the next five years and three-fifths (23 out of 39) said the same for the next 10 years.

Whilst few local authority representatives were interviewed in the qualitative research, those who were had some awareness of the national trend of a retirement bulge amongst school leaders and indicated that it was reflected in their local figures. One local authority interviewee explained that teaching staff age profiles were something which they had discussed in the past, and that *'the reforms in the pension scheme highlighted it for them'*. However, another local authority interviewee was unaware of the age profile of teachers in her area as it was not within her remit.

Given this anticipated 'bulge', the prominence given to succession planning by local authorities is important. Nine in 10 local authorities (HR) who responded to the survey indicated the authority was involved in succession planning activities to develop the next generation of school leaders. In contrast, while some of the local

authority interviewees were aware of succession planning activities in their authority, none of those interviewed could provide further details as they were not personally involved.

Table 6.1 Local authorities: Statements on school leader retirements in local authority

	We anticipate a 'bulge' of headteacher retirements in the next 5 years (%)	We anticipate a 'bulge' of headteacher retirements in the next 10 years (%)	We anticipate a 'bulge' of deputy or assistant headteacher retirements in the next 5 years (%)	We anticipate a 'bulge' of deputy or assistant headteacher retirements in the next 10 years (%)
Strongly agree	26	26	10	23
Agree	46	44	41	36
Neither agree nor disagree	13	21	33	23
Disagree	3	*	5	3
Strongly disagree	*	*	*	*
Don't know	8	5	10	10
Not stated	5	5	*	5
weighted	39	39	39	39

Based on all local authorities
Source: Local authority survey (HR)

Headteachers as employers

Looking at anticipated retirement patterns in their schools over the next few years, headteachers predicted an increase in the number of retirements for each school year. The proportion of those who anticipated 10 per cent or more of teachers in their schools retiring increased from 10 per cent for 2006 / 2007 to 12 per cent for 2007 / 2008 and 17 per cent for 2008 / 2009 (See Table 6.2).

Analysing sub-group differences based on the overall percentage of teacher retirements in the next three years combined, schools with a high proportion of teachers¹¹ aged 50 or over were more likely than schools with low or average proportions to anticipate more than 10 per cent of their teachers retiring in the next three years (60 versus 18 and 44 per cent respectively).

The number of teachers in the school also influenced the proportions expected to retire over the next three years. Regardless of school phase headteachers in

¹¹ A high proportion of older teachers is defined as 41 per cent or more of teachers aged 50 and above, a low proportion is those with 20 per cent or less of teachers aged 50 or above and average is defined as 21 per cent to 40 per cent (see Section 3.3.2).

smaller schools¹² were most likely to anticipate more than 10 per cent of their staff retiring in the next three years, see table 6.2 for more details.

Table 6.2 Headteacher as Employer: Anticipated retirements in next three school years as a proportion of number of teachers in school (by school size)

	Smaller Primary (%)	Medium Primary (%)	Larger Primary (%)	Smaller Secondary (%)	Medium Secondary (%)	Larger Secondary (%)	All (%)
2006/2007							
Less than 1% expected to retire	48	30	23	9	3	*	29
1% to 10% expected to retire	*	28	43	44	61	76	28
More than 10% expected to retire	52	42	32	41	29	23	39
Not stated	*	*	2	6	8	2	4
weighted	137	271	139	10	24	22	672
unweighted	109	120	131	58	78	66	672

Based on all head teachers as employers
Source: Headteacher as employer survey

Headteachers were also asked about retirement patterns in their schools. Both the survey and the qualitative data show that retirement age patterns varied considerably. In the survey, a quarter of headteachers said most teachers at their school retired before the age of 60, while another quarter said most worked until they were 60 or above. A further 17 per cent said there was no pattern because retirement age varied so much, while 28 per cent were unable to suggest a pattern because there were not enough older teachers in their school.

Secondary school headteachers were more likely than those in primary and PRU/special schools to say teachers in their school usually retired before the age of 60 (46 versus 23 and 19 per cent respectively). As might be expected, headteachers of schools with a low proportion of teachers aged over 50 were more likely than average to say there were too few teachers to suggest a pattern (41 per cent). In contrast, headteachers of schools with a higher proportion of teachers over 50 were more likely than those with low proportions to say most teachers work until they are 60 or above (39 versus 22 per cent) or that retirement age varied and there was no pattern (24 versus 12 per cent). There were no differences based on the number of teachers at the schools or the level of school challenge.

Patterns of retirement were similarly varied across the case study schools. As we explained in Chapter 3, case study schools were partly sampled in terms of the

¹² Smaller schools are defined here as those with fewer than eight teachers in Primary schools, or fewer than 41 teachers in Secondary schools. Medium schools are defined as those with 8-15 teachers (Primary) or 41-70 teachers (Secondary) and Large schools are those with more than 15 teachers (Primary) or more than 70 teachers (Secondary) (see Section 3.3.2).

number of older teachers in the school. Consequently, the majority of the case study schools had higher than average proportions of teachers aged 50 and over. While patterns of retirement in the case study schools were linked to some extent to the proportion of older teachers in the school, it became clear that they were also related to the attitude of the headteacher towards part-time working, and to the importance they accorded to retaining older teachers (see Chapter 4 for more details).

As with the survey data, early retirement appears to have been more common in the secondary schools, although it is difficult to draw such concrete conclusions from a small sample. Two secondary headteachers said that there was a pattern of early retirement in their schools. In Secondary C, where the headteacher was resistant to part-time working and there were higher than average proportions of older teachers, the headteacher reported that there had been a pattern of ill-health retirement, with teachers tending to leave in their early 50s after a period of illness. In Secondary D where the proportion of older teachers was average, the headteacher said: *'People certainly do retire by the age of 60 that is the first thing to say. And people are looking to retire two or three years earlier than that if they can do.'* In both these schools, there was no real tradition of reducing hours or responsibilities as they approached retirement.

In contrast, such practices were more common at Secondary B and E, where there were also more instances of teachers working past 60. At Secondary B, teachers tended to retire either at 60 or after; the headteacher reported that they *'have gone on because they couldn't really afford to retire at 60'*. There was a much younger teaching population at Secondary E; however, older teachers were offered greater flexibility. Two issues may have contributed to teachers staying on in these schools – financial factors and the level of flexibility offered by the school. Both were situated in areas of expensive housing, and it is possible that schools had developed flexible options because teachers needed to keep on working in order to be able to afford to continue living in the area.

In both Secondary A and F, headteachers reported that no real retirement pattern could be identified; the former because the school was so small and the latter because the school had only been open for a short time.

The primary case study schools had slightly different patterns of retirement to the secondary schools. We selected two of the primary schools because they had, or were setting up, co-headships which in each case involved one head moving towards retirement. It is unsurprising then, that similar flexibility was available to staff; practice at Primary G was described in Chapter 4, and Primary H had a similar pattern of reducing hours or responsibilities as retirement approached.

In the two special schools, teachers generally left at 60 or after. As the headteacher of Special School L explained *'It's normally 60 really. It's quite, as Tony Blair would*

say, *bog standard really.*' In Special school M, where there was a higher than average proportion of older teachers, there was a pattern of continuing working past 60, with three members of staff currently doing so. This was echoed by the interviews with teachers in these schools, who were for the most part very happy working there. These findings are in line with national data about the current special school teacher workforce which shows that special schools have a higher than average proportion of older teachers.

The survey data show that teachers in schools with low challenge were more likely to leave early than those teachers in schools with higher levels of challenge (31 per cent versus 23 per cent). This is contrary to what might be expected. Turning to the qualitative data, it is harder to explore such a pattern, as generally speaking, the schools in which we conducted our research had lower than average proportions of pupils entitled to free school meals.

6.3 Career plans before retirement

The majority of teachers and headteachers in both the survey and the interviews said they intended to stay in teaching on the same salary scale and hours until they retired; 60 per cent of those who responded to the survey indicated this (see Table 6.3).

Table 6.3 Employees: Career plans before retirement

	All (%)
Stay on current salary scale and hours	60
Move from full-time to part-time work	12
Reduce responsibilities and pay	5
Become a supply teacher	3
Remain in current leadership role	2
GAIN PROMOTION	8
- Gain promotion by gaining a TLR	2
- Become an deputy / deputy or assistant headteacher	2
- Move to upper pay spine	2
- Become a headteacher	1
- Become an excellent teacher	1
Don't know	9
Not stated	2
weighted	3865
unweighted	3865

Based on all employees
Source: Employee survey

A move to part-time work was mentioned by 12 per cent. A further eight per cent hoped to gain some type of promotion. The posts aspired to varied. Only one per cent hoped to become headteachers; almost all of those who planned to become a

headteacher were deputy or assistant headteachers. Reducing hours or responsibilities was more frequently indicated than gaining promotion: 17 per cent of employees indicated they would like to reduce their hours or their responsibilities compared with only eight per cent who indicated they wanted to gain promotion.

Headteachers and teachers aged 55 or above were most likely to expect to remain on their current salary scale and hours (73 and 67 per cent respectively). Headteachers were less likely than average to intend to move from full-time into part-time work (six per cent).

Age and role also had other influences on employees' career plans. Intentions of gaining promotion declined with rising age (from 15 per cent of 49 to 51 year olds to four per cent of those aged 58 to 60), while deputy or assistant headteachers were most likely to expect to seek promotion (12 per cent). As might be expected, younger deputy or assistant headteachers (aged 49 to 54) were more likely than their older counterparts (aged 55 to 60) to indicate a desire to seek promotion (17 per cent versus five); however, this is a low proportion in the light of aspirations to increase the number of headteachers.

Whether employees worked on a full-time or part-time basis also influenced promotion aspirations: the former were more likely to expect to seek promotion (nine versus three per cent). There were no differences between those teaching and not teaching shortage subjects.

Echoing the survey data, most of those interviewed expressed a desire to remain in their current school and at their current level during the time leading up to their retirement. Only four out of 65 teachers interviewed indicated that they might seek promotion in the future, either in their current school or elsewhere. Those who did discuss this as a possibility were understandably tentative; whether or not they would actually pursue promotion was dependent upon a range of factors.

All four teachers who expressed an interest in seeking promotion were aged 49 to 51. Three were based in secondary schools and were working as deputy or assistant headteachers. One deputy and one assistant head indicated that they might seek headships in the future; they had both completed or were due to complete the NPQH. Another assistant headteacher expressed possible interest in becoming a deputy headteacher in the future. While they talked about seeking promotion, all three were cautious about whether they would actually do so, and were keen to stress that they were happy in their current positions, as one explained: *'I hope so at some point, but I'm very happy in the role that I have now.'* Only one primary classroom teacher, aged 50, indicated that she would consider seeking further promotion onto the leadership scale, as this would help improve her pension.

A number of other teachers mentioned the possibility of promotion but explained that they had ruled it out, either because of their age, or because they had tried previously but had been unsuccessful.

Too old, aren't I? I should have done and I actually did go to a few interviews about four or five years ago but I think I was too old then. (Secondary teacher, f, 57)

I shall be here another year, I mean no other school would want me now anyway. (Primary deputy headteacher, m, 59)

In contrast to seeking promotion, some of those interviewed expressed an interest in returning to the classroom. As one senior leadership team member explained, her dream would be to *'go back to being a classroom teacher ... and just teach RE'*. One headteacher also expressed an interest in this; however, he also talked about a number of other possibilities, which are discussed below. (See also Box 6.1.)

Two teachers who were (or had recently been) acting headteachers both expected to return to the classroom once their colleagues returned. One explained her reasons for not wishing to pursue a headship:

You know I sort of decided a few years ago it's not for me; I like teaching, I like being in the classroom and I like being with the children. (Primary teacher who had acted as headteacher, f, 55)

Few interviewees discussed the possibility of moving to another school in the future, with most of those who mentioned it explaining they did not consider it a viable option. Reasons put forward for this included loyalty to their current school, attachment to the area, and a reluctance to start again in a new school. Some special school teachers explained that it may be difficult for them to find employment in any other school because they had developed such niche specialisms.

The survey showed that 12 per cent of employees indicated a desire to move to part-time work in the run up to their retirement. Interviewees also discussed the possibility of moving to part-time working. Out of the 65 teachers interviewed, 10 were already working part-time at the time of the interview, while a number of other interviewees showed an interest in part-time or job-share positions in the future.

Most of those already working on a part-time basis were in primary schools (seven out of 10, including two headteachers sharing the role). Another headteacher was moving to part-time headship in September 2007. However, as indicated above, these schools were selected because they had co-headship arrangements, and they should not be considered as a representative sample of primary schools. Their arrangements are discussed further in Section 7.5.

Many interviewees, including primary, secondary and special teachers, said in the interviews that they would like to move to part-time work in the future, but it was difficult to tell how serious some of these aspirations were. This included a number of headteachers in primary and secondary schools. One primary headteacher expressed an interest in the possibility of a job-share headship in the future, while a secondary headteacher had also approached the board of governors about moving to a job-share headship shortly. Another hoped to become a part-time executive head in the near future. This role was being created where several schools were merging:

My LA ... are quite interested in having an executive head who has a strategic overview and does a lot of the public image stuff, but who hasn't got, if you like, the daily grind. And I hope and believe that they are shaping me up for that, that's the impression they have given me.

While the majority of those interviewed could be said to have very fluid plans, headteachers appeared to have more fluid plans than most. Of the 21 headteachers we interviewed, the majority were very unsure of when they would retire or what they would do in the future. This was not because they had a lack of options. As well as the possibility of moving to job-share headships, headteachers also discussed a variety of other pre- and post-retirement part-time roles in the education sector. In considering this data it should be noted that in some cases it is difficult to distinguish whether interviewees expected to undertake the roles they identified before or after they 'retired' and drew their pension. The term 'retire' often seemed to be used very loosely to mean 'cease to do any kind of paid work' rather than being related to drawing a pension, or leaving regular employment. For example, one headteacher said:

I'm thinking of doing possibly either SIP work or something similar, which again mean that you might not be working every week, but you'll have the money coming in until you actually get to retire. (Secondary headteacher, f, 55)

Four headteachers mentioned the possibility of working as school improvement partners in the future, while a further six discussed the possibility of doing some kind of educational consultancy work for the local authority. Working for local authorities as consultants or advisors, or as school improvement partners were seen as attractive options because they allowed headteachers to continue earning while working more flexible hours and without the burden of so much responsibility. See Box 6.1 for the range of possible opportunities open to one headteacher.

While headteachers were for the most part unsure of their future plans, some were sure of what they *didn't* want to do; a number mentioned that they did not want to do any kind of inspection work. As one teacher retiring this year explained 'I don't want to put teachers through the stress that I've been put through'.

Box 6.1: Career Plans: special school headteacher, m, 52

Brian Smith is a headteacher and is currently in his early fifties. He had not really thought about his retirement but said he might go at about 57 to 59. He was aware of the various options that might be available to him in his retirement. He discussed the possibility of returning to the classroom in the last few years before retiring:

My wife says 'yeah, yeah, you say that now but you won't give up the status!' That would be one of the things, looking at it. I thought, wouldn't that be just great to go and be a classroom teacher again, because, you know, I didn't ever come in not to be working directly with kids, and I don't, because I do very little hands on with children because of the other responsibilities.

He conceded, however, that despite the attractions it would probably not be possible to do this in his current school, as he was unsure how other members of staff would feel about it:

I mean, come on, you come in as a head, and the head who has been here for donkeys years is now one of the teachers? ... It would be an interesting concept, I wouldn't like it at all as an incoming head, to have the serving head as a member of the teaching workforce.

He could see the attraction of job-share headships and also mentioned the possibility of becoming head of a federation. On top of this, he was also qualified as a SIP. *'The SIP thing gives me, if I get fed up here, which I'm not at the minute, then obviously I could go and do some consultancy and some teaching'.* He had also worked as an educational advisor in the past, and therefore had the option of a job in this area as well.

It was clear then that this headteacher had considered his options, but was unsure at the moment which route he might take. He went on to explain that *'I'm very open-minded, I would consider anything'*, but ultimately *'I'm just trying to keep my options and see financially where we are and where we are going.'*

6.4 Retirement plans

This section examines employees' plans for retirement, first by reporting the data from the survey with regard to the ages at which employees planned to leave teaching and draw their pensions, and discussing the different types of pension award anticipated. It then turns to the qualitative data and discusses the interviewees who anticipated retiring before they reached 60, those who expected to retire at 60, and those who intended to continue teaching into their sixties.

6.4.1 Anticipated retirement age

First we review data from the surveys relating to the age at which employees anticipated leaving teaching. The survey data show that 38 per cent of employees anticipated leaving teaching early (before 60), while 44 per cent anticipated age retirement (leaving at the normal retirement age of 60), and 15 per cent anticipated late retirement (when aged 61 or older). This is in contrast to the

pattern shown in the literature review in Chapter 2, in which, for all years shown, the number of teachers retiring before age 60 has consistently exceeded the number taking age retirement (57 per cent of pension awards before 60 versus 43 per cent age retirement in 2005-6, DfES, 2006b). It is difficult to know whether this implies a change in the pattern of retirement age or whether there is a difference between peoples' expectations of when they might retire and the reality of when they do so. This is further discussed in relation to type of pension award.

Overall, the likelihood of leaving teaching aged 61 or above increased with the age of the respondent (from 10 per cent of those aged 49 to 51 to 38 per cent aged 58 to 60). This might be because such employees were closer to this age and could be more definite that they wanted to stay in the profession beyond the age of 60.

The amount of pensionable years service influenced anticipated retirement age; employees with more than 30 years pensionable teaching service were most likely to anticipate retiring between 55 and 59 (45 per cent falling to 29 per cent of employees with less than 20 pensionable teaching years). Employees with less than 20 years were most likely to anticipate leaving at 60 (47 per cent) or above (21 per cent). This trend was repeated when looking at total pensionable years because of the close correlation between total pensionable teaching years and overall total pensionable years (i.e. when including pensionable service from other pensions in addition to years in teaching). Gender also had a significant impact, as seen by the fact that 36 per cent of males with less than 20 years pensionable teaching service said they would retire after 60 compared with a fifth (19 per cent) of females; see Table 6.4 for more details. Again this trend was repeated when looking at total pensionable years. █

Table 6.4 Employees: Anticipated age leaving teaching (by gender / pensionable teaching service years)

	Male 0-19yrs (%)	Male 20-29yrs (%)	Male 30yrs+ (%)	Female 0-19yrs (%)	Female 20-29yrs (%)	Female 30yrs+ (%)	All (%)
54 and under	3	3	*	1	2	1	1
55-59	24	43	46	30	37	45	37
60	35	39	39	49	47	41	44
61 and over	36	14	13	19	12	10	15
Not Stated	1	1	2	2	2	3	2
MEAN AGE	60	59	59	60	59	59	59
weighted	135	305	569	1038	1080	551	3865
unweighted	173	397	855	749	922	586	3865

Based on all employees
Source: Employee survey

Looking specifically at gender, females were more likely than males to anticipate retiring aged 60 (46 versus 38 per cent), while the latter were more likely to

anticipate retiring between 55 and 59 (42 versus 36 per cent). There were no differences by gender in terms of anticipating retirement when aged 61 or above.

Secondary school employees were more likely than those in primary and PRU/special schools to anticipate an early retirement. Two-fifths (43 per cent) of those in secondary schools anticipated retiring between 55 and 59 (versus 34 per cent of primary employees and 28 per cent of PRU/special school employees).

A similar, but more marked, pattern was also seen in the case study interviews. More than half (20 out of 34) of the secondary teachers who indicated their anticipated retirement age, anticipated retiring early. In contrast, primary teachers were more likely to indicate in the interviews that they would teach until normal retirement age (10 out of 16 teachers). Anticipated retirement age for those interviewees working in PRU/special schools was much more varied.

In addition, over half (57 per cent) of employees indicated in the survey that they anticipated drawing their pension aged 60. Although 37 per cent of employees had anticipated leaving teaching between 55 and 59, only 24 per cent actually anticipated drawing their pension at this age, which indicates that some employees who anticipated leaving teaching before 60 intended to live off some other income. A higher proportion of women were in this group.

As with anticipated age of leaving teaching, length of pensionable teaching service (along with the closely related total pensionable years) was a driving factor; employees with more than 30 years teaching service were most likely to anticipate drawing their pension between 55 and 59 (34 per cent), while those with less than 20 years were most likely to anticipate doing this aged 60 (61 per cent) or above (19 per cent). Further, as with anticipated age of leaving teaching, the relationship between both gender and length of service had a similar influence on the anticipated age that the employee would start drawing their pension; see Table 6.5 for more details.

Table 6.5 Employees: Anticipated age start drawing pension (by gender / pensionable teaching service years)

	Male 0-19yrs (%)	Male 20-29yrs (%)	Male 30yrs+ (%)	Female 0-19yrs (%)	Female 20-29yrs (%)	Female 30yrs+ (%)	All (%)
54 and under	*	1	*	*	*	*	*
55-59	13	28	36	13	25	33	24
60	47	55	49	63	61	53	57
61 and over	35	14	12	17	11	9	14
Not Stated	5	2	4	7	4	6	5
MEAN AGE	*	*	*	*	*	*	60
weighted	135	305	569	1038	1080	551	3865
unweighted	173	397	855	749	922	586	3865

Based on all employees. Source: Employee survey

Survey data show that only 13 per cent of employees said they were certain that they would retire at and draw their pension at the ages they specified (see Table 6.6). A further 36 per cent said their plans were 'highly likely' to happen. The remaining employees were more uncertain. Twenty seven per cent said their plans were 'fairly likely' to happen; 20 per cent said they were 'not definite', and three per cent had 'no idea' what they would do. Plans gradually became more definite with age: 39 per cent of 58 to 60 year olds said they were certain compared with three per cent of employees aged 49 to 51.

Employees were also more likely to indicate their plans were certain when they expected to retire within the next couple of years. The proximity to retirement – mean distance between actual current age and anticipated retirement age – of those employees who were certain of their plans was 2.2 years. This mean distance rose incrementally with decreasing levels of certainty so that the mean distance between actual age and anticipated retirement age of those employees who had no idea what they would do was 8.1 years.

Table 6.6 Employees: Certainty of anticipated retirement age and age start drawing teacher pension

	All (%)
Certain	13
Highly likely	36
Fairly likely	27
Not definite	20
Currently have no idea what I will do	3
Not stated	2
weighted	3865
unweighted	3865

Based on all employees
Source: Employee survey

The qualitative data show that teachers retiring in the next year were almost the only ones who could be said to be certain of their plans for leaving teaching. The majority of interviewees, particularly those who were younger, were very vague.

Of the 65 teachers and headteachers interviewed, 10 specified a date within the coming year that they would leave, or had already left between the time of the survey and the interview. Four out of the 10 were headteachers. Two planned to retire early (one at 57 and one at 59), while a further two expected to retire having moved to part-time working in the lead up to their retirement at 60 and 63 respectively. Of the remaining six teachers with definite plans, three were retiring early at 56, two had arranged to retire at 59 (one of whom had moved to a part-time contract prior to retirement), and one retired at 60.

Those who were furthest away from retirement were the least certain about their anticipated retirement age and retirement plans. Some of the senior leaders

interviewed were 50 or less and for them it was understandably difficult to talk about their retirement plans. They had given very little thought to what they would do and had little idea of when they might leave the profession.

I haven't got any retirement plans or decision making ... [the research] did start me thinking blimey, when I'm 65 and I retire, how will I live, but other than that, no. (Secondary deputy headteacher, f, 50)

There was a recognition that headship was physically very draining, and that there was only a limited time for which headteachers could sustain the level of work required to run a school.

Part of it is very, very energising and the best bit is seeing students and staff achieve to their full potential, but it is very, very draining, stressful, demanding job and whether I still have the capacity to do that in five years time, let alone 10 years time is open to question and so it's too early to say I think. (Secondary headteacher, m, 46)

In the survey, employees who felt certain of their plans were most likely to say they intended to stay on their current salary scale and hours in their final years of teaching. The likelihood of anticipating this declined with levels of certainty (from 68 per cent of those who were certain to 28 per cent of those that had no idea what they would do); see Table 6.7 for more details. Finally, employees who anticipated retiring aged 55 to 59 were more likely than average to mention a move from full-time to part-time work in their final years of teaching (18 per cent) but were less likely than average to want to gain promotion (three per cent); employees looking to retire after 60 (16 per cent) were more likely to want to achieve the latter.

Table 6.7 Employees: Career plans before retirement (by certainty of plans / anticipated retirement age)

	Certain (%)	Highly likely (%)	Fairly likely (%)	Not definite (%)	No idea (%)	54 and under (%)	55-59 (%)	60 (%)	61 and over (%)	All (%)
Stay on current salary scale and hours	68	66	60	47	28	43	59	62	57	60
Move from full-time to part-time work	10	12	14	15	10	9	18	9	10	12
Gain promotion (ANY)	3	8	9	10	11	*	3	10	16	8
Reduce responsibilities and pay	4	5	6	6	5	9	7	4	4	5
Become a supply teacher	7	3	3	3	3	11	4	3	3	3
Remain in current leadership role	1	2	1	2	2	*	1	2	3	2
Don't know	3	4	7	17	38	24	7	10	7	9
Not stated	4	1	1	1	4	4	2	1	1	2
weighted	515	1397	1027	754	115	52	1447	1708	583	3865
unweighted	617	1451	989	652	94	47	1448	1656	644	3865

Based on all employees
Source: Employee survey

6.4.2 Types of pension award

Focusing in more detail on specific retirement options, around a half of employees in the survey (54 per cent) said they intended to leave teaching aged 60 or above and draw their pension at that time. Less than a quarter (22 per cent) said they would leave teaching between 55 and 59 and take an actuarially reduced pension. Table 6.8 shows the full range of retirement preferences including first and second alternative options provided by employees who said their plans were 'not definite' or 'currently had no idea' what they would do.

Table 6.8 Employees: Main anticipated retirement option and 1st / 2nd alternatives of employees that unsure

	Main retirement option (%)	1 st alternative option (%)	2 nd Alternative option (%)
Leave teaching and draw pension at 60 or later	54	21	8
Leave teaching before 60 and draw pension aged 60+	16	28	12
Leave teaching aged 55-59 and take an actuarially reduced pension	22	18	18
Phased retirement	5	21	17
Take premature retirement	2	4	4
Take ill-health retirement	1	1	3
Not stated	*	7	39
weighted	3865	674	674
unweighted	3865	576	576

Based on all employees
Source: Employee survey

These figures can be compared with the pension awards made in 2005-6 (DfES, 2006b) (Table 6.9). The first obvious difference is that only three per cent of those in our survey predicted that they would take ill-health retirement or premature retirement, whereas in 2005-6, 21 per cent of all teacher pension awards were on these grounds. Obviously it is not possible to predict illness or school reorganisation leading to premature retirement unless it is taking place in the very near future, and it can be assumed that the proportion in these categories will be very much higher than our survey predicts (though possibly rather lower than the 2005-6 figures because there has been a steady decline in ill-health retirements since 1997 when the regulations were changed). The survey divided age retirements into two categories: those who planned to leave teaching and draw their pension at or after 60, and those who planned to leave teaching earlier but not to draw their pensions until they reached 60. The DfES figures do not distinguish between these two groups, in that both take age retirement pensions.

Table 6.9 Employees: Main anticipated retirement option given in survey, compared with actual retirements in 2005-6 (DfES, 2006b) (excluding those anticipating or taking health or premature retirement)

	Main retirement option in survey (%)	Pension awards 2005-6 (%)
Age retirement	70	43
<i>Leave teaching and draw pension at 60 or later</i>	54	
<i>Leave teaching before 60 and draw pension aged 60+</i>	16	
Leave teaching aged 55-59 and take an actuarially reduced pension	22	35
Phased retirement	5	0
Take premature retirement	2	11
Take ill-health retirement	1	10
Not stated	*	
weighted	3865	
unweighted	3865	

Sources: Employee survey and DfES, 2006b, Table H2

What this comparison shows is that, even if we assume that all those taking premature and ill-health retirement in 2005-6 would otherwise have continued to teach to age 60, the survey figures still suggest that far fewer teachers would leave before 60 (22 per cent predicted they would take actuarially reduced pensions versus 35 per cent in 2005-6). This contrast stands even if we assume that all those now suggesting phased retirement would previously have taken an actuarially reduced pension. It is impossible to tell whether the contrast between these sets of figures represents a genuine shift in retirement patterns, or simply illustrates the pitfalls of predictions.

In the survey, older employees (55 to 60) were more likely than younger to anticipate leaving teaching and drawing their pension at 60 as their main option (62 versus 48 per cent), as were PRU/special and primary compared with secondary school employees (63 and 56 versus 50 per cent). Males were more likely than females to anticipate leaving before 60 and drawing an actuarially reduced pension (28 versus 20 per cent) as were headteachers and deputy and assistant headteachers compared with teachers (26 and 27 versus 20 per cent). These were the same trends as found in 2005-6 (see Chapter 2). If we consider both role and gender, male headteachers were more likely to expect to draw an actuarially reduced pension than female teachers (30 per cent versus 19 per cent). There were no differences between those teaching and not teaching shortage subjects.

Only 15 per cent of employees indicated that their plans were definite, and a further 39 per cent said they were 'highly likely' to happen. The remaining

employees were less certain. Around a quarter (27 per cent) said their plans were fairly likely to happen; and 15 per cent said that were not definite or had no idea what they would do (three per cent). These proportions were similar to those that said future career plans and anticipated retirement age were certain or likely to happen.

Certainty again increased with employees' age, as well as their proximity to retirement. Around a half (47 per cent) of employees aged 58 to 60 said their plans were definite and this decreased to four per cent of those aged 49 to 51. But once again, those who were planning to retire in the near future were the most likely to have definite plans; the mean distance to retirement of employees who were certain of their retirement plans was 2.7 years increasing to 8.6 years amongst employees that said they had no idea what they would do.

The highest levels of certainty were found amongst those employees who anticipated leaving teaching between 55 and 59 and taking an actuarially reduced pension (23 per cent of employees who anticipated taking up this option said they were certain that they would do this). Employees anticipating phased retirement or leaving teaching before normal retirement age and drawing their pension aged 60 or above were less certain that they would go ahead with their anticipated option. Of those anticipating phased retirement, only seven per cent were certain, and of those who expected to leave before reaching normal retirement age and drawing their pension at 60, only 10 per cent were certain.

6.4.3 Early retirement

This section draws on interview data and focuses on those who anticipated retiring before 60. It explores teachers' plans in relation to early retirement, looking at the age at which they planned to retire; how and when they anticipated they would take their pensions; and their reasons for taking early retirement. Sections 6.4.4 and 6.4.5 explore the same themes in relation to teachers who anticipated taking retirement at 60 and those who indicated they would continue to work into their sixties.

In comparison with the survey data, a slightly higher proportion of interviewees anticipated retiring early; almost half of those interviewed indicated that they would consider leaving teaching before they reached 60. This more closely reflects patterns found in previous years than does the survey data. As in the survey, secondary teachers, headteachers and men were more likely to anticipate retiring before 60.

Finance and length of time in teaching were important factors in whether or not teachers felt able to retire early. While some of the headteachers interviewed explained that their job was just too physically exhausting and draining to go on

until 60, they were generally in a better financial position than some of their classroom teaching colleagues, because of their higher salaries. Men also tended to be better off in terms of their years of pensionable service, while many of the women interviewed had had career breaks to bring up families.

Those who planned to retire in the near future had generally thought through the financial issues. Many said they would take an actuarially reduced pension. However, some had reservations about doing so and planned their retirement date around the level of actuarial reduction they could afford. Others explained that while they would like to retire earlier, they were reluctant to do so because of the extent of the actuarial reduction:

The logic is I don't want to have more than two years [actuarial reduction] so it would be 10 per cent off my pension and because of my wife as well I couldn't afford anything more than that. (Secondary teacher, m, 54)

You can go from 50 to 60 but you lose a whacking great amount, I think its something like 23 per cent if you went at 55. It gets better as you get to 58 and 59. (Primary deputy headteacher, m, 51)

Another teacher who retired at 56 in summer 2007 explained that he had retired at 56 rather than 55 'to get another year of the pension. We could have managed last year, but with this year we can manage even better' (Secondary teacher, m, 56).

Not all those interviewed in this group planned to draw their pension at the time they would leave teaching. Some explained that they would delay drawing their pension until they were 60. A number of interviewees had financial investments, such as ISAs and AVCs, which they had taken out specifically so that it would be possible for them to take early retirement. A number of female teachers, and one male, mentioned that they would rely on their partner's income.

Other teachers planned to enter employment other than teaching to supplement their income until they drew their pension. For example, one maths teacher planned to leave teaching at 53 (during the next year), and find paid employment away from teaching, perhaps working for a charity. She had been overpaying her mortgage to compensate for the probable loss of income, and she intended to delay drawing her pension.

Many of those who indicated that they would retire early had calculated that their mortgage would have been paid off by the time they left, and/or their children would have completed higher education, so that although they might be earning less, they would have fewer outgoings. One interviewee who had gone part-time explained that although he was now earning less, it had taken him into a lower tax bracket, and now that his mortgage had been paid, he noticed little difference in terms of income.

The age at which teachers anticipated retiring early varied. Some were very vague, giving unspecific time frames such as between 55 and 59, while others had a much clearer idea of when they would like to leave. A minority of those who anticipated retiring early indicated that they would like to leave teaching before or at 55. The most commonly mentioned ages mentioned were 57 and 58.

Section 4.3 explained that many teachers thought that they would start to lose energy after reaching 55, and consequently enjoy their work less and be less effective. Some teachers were attempting to balance this concern with their perceptions of the level of actuarial reduction that was affordable, often concluding that 57 or 58 would be the best time at which to leave.

Reasons for early retirement included many of the factors discussed in Chapter 4, such as the desire to retire while still healthy enough to enjoy it, and being worn out by changing initiatives. But some teachers explained that they had always intended to leave teaching early. Before the 1997 changes in funding that reduced the possibilities for early retirement (see Chapter 2), a very small number of teachers said that they had '*always planned*' to go at 50, and had subsequently had to change their plans to 55. Others said they had '*always planned*' to retire at 55. One teacher said:

I always intended to retire at 55, certainly from the role that I've, the responsibility aspect if you like. I still intend to do that if I can, at 55, 56 and that's obviously tied up with financial considerations really. My youngest son will have finished university by then. (Secondary teacher, m, 52)

This was not necessarily constructed as a desire to leave teaching, but rather a desire to move into the next phase of life, and to pursue long-held plans for travel, for example. A teacher who was about to retire at 56 and move abroad explained:

We always said we wanted to retire early. We actually set our target many years ago at 57 so it wasn't a case of, I want to get out of teaching, it was by 57 we wanted to retire. (Secondary teacher, m, 56)

A number of teachers indicated that they had originally wanted to leave teaching at 55, but had changed their minds as the time got nearer; some because they were still enjoying it and others because they were not yet ready to retire.

In the interviews, teachers talked about weighing up a range of factors which came into their decision. Box 6.2 provides an example of one teacher's decision to take early retirement at 58.

Box 6.2: Early retirement: Secondary teacher, m, 56

Andrew Smith is a teacher in a secondary school. He has calculated that the best time for him to leave the profession is Summer 2009 when he will be 58 and will have 32 years service, and intends to take an actuarially reduced pension. He still enjoys working with the pupils, but feels worn down by the bureaucracy and the tiredness that goes with that. He has thought through the process of retirement thoroughly and had weighed up the pros and cons in terms of his pension. His rationale for leaving in 2009 is explained below:

Well, I looked at the figures and worked out what I would end up trying to live on. And, as I say, I've got no dependents, and the mortgage will just about be gone at the end of this year, so I don't need to work quite so hard, and I'd like to just take it a bit easy. I think at the back of my mind, all of my ex-colleagues who took early retirement ... they are all having a wonderful time. They are all saying if you want to retire get out if you can and do all the things that you want to do before it's too late.

He had 'calculated that we would lose out more' if he took phased retirement.

It's better to just take the actuarial and then make up the difference with doing some more work, rather than trying to carry on. I think a lot of it is I want a change of scene anyway. I've been in the classroom or inside the school for 30 odd years and I'd just like to try something different.

He has a number of ideas for what he may do when he leaves teaching.

I'd probably still want to go out and work. If not doing a little bit of supply work, I'd certainly find something to do. I'm not the sort to sit around and do nothing.

He thinks he might set up his own business in the future, perhaps organising school trips and 'providing local transport and organisation to the educational facilities around the city' for example.

6.4.4 Plans to retire at 60

Echoing the quantitative data, a large proportion of teachers interviewed anticipated leaving teaching at 60. Almost a third said they would retire at normal retirement age. Primary teachers and women were much more likely to anticipate staying in teaching until 60 rather than leaving earlier or continuing to teach into their sixties.

For those who anticipated staying until 60, their reasons for doing so were mainly financial. Many of the women we interviewed had had interrupted careers, having taken time out to have children. A large number had also worked part-time at some point in their careers, and not all had opted into the scheme. Consequently, some had significantly fewer years of pensionable service than male teachers.

The interviews revealed that some of the teachers who anticipated teaching until 60 would have liked to have retired earlier, or to have taken phased retirement, but

that it simply wasn't financially viable. Most of those staying to 60 were doing so out of necessity in order to increase their pension or to continue earning.

See, mine's the only income, so I haven't got anyone else who's going to be retiring and add to it, so really that's why I keep saying – it's purely financial. (Primary teacher, f, 56)

It's because I wouldn't, I'm not going to get an enormous pension as it is, and if I stay full-time to 60, I think I'll have 22 years service which gives me about 25 per cent of my salary and it's not huge. That could change. My husband retires at Christmas and we'll see what the finances are like then ... At the moment I haven't got the faintest idea what it's going to get us, so if the financial situation is better than I expect I might go sooner. (Secondary teacher, f, 56)

While most of those anticipating retiring at 60 said they were remaining in teaching for financial reasons, there was a group of teachers who anticipated staying to 60 because, they said, they had always expected to retire at 60, and had not really considered any other option.

How certain teachers were of retiring at 60 was dependent upon how close they were to 60. Only two of the interviewees had made plans to retire in the coming year at 60, and could be considered as having definite plans. Most of the teachers who anticipated retiring at 60 were some distance from that age, and were therefore perhaps more liable to change their mind as they got older. Teachers themselves were keen to point out that their plans depended on many different factors and that they might change their minds as they got older, or as their circumstances changed.

I don't know, it's difficult thinking that far ahead really. I mean colleagues I've seen approaching retirement do become very tired. It's a very demanding job physically and I would think the likelihood is that I would not want to stay. But having said that, beyond 60 I might end up doing something in a greatly reduced capacity maybe, if I did want to do anything extra, but I couldn't see myself really, certainly not maintaining the role I have now beyond 60. (Primary teacher, f, 49)

Some of those anticipating age retirement had previously changed their minds about when they might retire. This was related to the reduced availability of early retirement packages introduced in 1997. A number of interviewees, however, appeared to confuse this with the introduction of actuarially reduced pensions which were not introduced until four years later. As a male secondary headteacher aged 56 explained, 'I had done all my financial planning to retire at 55 and if they hadn't introduced the actuarially reduced thing, which would take 25 per cent off my

pension’ then he would have gone at 55. He now saw himself staying until 60 in order to maximise his pension.

Another teacher had had to change her plans after the death of her partner:

I was planning to retire at 54. That was the plan my husband and I had. Because at that point the mortgage would have been up on the house, and we were going to sell it at that time when the kids would be grown up, and the mortgage paid, sell the house, but he died in anticipation of that, and I just had to carry on working really. ... So that was my retirement plan. I now really don't have one. I'm assuming I'll go at 60 even though I won't have a very good pension. (Secondary teacher, f, 57)

Box 6.3 describes the factors taken into account by a female primary teacher.

Box 6.3: Retiring at 60: Primary teacher, f, 50

Julie Smith is a member of a primary school senior leadership team. She is 50 and plans to retire at 60. She had discussed her plans with her husband, who she thought might want to continue past 60, *'But I would probably leave at 60 if I'm honest. I probably will have had enough by then'*.

The financial side of things is very important to her, as she did not pay into the TPS for a number of years when she returned to work part-time after having had her children. She was not sure how many years service she had altogether, and had a generally poor understanding of how her pension worked. She said she still enjoys her work, but felt that the workload was too heavy. She would ideally like to leave earlier than 60, but because of financial commitments, such as putting her son through university she thought that she would have to stay till then. She could see the benefits of phased retirement but ruled it out for financial reasons: *'So if I wanted to go part-time I suppose I could, but we would struggle so I haven't really got an option, if you like.'*

As well as financial commitments encouraging her to stay in teaching until 60, she has never really considered any other way of retiring. She had always expected to retire at 60.

My thinking is always, 'I work till 60 then I stop' because that's the old fashioned view I suppose. That's the way my parents worked and that's the way in my head I'm going to work.

Having said this, Julie also recognised that things may change over the course of the next 10 years, and that she may not feel this way as she gets older.

And at the moment I'm quite happy to work till 60, its part of my plan to work till 60 but who knows how I'm going to feel in between. Because I'm fairly healthy at the moment but you don't know what's round the corner do you.

6.4.5 Plans to retire after 60

Of all the interviewees the least definite appeared to be those who said that they would probably remain in teaching into their sixties; this group comprised a sixth of those interviewed. Secondary and special school teachers were more likely to anticipate staying in teaching after 60, as were men. Only three teachers of this group had already arranged dates for their retirement, and could therefore be seen as having definite plans.

As explored in previous sections, distance from retirement was an important factor. Half of those who anticipated retiring later than 60 were aged 49-56, and it is therefore difficult to know how certain they are in their plans. They have not yet reached the point in their later fifties when many teachers talked about losing energy and becoming less effective as teachers. Most of these teachers did, however, provided caveats about the state of their health and the extent to which they were still enjoying their job.

So I think you've got to weigh those on an individual basis and see what suits you. I mean, you know, if my health is good I'd like to carry on for as long as I can, you know, but obviously I can't predict what's going to happen in five years time or 10 years time. You've got to be positive, but at the end of the day you just don't know. (Secondary teacher, m, 49)

Teachers discussed various reasons for remaining in teaching into their 60s. One headteacher, who was particularly attached to his school and had been headteacher there for a very long time, planned to retire at 63. He obviously still loved the job very much and still felt he had much to offer.

I still love the job. I'm still very enthusiastic about it. I even, in a strange sort of way, I mean enjoy isn't the right word but I relish the difficulties in the job, you know, the occasional difficulties we get with the children and the parents. (Primary headteacher, m, 60)

Most of those who saw themselves teaching beyond 60 loved their jobs and found it hard to imagine doing anything else other than teaching or to think about a time when they would not be teaching. School often played a major part in teachers' social lives.

While most teachers planned to continue in teaching because they loved it, some felt that they needed to do so out of financial necessity. Some recognised that they needed money to be able to do the things they planned to do in their retirement. One teacher who thought he would stay teaching until at least 62 said, *'I don't want to be scrimping and saving'*. He went on to say:

It's just a financial gamble to go before 65 isn't it? Your teacher's pension and your lump sum will not necessarily cover the three years until your state

pension comes in as well. So you do have to have an alternative plan B.
(Secondary teacher, m, 59)

Some female teachers recognised that they were in the transitional period for the state pension, and had calculated that they would not be able to draw this until they were into their early 60s.

Box 6.4 provides details of a male primary teacher's decision to stay in teaching into his sixties.

Box 6.4: Working past 60: Primary teacher, m, 59

Doug Smith is a primary teacher aged 59. He thinks he will retire in the next few years, and will continue teaching into his early 60s because he still enjoys teaching very much and is very dedicated to his job, *'I sometimes think in a way my life is school and school is my life'*. He went on to explain, *'At the moment I am not wanting to rush into retirement because tragically what do you do?'*

His school is currently undergoing a period of change, and consequently he is leaving his options open at the moment, but thinks that he will stay in teaching for the next few years. He was, however, aware of the potential difficulties in terms of energy and health and acknowledged that *'whether I could sustain that over a long period of time is another matter'*. He went on to say how important it would be to have some kind of work when he retires:

But anyhow I feel that as long as I have got the health I would want to be doing something when I retire from here, because otherwise it is such a sudden jump from possibly doing 18 hours a day connected to a job to nothing. And I've got one or two hobbies that I would like to be able to pursue but I would like something, because again when your life has been people really, I feel I will want to have something where I will have interaction with people for you know as long as I could. You know if I was managing financially it wouldn't matter if it was voluntary or a small paid job.

While, he is not staying in the profession for the sake of his pension, he did recognise that there would be benefits to staying at the school until 2010 when he would have 40 years of pensionable service.

Yeah you almost feel if you can keep going you might as well make the most of the maximum allowance

However, he is unsure that he will have the energy to go until he is 65:

I doubt whether I will go until 65 unless I am really... I think because it is a job that needs the energy really that you can run out of and when you are sort of really burning out and then you are getting a bit irritable with the children it's not necessarily their fault. But at the moment I am obviously happy here otherwise I wouldn't be here so long.

6.5 Post-retirement plans

This section explores employees' ideas about what they would do after they retired from teaching. Both the survey data and the interviews show that employees had varied plans for their retirement (see Table 6.10). Females were more likely to say they would not be seeking further employment (30 versus 25 per cent of males); though there was no difference by gender amongst deputy or assistant headteachers or headteachers.

Table 6.10 Employees: What employee will do after leaving teaching (by gender)

	Male (%)	Female (%)	All (%)
Seek full-time employment in another sector	5	2	3
Seek part-time employment in another sector	19	11	14
Do some supply teaching	14	19	18
Become self-employed	9	4	5
Not seek any further employment	25	30	29
Don't know	24	31	29
Not stated	3	2	2
weighted	1050	2815	3865
unweighted	1489	2376	3865

Based on all employees
Source: Employee survey

The predicted likelihood of employees becoming supply teachers in 'retirement' increased with age; from 16 per cent of 49 to 51 year olds to 24 per cent of those aged 58 to 60. Employees in primary schools were more likely than those in secondary or PRU/special schools to say they would do some supply teaching (21 versus 15 per cent of both secondary and PRU/special school employees) as were females compared with males (19 versus 14 per cent).

While headteachers indicated that there were many employment options open to them (see Section 6.3), classroom teachers did not generally anticipate so many options being available to them. In the interviews, many teachers indicated that they would have to do some form of part-time work in their retirement, either as supply teachers or in another sector in order to supplement their pensions. However, few of those who mentioned this in the interviews as a possibility put forward definite ideas. Rather, it was seen as something which they could take up should they want or need to when the time came.

Whether or not teachers thought they might do supply teaching in the future was based on a number of factors. For the most part, the teachers said they would do some supply work only in their current school or only if they felt that they needed the extra income.

I think it's pretty unlikely I will come back to do paid work. I might come back and do some supply in particular areas. I'd be very picky about where I

was working. I'd probably enjoy coming to help out at the lower end of the school for a while, doing something, bits and bobs with supply work. (Primary teacher, f, 58)

For others, the attraction of supply teaching related more to a desire to retire gradually because they felt it would be too sudden to just stop teaching when they retired. For these teachers, the social aspects and their attachment to the school were more important.

if you don't financially need the money to keep you ticking over, it keeps you in the loop doesn't it and it keeps you, it's a social thing as well in a way. I would miss people I think more than the actual teaching. I'd miss the children too. (Primary teacher, f, 50)

I think if they didn't allow me to go part-time, I would definitely ... consider asking for supply because I think it would be a big cut-off after being here all this time and being single and not having a family to keep me busy outside. (Special teacher, f, 53)

Many of the female teachers in the interviews mentioned having done supply work in the past, usually after having returned to work after having had children. For some of them, this was a reason for not wishing to do it again in the future. As one said, *'I do not want to do supply at all. I'm adamant about that. I did that for so long and I hated it.'* Some also argued that there were fewer opportunities for supply teaching, in that schools increasingly used cover supervisors and HLTAs.

In the survey, males were more likely to indicate a desire to seek part-time employment in another sector (19 versus 11 per cent of females) and the likelihood of this was further influenced by school phase; male secondary employees were most likely to have anticipated this option and, at the other end of the scale, primary females were the least likely (21 versus 10 per cent). There were no differences between those teaching and not teaching shortage subjects.

Employees who had given a financial reason as the main factor keeping them in teaching (see section 4.3) were more likely to indicate that they would seek part-time employment in another sector compared with those who had given a school-based / work-related main reason (16 versus 11 per cent). Almost a fifth of those who provided only financial reasons for staying in teaching (18 per cent) indicated they would seek part-time employment in another sector, versus eight per cent of those who provided only school-based / work-related reasons.

In the interviews, more teachers than headteachers mentioned having to find part-time work to supplement their pensions. These were mainly those who had fewer years of pensionable service. One female teacher who had 19 years of pensionable service left teaching a few months early at 59, but explained that she was going to have to work two days a week in order to have a satisfactory income. Another

teacher who had moved to part-time work was supplementing her income by working as a teaching assistant.

While headteachers tended to see their future part-time employment as being in the education sector, teachers suggested a much more varied range of possible future employment; much of it away from education. Some expressed a desire to do anything as long as it wasn't related to teaching.

I have been offered a job in a lab and I might take that or I might work in a bookshop or a café, I don't know, but not teaching. (Special teacher, f, 59)

Whether it's just driving a van or being a milkman or a postman, not a milkman probably because that's a disappearing job, but a postman or something like that. You know I'm being a little bit trite but maybe doing something else. (Secondary teacher, m, 52)

Some teachers saw their retirement as an opportunity to explore other interests. Two mentioned perhaps working for the National Trust; another thought they might do some kind of coaching, and another was interested in fostering children. A number of those interviewed, including headteachers, expressed an interest in some kind of voluntary work, either with the church or with a charity.

And I don't know I have always quite fancied a little job in a charity shop or something like that really and I have never been able to do it because I have always worked you know full-time. (Special school teacher, f, 52)

Not all of teachers' post-retirement plans were about work. While many of the teachers were unsure of what exactly they would do with their time once they reached retirement, there was a general feeling from the majority of interviewees that they would 'have plenty to fill [their] time with'. In the interviews, teachers explored at some length a wide range of activities away from work which they looked forward to having the time to enjoy in the retirement. As might be expected, many anticipated being able to travel more in their retirement. Some also discussed plans to move house, either abroad or to other parts of the UK. Many teachers hoped to be able to spend more time with their partners and families, while some mentioned acting as carers for relatives. Having more for hobbies and studying was also discussed.

For a minority of those interviewed the question of what they might do when they leave teaching was rather uncomfortable, either because it was something they had not considered or because they were reluctant to do so. Particularly for those teachers who had taught in the same school for most, if not their entire career, it was very hard to imagine life without their school and their colleagues.

6.6 Summary

This chapter describes teachers' career and retirement plans: ages at which they intend to leave teaching and to draw their pensions, and the type of pension award they expect (age, actuarially reduced, phased retirement, premature, ill-health).

Teachers' career plans before retirement

Before retirement, 60 per cent of the employees surveyed anticipated that they would continue to work on the same salary scale and for the same hours. Almost a fifth (18 per cent) indicated that they would reduce their hours or responsibilities, and only eight per cent (mainly those who were younger) indicated that they would seek promotion. Slightly more of the deputy and assistant headteachers said they intended to seek promotion (12 per cent), with seven per cent of this group looking to achieve headship. Headteachers were less likely than other groups to intend to move to part-time work (six per cent) or to reduce their responsibilities (two per cent, compared with six per cent of teachers).

Teachers' retirement plans

There was some contrast between the data about teachers' retirement plans from the surveys, in which those responding were channelled into a definite choice, and the data from interviews, which indicate very much more fluid and nebulous plans. Far fewer employees indicated that they would retire before the age of 60 than has been the case in recent years: just a quarter indicated that they would draw an actuarially reduced pension (22 per cent), or take premature or ill-health retirement (two per cent, one per cent). This contrasts with the 2005-6 figures (DfES 2006b) which show that 57 per cent of all teachers' pension awards fell in these categories. It is impossible to tell whether this contrast represents a dramatic change in retirement patterns, or simply illustrates the size of the gap between intentions and actions in this respect. It is of course possible that some of those who might otherwise have retired before the age of 60 had decided to extend their working lives by taking phased retirement, but only five per cent of employees indicated that they planned to do so. Some groups were more likely to anticipate retiring before age 60: those in secondary schools, headteachers, men and those with more years of pensionable service.

Employees were asked how definite their retirement plans were. Overall, just 13 per cent indicated that their retirement age plans were certain, and 15 per cent that their type of pension award was certain. Those whose anticipated retirement was some years ahead indicated a higher degree of uncertainty. Those who intended to retire before age 60 indicated a higher level of certainty than those who indicated they would work to age 60 or beyond.

Those who intended to teach to 60 or beyond more often selected school-based factors (such as 'I enjoy teaching') as incentives to stay in teaching than those who anticipated retiring before 60 (69 per cent selected a school-based factor among

the three most important, versus 59 per cent of those who intended to retire early). Similarly, those anticipating staying in teaching to 60 or beyond were less likely to identify school-based factors as reasons to leave (e.g. not enjoying some aspects of their work, or unsatisfactory work-life balance) (70 per cent versus 76 per cent of those who intended to retire early). Expectations also played an important role; those who anticipated teaching to 60 or older were far more likely to agree that they had 'always expected' to work until they were 60 or over (17 per cent versus three per cent of those retiring early).

7 Impact of the changes to the TPS on teacher behaviour

7.1 Introduction

One aspiration behind the TPS changes has always been to extend working life. It was also hoped that it would support succession planning. The literature review showed that the introduction of phased, or progressive, retirement options in European countries had had varying effects: in some cases extending working life but more often reducing it. This chapter focuses on actual and potential impacts of the TPS changes.

The previous chapter focused on current retirement plans of teachers; inevitably these have already been shaped by changes to the TPS (for example, five per cent of the employee survey sample anticipated taking phased retirement). To some extent, then, impacts are implicit within the findings already discussed.

In this chapter, we begin by discussing the 'actual' impacts as described by employers and employees. We also explore perceptions of potential impacts on teachers and school staffing, drawing on findings from all strands of the research. The chapter then considers some of the perceived constraints that may prevent employees from taking advantage of potential flexibilities offered by the changes. Finally the impacts in relation to school leadership and succession planning are also discussed.

7.2 Actual impact: behaviour changes so far

This section focuses on action that had already taken place as a consequence of the TPS changes. It starts by outlining qualitative data from interviews with teachers who said that they had already reduced their responsibilities, taken phased retirement, or retired as a direct consequence of the changes. It then turns to data from local authority, headteacher as employer and employee surveys which set out a range of preliminary steps toward taking such action: discussion of potential reduced capacity roles in the school, approaches to employers to discuss possibilities of such roles, and so on.

7.2.1 Teachers who had already acted in response to TPS changes

The previous chapters have shown that many headteachers and teachers had only a limited awareness of the TPS changes. It is therefore unsurprising to find that relatively few had acted in response to them. Two of the case study interviewees had already reduced their responsibilities, in both cases using the change to the calculation of average salary. A secondary English teacher (aged 56) was

relinquishing her subject leadership role and returning to full-time class teaching, and a secondary assistant head (also 56) had stepped down to be head of department (Box 7.1). Their stories had common features: having had enough of 'admin' or 'bureaucracy' and gaining satisfaction from teaching.

Box 7.1: Reducing responsibilities in response to average salary changes

- a) Secondary English teacher, f, 56, stepping down from head of department to class teaching

Well I am about to give up my TLR at the end of this year, because I've had enough of all the admin, what I find less enjoyable is of course the workload. ... I'm just going back to main scale teaching from September. ... [The changes] struck me as very helpful. ... The fact that I could resign my responsibilities without losing my pension. ... I was planning to go on to two years before retirement to get the pension based on the last highest years' salary. When I realised I could do it without that, and I started feeling very unwell again a few months ago, my doctor basically said to me, 'If you can stop, stop.' So I did. [So that was a direct response to those changes?] It was a direct response. Yes, because I can base my pension on my best 3 years, I've only got 4 years to go so I've given it up now. I feel that I am not giving the children what I ought to give the children and I can't keep doing that for another 4 years. I think that's terribly important, I'd like to get back to teaching better, which is another reason for doing it. ... As soon as the pension came through I could see that that was my opportunity to change the way I was doing things. I was very pleased about it. I think it was a real relief. ... And I do think it's right that younger teachers who are more vigorous and have got a lot to offer and have got a lot of ideas should be getting a promotion, it shouldn't be blocked by people sitting in jobs that they've done for years just so they can get the pension.

- b) Secondary art teacher, m, 56, stepped down from assistant head to head of department, with a salary loss of around £10,000 per annum.

I was Assistant Head until last Easter and I stepped down with a view to taking it a little bit easier before I retire. ... I was in the old mould of manager rather than the leader type. ... One of my colleagues who was running the arts left, and her job was going to be advertised, I thought I was happier doing that ... so I thought I'll step down. I don't need the pressure any more and my intention is to retire sooner rather than later. ... I like working; doing the same things that I enjoyed at the outset, the working with children and seeing them get excited about doing their artwork. ... I've had bureaucracy coming out of my ears for such a long time. Some of it is essential but a lot of it I think, the business of meeting targets all the time, the pressure from outside. ... One of the reasons that I stepped down from senior leadership is that the pressure on leadership is intense. I kept finding little bits and pieces out [about the TPS changes], so in the end I thought well, if that's the case I can afford to go a bit earlier, I can step down, I can take the last couple of years, take less pressure and still have the benefit of my higher salary to drive the pension. ... As soon as it became confirmed I went and saw [the headteacher] and told her what I'd like to do.

We also interviewed a maths teacher who indicated on the questionnaire that as a result of the changes to average salary calculation he was retiring at 56, when

previously he had been intending to stay to 60. However, this action resulted from a misunderstanding of the changes. He believed (incorrectly) that his pension would now be calculated on *the average of the last three years' salary* rather than the final year's salary, and felt that this would cheat him of pension he should have received:

It was always going to be your final year's salary taken into account and they changed it and as far as – well, my reading of it now is an average of the last three years, which is much worse. I mean, anyone who could look at that logically knows that you're not going to do as well on that, because it's pretty clear that most years you get a salary increase even if you don't move jobs or position. So that was one of the reasons I decided to go. (Secondary maths teacher, m, 56)

None of the case study interviewees planned to take phased retirement. However, some follow-up interviewees were selected because they stated on the questionnaire that they planned to do so. Box 7.2 gives one teacher's account.

Box 7.2: Phased retirement

Judith Smith (aged 55) had taught in the same nursery school for about 16 years. She had moved to part-time work (three days a week) two years ago. When she received information about the pension scheme changes, she decided to take phased retirement and further reduce her hours to two days a week:

I'd been keeping an eye on the figures and for my individual position I felt that it was quite a good thing to do. I was very fortunate in the fact that my headteacher has given me a permanent contract of two days a week, so that was quite secure as well, and my two daughters were both married and left home, and I think you just sort of feel as though you want to develop other interests as well. ... For me personally I think it's ideal. I like it, it's made my life quite comfortable, I don't feel so tired, I've got time to do other things, and it's the best of both worlds to be honest.

She argued that full-time teaching in a nursery is 'quite demanding', and was attracted by the idea of reducing her hours as she approached retirement: 'You can gradually get into retirement ... I think for me personally if I'd sort of worked full-time and then just stopped as such, it seems like a big hole.' She did not expect to continue beyond age 60, but said she might, 'if I'm still enjoying it'. If phased retirement had not been available she would still have worked three days a week for her last few years, and would have stopped at 60.

While five out of 935 headteachers indicated in the survey that they were 'highly likely' to take phased retirement, those we have been able to contact no longer expected to do this, or simply meant that they intended to reduce their hours or responsibilities, rather than that they intended to draw a partial pension. One of these, a secondary headteacher, had apparently decided against it because the part-time opportunity that seemed likely to be open to her (working as an executive headteacher three days a week. described in the Chapter 6) would be

sufficiently well paid without drawing on her pension. However, she was able to tell us about two members of staff in her school who had taken phased retirement. She confirmed that they were already drawing their pensions, and said that both of them had done this as a result of health problems:

They are both blokes and the reason why they've done it that way is potentially health problems - their health wasn't as good. One bloke had a scare with his heart and the other one had other health issues, and they decided that they would officially sort of start feeling retired and get something where the pressure was less on them. And I suppose if I'm honest, their sense of how long they've got was probably rather different and so they wanted to start drawing back from what they have paid in sooner rather than later, which all sounds a bit gloomy. But people have to think about things like that.

According to the headteacher, these two teachers, like the first one quoted in Box 7.1 above, had elected to reduce their roles because they had health problems. While this is clearly insufficient data from which to suggest an emerging pattern of behaviour, it is apparent that the TPS changes have the potential to be particularly useful to teachers in such situations.

7.2.2 Discussions about potential actions

We turn now to the survey data on the behavioural impacts of the TPS changes that had already taken place. Various questions were asked of employers and employees to ascertain how behaviour might have been affected as a result of changes to the TPS. The process of behaviour change may often begin with discussion between employer and employee. This may involve employees proactively enquiring about possibilities open to them under the new changes or employers discussing new flexibilities at staff meetings or in other relevant forums.

Local authorities

Local authorities reported having meetings about the TPS changes and their impact on school staffing arrangements. Fifteen out of 39 local authorities (HR) said issues had been discussed at a local authority level by the school staffing team or inspectors and 11 said they had been discussed at a meeting with headteachers. Five local authorities said that there had been discussions of roles for teachers opting to reduce their hours or responsibilities. Specific examples in these five cases included co-headships; senior leadership roles; executive headship; part-time working on authority projects; and flexible retirement patterns.

Before the changes took effect in 2006, a quarter (16 local authorities - pensions) said that a greater number of teachers than usual had bought additional years under the previous arrangements. A larger number (26 local authorities - pensions)

said they had experienced a greater number of part-time teachers opting into the scheme under the previous arrangements.

The changes to the TPS introduce phased retirement arrangements, although it would appear that it is still early days in terms of teachers actively taking up the option. A large proportion (three quarters) of local authorities (pensions) said that nobody had taken advantage of it or had contacted the authority with the intention of doing so. More teachers, however, had sought further information. Around a fifth (12 local authorities - pensions) had received one or two requests for information; 11 had received three to 10 and a further seven had received 10 or more requests. The above therefore suggests that employees whilst making general enquiries have not really progressed much further than this initial 'knowledge gathering' stage. This is echoed in the comments from one local authority below:

"There has been so little demand. Guidance has been deferred due to other pressures. There is a residual culture of early retirement which militates against phased retirement at the moment".

Headteachers as employers

For many schools, discussions about the changes happened informally among staff (43 per cent of headteachers said that potential impacts on school staffing arrangements had been discussed in this way). When more formal settings were considered, a quarter of headteachers said they had discussed impacts at a staff meeting and 12 per cent at a senior leadership team meeting. In around a fifth of cases, discussions were reported at a meeting involving headteachers. Of the 12 case study headteachers, only one said that TPS changes had been discussed at a school staff meeting. However, two secondary case study headteachers and one follow-up headteacher interviewee reported that they had recently arranged pensions training focusing on the changes; this was something that was not included in the survey questions (see Chapter 5).

None of the case study headteachers reported the changes being discussed at local headteachers' meetings, though one had been involved in such discussion at other local authority meetings such as a '*workforce working party*'.

The survey data show that phase of school did not impact upon the likelihood of having discussed pension changes in any substantial way except for the case of discussions at senior leadership meetings, which were more common in secondary schools (26 per cent of secondary headteachers had discussed impacts in this way).

In contrast, the content of discussions varied significantly by school phase. More specifically, a fifth of secondary headteachers said that there had been discussion of potential roles for older teachers who opted to reduce their hours, while a quarter (24 per cent) had discussed roles for those who opted to reduce their

responsibilities. This compared to around one in 10 primary and special school headteachers (Table 7.1). To a lesser extent, the age of the teacher workforce also had an impact. See Table 7.2.

Table 7.1 Headteachers as employers: Discussion of potential roles (by school phase)

	Primary (%)	Secondary (%)	Special and PRU (%)	All (%)
Whether there had been discussion of potential roles for older teachers who opt to reduce their <u>hours</u>				
Yes	9	20	11	10
No	79	66	75	78
Don't know	10	9	9	10
Not stated	2	5	5	3
Whether there had been discussion of potential roles for older teachers who opt to reduce their <u>responsibilities</u>				
Yes	7	24	8	9
No	76	63	72	75
Don't know	9	7	9	9
Not stated	7	6	11	7
weighted	562	63	47	672
unweighted	368	228	76	672

Based on all headteachers as employers
Source: Headteachers as employers survey

Table 7.2 Headteachers as employers: Discussion of potential roles (by age of teacher workforce)

	Low (0-20%) proportion teachers aged over 50 (%)	Average (21-40%) proportion teachers aged over 50 (%)	High (41+%) proportion teachers aged over 50 (%)	All (%)
Whether there had been discussion of potential roles for older teachers who opt to reduce their <u>hours</u>				
Yes	6	11	14	10
No	79	77	76	78
Don't know	12	9	9	10
Not stated	3	3	1	3
Whether there had been discussion of potential roles for older teachers who opt to reduce their <u>responsibilities</u>				
Yes	6	9	12	9
No	75	77	72	75
Don't know	11	9	10	9
Not stated	9	5	7	7
weighted	188	266	188	672
unweighted	178	269	180	672

Based on all headteachers as employers
Source: Headteachers as employers survey

Similarly, small differences were found in relation to the extent of *challenge*¹³ faced by schools. Schools with the lowest levels of challenge were most likely to have had discussions about potential roles for teachers who wished to reduce their hours (12 per cent in schools with 'low' levels of challenge compared to six per cent in schools with 'high' levels).

¹³ The key elements that make up the school challenge variable are: the proportions of pupils at the school eligible for free school meals, with special needs, and not speaking English as a first language; together with the level of achievement at KS4 (secondary schools) or KS2 (primary schools) (for further details see Section Appendix C).

The number of headteachers who gave details of the specific roles that had been identified was limited. Of those that did provide written examples, 34 said that the shift from full to part-time hours was discussed (including job-share roles). Ten primary headteachers referred to PPA cover. The shift to part-time working was reflected in the roles identified by the following two headteachers:

"Deputy Head will return part-time to teach and act as a Business Manager".

"One of my teachers has opted for three days next year. She has been made part of the Foundation Stage to help develop Phonic Reading".

Employees

We continue the theme of phased retirement below in the more specific context of employees' reported behaviour (as gathered from the employee survey). Employees were asked whether they had taken any action before December 2006 (when the new changes had not yet been introduced). A small proportion had investigated phased retirement prospects with their school or local authority (two per cent) or had bought additional years under the old arrangements (six per cent). In respect of the latter, female secondary headteachers were most likely to have done this (15 per cent). It is also interesting to note that a fifth (19 per cent) of part-time teachers had opted into the old scheme.

In the survey, employees were asked whether they would consider phased retirement (and this is discussed separately in the next section on potential impact). Those who indicated that this was an option that they would consider were asked about any actions they had already taken in relation to this (Table 7.3).

Table 7.3 Employees: Discussion of phased retirement with local authority (by age and by role)

	49-51 (%)	52-54 (%)	55-57 (%)	58-60 (%)	Headteacher (%)	Deputy/Assistant head (%)	Teacher (%)	All (%)
Yes, formally	-	*	*	5	*	*	*	1
Yes, informally	*	1	1	5	3	3	1	1
No	97	94	90	78	96	93	93	93
Not stated	2	5	9	12	1	4	6	6
weighted	502	534	339	109	152	200	1064	1484
unweighted	418	438	407	133	304	185	848	1396

Based on all employees who would consider phased retirement
Source: Employee survey

Table 7.3b Employees: Discussions of phased retirement with headteacher by age (headteachers excluded)

	49-51 (%)	52-54 (%)	55-57 (%)	58-60 (%)	All (%)
Yes, formally	*	1	3	10	2
Yes, informally	2	6	8	17	6
No	96	90	85	66	89
Not stated	2	4	4	7	3
weighted	432	459	283	97	1272
unweighted	307	322	304	108	1041

Based on all employees other than headteachers who would consider a phased retirement option
Source: Employee survey

Whether or not employees had engaged in discussions about phased retirement with either their local authority or a headteacher was almost entirely driven by age. In particular, a quarter (27 per cent) of employees aged 58 to 60 who would contemplate phased retirement had discussed this with a headteacher on either a formal or informal basis (this equates to five per cent of all 58 to 68 year olds). One in 10 had discussions about it with the local authority (two per cent of all 58 to 60 year olds). There were no major differences by school phase or gender.

As already mentioned, the retention and career choices for teachers of shortage subjects is an important concern. The responses of employees who taught these subjects did not vary significantly from employees at large. For instance, they were no more or less likely to consider phased retirement, to have had discussions about such roles or to have said that their plans had changed as a result of changes to the TPS. This latter point is explored further in the next section.

7.3 Perceptions of potential impact on teachers and school staffing

Section 7.2 focused on some of the more *direct* impacts of the changes to the TPS on employers and employees. It is important to recognise that there has been a relatively short time period so far in which impacts can be observed amongst both groups. It is therefore also important to look at *potential* impacts as this is the best gauge of possible behaviour in the future. Perceptions of positive potential impacts are considered in this section; potential (and actual) barriers and constraints are discussed in the section that follows. Finally, the chapter ends with a discussion of potential impacts on school leaders and succession planning.

Local authorities

Half of local authorities (pensions) thought that the introduction of phased retirement arrangements would not have a very large impact on teachers (Table 7.4). This group did not always feel able to comment on potential impacts with a third saying that they were unsure whether the new arrangements would have an impact; this reflected their roles, generally as pension administrators. Similarly, when asked whether the introduction of phased retirements will increase or decrease the supply pool of teachers in their local authority, two thirds either said that they were unsure or did not state an answer. This seems to indicate that local authorities were unable to comment on the potential impact on teachers, possibly due to the low level of teachers contacting them so far about the arrangements (see earlier discussion).

Table 7.4 Local authorities: The potential impact of phased retirement arrangements

	All (%)
How much impact phased retirement will have on teachers in this local authority	
Very large impact	2
Quite large impact	12
Not very large impact	48
No impact at all	2
Don't know	33
Not stated	5
Whether phased retirement arrangements will increase or decrease the supply pool of teachers in this local authority	
Increase the supply	15
Decrease the supply	5
The supply will stay the same	13
Don't know	33
Not stated	34
unweighted	67

Based on all local authorities

Source: Local authorities survey (pensions)

In addition to the above, a third (13 out of 39) of local authorities (HR) indicated that headteachers (in their role as employers) would be enthusiastic about the creation of reduced capacity roles. They suggested a variety of potential roles for headteachers including advisor or consultancy roles (10 local authorities) and supporting new or potential headteachers (seven local authorities). A half of local authorities (HR) (19 out of 39) said that local authority staff would respond enthusiastically. In both cases, nearly half of local authorities were again unable to comment on the potential impact of these new roles.

In terms of potential roles for *teachers*, nine local authorities (HR) mentioned mentoring roles to assist younger teachers. Written suggestions from two local authorities are detailed below:

"Supporting NQTs and others needing support via mentoring".

"Good teachers need to be seconded to other schools in an advisory capacity within the classroom".

Local authorities (HR) did recognise some of the possible impacts that the changes would have on succession planning with over half (24 out of 39) saying that the changes might help support planning for the next generation of school leaders. Under half (17 out of 39) thought the changes would have an impact on the retention of teachers in 'shortage' subjects.

The interview data show similar views. In one authority, HR staff said that they thought the change to average salary calculations would impact on schools. They saw this as having a positive impact on retention because people '*at the end of their tether, who'd had enough*' could now reduce their responsibilities and have

their pension based on their previous salary. In particular, they saw it as helpful for headteachers who might move into mentoring roles, for example. The hope was that *'people won't retire straight away, there's still roles for them to do if they're feeling as if they can't cope any more or have had too much'*. But staff in that authority had not discussed, and did not appear to have recognised, that the phased retirement option offered similar benefits. Other local authority interviewees who worked as advisors or inspectors or in Human Resource departments did not generally see the TPS changes as something that would impact on their work, and as previously explained, others declined to be interviewed because they did not see pensions as relevant to their work.

Governors

Governors differed in the extent to which they saw the changes as of interest to them. Several did not see the changes as matters for governing body to consider, or saw them only as concerns for the finance committee. One suggested that pensions issues were only of interest if they had budgetary implications, there were problems or the union was concerned. This suggests that any communication with this group needs to be well thought through in order to highlight factors of particular importance to governors.

However, there were an equal number of governors who were very receptive to the information and started to think (often during the interview) about how the changes might be useful to their school:

Well, I thought actually, some of this could be beneficial, I think. I did like the idea of you know this variation [indicates average salary change] but also the one that I thought could possibly help a number of people was this example here [indicates phased retirement]. Because a number of people when they do get that bit older, they do decide they would like to go part-time and we don't want to lose their expertise and we try and accommodate that wherever we possibly can and if this, it's not massive, and I just keep thinking you know unless people have actually got their finances in good shape by the time they're into retirement it could be quite difficult for a number. (Secondary governor)

The governors therefore were at a very early stage of thinking about the significance of the pensions changes for their schools, generally due to the lack of information and support that they had received.

Headteachers as employers

Changes to the TPS may open up new opportunities for older teachers who wish to reduce their hours or responsibilities. Whether or not older teachers can take advantage of such opportunities depends in part on the attitudes of headteachers to

any newly created roles within their schools. Table 7.5 shows that a large number said it would be useful to have older teachers working in various roles.

A large proportion of primary headteachers thought that taking classes during PPA time (75 per cent) and teaching of subjects such as music or art (78 per cent) would be useful within their school. Furthermore, secondary headteachers were particularly supportive (86 per cent) of mentoring initiatives.

Table 7.5 Headteachers as employers: How useful it would be for older and more experienced teachers to take on the following roles.... (by school phase)

	Primary (%)	Secondary (%)	Special and PRU (%)	All (%)
Covering PPA time				
Useful	75	38	40	70
Not useful	12	32	34	16
Don't know	3	5	5	4
Not applicable/Not stated	9	27	19	11
Enrichment work with small groups of pupils				
Useful	81	78	57	79
Not useful	11	11	17	9
Don't know	2	3	5	2
Not applicable/Not stated	7	8	19	8
Mentoring or working alongside less experienced teachers				
Useful	71	86	70	73
Not useful	16	8	15	15
Don't know	3	1	4	3
Not applicable/Not stated	7	5	11	8
Working with student teachers				
Useful	63	71	38	62
Not useful	23	17	21	22
Don't know	4	2	4	4
Not applicable/Not stated	10	10	36	12
Teaching a fraction of a timetable (possibly as a job share)				
Useful	60	62	49	59
Not useful	30	29	34	30
Don't know	4	4	8	28
Not applicable/Not stated	7	6	9	7
Teaching specific subjects such as music or art (Primary only)				
Useful	78	n/a	n/a	n/a
Not useful	14	n/a	n/a	n/a
Don't know	2	n/a	n/a	n/a
Not applicable/Not stated	6	n/a	n/a	n/a
weighted	562	63	47	672
unweighted	368	228	76	672

Based on all headteachers as employers
Source: Headteachers as employers survey

Headteachers who expected a 'low'¹⁴ level of retirement in their schools were less likely to regard mentoring roles with less experienced teachers or working with student teachers in a favourable light. This would indicate that headteachers were less able to see the 'immediate' value of such roles, which were perhaps more important to schools facing greater retirements in the future, because of the 'short-term' impact on their workforce of imminent retirements.

The benefits of creating specific roles for staff who wished to take advantage of phased retirement was further illustrated by the verbatim responses entered in the headteachers survey. The benefit most often recognised was that of being able to utilise the experience and expertise of older teachers (mentioned by 27 per cent). Related to this was the notion that it prevented a *sudden* loss of experienced staff as indicated by the responses below:

"Not losing their experience suddenly. A phased retirement would give more opportunity to pass on skills and experience".

"It could facilitate a general change rather than a sudden one. Handovers are often too rushed otherwise. It may allow a school to benefit from someone's best skills and experience as they can manage to perform at this level part-time [rather than] full-time".

Other advantages were also mentioned (in each case by less than 10 per cent) and can be grouped around the following themes: *flexibility* (in relation to timetabling and the general benefits for schools); *standards* (in relation to improved teaching standards, continuity for children and improved personalised learning); *staff workload* (reducing pressure and increasing motivation); and more *specialist teaching*. Not all headteachers recognised the benefits of creating new roles for older staff, as inferred in the comment from one headteacher below:

"None [no benefits] – much better that they retire and we can recruit from the large fields of newly qualified teachers that we have".

In more flexible retirements, there is the potential to impact on both individual teachers, and on staffing patterns in schools. Table 7.6 illustrates that headteachers' opinions are divided on nearly all of these impacts. A relatively high proportion did not agree that flexible retirement patterns would improve the supply of teachers in shortage subjects, with only 15 per cent agreeing there would be an improvement in this area (57 per cent neither agreed nor disagreed with the relevant statement detailed in the table below).

¹⁴ 'Low' was defined as less than one per cent of staff were expected to retire over the next three years

Table 7.6 Headteachers as employers: Proportion who agree ¹⁵with the following statements about the impact of more flexible retirement patterns on their school...

	All (% agreeing with statement)
Work-life balance for older teachers will be improved	64
The proportion of teachers working part-time is likely to increase	60
Teachers who might otherwise have continued to work full-time to age 60 will opt to reduce their hours or responsibilities before that age	54
There will be greater opportunities for older teachers to pass on their skills and experience	50
Teachers will extend their working lives, continuing in a reduced capacity beyond the age at which they would have otherwise retired	41
Retention of experienced teachers within the school will be improved	41
Many of the older teachers are likely to want to reduce their responsibilities	39
Many of the older teachers will want to reduce their hours	37
The supply of teachers in shortage subjects will be improved	15
	weighted 672
	unweighted 672

Based on all headteachers as employers
Source: Headteachers as employers survey

As Chapter 5 has shown, the headteachers interviewed were not all fully aware of the changes. Only five of the twelve case study headteachers appeared to have thought about the potential impact of the TPS changes prior to the interview (though all were asked to think about this during the interview). Three of them saw the changes as potentially having a positive impact on school staffing, or on individual teachers, or both. (See Box 7.3).

Box 7.3: Potential of TPS changes seen as positive

The head of Secondary B referred to a member of staff who was relinquishing her TLR as a result of the TPS average salary changes. She felt that schools could only benefit from teachers having this option:

It doesn't cost the schools because you're retaining people to do the really important classroom job, you're paying them the rate for the job but you're getting all of their experience and expertise and actually you will get a little bit more even though they're not paid but because they are who they are, you know.

She also argued that it was a positive option for teachers, and one that 'more and more people will do'. The head of Special L believed that there were considerable benefits for teachers, particularly if they stayed in the same school:

I think it's this fact that you can continue in a school where you have status and a real place in the firmament really. Go back to teaching which is what brought us all into the profession at the beginning. Undertake a few years of lower level work in terms of remuneration but have the scope to call upon your previous salary in the calculations that will ultimately determine your pension.

¹⁵ The proportion who 'agree' refers to those who 'strongly' agreed and those who 'agreed' when asked to respond on a five-point agreement scale

The headteacher quoted in Box 7.3 refers to the financial benefits to the school of allowing older teachers to reduce their responsibilities. Other headteachers argued that there were financial benefits in older teachers moving to part-time work:

I have actually been able to employ more staff because of senior teachers going part-time. I've been able to replace their halftime bit with a whole NQT and so I've ended with more staff and so it gives more flexibility and a better pupil/teacher ratio. (Primary headteacher)

The cost of employing older teachers was identified as a problem when teachers have lost their energy, and reducing their hours not only had benefits for the teacher's work life balance (and presumably their efficiency) but also benefits for the school budget:

Some teachers are very, very expensive and they are hanging on by their fingernails and they haven't got the energy and enthusiasm that perhaps is needed. And so working part-time might give them more of a work/life balance. (Primary headteacher)

In contrast, two other headteachers expressed concern about the potential impact of the TPS changes; their views are discussed in the next section, where we focus on barriers and constraints.

In the interviews with headteachers, we explored whether they had identified any potential for using the TPS changes in human resource management. Only two secondary heads said that they had done so: one argued that they were '*another tool in managing performance and being able to help people to continue*'. The other said that the changes had already been useful when talking with a teacher about stepping down from a management role, though in this case the headteacher acknowledged having a very '*vague*' grasp of the changes. See Box 7.4 for details.

Box 7.4: Human resource management drawing on the TPS changes

'It's just another tool in managing performance'

It gives us a way of talking to staff when you can recognise that somebody isn't able to keep going at that level that you've got something that you can actually talk to them about positively. Rather than it being about, 'well actually your performance isn't doing brilliantly', you're actually able to say to them 'Have you thought, are you aware of this?' Because there is a possibility there and it's something to be able to match to people's financial circumstances because for lots of our staff when they get to that point the children have gone and the money is not so important for them. Obviously it's a part of it but a lot of it is about still being able to do something that's useful and worthwhile. So it's just another tool in managing performance and being able to help people to continue. ... I think for all of us you get to a point where you still could continue something but actually the challenge of being at a certain level or having certain responsibilities becomes quite hard. (Secondary headteacher)

'She is going to finish her career happy'

The scenario was, 'I think a great deal of you, you've done an awful lot for this community but we've got a problem in terms of what's needed now and what's needed for the future I'm not sure you have got the energy left to make that level of commitment and efficiency.' ... Obviously I can't give pensions advice and so I suggested that she go on the website and find out about it and see if there was anything that she would like to explore. [And did you know the option was there?] Vaguely. ... I knew there was something happening and so it encouraged me to have the conversation. ... It was just the nicest thing to see somebody coming in every day working as she chooses to do but looking an awful lot better, less stressed and enjoying herself. Whereas if she had not done that she would either be in capability or she would have been ill. Whereas now she is going to finish her career, which is a long and very illustrious career in many ways, happy, which is marvellous. (Secondary headteacher)

In contrast, two other headteachers had considered the possibility of using the pensions changes in performance management, but felt that it would not be appropriate to approach teachers and suggest that they might want to reduce their responsibilities or hours. Their views are discussed in the next section, with other barriers and constraints. Eight of the case study headteachers had not identified such possibilities at all.

Employees

In this section we examine the extent to which employees in the survey said that their plans had changed as result of changes to the TPS, and then focus on their responses in relation to phased retirement. While changes to plans could be considered as 'actual impacts' (and therefore discussed in the context of the previous section), the data below is only speculative and relates to individuals' perceptions of possible change.

A small proportion (four per cent) of employees said that their retirement plans had altered as a result of changes to the TPS, whilst a further quarter (23 per cent) said that they had 'possibly' changed (Table 7.7).

Table 7.7 Employees: Whether retirement plans have changed as result of changes to the TPS (by age, gender and role)

	49-54 Male (%)	49-54 Female (%)	55-60 Male (%)	55-60 Female (%)	Head teacher (%)	Deputy/assistant head ((%)	Teacher (%)	All (%)
Yes	5	5	5	3	4	4	4	4
Possibly	23	30	14	16	23	21	23	23
No	70	62	79	79	72	73	70	71
Not stated	2	3	2	3	2	3	3	3
weighted	561	1633	489	1183	432	511	2712	3865
unweighted	686	1158	803	1218	935	487	2242	3865

Based on all employees
Source: Employee survey

The proportion citing a 'definite' change did not vary across different types of employees, although females aged under 55 were most likely to highlight 'possible' changes (see Table 7.7). We have shown earlier that this group were the least likely to be aware of or understand the pension changes, and this may have contributed to their uncertainty about whether the changes would impact on their plans. There were no differences relating to role; headteachers, deputy and assistant heads and teachers were all equally likely to say their plans had or had not changed.

In order to fully understand possible impacts, it is necessary to analyse the precise ways in which retirement plans may have altered. If we look at current and previous plans (of all those who indicated a definite or possible change - see above), we can start to profile shifts between individual retirement options. This presents a somewhat confused picture as in some cases the previous and current plans appeared to be the same (despite employees suggesting that plans had changed).

Even those who indicated a definite change of plans were just as likely to provide conflicting responses. It might therefore be reasonable to assume that whilst the changes to the TPS may have impacted on some behaviours and perceptions, they may have had a relatively smaller impact in terms of changing precise plans (or at least certainly smaller than the survey findings may suggest at first glance).

Table 7.8 illustrates the above points in the context of the main four retirement options mentioned by employees. The figures highlighted show cases where current and previous plans were broadly the same (despite employees' claims that their retirement plans had changed). However, it should be noted that although employees may have said they planned to take the same form of retirement as previously, they may have intended to do so at a different age. In these cases, plans had therefore changed. Age of retirement is discussed later in this section.

It is interesting to note the proportion of those who previously anticipated leaving teaching before 60 who now intended to take up a phased retirement role. In these instances, it would appear that the new flexibilities introduced with phased retirement may have helped maintain the potential supply pool of employees. One in 10 (19 employees) of those who planned to leave teaching before 60 and draw their pension were now considering phased retirement, as were 15 per cent (30 employees) who had previously planned to leave teaching between the ages of 55 to 59 and take an actuarially reduced pension.

It is also important to highlight that over a quarter (27 per cent - 34 employees) of those who planned to continue teaching but reduce their hours or responsibilities said that they now planned to take phased retirement. It is also reasonable to assume that anyone who said they planned to take phased retirement must have changed their plans as this option did not exist previously.

Table 7.8 Employees: Retirement shift patterns (previous versus current retirement plans)

	Previous plans			
	Continue in current role until 60+ (%)	Continue teaching but reduce responsibilities / hrs (%)	Leave teaching before 60, start drawing pension 60+ (%)	Leave teaching 55-59, take actuarially reduced pension (%)
Current plans				
Leave teaching and draw pension at 60+	65	31	19	13
Phased retirement	9	27	10	15
Leave teaching before 60, start drawing pension 60+	11	12	50	7
Leave teaching 55-59, take actuarially reduced pension	15	28	24	67
weighted	469	124	191	201
unweighted	444	103	165	195

Based on all employees who said their retirement plans had changed (or had 'possibly' changed)
Source: Employee survey

Tables 7.9 and 7.10 illustrate the anticipated age at which employees intended to leave teaching and start drawing their pension. It shows that some employees had changed their plans as a result of changes to the TPS, with some making decisions to retire earlier and some later.

Table 7.9 Employees: Retirement shift patterns (previous versus current anticipated age of leaving teaching)

	Previously anticipated age of leaving teaching			
	54 and under (%)	55-59 (%)	60 (%)	61 and over (%)
Current anticipated age of leaving teaching				
54 and under	28	1	1	-
55-59	61	75	33	11
60	12	22	59	27
61 and over	-	2	7	59
weighted	18	411	498	95
unweighted	16	389	443	97

Based on all employees who said their retirement plans had changed (or had 'possibly' changed)
Source: Employee survey

Using the figures detailed in the table above, it is possible to quantify the numbers who now considered they would stay longer in the profession (24 per cent of those who had changed their plans – or six per cent of the whole sample) and those who considered that they may retire earlier (25 per cent of those who had changed their plans – or seven per cent of the whole sample)¹⁶. This does not suggest that the

¹⁶ These figures were calculated by analysing the raw survey data provided by employees (age previously anticipated leaving teaching versus age currently planned to leave teaching)

TPS changes have had a major impact on anticipated retirement decisions or on the aim of extending working lives.

Table 7.10 Employees: Retirement shift patterns (previous versus current anticipated age of drawing pension)

	Previously anticipated age of drawing pension			
	54 and under (%)	55-59 (%)	60 (%)	61 and over (%)
Current anticipated age of drawing pension				
54 and under	-	-	*	-
55-59	43	72	25	10
60	57	25	68	33
61 and over	-	*	5	53
weighted	7	228	674	93
unweighted	6	225	595	94

Based on all employees who said their retirement plans had changed (or had 'possibly' changed)
Source: Employee survey

The above is also supported by the mixed findings presented in Table 7.11. Whilst a small proportion - seven per cent (74 employees) said that the changes to the scheme had made a definite impact on their likelihood to stay in the profession longer, others were less certain¹⁷. The proportions of heads, deputy and assistant heads and teachers that said they would definitely stay in teaching longer were identical: seven per cent of each group. The largest impacts can be seen amongst employees aged 58 to 60, with 56 per cent saying the changes were definitely (or possibly) encouragement factors.

Table 7.11 Employees: Whether changes to the TPS made it more likely that will stay in teaching longer than anticipated (by age)

	49-51 (%)	52-54 (%)	55-57 (%)	58-60 (%)	Head teacher (%)	Deputy/Assistant head (%)	Teacher (%)	All (%)
Definitely	7	8	6	11	7	7	7	7
Possibly	35	32	37	45	39	35	36	35
Uncertain	35	36	25	18	30	33	32	32
Definitely not	21	24	30	23	25	23	24	24
weighted	354	382	245	59	115	127	742	1040
unweighted	286	309	290	72	219	114	577	957

Based on all employees who said their retirement plans had changed (or had 'possibly' changed)
Source: Employee survey

Employees who said their retirement plans had changed were also asked to state the age at which they had previously anticipated *drawing* their pension. Comparing these data to the current age at which employees planned to draw their pension

¹⁷ These data relate to a direct question asked to employees and are therefore not directly comparable to the proportions mentioned above Table 7.9 (which are based on derived data from the previous and current anticipated retirement ages entered on the survey questionnaires).

show that 24 per cent (or six per cent of the whole sample) planned to do so later than previously planned, while 13 per cent (four per cent of the whole sample) planned to do so earlier.

Still focusing on those who said their retirement plans had altered as a result of changes to the TPS, phased retirement was the change most frequently cited as being the one which had impacted on plans, with 62 per cent of those who had changed their plans saying this was the case. Over two fifths (44 per cent) said changes to average salary calculations, and around a quarter (28 per cent) said flexibilities in relation to lump sums, had been influential factors. However, as Chapters 4 and 5 showed, many teachers did not have a clear understanding of these aspects of the TPS changes.

Younger employees (those aged 49 to 51) were most likely (66 per cent of those who had changed their intentions) to say that phased retirement had impacted on their plans, as were those working in primary schools (65 per cent).

Changes to pension arrangements have aimed to make it easier for teachers to reduce their hours or shed their responsibilities in the run up to retirement. When asked to reflect on the previous arrangements, three in 10¹⁸ did in fact say that they had been a barrier in this context. Employees aged 49 to 51 were most likely (48 per cent) to say that they would not consider phased retirement (supporting findings from earlier in the chapter, which show that younger employees were least likely to have had discussions about it), but as we have shown, retirement plans were often very vague among this age group. The same proportion of headteachers also said that they would not consider this option.

Focusing on the perceptions of the previous arrangements is of course only one angle and the key issue is whether people have been encouraged to take phased retirement. In this respect, it is interesting to note that employees who said the previous arrangements were a barrier were also most likely to be considering phased retirement; 10 per cent were doing so compared with three per cent who did not think the previous arrangements were a constraint.

We now turn to consider employees' ideas about phased retirement in more depth. In a previous section, we have seen that some employees have had formal discussions with employers about phased retirement. It is also important, however, to examine future plans.

We reported in Chapter 6 (Table 6.8) that only five per cent of employees expected to take phased retirement, and that this group were the least likely to consider their retirement plans were 'certain' (seven per cent, compared with 15 per cent of

¹⁸ This is the proportion who said they were a barrier (eight per cent) or they were to *some* extent (22 per cent)

all employees). Overall, four out of five employees indicated their plans were certain or likely, but among those who expected to take phased retirement, only half indicated this degree of likelihood. Headteachers were less likely than other employees to either indicate that they would take phased retirement, and a smaller proportion of those who did indicate this option said that it was certain or likely. Just one per cent of all headteachers indicated they were certain or likely to take phased retirement, compared with three per cent of teachers.

While only five per cent of all employees expected to take phased retirement, in a separate question, nearly two fifths (38 per cent) indicated that this was an option they would explore further or give consideration to in the future. There is a close match between this and the proportion of headteachers who thought that employees would want to reduce their hours and/or responsibilities (see above). However, it is important to remember that, as Chapter 5 showed, many teachers and headteachers seemed to think that phased retirement meant any 'staged' process of reducing hours and responsibilities before retirement. Thus these employees were not necessarily thinking of the specific meaning of phased retirement set out in the pension regulations when they said that it is an option they would consider.

Earlier in this chapter, we have seen that the likelihood of whether employees had contacted the local authority or their school to discuss phased retirement was driven by age. Once again this was the case, although this time it was younger employees who were more likely to view phased retirement as something they might consider in the future (see Table 7.12). One possible explanation is that older employees considering this option were more likely to have discussed arrangements because they are closer to retirement age. But they would be less likely to consider it in the future if their retirement plans had already been decided. Indeed, other survey data support this assertion with older employees much more certain about their retirement plans (see Chapter 6).

Table 7.12 Employees: Whether would consider phased retirement (by age)

	49-51 (%)	52-54 (%)	55-57 (%)	58-60 (%)	Head teacher (%)	Deputy/Assistant head (%)	Teacher (%)	All (%)
Yes	49	46	30	20	35	39	39	38
No	17	24	45	60	39	33	32	33
I have not thought about it	32	29	23	16	24	24	27	26
Not stated	2	2	2	4	2	4	2	3
weighted	561	1633	489	1183	432	511	2712	3865
unweighted	686	1158	803	1218	935	487	2242	3865

Based on all employees
Source: Employee survey

Two fifths (40 per cent) of full-time employees said they would consider phased retirement compared with a third (31 per cent) of those working part-time. To a large extent, this might be expected as part-time workers in particular have less

scope to reduce their hours further. There was no difference relating to role; 35 per cent of headteachers, and 39 per cent of deputy and assistant heads and of teachers said they would consider phased retirement.

Amongst those who would consider phased retirement, half (51 per cent) indicated they would reduce *both* their hours and responsibilities in such a role. In contrast, two fifths (38 per cent) would only reduce their hours and four per cent would only reduce their responsibilities. The only notable sub-group difference was in relation to gender where 57 per cent of men were willing to reduce both hours and responsibilities compared to 49 per cent of women.

In interviews, the headteachers were much less likely to say that they would consider this option than those in other roles. This was largely because they earned more, and consequently felt that they could cope on a reduced income, and would not need to draw their pensions.

Comparing the fraction of the week that employees currently teach with the fraction they would like to in a phased retirement role illustrates the various ways in which teachers would intend to reduce their hours. If we focus on full-time employees, nearly two fifths of those who would consider phased retirement (37 per cent) would like to work 50 per cent of the week, whilst a third (32 per cent) would like to work 60 per cent. A smaller proportion (14 per cent) would like to work 80 per cent, with a minority citing smaller or larger fractions. This latter group had clearly not understood the details of the phased retirement arrangement, as it is only available when the salary is reduced by 25 per cent. Reducing hours by 20 per cent would not be sufficient to qualify for this option. A local authority interviewee said that this issue had been raised by other local authorities

We attended the teachers' pensions conference last week in London and a lot of other authorities are saying it would have been better if it was just a 20 per cent drop meaning that teachers would just drop, say, a day and maybe more schools could accommodate phased retirement if they did that whereas at the moment it's a 25 per cent reduction. ... Maybe if it was a 20 per cent more people would go for it – it's only just dropping say, as I said, a day off the week rather than a day and a half or something. (Local authority pensions officer)

For those who wish to reduce their responsibilities, the range of options is wider and the potential courses of action that employees suggested illustrate this diversity. The most common potential action was to reduce or give up a specific responsibility (21 per cent of those who would consider phased retirement) or move to a non-managerial role (23 per cent of those who would consider phased retirement). Other written examples were provided, albeit by smaller proportions, and included such roles as supply teaching, teaching assistant, consultancy, PPA support teacher, SENCO role, mentoring and general job-share ideas.

Focusing on the role of teaching assistant, one in 10 of those who would consider phased retirement said they would be interested in taking up this option. Current seniority impacted on this with five per cent of headteachers and assistant / deputy headteachers interested in this role compared with 11 per cent of teachers. Furthermore, part-time staff were more positive than full-time (19 versus eight per cent). Most interviewees, however, ruled this option out:

I don't think I will be doing that, not after being in charge in the classroom for that length of time, it would be very difficult.

It would drive me potty, because you'd have to watch somebody else doing it how you probably wouldn't do it, so no.

No thank you no! A lovely idea but my personality and the job I've done I would find that very difficult.

Just one interviewee was actually working part-time, both as a teacher and as a teaching assistant, and she commented, 'I didn't realise how little they got paid.'

It might have been more useful to have referred to 'support staff roles' rather than 'teaching assistants' in the survey, because, as Chapter 4 showed, we found a number of examples of older teachers moving to senior support staff roles, but did not ask about this possibility in the survey.

Table 7.13 shows the proportion of employees who indicated that they would be interested in various other potential roles listed in the survey.

Table 7.13 Employees: Proportion interested in each of the following roles in a phased retirement position (by role)

	Headteacher (%)	Deputy/Assistant head (%)	Teacher (%)	All (%)
Enrichment work with small groups of pupils	45	60	76	71
Class teaching (possibly part-time or job-share)	23	55	77	68
Mentoring or working alongside less experienced teachers	57	71	63	63
Working with student teachers	64	74	59	61
Primary only: teaching specific subjects such as music or art	27	49	50	46
Mentoring less experienced school leaders	57	71	63	40
A school leadership role as a job-share	76	74	27	39
Covering PPA time	20	25	34	31
	weighted	200	1064	1484
	unweighted	304	185	1396

Based on all employees who would consider phased retirement
Source: Employee survey

Table 7.13 shows that there were considerable differences here by role. More than two thirds of the teachers who would consider phased retirement indicated that in a phased retirement position they would be interested in 'enrichment work with small

groups of pupils' (71 per cent) and 'class teaching (possibly part-time or job-share)' (68 per cent). Among the deputy and assistant heads, four options were each selected by more than 70 per cent of those who would consider phased retirement: 'working with student teachers'; 'a school leadership role as a job-share'; 'mentoring or working alongside less experienced teachers'; and 'mentoring less experienced school leaders'.

The headteachers were most likely to indicate that they would be interested in job-share headship (76 per cent of those who would consider a phased retirement position). However, interest was greatest amongst female headteachers (81 per cent of those who would consider phased retirement versus 67 per cent of male headteachers – this equates to 30 per cent of all female headteachers). Interest was also greatest amongst primary headteachers (80 per cent versus 53 per cent of secondary headteachers).¹⁹

Employees were prompted on each the roles above, but they were also given the opportunity to provide details of other ways in which use could be made of their skills and experience. Once again, the range of suggestions was diverse but the most frequent centred on consultancy roles (eight per cent) or training (seven per cent). Headteachers were most likely (17 per cent) to suggest an advisory or consultancy role, which supports the potential roles identified by local authorities.

The proportion of teachers interested in each of the roles shown on Table 7.13 can be compared with the proportion of headteachers as employers that expressed interest in having teachers undertake each role, shown on Table 7.5. This comparison shows that in relation to the demand indicated by headteachers, more teachers were interested class teaching on a job-share or part-time basis, but fewer were interested in taking classes during PPA time.

The data from teacher interviews about the potential impact of the changes identify potential benefits and disadvantages of the changes in general terms, as well as responses about whether teachers thought that they themselves might take advantage of the new flexibility available. Teachers considered that the main beneficiaries of the changes would be themselves. It was argued that they would benefit from having a gradual transition to retirement rather than going from '*a huge commitment down to nothing*'. (Comments of this type were often linked to those discussed in Chapter 4 about alleged research into teacher mortality: '*evidence that a lot of people that sort of stay up until the bitter end, full-time, full whack don't last terribly long into retirement.*') One interviewee argued that the changes should be seen in terms of the well-being of teachers: '*it's a community at*

¹⁹ These findings are potentially linked as primary headteachers are more likely to be female, although it is not possible to draw further conclusions due to the small base sizes involved. Note: the base for this question is all those who would consider a phased retirement role.

the end of the day and looking after your staff and getting something back from them is what this should be all about' (Secondary teacher, f, 54).

Teachers also saw the changes as enabling them to spend more of their time in accordance with their own preferences. Thus one teacher argued that a reduction in hours would be particularly welcome: *'time is a very valuable thing, I'm in a position now where I've got money, what I don't have is time to enjoy it'* (Secondary teacher, m, 53). Another very much welcomed the idea of shedding responsibilities: *'[to] go back to being a classroom teacher, that would be my dream really, and just teach RE'* (Special school assistant head, f, 52).

Several teachers showed an awareness of the 'retirement bulge', describing themselves as *'part of the baby boom'*. They argued that the TPS changes could spread the impact of this: *'I think it would be helpful to the school if we didn't all go at the same time'* (Special school teacher, f, 53). Several interviewees argued that if teachers were to reduce their hours or responsibilities, they would experience less stress, and would have more energy. This in turn would have *'a knock on effect, if the staff are less stressed I presume for the students it might be different'* (Secondary teacher, f, 53).

7.4 Barriers and constraints

Local authorities

Various factors may encourage or discourage employees from taking advantage of potential flexibilities. In addition to the limited communication within local authorities and the uncertainty created by reorganisation discussed in Chapter 5, some local authorities identified other barriers in the survey. Barriers may emanate from employers' reluctance to create specific roles or support employees in new ways of working. Cost was the main barrier (11 out of 39) identified by local authorities (HR); as one commented:

"there is a lack of resources at the local authority level to promote the changes".

Seven local authorities (HR) also highlighted some resistance to change and provided written examples referring to the 'cultural change' necessary to embrace greater flexibility.

Staff interviewed in one local authority, who were aware of potential impact on individual teachers' retirement decisions, argued that there was little opportunity for the authority to use the changes as a basis for creative human resource management because under Local Management of Schools, they do not have the power to intervene.

Governors

One governor talked about the possibility that promotion opportunities for younger staff could be created if older ones reduced their responsibilities. However, he felt that it would be problematic to suggest that older teacher step down in order to allow this to happen:

I don't know how it would affect, should I say, from the employer's point of view, if there was somebody that we were scratching our heads and saying 'How do we ask him or her to step down because we want to promote somebody from underneath?' I don't know the implications of that but it's something that simply comes to mind, and I have to say, I haven't thought that one through. (Special school governor)

Headteachers as employers

Like the local authorities, two fifths (41 per cent) of headteachers as employers provided written examples of barriers that were linked to 'budget constraints'. As illustrated below, older teachers were sometimes seen as a costly resource, particularly in roles where support staff are a viable alternative, such as taking classes during PPA time or working with groups:

"Older teachers are expensive and we have good HLTAs who can often do an equally good job".

"Non teaching staff cost less than teachers generally".

We showed earlier that some headteachers argued that the pensions changes could help the school reduce costs because older teachers moving to part-time work could be replaced by younger and cheaper teachers. However, the headteachers above were arguing that expensive older teachers could be dispensed with altogether.

Chapter 4 showed that 49 per cent of primary and 56 per cent of secondary headteachers were unwilling to employ more part-time teachers. In the survey, 14 per cent of headteachers wrote in comments relating to the potential impact of the pensions scheme changes which indicated negative feelings towards part-time or job-share staff, whilst nine per cent said that as a small school they were unable to accommodate them. More specifically, a quarter (26 per cent) of 'smaller' primary schools said this was the case compared to six per cent of 'smaller' secondary schools²⁰. Headteachers also referred to difficulties in managing the timetable (nine

²⁰ It is not possible to analyse special schools (by size) with high levels of statistical confidence due to the small base sizes involved.

per cent) and the lack of stability (eight per cent) which job-share or part-time teaching created.

Secondary headteachers were most likely to refer to timetabling problems (16 per cent did so), whilst special school headteachers emphasised the issue that children need the stability and continuity offered by 'one' teacher (22 per cent). Special school headteachers were also most likely to say that their size prevented them accommodating job-share or part-time roles (18 per cent). Furthermore, a fifth of schools with a high proportion²¹ of part-time staff alluded to some of the problems that this created. The following responses from two special schools highlight these issues:

"Too many part-timers is unfair on the pupils with special needs".

"We prefer full-time class teachers – continuity and consistency for the children with severe learning difficulties".

Schools that faced the highest levels of 'challenge' were most likely to cite barriers linked to the need for children to receive stability and continuity (12 per cent of schools that faced 'high' levels of challenge said this was the case compared to three per cent with 'low' levels). This finding is re-enforced by the comments in the survey below:

"In very challenging schools, I see no benefit of the reduction of hours. Children in such schools need consistency. They do not need frequent changes of staff".

"In a high deprivation area, children need stability and less change. Too many teachers for some primary children is not good".

In Chapter 4, we have already examined the policies and practices that schools have in place for those approaching retirement. This also illustrates some of the constraints that headteachers faced. The barriers referred to above are inevitably correlated with some of these earlier findings. For instance, three in 10 who indicated budget constraints also agreed with the statement 'I prefer not to employ job-share teachers because of the additional costs'. Similarly, six in 10 who mentioned negative feelings towards part-time or job-share teachers also disagreed with the statement that they 'would be happy to employ more teachers on this basis'.

The headteacher of Secondary C was particularly concerned about the potential impact of the TPS changes in terms of the number of part-time teachers in the

²¹ For analysis purposes, this was defined as more than 30 per cent of the workforce (see Section 3.3.2).

school (see Box 7.5). However, he appeared to be under the misapprehension that teacher would now have a right to work part-time, regardless of the views of the headteacher and governors.

Box 7.5 Potential of TPS changes seen as negative:

I think most people haven't really clicked that they could, if they wanted to, ask to go part-time. I'm not sure that my governors have really fully taken on board the consequences of that. ... For headteachers I think the problem is going to be – if I just take my own circumstances at the moment, the last thing I want really is lots of teachers on part-time and trying to find ways of slotting lots of different people in during the week to cover classes. The last thing that I really want is for lots of classes across the school taught by more than one teacher. ... On educational grounds I don't think it's a good idea to encourage anybody to take part-time and work their way down. It would be better for that clean break, but it's just now their legal right to do so, I don't really have a choice. I don't think the governors realise that that could potentially have such a big impact on the children. ... This opportunity is one that is a concern ... to have people, let's say 0.6 or 0.4 or whatever over a period of three years, working their way down, you know. (Secondary C headteacher)

Another secondary headteacher had similar views about part-time teachers, but said that the pensions changes would not have any impact in his school; he said, '*I have a highly motivated staff and people aren't really looking to retire and so in a sense that is not my issue here.*' This was not borne out in interviews with the teachers in this school, some of whom said they would like to move to part-time work or reduce responsibilities, but were aware that such plans were unlikely to be agreed.

In interview, some headteachers argued that they would be less likely to employ part-time teachers of core subjects such as science, maths and English, because these tend to be timetabled through the week. The perception that part-time teachers are only willing to work on certain days was discussed in Chapter 4 (Section 4.2.2). This might militate against some shortage subject teachers moving to phased retirement.

All of the above suggests that the flexibilities available to employees will be associated with the willingness of schools to create specific roles. Despite the barriers identified above, eight in 10 headteachers still said that they would try to support staff who wished to reduce their hours or responsibilities.

The interview data also suggest that teachers in schools which are unwilling to support them in reducing their hours or responsibilities may also find it difficult to find appropriate posts elsewhere. We asked headteachers whether they had considered creating roles designed to suit teachers taking phased retirement. While some headteachers were willing to do so in order to retain particular teachers in their own schools, none intended to advertise such roles; even those who were

more inclined to encourage flexibility, including part-time work, felt that they generated enough part-time roles internally (through existing teachers asking for flexibility) without advertising more.

This might mean that only those in certain schools would be able to avail themselves of the new options. Moreover, it was argued that only those in schools where morale was high would wish to do so:

If you were in a place where morale was low, you might just want to get out and it wouldn't matter how much you could reduce or whatever, if you could afford to go, you might just say 'that's it, I'm going', not, 'I want to reduce.'
(Primary headteacher)

A further issue that would limit the potential benefits to schools of the new flexible options was a concern that it was not appropriate for headteachers to approach staff and suggest that they reduce their responsibilities. This contrasts with the views set out in Box 7.4, but echoes those of a governor, quoted earlier. One head said:

I'm not sure I really want to consciously want to start going down that route, to approach somebody and say, you know, why don't you give up? For most of them that extra responsibility carries a pension, right, and to give it up means it's going to be reduced in some way, and that's not what they're about. I think once they've put in their 30 or 40 years, whatever it is, they want to know that whatever they've been earning is actually going to count towards it, but there's some very difficult discussions if I initiated those discussions. (Secondary headteacher)

Headteachers also questioned whether older teachers, and particularly those in more senior roles, would in reality want to relinquish responsibilities and return to the classroom. A secondary headteacher said that she herself would find this impossible:

I could not go back to full-time teaching. I know I couldn't do it. My job has moved on so much. At the moment I'm teaching one lesson a week to help get over a timetable difficulty for a maternity cover and I'm finding it a struggle because, you know it's not - the hour in the classroom is bliss, but you know you've got to prepare, and you don't have the resources any more and that networking.

Consequently she envisaged that it might be necessary to give reduced timetables to some older teachers who had shed responsibilities (which would inevitably increase the cost to the school). Similarly another secondary head considered that teachers with responsibilities might be unwilling to return to a full teaching timetable. He himself would not want to do that:

I don't think that at say 65 or 70 I would relish the idea of coming into a class of, let's say, potentially unruly year 10s or year 11s and doing the business with them, certainly not in the State sector. If there was a little job that, you know, was quite handy and it was with a nice bunch, let's say teaching 6th form or something in a private school, that expertise would be valued a bit more.

Finally, one headteacher questioned suggested that the time periods specified in the new pensions regulations also limit the numbers that might benefit. He argued that the 10-year period specified in the new average salary calculations was too short, and might prevent some teachers from benefiting from the changes:

Obviously there's a limit to how retrospective those arrangements are and therefore you're clock watching and I think that's regrettable really and I think for very little money really you could probably engineer a retrospective arrangement that was more palatable over a longer period of time.

Employees

A large proportion of employees (45 per cent) who said they would consider phased retirement anticipated difficulties in finding suitable employment in which to take it, with a fifth anticipating 'considerable' difficulty.

Table 7.14 shows that older employees were less likely to anticipate any difficulties. This is related to the fact that a greater proportion had already discussed arrangements with their local authority or school (see discussion below).

Table 7.14 Employees: Whether anticipate difficulty finding employment in which to take phased retirement (by age and role)

	49-51 (%)	52-54 (%)	55-57 (%)	58-60 (%)	Headteacher (%)	Deputy/Assistant head (%)	Teacher (%)	All (%)
Considerable difficulty	21	21	19	11	32	24	18	20
Slight difficulty	27	25	25	21	26	20	26	26
No difficulty	13	18	20	33	14	19	18	18
Don't know	36	33	30	31	24	34	34	33
Not stated	3	4	6	4	3	3	4	4
weighted	502	534	339	109	152	200	1064	1484
unweighted	418	438	407	133	304	185	848	1396

Based on all employees who would consider phased retirement
Source: Employee survey

It is also worth noting the relatively high proportion (35 per cent) of primary headteachers who anticipated 'considerable' difficulty (compared to 21 per cent of secondary headteachers). Headteachers were generally more likely to cite 'considerable' difficulty (32 per cent) compared to deputy and assistant headteachers (24 per cent) and teachers (18 per cent).

As can be seen in Table 7.14 a third of employees were unsure whether they would face any difficulties. This was linked to whether or not they had discussed arrangements with the local authority or their school. For instance, only one in 10 who had discussed arrangements 'formally' with either party was unsure and only a minority (14 per cent) anticipated difficulties. This suggests that once formal discussions had taken place, employees were reassured by the options open to them whilst those who had not discussed any course of action were left with a degree of uncertainty.

However, teachers were not necessarily reassured when they spoke to their headteachers. One of the follow-up interviews was with a teacher who stated on the questionnaire that she was hoping to take phased retirement, possibly as a teaching assistant, and had spoken with both her headteacher and the local authority about this. However, when she was interviewed several months later, she reported that she had not been able to pursue this plan because her headteacher would not agree (see Box 7.6).

Box 7.6: Teacher unable to take phased retirement because headteacher would not agree

Ruth Jones, a secondary English teacher aged 56, immediately identified the phased retirement option as something she would like to do. She wanted to move from working part-time 0.8 to 0.4 or 0.5. She also suggested that she might make this 0.4/0.5 up by combining some teaching with some work as a teaching assistant. However, when she approached her headteacher in February he would not agree to the plan, and the Local Authority confirmed that the headteacher had the right to say no. Consequently Ruth resigned in May. But at that point the headteacher offered her a 0.2 teaching contract. She has accepted this, and is working as a teaching assistant in the same school to make some extra money. Thus she is in fact working two full days which is what she had proposed doing in her phased retirement. But she is not drawing her pension, and is unwilling to retire fully at this point because of the extent of the actuarial reduction at her age. Her part-time work involves teaching Year 7, and she feels that this is not making the best use of her skills and experience:

When I put it to the head, you might think it sounds arrogant but you kind of think well, you've got 20 odd years experience with GCSE, A level, all the rest of it I actually thought I would still be useful and that they would use me to carry on with my A level classes or finish my GCSE class, I actually thought they would use me for something useful and in actual fact, they've given me year 7's which doesn't really – it isn't really a challenge if you know what I mean?

Several other teachers who were interviewed identified the views of the headteacher and senior leadership team as a potential constraint. Some said that they thought it would be feasible in their own schools:

I would think that this school is quite amenable ... I think in a big school like this it is probably slightly easier because the impact [of having part-time

teachers] *when you've got a school of two thousand odd is different from if you're in a little primary school.* (Secondary teacher, f, 51)

Some others, however, were so convinced that a proposal to move to part-time work in their current school would be unacceptable that they did not even contemplate asking, and in such schools, the headteachers did indicate a considerable reluctance to employ part-time teachers. Chapter 4 described a school in which a proposal to relinquish responsibilities had not been agreed; teachers in that school were aware of this and indicated that there would be little point in asking whether they could reduce their hours or responsibilities in response to the TPS changes.

Several interviewees voiced a concern about potential lack of equality of opportunity:

Those jobs don't really exist unless they're created. So in a place like here, if I wanted to go from Head of Year to Deputy Head of Year, in theory you'd have to apply for a post. In practice of course you might not need to, someone would leave and they'd drop you into that, but there is a large element of luck, you depend on turnover, what posts would come available and two, as I say, there's a large element of grace and favour, because in the end the management don't have to do that. Now some would and some wouldn't, it would probably depend on how you were getting on with them as well. There's no kind of ... automatic right to go down. (Secondary teacher, m, 50)

A senior leadership team member in another school was also concerned about the lack of openness and fairness that could result from allowing some older teachers to reduce their hours or responsibilities. He said *'I tend to think that it would be done as a job for the boys situation.'*

Teachers of secondary shortage subjects who would consider a phased retirement role were less likely to indicate on the survey that they anticipated difficulty finding such employment (40 versus 45 per cent). This was reflected in some interviews. One maths teacher argued that under its present leadership her school would be amenable to her moving to part-time work, but added, *'and being in maths which is a shortage subject, in that sense I'm in a good position'*. This contrasted with the English teacher described in Box 7.6 above, and a science teacher who said there was no point in asking about moving to part-time work in her current school (discussed in Chapter 4). We have showed (in Chapter 4 and earlier in this section) that some headteachers argued that employing part-timers made timetabling more difficult. In trying to work around this difficulty, it appeared that they sometimes made part-time working unattractive for employees. Another English teacher explained:

The problem here is that we don't get any say in what time you have off if you're part time; they're perfectly capable of giving you a day off which is Tuesday afternoon and Wednesday morning. Frankly, that's [not what I want]. It would have to be a Monday or a Friday otherwise it's not worth bothering with. (Secondary English teacher, f, 56)

Others teachers echoed some of the headteachers' concerns about the potential negative effects of increasing the number of part-timers. Concerns included the increased number of different teachers that children would encounter; a possible negative impact on exam classes; the increased difficulty for pupils in contacting teachers who are not in school every day; and 'a kind of credibility thing, I think children find you slightly less credible if you're part -time' (Special school teacher, f, 53).

When asked whether they themselves might take advantage of the new flexibilities, the oldest teachers generally indicated that it was too late for them because they had already made plans, or were so close to age 60 that they could not benefit from the changes. Those under 55 tended to say that they were not near enough retirement to say whether they would take advantage of the TPS changes, but that this was something to consider nearer the time.

It's one of the things that I've got to bear in mind as an option and nearer the time if I feel that teaching full-time I'm not coping with I'll have to look at the numbers and consider it more carefully. (Secondary maths teacher, f, 54)

This fitted with the general pattern, discussed in Chapter 5, in which teachers' retirement plans tend to be very vague, and are seen as something to be decided in the future. Thus the group who might give serious consideration to taking advantage of the TPS changes is quite limited. Some others identified specific reasons why they would not consider this course. For example, one teacher argued that he would not want to reduce his responsibilities and continue to work in his present school because he felt that this would be awkward both for himself and for other people:

Now if I decided in two or three years' time to say right I just want to become a bog standard classroom teacher again, I probably can't see that happening because of my character, ... not because I would be worried about doing a lower status job particularly, but I think other people, other colleagues might feel a bit uncomfortable with it, because I've been quite high profile in the school in several areas. (Secondary teacher, m, 52)

He argued that if he were to contemplate reducing hours or responsibilities it would be better 'to make a clean break and maybe do something different'.

Another teacher argued that if he did move to part-time work he would not want to start drawing his pension because *'If I went part-time it might be a good way of tightening my belt. I would want it to be a trial run for not having quite so much money'* (Secondary teacher, m, 54).

Others said that they would not consider phased retirement because this would still involve an actuarial reduction to their pension.

7.5 Potential impact on school leaders and succession planning

The NCSL's Succession Planning Programme aims to ensure sufficient numbers of high quality school leaders, now and in the future. This includes encouraging more teachers to consider headship, and encouraging effective and experienced leaders to stay in headship. In this context, the new pension arrangements could contribute in a number of ways. Firstly, enabling older disaffected teachers to reduce their responsibilities or hours may prevent disaffection due to burn-out and fatigue, and thus help leaders to manage their workforce (Cribb, 2007). Secondly, the phased retirement option may enable headteachers to move into system leadership roles alongside their existing headship. It has been suggested that the development of such roles can help with retention by offering experienced headteachers fresh challenges and a chance to refresh their careers while retaining them in their schools. It also offers deputy and assistant headteachers the chance to act up, which may encourage them in turn to move into headship (NCSL, 2006). Thirdly, the phased retirement option *'provides opportunities for leaders to step down but not out'* (Cribb, 2007). Hartle *et al.* (2007: 35) argue that:

The new [phased retirement] arrangements should enable more co-headships, whereby the leadership of a school is shared between the headteacher (on a part-time contract) and another, perhaps younger aspiring leader, an arrangement that aids both retention and the development of school leaders.

They also argue that the changes to average salary could enable a school leader to decide to work, say, three days a week, whilst taking on independent consultancy work beyond the school.

In this section we examine the quantitative and qualitative data to consider how far the pensions changes can contribute to each of these aspirations.

1. Pensions changes will reduce workforce disaffection, and this make the role of school leaders easier

There is some evidence that this potential has been recognised in some schools, and is already taking place on a very small scale. As we have shown, many older

teachers expressed interested in reducing their hours and responsibilities, and believed that doing so will reduce stress. A few headteachers also identified the possibility of using the pension flexibilities to persuade some older teachers to step down from key roles that they are not succeeding in. However, we have also shown that a core of teachers feel unable to take early retirement because of their financial commitments (particularly mortgages and children in higher education). Arguably those who are staying in teaching mainly for financial reasons may be the most disaffected, and may present challenges to school leaders. The survey showed that those teachers who indicated that they were staying in the profession for entirely financial reasons were more likely to say that they would consider phased retirement than those who were indicated they were staying because they enjoyed their work in school (40 per cent versus 30 per cent). This suggests that the changes to the TPS may indeed enable such disaffected teachers to reduce their hours or responsibilities, because they would be able to maintain their income level by drawing on their pension fund. This may then have the desired effect of reducing the pressure on school leaders.

2. *System leadership roles can help retain existing heads and opportunities to act up may encourage others to move into headship.*

We have shown that many of the headteachers who responded to the survey or were interviewed talked about moving into system leadership roles: 85 per cent of headteachers who said they might consider phased retirement indicated that they would be interested in mentoring school leaders, and 17 per cent wrote in that they would like to take on advisory or consultancy roles. Many of the headteachers interviewed also talked about moving into such roles, but they generally seemed to be thinking of this as something that they would do after retirement to supplement their incomes (or in some cases as a final role before retirement). However, none of them linked this with the phased retirement option; they indicated that they were financially secure and would not need to draw on their pensions in such cases. We referred in Chapter 6 (Section 6.3) to a secondary headteacher who anticipated that she would become an executive head three days a week. She had thought about phased retirement (and indicated this as a possibility on the questionnaire) but had decided that this was unnecessary:

I think I will finish up doing 3 days a week as an executive head which will mean I will still be operating at this level, but obviously I won't earn as much. But that's fine because you know I don't need to keep on earning at this rate. I'm fortunate, I mean obviously, I've not got children and my school pays me well and so I've not got some of the hassle that some of my colleagues have who are in their 50s. ... I shan't need to take an actuarially reduced pension. (Secondary headteacher, f, 51)

The case studies also offer some insight into the question of whether those who act up while school leaders are undertaking system leadership work are then more likely to move into headship. The headteacher a case study primary school had recently been absent for three months undertaking a system leadership role. The teacher who had been acting head during that time said:

It was a challenge. I mean I can't say I didn't enjoy it, and I can't say I did enjoy it. I mean, I coped with it, it was interesting. You know I could take it or leave it. ... It probably made me decide what I'm doing is fine and I'm just going to flog on. ... I certainly didn't think I wanted to be a head, and I certainly would not want to do it. ... And because I'm old and I've got through the threshold, the difference in money isn't enough to tempt me.
(Primary teacher who had acted as headteacher, f, 55)

Moreover, the headteacher of this school was considering retiring earlier as a result of this experience. However, in some other schools involved in the same scheme, those acting up did indicate that they were now more likely to move towards headship (Hutchings and Smart, 2007).

Another interviewee had spent a year as an acting head, and said that the experience, together with positive feedback, had encouraged her to apply for the headship when it was advertised. When she was not appointed, her confidence had received 'a severe knock'. It was only when the Primary G co-headship was advertised that she felt confident enough to reply, because it was quite explicit that she would have support in moving into her new role. This suggests that if the intention is that acting headship should be a positive step towards headship, it is important that acting heads are very well supported, and are mentored to take the next step.

3. The pensions changes can facilitate co-headships which support both retention and the development of future leaders

The survey data show that 76 per cent of those headteachers who said that they would consider phased retirement indicated that they would be very or fairly interested in school leadership as a job share. In order to investigate how far such arrangements offer the benefits suggested above, we selected two case study primary schools to take part in this research because of their co-headship arrangements (planned or existing). In addition, one of the case study secondary schools had recently had such an arrangement (with the current head then acting as co-head). None of these arrangements resulted from the pension changes, though it is quite possible to see how these could support similar arrangements. Each case had different characteristics and potential outcomes.

In Primary H, the headteacher had been at the school for the last 20 years, and moved to part-time work (0.5) two years ago, when recovering from an illness. The

deputy headteacher then worked as headteacher for half the week, while continuing her role as deputy on the other days. The situation was further complicated by her absence on maternity leave, which had resulted in a further acting up arrangement. The head was very clear that this was not a job share, in that the members of staff acting up were appointed to those roles on a temporary basis only, and when the head retires, the school will advertise for a new headteacher. He said:

I'm not even 100 per cent certain yet whether she [the substantive deputy] will apply. ... It will have to be advertised. She would have as good a chance as anybody if she decides to apply but there are certainly no guarantees that she would get the job and so she has got to throw her hat into the ring along with everyone else.

Secondary A had had a similar arrangement. The headteacher explained: 'I came here as deputy 6 years ago, and the existing head teacher decided to go with a joint arrangement.' At the time the arrangement was made the previous head had had no intention of moving to retirement, but reportedly wanted to reduce her workload and hours: 'She decided that enough was enough, it's a demanding job.' The governor we interviewed indicated that the arrangement had not been entirely satisfactory:

I didn't think it worked very well because when it came to governors' meetings, there was slight confusion to which head you were referring to on which part of the agenda. The governors had a few concerns and by the time it came to review the arrangement [the previous head] handed in her resignation and decided to go.

Thus the arrangement had only lasted one year. The interviewees did not think that succession planning had been any part of the original intention, though in fact the current head had been appointed to the headship following this experience.

When she chose to go, then I was in charge on an acting basis individually and then the post was advertised and I had to compete with a full field.

In contrast, the co-headship planned at Primary G has been explicitly designed as a mentoring arrangement, and the intention has always been that the person appointed to the co-headship will move into full-time headship. In that this arrangement is one that explicitly supports succession planning, a full account is given in Box 7.7.

These three arrangements have involved rather different allocations of responsibilities between the two heads resulting from their different origins and intentions. At Secondary A the headteacher explained:

I was in five days a week and I was in charge of teaching and learning and staffing and budgets, and she was in charge of, she was two and a half days

a week and she was external relations, so cluster, specialist school application and extended schools. ... What that enabled us to do was to progress each of us in quite a focused way but over quite a broad front.

The Primary H co-head said:

What we eventually got down to was that I would do quite a bit of the administrative stuff because of my experience ... And so a lot of the basic paperwork that comes in the post every day, quite a bit of it gets left for me, and I'm happy to do that because a lot of it I can just sift through and deal with it very, very quickly whereas somebody less experienced will perhaps agonise for ages over something that is in fact fairly trivial and doesn't seem a lot of time spent on. Apart from that, the rule of thumb is whoever's watch it is deals with whatever comes up, and follows it through.

In contrast at Primary G where there was an explicit mentoring arrangement the plan was that the previous head would be lead head in the first year, and the incoming head would shadow him and gradually take a lead on some aspects. In the second year she would be lead head, and he would be there as a mentor.

The headteacher of Primary J also expressed interest in co-headship. She said that phased retirement '*would be good*', but she also indicated that in financial terms, things would become easier: '*In the next three to four years I think I will have got to the stage where I won't have any financial responsibilities in terms of my children and my mortgage.*' It was unclear, then, whether she saw drawing her pension through phased retirement as a key aspect of any co-headship arrangement. However, the main barrier that she perceived was in finding a co-head. It had obviously not occurred to her to advertise in the way that Primary G had done. She said:

[The deputy] couldn't do it with me, because legally you have to have somebody who has got the NPQH, this is what I understand, and no one in the school has got it. There is one person actually but he is a class teacher here ... he was a head and he gave up in order to spend more time with his family really, he went back to class teaching. ... I could do the job share with and I think he would probably run a mile! There is a colleague in another school locally and she said, 'Oh, you and I could do it together', but the difficulty is she would want me to go to her school and I would want her to come to mine and so I think it probably wouldn't work like that.

She added, '*Obviously it would be up to the governors, they might not want to do that.*'

In addition to the arrangements describes above, one of the follow-up interviewees was contemplating moving to part-time work following an illness, and had proposed to her governors that she and the deputy work as co-heads. She said:

I'm on a succession planning group for the LEA and that's part of what we're looking at, how we can persuade heads like me who have got loads of experience, not to just disappear off the face of the earth and retire early, but to actually stay around and sort of co-head with somebody or to work with somebody that's younger. (Special school headteacher, f, 55)

The deputy was happy with this proposal, but did not want to be a head on her own. The head said:

Unfortunately I think people tend to see us i.e. the current generation of heads and see how much we are sort of bogged down by the paperwork, that we don't get into classrooms as much as you like because things are there and you just have to deal with them, and I think it puts people off.

The head of Secondary E also expressed some interest in co-headship with members of her leadership team, seeing this in terms of succession planning. She said:

I might cut down rather than go early on an actuarially reduced pension. I'd have to look at whether that was an advantage to draw pension or not draw pension, I probably wouldn't.

It seems then that there is considerable interest in co-headship arrangements, but that there is not yet a shared view of how these can help succession planning. It should be noted, however, that while some headteachers, particularly in primary schools, said that they were interested in co-headship, some headteachers saw this as completely out of the question. The head of Secondary C said, 'I know there are some schools where they've got two headteachers in post but I don't know how they work it'. The head of Secondary B said, 'if you're a head teacher you can't partially retire'. She continued:

I couldn't possibly job share with somebody else in this school because I'm here and in post. I am the head, they would be the subsidiary. ... I don't think it would work and I don't think it would be fair on them, and I don't even think you can mentor somebody that's taken over. You've got to step back from it and let someone get on with it.

This suggests again that where such arrangements are effective, they need to publicised so that others can see what is feasible. It seems particularly important that the progress of the Primary G arrangement should be followed, and, assuming it is successful, should be widely publicised.

Box 7.7: Primary G: a mentoring co-headship

Early in 2007 Primary G had placed an advertisement for 'Co-Headship leading to Full Headship', stating that:

This is a unique career opportunity for anyone with the potential to be a headteacher and who wishes to follow a mentorship model of co-headship over a maximum 3 year phased period.

During 2007-8, the incoming head would work collaboratively part-time (0.6) as headteacher (with the option of working as a class teacher for a further 0.4). S/he would take on a greater proportion of headship from September 2008, and from September 2009 would take full responsibility. While other job-share headships exist, the school has not found any other instances of a 'mentorship model'.

The current headteacher said that there were both personal and school-related reasons for deciding to do this. He argued that the prospect of being headteacher one day and being at home with no role the next was a very difficult one to face. He had made it possible for others on the staff to reduce their hours or responsibilities as they approached retirement, and he wanted to be able to do the same himself. He had considered, but rejected, options such as becoming an advisor or consultant. He was passionately attached to the school and its community, having been headteacher for 31 years, and felt that consultancy would not give him the same satisfaction as that of really making a difference in one small patch.

Consequently he was very anxious about the impact on the school of his retirement. He said that he had observed other schools going through a period of 'turbulence' when a new head was appointed:

It is simply that classically the new head comes in and ... they would feel the need to make their mark. ... They come in with virtually no knowledge about the school, its traditions, the idiosyncrasies of the staff, anything really. And they make mistakes, they ruffle people's feathers, they go too quick or they don't go quick enough, and there's turbulence.

He did not want this to happen in Primary G. He was aware that some staff and parents shared these anxieties. His aim was to achieve:

... the seamless transfer through a mentorship model of handing over your expertise, your computer systems, your routines in the school, with the proviso that we're not looking for a clone of me but we're looking for somebody who is willing to learn.

He had therefore come up with the scheme for co-headship leading to full headship. The head initially broached this idea with the deputy and with a colleague who had recently retired. The deputy had had some misgivings in relation to how this would impact on his own role and retirement plans. The other colleague was very encouraging. He then talked with the chair of governors, who had been supportive from the first. In interview he said:

[where I work] it is part of the work ethic ... to promote certain degrees of flexible working, look for ways of making the work life balance much better, more appealing, so I had that drummed into me as part of my background. ... A genuine request for changing the conditions of working, shouldn't necessarily be immediately turned out, without some sort of good thought.

In addition he, together with other governors, was concerned about the future of the school:

There's also the school issue and it's framed very much around the fact that head teacher recruitment these days is very difficult. When you do get somebody new coming in the

post it is quite possible that there's an awful lot of uncertainty, big step changes in management and leadership and all that sort of thing. ... We felt that this Co-Headship model offered us a degree of assurance What we want is the general, the maintenance of the school ethos, we didn't want any great big step changes which reflect badly through all the staff, you end up losing lots of staff. And generally undermining the morale.

The governing body were unanimously supportive of the scheme. However, the headteacher said that the Director of Education in the LA had been sceptical about it, arguing that no-one would want to take up the post. The LA advisor said in interview that his first reaction had been that a new head would be unlikely to welcome this model:

I did say to him, if you go back to when you were first in headship and I go back to when I was first in headship, wasn't our view both that we wanted to run our own schools, rather than actually having someone else watching over us?

He acknowledged that he had been surprised by the number and quality of the applicants.

The head reported that when the post was advertised there were 25 enquiries. There were five good applications; all were short-listed and an appointment has been made. The field was better than that achieved by some other local primary schools advertising for headteachers.

When interviewed as part of this research, the successful candidate said that she had previously applied for the headship of the school where she is currently deputy head. At that time she was acting head, and had been given very positive feedback on her work in that role. Therefore when she was not appointed to the headship, she experienced a severe knock to her self-confidence. As a result, the mentorship model appeared very attractive.

Although I'd done it for two terms and been told that I was doing it all right, I didn't have so much confidence just to go out and really win a headship outright, and when I first heard on the grapevine what [the head] was going to do at [Primary G], I thought it just sounded what I needed for the future. Because although I've done my NPQH two years ago now, you don't learn until you actually start doing the job of headship. ... The mentorship role was really attractive because it meant I could actually develop it alongside an established and experienced guy.

Moreover, having worked for a year under the new head in her present school, she shared the head of Primary G's concerns about the effect on a school of having a new headteacher, though perceived this in terms of stagnation, rather than turbulence:

Seeing what's happened here has helped me to understand what can happen in a school with a new head. I mean I feel we stagnated here for a year and that's been frustrating – knowing things that I put in place last year as acting head haven't really carried on because she's getting to know the place and what's it about. You can understand why, however frustrating it is, and I hope that doing it this way, [the head of Primary G] will be continuing the drive forward and the knowledge of the school while I pick up on it.

Next year the incoming headteacher will work 0.6 as head and 0.4 as a teacher, while the current head will officially retire, but return on a 0.5 contract. He will be lead head and the newly appointed head will shadow him, learn his systems and his ways of approaching issues, and gradually take over tasks. While he will only be paid 0.5, he anticipates that at least in the autumn term he will spend a much higher proportion of his time in the school. The following year the incoming head will become 'lead headteacher' and will increase her hours as head, while the outgoing head will reduce his hours to 0.4. In the third year, his

role will further decrease as he moves towards full retirement. Even when he ceases to have an official role, he hopes it will still be possible for him to continue to work with the football team or to hear readers. The incoming co-head said in interview that she would encourage this because *'schools have got such a web of history and connections and they need these long established connections really to make them strong'*.

There is clearly a great deal of good will from all parties to make this arrangement work. The new co-head wondered whether the handover period might be too prolonged. She was also very clear that it would be vital for her to establish herself as a headteacher from the first, and to *'earn people's respect'*, and that there was a danger she could be seen as some sort of deputy.

I think that's really important that my credibility is established very quickly. ... My fear is that I won't be able to do that, or I will be sitting in the back seat all the time which isn't what they need. They need someone who's going to come and work to being an equal with [the current head] and moving forward

The head, for his part, said that he has *'a vested interest'* in making it work. This meant, he said: *'I've got to make it OK for her, I've got to get the balance right between her shadowing me and having enough headship responsibilities to feel part of it.'* He said:

If she decides to have a completely different management style and approach and all the rest of it, that is her choice. But she'll be doing it from a position of knowledge and experience of shadowing me and knowing how I did it.

The scheme was going to cost the school about £7,000 in the first year. The new head would be placed less far up the scale so a saving on headship costs will be achieved. However, she was going to work full-time in the school (0.6 as head and 0.4 as a classroom teacher which would enable her to get to know staff and pupils), so the overall cost would be greater.

The pension scheme changes had not played any part in the design of this scheme. The head was already 60. He would officially retire, then would take up the maximum part-time work permitted. (This was a strategy already used with staff who wanted to reduce their hours towards retirement.) He would then have a total income (from his pension and his part-time work) very similar to his current income, though this would reduce over the next few years. He was, however, taking up the option of taking a larger lump sum and a smaller pension. He said:

Some of my head teacher colleagues have said, it's really an amazing thing that you could actually be still paid virtually the same, still do the job you like doing, reduce it a little bit if you choose, the same time encourage your successor and have a say in that, you know it's almost like winning the pools in life isn't it?

While this particular arrangement was not prompted by the pension changes, it is obviously an arrangement that could occur using phased retirement. However, none of those involved had made the link between pension changes and the feasibility of such arrangements. The head was anxious that the arrangement was monitored and reported, in that it is an arrangement that might appeal to others. Both the incoming and the outgoing headteachers indicated that they would be willing to be interviewed again in a year's time to track the progress of this arrangement.

When asked if other schools might make similar arrangements, the LA advisor said:

I don't know that we would necessarily go to other schools and say we suggest you try a similar route. ... Certainly the informal feedback from heads and from governing bodies

has been, actually we really rather would look at the model of one head teacher so someone retires and we appoint a new head teacher, so that's still very much the mindset. I think until [Primary G's] case has gone through and we've worked out, where I say we, I think it's for the school to work out, but also local people to see, is it a model worth considering, it's going to be very difficult to think whether others might adopt it. It's still work in progress, but we're interested obviously to see how it does work, and assist the school in all we can to make things work.

7.6 Summary

This chapter has explored the actual and potential impacts of the TPS changes on teachers' retirement behaviour.

Actual impacts of the TPS changes

The survey was sent out just five months after the changes came into effect, and was too early to capture action in response to the changes. The qualitative research took place over a longer period, and interviews were conducted with four teachers who had changed work patterns in response to the changes (two in case study schools and two in follow-up interviews). Eight per cent of the employee sample had had either formal or informal discussion about taking phased retirement with their headteachers, and two per cent with the local authority. Around one in 10 headteachers indicated that discussions about potential roles for older teachers who opted to reduce their hours or responsibilities had taken place. This had more often occurred in schools with higher proportions of older teachers.

Potential impact of the changes

There was no clearly agreed view among teachers' employers (local authorities and headteachers) as to what the future impact of the changes would be. Some headteachers as employers viewed the changes very positively, identifying potential roles for older teachers working who had reduced hours or responsibilities such as enrichment work with small groups (79 per cent), mentoring less experienced teachers (73 per cent), and taking classes during PPA time (75 per cent of primary headteachers). Sixty-four per cent of headteachers as employers agreed that work-life balance for teachers would be improved, and 50 per cent agreed that there would be greater opportunities for older teachers to pass on their skills and experience. While 41 per cent of headteachers agreed that teachers would extend their working lives, working beyond the age at which they would otherwise have retired, 54 per cent thought that teachers who would otherwise have continued to work full-time to age 60 would now reduce their hours and responsibilities before that age. Headteachers interviewed argued that the changes would benefit the school because those who were no longer able to contribute fully could take on

reduced capacity roles in which their skills and experience would be valuable, and they would have more energy and increased motivation. A minority of the headteachers who were interviewed identified the potential for human resource management, and offering positive ways forward to some older teachers who are not coping with their current responsibilities. Some of these identified the potential for encouraging retention, but none linked this specifically to shortage secondary subjects.

Overall, four per cent of the employee sample indicated that their retirement plans had changed as a result of the TPS changes, and a further 23 per cent that they might possibly change. The survey explored these changes. Around a quarter (24 per cent) of all those whose plans had definitely or possibly changed - six per cent of all employees - considered they might stay longer in teaching as a result of the TPS changes, but a similar proportion (25 per cent) - seven per cent of all employees - anticipated retiring earlier than they would otherwise have done. This does not suggest any major impact in terms of extending working lives. Of those who said that their plans had definitely or possibly changed, 62 per cent said that this resulted from the introduction of phased retirement, 44 per cent from the change to average salary calculation, and 28 per cent from increased flexibility in relation to the lump sum (some indicating more than one of these changes).

Two fifths of all employees indicated in the survey that they would consider phased retirement, but qualitative data showed that many misunderstood what was involved in this, thinking the term referred to any reduction in hours or responsibilities before retirement. Of those who said that they would consider phased retirement, half thought they would reduce both their hours and their responsibilities in such a role; a further 38 per cent that they would reduce only their hours; and just four per cent that they would reduce only responsibilities.

Barriers and constraints

Local authority staff noted that phased retirement can only be taken if the salary is reduced by at least 25 per cent, but that this does not fit well with teachers' work patterns. If this figure were reduced to 20 per cent it would allow teachers to work four days a week in a phased retirement role. Some 14 per cent of those teachers who would consider phased retirement indicated they would like to work four days a week, and they would be unable to do this under the current regulations.

The survey data showed that both local authority staff and headteachers as employers identified cost as a concern. When asked to write on the questionnaire the main difficulties in creating roles for older teachers who reduced their hours or responsibilities, 11 out of 39 local authorities and 41 per cent of headteachers wrote comments about the cost. Older teachers were seen by some as a costly resource in comparison with NQTs or support staff. Some headteachers were also reluctant to allow teachers to move to part-time work, which they saw as creating

timetabling problems and reducing continuity for pupils; Chapter 4 reported that 49 per cent of primary and 56 per cent of secondary headteachers said that they would not be happy to employ more part-time teachers. Some headteachers and governors also indicated reluctance to use the possibilities opened up by the TPS changes proactively in managing staff, because they felt it would not be appropriate to approach teachers and suggest that they reduced their hours or responsibilities.

Almost half the employees who said they would consider phased retirement anticipated having difficulty in finding suitable employment in which to do this. One teacher who had wanted to take phased retirement in her current school had not been allowed to do so. Some teachers pointed out that headteachers are often reluctant for part-timers to fit their work into a small number of whole days because of timetabling difficulties; others echoed the headteachers' concerns about lack of continuity for pupils. A few talked of the difficulties of reducing responsibilities and staying in the same school.

Potential impact on school leaders and succession planning

There was considerable interest among headteachers in system leadership roles; 85 per cent of those headteachers who said they would consider phased retirement (or 30 per cent of all headteachers) said they would be interested in mentoring less experienced school leaders. However, most of those interviewed intended to do this after 'retirement', or saw no need to make use of the new pensions flexibilities. The NCSL (2006) have suggested that one benefit of headteachers taking on system leadership roles would be that their deputies have a chance to 'act up', which might make them in turn more likely to apply for headship. The research showed that such opportunities had had varying impacts (either encouraging or discouraging them to apply for headship, and either increasing or reducing their confidence); if such roles are to be a positive step towards headship it seems important to support acting heads, and mentor them as they move on to headship.

There was some interest among headteachers in co-headship, with 76 per cent of those who would consider phased retirement (27 per cent of all headteachers) identifying such a role as a possibility. The qualitative research investigated a number of existing co-headship arrangements, most of which had the impact of supporting the younger co-head to move to full headship when the other retired. One such arrangement had been explicitly designed as a mentoring arrangement. While none of these arrangements was taking advantage of the TPS changes, it was obvious that these could be useful in promoting similar arrangements.

8 Summary and implications for policy

8.1 Introduction

This final chapter summarises the findings in relation to the different groups: employers (local authorities, governors and headteachers) and employees (teachers and headteachers). It then considers the implications of these findings for policy makers.

8.2 Employers

Local authorities

The research included two surveys of local authorities. One was sent to staff working in the pensions section, and aimed to find out the extent to which teachers had made immediate enquires, or taken action, in response to the TPS changes. The second was intended to be filled in by local authority staff who had a wider view of school staffing, and who might be thinking about strategies for creative human resource management in the light of the TPS changes. The initial response to both these surveys was extremely disappointing, and it was only raised after reminders and telephone calls (final response rates being 48 per cent and 28 per cent respectively). We had also hoped to interview local authority staff as part of the school case studies, but only succeeded in conducting one such interview. Staff in two further local authorities were interviewed following the survey, and two had been interviewed at a pilot stage.

Only a fifth of local authority pensions departments had had any requests for information about phased retirement from teachers; it appeared that at the time of the survey it was still too soon to see much impact. Less than half the local authorities responding indicated that the implications of the TPS changes had been discussed at local authority level, and less than a third, that they had been discussed at meetings with headteachers. Just five out of 39 indicated that there had been any discussion of roles for those opting to reduce their hours or responsibilities.

The difficulties experienced in obtaining responses from LA HR departments seem to have arisen because the TPS changes were not high on their agenda. One reason for this is that they felt that there was no opportunity for the authority to use the changes as a basis for creative human resource management because of their limited role in schools. A further issue was perhaps that there appeared to have been little communication about the TPS changes between those with different roles in the authorities. Those working most closely with schools (advisors, inspectors and SIPs) were generally unwilling to take part in the research because they did not

see pensions as having anything to do with their work. We did not try to interview the staff involved in succession planning for school leadership, and it is possible that they might have had more developed ideas about how such activities could benefit from the TPS changes.

Governors

In each school case study, we aimed to interview the Chair of Governors or the Chair of the employment or personnel committee on the governing body. In just one case we did not receive a response to our request.

The governors interviewed were generally interested to hear about the TPS changes. They had not received any information about this in their role as governors, and the changes or their potential impact on school staffing had not been discussed in governors' meetings.

The extent to which the governors interviewed made connections between the TPS changes and school staffing varied. Some felt that they did not need to be concerned with teachers' pensions. One suggested that pensions issues were only of interest to the governors if they had budgetary implications, there were problems, or the union was concerned. In contrast others considered that they should have been informed of the changes, partly simply because governors should know about the terms and conditions under which teachers are working. Some said during the course of the interview that they could see how the changes might impact on staffing. One speculated about how far it would be possible for those in an employer role to suggest to individual teachers that they might reduce hours or responsibilities.

Headteachers as employers

The views of headteachers were sought in two separate surveys, one addressed to headteachers in their role as employer, asking about the potential impact of the TPS changes on school staffing, and the other aimed at headteachers in their role as employees, asking about their own retirement plans and how these might change as a result of the TPS changes. The survey to headteachers as employers achieved a much lower response rate (34 per cent versus 48 per cent), suggesting perhaps that headteachers had more interest in pensions as a personal issue than as one with implications for staffing.

Quantitative and qualitative data show that there was considerable variation in the extent to which headteachers supported older staff in reducing their hours or responsibilities. While 82 per cent indicated in the survey that they tried to do this, only a quarter said that staff in their schools had moved from full-time to part-time work or vice versa. Those who were reluctant to support such flexibility argued that they would only support it if it was in the interests of the school. In such cases,

the interests of the school appeared to be constructed as distinct from, or even in conflict with, the well-being and job satisfaction of the older teachers. In contrast, other headteachers saw staff well-being as an essential aspect of providing a good education for pupils.

Headteachers' awareness and understanding of the TPS changes was less than that of local authority staff but on average better than that of teachers. However, the majority were primarily interested in their own pension, and less aware of the importance of pensions in relation to human resource management. More than half had acquired their information from unions, and less than a third from their local authority. Less than a quarter were aware of the DfES/Prudential DVD. The best informed group were older males.

About three-fifths of headteachers said they had passed on information to their staff, generally either at a staff meeting (one third) or by putting up a poster in the staff room (a quarter). Only one eighth said that the staff had watched the DVD. Three of those interviewed had arranged pensions training sessions for their staff.

Only a minority of headteachers had thought about the implications for school staffing. This was more common in secondary schools, where a quarter of those completing the survey said that potential roles for those wanting to reduce hours or responsibilities had been discussed within the school, compared with less than one in 10 primary headteachers. Those in schools with a higher proportion of older teachers were more likely to have engaged in such discussions. A majority of heads agreed that it would be useful to have older teachers taking on roles such as enrichment work with small groups, covering PPA time (primary) and mentoring or working alongside less experienced teachers.

In interview, some headteachers argued that the changes were very positive, in that they will enable older teachers to reduce their hours and responsibilities, which can reduce stress and exhaustion, and enable the teachers to do a better job and to be more contented, while the school will still benefit from their experience and skills. However, some heads (more often in secondary schools) were very concerned that these changes were going to increase demands to work part-time, which creates difficulties for timetabling and some argued impacts negatively on pupils.

There were different views about how far it was possible for headteachers to use the changes as part of human resource management. Some felt that it would be inappropriate to suggest to a teacher that they reduce their hours or responsibilities. Others felt that this could be done if approached sensitively. One claimed to have already had such a discussion – though with a very vague awareness of the TPS changes.

8.3 Employees

Teachers and headteachers were sent a survey in their role as employees (i.e. focusing on their own plans for retirement). The response rate was very good (44 per cent of teachers and 47 per cent of headteachers). In addition, a total of 47 teachers aged 49 to 60 and 18 headteachers (of whom one was under 49) were interviewed in the school case studies and follow-up interviews. In this section, we first consider the broad picture of employees' perceptions and plans, and then set out some key differences in the perceptions and plans of headteachers and teachers. Data relating to shortage subject secondary teachers are also considered.

Among all employees, age and gender had an important impact on awareness of pensions and their plans. In general those who were nearer to retirement age were more aware of their pensions and had clearer plans for the future. Men tended to know more about their pensions, and were more likely to say they would retire before age 60. However, women teachers had on average fewer years of pensionable service (between 20 and 24 years compared with an average of 25 to 29 years amongst males), and this was a key factor in some of the differences that were found.

When employees were asked to select from a list the most important factor that encouraged them to stay in teaching, the most frequently selected factors were enjoyment of teaching (26 per cent) and financial commitments (17 per cent) (most often mortgages and children in higher education). The most frequently selected factors encouraging them to leave teaching were a desire to retire while still healthy and able to enjoy it (37 per cent) and not enjoying some aspects of their current work (such as paperwork, initiatives and pupil behaviour) (20 per cent).

Just 24 per cent of employees said that they kept up to date with pensions information, and a further 59 per cent had a broad awareness of how the pension is calculated. Almost a fifth of teachers said either that they found pensions information confusing or that they had not looked at it. Only nine per cent said that they had a detailed awareness and understanding of the TPS changes, with a further 46 per cent having a 'general awareness'; 13 per cent had not known that the scheme had changed or did not know what the changes were. This was partly because a quarter of employees found the information provided by the TPS 'not very clear' or 'not clear at all'. Those in secondary schools and larger schools said they were better informed; this partly reflects the importance of talk with colleagues as a key (but possibly unreliable) way of obtaining information. Unions were also a key source of information.

Most employees anticipated remaining on their current salary scale and hours until they retired. Just eight per cent anticipated seeking promotion, while 17 per cent anticipated reducing their responsibilities or hours. Most did not have definite plans

as to when they would retire; only 13 per cent said that the date they gave was 'certain'. Those retiring in the next two years were far more likely to be certain than those with longer to work.

In comparison with previous data on teacher retirements, far more expected to continue until they were 60 and fewer anticipated taking actuarially reduced pensions (just 22 per cent, compared with 35 per cent of pension awards in 2005-6). It is not clear how far this represents a shift in retirement patterns, or whether it illustrates the contrast between plans and action. Men, and those working in secondary schools, were more likely than women to anticipate retiring early on an actuarially reduced pension (28 per cent versus 20 per cent). Female classroom teachers were the most likely to expect to stay in teaching until they were 60.

Very few employees had taken any action in response to the TPS changes. Just eight per cent had had discussions with their headteachers (and two per cent with the local authority) about the possibility of taking phased retirement. Three teachers were interviewed who had acted in response to the average salary changes (two reducing their responsibilities, and one retiring on the basis of a misunderstanding of what had changed). One interviewee had taken phased retirement. There was evidence that some employees may be unable to reduce their hours or responsibilities because their headteachers did not agree; one interviewee had not been able to take phased retirement, though had in fact continued to work in her school on a part-time basis which corresponded exactly to the proposal for phased retirement she had put forward.

Some employees had said they had changed their plans as a result of the TPS changes; four per cent indicated a definite change, and 23 per cent a possible change. However, the data about these changes is somewhat confused. Overall, 24 per cent of those who had changed their plans (or six per cent of the whole sample) now considered they would stay longer in teaching, and 25 per cent of those who had changed their plans (seven per cent of the whole sample) said they would now retire earlier. Most said that if they took phased retirement they would like to reduce both their hours and their responsibilities.

Overall, most employees welcomed the potential offered by the changes, and 38 per cent indicated that they would consider phased retirement.

Differences between headteachers and teachers

The table overleaf shows the main differences found between headteachers and classroom teachers. It shows that deputy and assistant headteachers sometimes responded more like the headteachers, and at other times more like the teachers. Their views are included on the table.

Headteachers	Classroom teachers
<p>Among the three factors that encouraged them to leave teaching, headteachers were more likely to select unsatisfactory work-life balance (47 per cent of headteachers said this compared with 37 per cent of teachers) (deputy/ assistant heads: 40 per cent).</p>	<p>Classroom teachers were more likely to say they wanted to leave teaching because they were not enjoying their current work (58 per cent of teachers said this compared with 42 per cent of headteachers) (deputy/ assistant heads: 37 per cent).</p>
<p>Headteachers were more likely to say that they wanted to stay in teaching because:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • they hoped to take on new challenges or roles at work (16 per cent versus five per cent of teachers) (deputy/ assistant heads: 12 per cent); • they enjoyed their status (21 per cent versus five per cent of teachers) (deputy/ assistant heads: 14 per cent). 	<p>Teachers were more likely to select a financial factor as their main reason for staying in teaching (38 per cent versus 29 per cent of headteachers) (deputy/ assistant heads: 34 per cent).</p>
<p>Headteachers were more likely to say they kept up to date with pensions information (30 per cent versus 21 per cent of teachers) (deputy/ assistant heads: 30 per cent).</p>	
<p>Headteachers were better informed than other teachers about their own pension and the changes to the TPS (68 per cent of headteachers had a detailed or general awareness of pensions changes compared with 52 per cent of teachers) (deputy/ assistant heads: 65 per cent).</p> <p>However, some of those headteachers who were interviewed had a very limited understanding.</p>	<p>Those working part-time or as supply teachers were the least likely to have a detailed or general awareness (44 per cent and 40 per cent respectively).</p> <p>Many of those interviewed knew very little about their pensions, and some displayed misunderstandings, which in some cases had formed the basis for their plans or action.</p>
<p>Headteachers were more likely than teachers to have heard about the TPS changes from:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • their local authority (27 per cent of versus 14 per cent of teachers) (deputy/ assistant heads: 16 per cent); • the TPS website (24 per cent versus 17 per cent of teachers) (deputy/ assistant heads: 25 per cent); • posters (35 per cent of headteachers versus 23 per cent of teachers) (deputy/ assistant heads: 22 per cent). 	<p>Teachers were more likely to have heard about the changes through talk with colleagues (42 per cent compared with 28 per cent of headteachers) (deputy/ assistant heads 36 per cent).</p>

<p>Headteachers were more likely to see possibilities for moving to other roles in education including system leadership roles either before or after they officially retired.</p>	<p>Teachers were more likely to expect to move to part-time work before retirement (14 per cent of all teachers compared with six per cent of all headteachers) (deputy/ assistant heads: 11 per cent)</p> <p>Primary school teachers were more likely to expect to do supply teaching after retirement (24 per cent versus 16 per cent in secondary).</p>
<p>Headteachers more likely to anticipate retiring before age 60 and taking an actuarially reduced pension (26 per cent, compared with 20 per cent of teachers) (deputy/ assistant heads: 27 per cent).</p>	<p>More secondary than primary teachers anticipated leaving teaching before age 60 (though not necessarily drawing an actuarially reduced pensions) (43 per cent, versus 34 per cent primary teachers and 28 per cent special/PRU).</p>
	<p>A higher proportion of teachers than of headteachers said that they were likely or certain to take phased retirement (three per cent of teachers compared to just one per cent of headteachers) (deputy and assistant heads, two per cent).</p>
<p>Headteachers considering phased retirement roles were most likely to suggest:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • system leadership roles (27 per cent compared with 11 per cent of teachers) (deputy/ assistant heads: 29 per cent); • school leadership as a job share (30 per cent compared with 11 per cent of teachers) (deputy/ assistant heads: 24 per cent). 	<p>Those considering phased retirement were most likely to suggest that they should undertake:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • enrichment work with small groups (30 per cent compared with 16 per cent of headteachers) (deputy/ assistant heads: 23 per cent); • class teaching on a part-time basis (30 per cent compared with eight per cent of headteachers) (deputy/ assistant heads: 22 per cent).

Shortage subject secondary teachers

The research specifically aimed to investigate how teachers of shortage subjects might respond to the TPS changes. About two-thirds of secondary teachers responding to the survey taught a shortage subject for at least half their weekly timetable (902 returned questionnaires). In addition 24 shortage subject teachers were interviewed.

In general their responses were no different from those of other teachers. However, those teaching science, technology or ICT were all more likely to have a detailed or general awareness of the TPS changes. Both qualitative and quantitative data

indicate that, in comparison with other teachers, more shortage subject teachers thought they would be able to work part-time as they approached retirement, or move to a phased retirement position. They argued that schools would be keen to retain them, even in part-time roles. However, countering this, some secondary headteachers argued that they would be unwilling to have teachers of core subjects such as maths and science being taught by part-time teachers because this would lead to considerable timetabling difficulties, or involve timetabling classes to be taught by two different subject specialists in the course of each week, which would have a negative impact on standards.

8.4 Implications for policy

The TPS regulations

- It was suggested that the reduction in pay that enables a teacher to take phased retirement should be 20 per cent rather than 25 per cent. This would mean that teachers could work part-time four days a week and still qualify.

Communication issues

The data collected show that many teachers and headteachers did not fully understand their pension arrangements, and had a limited awareness of the TPS changes. A key issue for Teachers Pensions is therefore to find more effective ways of communicating with those paying into the scheme. Inevitably, the changes will have a limited behavioural impact if people have a limited awareness and understanding of them.

A number of approaches to improving communication could be considered:

- Communicate directly with teachers, rather than assuming that local authorities and headteachers will pass on information.
- Provide information sheets written in as simple language as is possible.
- Provide many worked examples, showing the different possible outcomes for the same person if they choose, for example, to take an actuarially reduced pension at various ages; phased retirement (with examples of different possibilities within this); age retirement; or to take a larger lump sum.
- Examples are needed of the impact on those teachers with relatively few years of pensionable service and with lower salaries, as well as of those in senior roles.
- In particular, ensure that there are clear examples to counter some of the more common misconceptions identified, such as that about the extent of actuarial reduction.

- Ensure that annual statements are sent to all active members of the scheme, and that the information on them is very clearly written, and they are told where they can obtain further information.
- Make pensions workshops for teachers more available; ideally these would be offered by public rather than private sector organisations, as teachers are suspicious that private sector organisations are simply trying to sell their own products.
- In addition, information about the TPS changes should be sent to all governing bodies.

Promoting the new flexible options to employees

The strategies above all relate to ensuring that employees are sufficiently well-informed about the TPS to make informed choices about their retirement. However, it also seems to be important that some case studies of teachers using the changes to reduce their hours or responsibilities should be publicised. This should help to encourage others to take similar steps, and to gradually bring about a change in the culture of retirement patterns.

Presumably it was hoped that this research would collect suitable material for this. However, while we have been able to explore perceptions of the potential impact, the research took place too early to find many stories of teachers who had already taken advantage of the changes. One teacher had already reduced his responsibilities as a result of the average salary changes; another was about to do so. We also interviewed one teacher who had taken phased retirement, but were unable to find any headteachers who had done so. It seems particularly important to be able to provide case studies of phased retirement, because its complexity is somewhat daunting.

- A possible next step, then, would be to approach teachers who have taken phased retirement, and to write up some of their stories as case studies for wider dissemination.

The potential use of the changes in effective human resource management

This research has shown that a relatively small number of headteachers have recognised the potential which the TPS changes offer for human resource management. Before the changes were introduced, some headteachers already used a variety of strategies to enable older staff to reduce their hours or responsibilities when they wanted to, but even these heads did not necessarily recognise the contribution that the TPS changes offered in this respect. Other heads (generally of secondary schools) were very opposed to employing teachers on a part-time basis, and this clearly limited the potential for teachers to move to part-time roles in those schools. This suggests that it is important both to point out

specifically to heads how the TPS changes can contribute to effective human resource management, and to help some headteachers to recognise that promoting staff well-being can be very beneficial in terms of motivation and happiness, and that this is in turn beneficial for pupils. Possible strategies include the following:

- In professional development for headteachers at all levels emphasise the importance of the motivation and well-being of all staff, as highlighted by PriceWaterhouseCoopers (2007). Include the new pensions arrangements as a potential way of improving well-being, and contributing to the development of an energised, contented and teacher motivated workforce.
- Encourage headteachers to discuss the issues around the difficulties and problems in approaching older teachers on this topic.
- Share examples of successful practice in this respect through headteachers' conferences and publications directed at headteachers.

Secondary shortage subject teachers

Where secondary schools did employ supply teachers, these were most often found in subjects such as music and art, which pupils were taught just once a week. Even this could create timetabling difficulties. It was seen as much more difficult to employ teachers of core shortage subjects because pupils are taught several times a week. Most part-time teachers prefer to work only on certain days, rather than for part of each day. For these reasons there seemed little expectation that the pensions changes would have any impact on supply of shortage subject teachers. It could be of interest to explore whether there are any schools that have successfully deployed part-time maths, science and English teachers, and are confident that this is having a positive impact on pupils' education.

Pensions and succession planning

The potential of the pensions changes for succession planning has already been identified and highlighted in NCSL advice to headteachers. Further action could be taken:

- Provide support and mentoring for acting headteachers to ensure both that they have a rewarding experience of acting as head, and that they are supported to move on from this and apply successfully for headship.
- Make ongoing efforts to raise awareness through publications, conferences etc. of the potential that the TPS changes offer for the development of co-headship arrangements.
- Commission research into co-headship arrangements to ascertain what arrangements are seen as most successful by the co-heads and by other staff, pupils and parents. This would include a review of the reason that the co-

headship has been set up; the way the role is shared between the co-heads; the difficulties that arise and how they are tackled; and what happens when one or other of the co-heads leaves the school.

- As a first step towards this, it is important that the Primary G arrangement is followed through the projected three-year period of the co-headship arrangement, to review the extent to which the planned outcomes and the aspirations of those involved are achieved, and what impact this has on the school as a whole.
- The most successful models should then be widely publicised so that those considering such arrangements can learn from the experience of others.

8.5 Summary

This chapter has summarised the findings relating to different groups, local authorities, governors, headteachers as employers, and employees. This research has shown that understanding and awareness of the pensions scheme changes varied across the groups; many headteachers and teachers had a limited awareness. Some also had a limited understanding of the previous pension arrangements and some had incorrect understandings. Many teachers in their fifties had only vague ideas about when and how they would retire, and did not start investigating their pension prospects until they were on the point of retiring.

Communication about the TPS changes appeared to have been patchy; some local authorities had communicated with schools and individual teachers but many had not. Headteachers had not systematically passed on to their teachers any information that they had received. The teacher union communications appeared to be the most effective.

The research took place too soon after the changes came into force for there to have been a large impact on teacher behaviour, but some instances were found of teachers taking advantage of the new flexibility, and other teachers said they planned to do so. Just four per cent of the employee sample indicated that their retirement plans had changed as a result of the TPS changes, and a further 23 per cent that they might possibly change. Six per cent of the employee sample indicated that as a result of the changes they would stay in teaching longer than they had previously intended, and seven per cent that they would now reduce their hours or responsibilities earlier than they had previously anticipated. There were few differences in this across different groups of teachers, though those aged 49 to 54 were more likely to indicate a possible change in their plans than those aged 55 to 60. Those teaching secondary shortage subjects and headteachers were no more likely to anticipate taking advantage of the changes than other teachers.

A majority of headteachers as employers indicated interest in employing older teachers in roles such as enrichment work with small groups (79 per cent), mentoring less experienced teachers (73 per cent), and taking classes during PPA time (75 per cent of primary headteachers), arguing that this would enable schools to benefit from their skills and experience. The changes were seen as having limited potential to impact on the supply of teachers of shortage subjects, but rather more potential for leadership succession planning.

The main barriers that might prevent teachers from taking advantage of the new flexibilities were the negative attitudes of some headteachers to employment of part-time teachers, which they saw as creating timetabling problems and reducing continuity for pupils, and the fact that some headteachers saw older teachers as a costly resource in comparison with NQTs or support staff.

These findings have a number of implications for policy and practice, and some suggestions for future strategies and actions have been identified:

- improved communication about the TPS which is sent directly to teachers; is in simple language; includes worked examples; and aims to counteract common misunderstandings;
- ensuring that all active members of the TPS receive annual statements;
- informing school governors about the changes;
- seeking out those who have taken phased retirement and writing case studies to publicise the arrangement;
- emphasising the importance of teacher well-being and motivation and its impact on pupil learning in all headteacher professional development, and including the new pensions arrangements as potential ways of contributing to the well-being of older teachers;
- encouraging headteachers to discuss the difficulties of approaching older teachers on this topic, and sharing examples of successful human resource management;
- making ongoing efforts to raise awareness of the potential that the TPS changes open up for co-headship arrangements;
- commissioning research to explore the variety and impacts of such arrangements, and to identify key factors in successful arrangements; publicising case studies of the most successful.

References

- Angle, H., Gilby, N. and Belcher, M. (2007) *Teachers' Workloads Diary Survey*, available online at www.ome.uk.com.
- Arthur, S. (2003) *The Financial Circumstances of Early Retirement: findings summary*, York: Joseph Rowntree Foundation.
- Association of British Insurers (ABI) (2007) *The Gender Pay Gap*, available online at http://www.abi.org.uk/Display/File/364/The_Gender_Pensions_Gap_FINAL.pdf.
- Barnes, H. Parry, J. and Lakey, J. (2002) *Forging a New Future: the experiences and expectations of people leaving paid work over 50*, York: Joseph Rowntree Foundation.
- Barnes, H. and Taylor, R. (2006) *Work, Saving and Retirement among Ethnic Minorities: a qualitative study*, London: DWP.
- Bowers, T. and McIver, M. (2000) *Ill-health Retirement and Absenteeism amongst Teachers*, RR235, Nottingham: DfEE.
- Butters, J. (2002) Managing the mental and emotional aspects of retirement, *Leadership in Health Services*, 15, 4, vi-x.
- Byrne, A. and Rhodes, B. (2005) *Employee Attitudes to Pensions: Evidence from Focus Groups*, London: The Pensions Institute.
- Casey, B. (2004) *Why are Older People not more 'Active'?* London: The Pensions Institute.
- Cribb, M. (2007) *Succession Planning for School Leadership*, NCSL, available on line at www.lga.gov.uk/Documents/27Sept07_MartynCribb.pdf.
- Daniels, G. and French, S. (2006) *Work-life Balance of Managers, Professionals and Head Teachers: A report for the NAHT* by the Centre for Industrial Relations, University of Keele, available online at www.naht.org.uk/newsdocs/890/nahtcomparativerereport325sept06.pdf.
- Day, C., Stobart, G., Sammons, P., Kington, A., Gu, Q., Smees, R., and Mujtaba, T. (2006) *Variations in Teachers' Work, Lives and Effectiveness*, RR743, Nottingham, DfES.
- Department of Health (2000) *Working Lives, Flexing Retirement: Guidance for Managers*, available online at http://www.dh.gov.uk/en/Publicationsandstatistics/Publications/PublicationsPolicyAndGuidance/DH_4007706.
- DfEE (1999) *Statistics of Education: Teachers, England and Wales*, London: The Stationery Office.
- DfES (2003) *Statistical First Release: Secondary Schools Curriculum and Staffing Survey*, November 2002, SFR 25/2003.
- DfEE (2000a) *Factors Affecting Retirement: Executive Summary*, London, DfEE.

- DfEE (2000b) *Factors Affecting Retirement: Book 2 - the United Kingdom*, London: DfEE.
- DfES (2006a) *Explanatory Memorandum to the Teachers' Pension Scheme etc. (Reform Amendments) Regulations 2006 No 3122*, DfES.
- DfES (2006b) *School Workforce in England* (including pupil: teacher ratios and pupil: adult ratios), January 2006 (Revised), additional tables added December 2006.
- Draper, J. and McMichael, P. (1996) I am the eye of the needle and everything passes through me: primary headteachers explain their retirement, *School Organisation*, 16, 2, 149-163.
- DWP (2002a) *Simplicity, Security and Choice: working and saving for retirement*, Cm 5677, London: The Stationery Office.
- DWP (2002b) *Flexible Retirement. A Snapshot of Large Employers' Initiatives. Summary of Research Findings*, London: DWP.
- DWP (2003) *Working and Saving for Retirement: action on occupational pensions*, Cm 5835, London: The Stationery Office.
- DWP (2006) *Flexible Retirement: A Snapshot of Employer Practices 2006*, London: DWP.
- Employers Forum on Age (2007) *Six months on from legislation, ageism still rife at work*, EFA.
- Financial Services Authority (2006) *Financial Capability in the UK: Establishing a Baseline*, available online at http://www.fsa.gov.uk/pubs/other/fincap_baseline.pdf.
- Financial Services Consumer Panel. (2005) *How People Buy*, London: Financial Services Consumer Panel.
- Financial Services Consumer Panel. (2006) *Survey of Consumer Attitudes to Financial Services and their Experience in BUying them*, London: Financial Services Consumer Panel.
- Flintham, A. (2003) *When Reservoirs Run Dry: why some headteachers leave headship early*, Nottingham: NCSL.
- Fornero, E., & Monticone, C. (2007) Flexible Retirement in Europe [Electronic Version] *European Papers on the New Welfare, 2007*, available online at <http://eng.newwelfare.org/?p=258&page=4>.
- GTC (2006) Annual Digest of Statistics 2005-6, available online at www.gtce.org.uk.
- Guillemard, A.-M. (1997) Rewriting social policy and changes within the life-course organisation, a European perspective, *Canadian Journal on Aging*, 16, 3, 441-464.
- Hartle, F., Stein, J. and Hobby, R. with O'Sullivan, M. (2007) *Retaining School Leaders: a guide to keeping talented leaders engaged*, Nottingham: NCSL.

- Higgs, P., Mein, C., Ferrie, J., Hyde, M. and Nazroo, J. (2003) Pathways to early retirement: structure and agency in decision-making among British civil servants, *Ageing and Society*, 23: 761-778.
- Hirsch, D. (2003) *Crossroads after 50: Improving Choices in Work and Retirement*, York: Joseph Rowntree Foundation.
- Humphrey, A., Costigan, P., Pickering, K., Stratford, N. and Barnes, M. (2003) *Factors Affecting the Labour Market Participation of Older Workers*, London: DWP.
- Hutchings, M., James, K., Maylor, U., Menter, I. and Smart, S. (2006a) *The Recruitment, Deployment and Management of Supply Teachers in England*, RR738, Nottingham: DfES.
- Hutchings, M., Smart, S. James, K. and Williams, K. (2006b) *GTC Annual Survey of teachers 2006*, available online at www.gtce.org.uk.
- Hutchings, M. and Smart, S. (2007) *Evaluation of the Impact on UK Schools of the VSO/NAHT pilot scheme: 'International Extended Placements for School Leaders'*, report to VSO and the NAHT, available on line at <http://www.vso.org.uk/partnerships/naht.asp>.
- Lissenburgh, S. and Smeaton, D. (2003) *Employment Transitions of Older Workers: The role of flexible employment in maintaining labour market participation and promoting job quality*, York: Joseph Rowntree Foundation.
- Loretto, W., Vickerstaff, S. and White, P. (2005) *Older workers and options for flexible work*, Manchester: Equal Opportunities Commission.
- Mercer HR Consulting (2006) *A-Day: most pension scheme members to benefit*, Mercers HR Consulting.
- Moor, H., Jones, M. Johnson, F., Martin, K., and Cowell, E. (2006) *Mathematics and Science in secondary schools: the deployment of teachers and support staff to deliver the curriculum*, RR708, Nottingham: DfES.
- Moreau, M., Osgood, J. and Halsall, A. (2005) *The Career Progression of Women Teachers in England: a study of the barriers to promotion and career development*, final report of the Women Teachers Careers and Progression project funded by HEESA, SHA and London Metropolitan University, London: Institute for Policy Studies in Education.
- Morris, J., Cook, D. and Shaper, A.G. (1994) Loss of employment and mortality, *British Medical Journal*, 308, 1135-1139.
- NCSL (2006) *Leadership Succession: an overview: securing the next generation of school leaders*, available online at www.ncsl.org.uk.
- Northen, S. (2005) Are you being served? *Times Educational Supplement*, 3 June.
- National Union of Teachers (NUT) (2001) 'There is no such thing as a part-time teacher': an NUT survey, available online at www.data.teachers.org.uk.
- Pedersini, R. (2001) Progressive retirement in Europe [Electronic Version]. *European Industrial Relations Observatory On-line, 2001*, available online at <http://www.eurofound.europa.eu/eiro/2001/09/study/tn0109184s.htm>.

- Penlington, G. (2002) Who returns to teaching? The profile and motivation of teacher returners, in M Johnson and J Hallgarten (eds) *From Victims of Change to Agents of Change: The Future of the Teaching Profession*, London: IPPR.
- People Management (2005) Retirement needs a flexible approach, *People Management*, 15 September, p15.
- Phillips, S. Sen, D. and McNamee, R. (2007) Prevalence and causes of self-reported work-related stress in head teachers, *Occupational Medicine*, available online at <http://occmed.oxfordjournals.org/>.
- Phillipson, C. and A. Smith (2005) *Extending Working Life: A review of the research literature*, A report of research carried out by Keele University on behalf of the Department for Work and Pensions, London: DWP.
- Powney, J. Wilson, V., Hall, S., Davidson, J., Kirk, S. and Edward, S. (2003) *Teachers' Careers: the impact of age, disability, ethnicity, gender and sexual orientation*, RR488, Nottingham: DfES.
- PriceWaterhouseCoopers (2007) *Independent Study into School Leadership: Main report*, London: DfES.
- Smithers, A. and Robinson, P. (2003) *Factors Affecting Teachers' Decisions to Leave the Profession*, RR430, Nottingham: DfES.
- Smithers, A. and Robinson, P. (2005a) *Teacher Turnover, Wastage and Movements between Schools*, RR603, Nottingham: DfES.
- Smithers, A. and Robinson, P. (2005b) *Physics in Schools and Colleges: teacher deployment and student outcomes*, Centre for Education and Employment Research, University of Buckingham.
- Trichopoulos, D. (1996) Any questions, *British Medical Journal*, 312, 632.
- Tsai, S., Wendt, J. Donnelly, R., de Jong, G. and Ahmed, F. (2005) Age at retirement and long term survival of an industrial population: prospective cohort study, *British Medical Journal*, 331, 995.
- Vickerstaff, S., Baldock, J. Cox, J. and Keen, L. (2004) *Happy Retirement? The impact of employers' policies and practice on the process of retirement*, Bristol: The Policy Press.
- Wadensjo, E. (2006) Part-time pensions and part-time work in Sweden, *European Papers on the New Welfare* (Paper No. 6).
- Wilkins, R., Head, M., Taylor, M. and Keaveny, B. (2004) *Supporting and Utilising the Experience and Expertise of Teachers*, London: GTC.

Appendix A: Questionnaires

Employees TEACHERS' PENSIONS: YOUR VIEWS

How to fill in this questionnaire:

Please put a **cross** in the appropriate box to indicate your answer [☒]. If you have made a mistake in your answer, please completely fill a box to show the mistake [■] and then cross the correct answer. You will need to use **blue or black ink**

Your answers will be treated in the strictest confidence and all findings will be made anonymous in the reporting of results so that responses cannot be traced back to individuals.

Are you currently working as a...? CROSS ONE BOX

- Head teacher (full time) ★
- Head teacher (part time) ★
- Deputy/Assistant Head teacher (full time) ★
- Deputy/Assistant Head teacher (part time) ★ GO TO 1
- Teacher (full time) ★
- Teacher (part time) ★
- Supply teacher ★

Not employed as a teacher at the moment ★

The rest of this survey does not apply to you; we would be grateful if you could return it in the reply-paid envelope. Thank you

1b Are you currently working in a...? CROSS ONE BOX

- State maintained nursery school ★
- State maintained primary school ★
- State maintained secondary school ★
- State maintained special school ★ GO TO
- Pupil Referral Unit (PRU) ★
- Non-maintained special school ★
- Academy ★

Independent school ★

The rest of this survey does not apply to you; we would be grateful if you could return it in the reply-paid envelope. Thank you.

1c Are you currently paying into the Teachers' Pension Scheme? CROSS ONE BOX

Yes GO TO 2 No

1d Are you already drawing your Teachers' Pension? CROSS ONE BOX

Yes GO TO 2 No

1e Have you ever paid into the Teachers' Pension Scheme? CROSS ONE BOX

Yes No **The rest of this survey does not apply to you; we would be grateful if you could return it in the reply-paid envelope. Thank you**

2 Are you currently working in a reduced capacity having taken phased retirement? CROSS ONE BOX

Yes No

3 Which pay scale are you on? CROSS ONE BOX

Main Pay Scale <input type="checkbox"/>	Leadership scale as Deputy Head <input type="checkbox"/>	Office Use Only (X)
Upper Pay Scale <input type="checkbox"/>	Head teacher <input type="checkbox"/>	
Excellent Teacher <input type="checkbox"/>	Daily-paid supply teacher not paid to scale <input type="checkbox"/>	
Advanced Skills Teacher <input type="checkbox"/>	Other (please give details below) <input type="checkbox"/>	
Leadership scale as Assistant Head <input type="checkbox"/>		

4 Do you currently receive the following...? CROSS ONE BOX FOR EACH QUESTION

	Yes	No
A Teacher and Learning Responsibility (TLR) payment	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
A recruitment or retention payment	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

5 Before the restructuring of responsibilities and the introduction of TLRs, did you have a Management Allowance? CROSS ONE BOX

Yes No

SECONDARY TEACHERS ONLY (OTHERS GO TO 7)

6 For each subject listed below, please indicate for how much of a normal teaching timetable you teach this subject. If you do not teach this subject, please indicate this in the first column (do not teach this subject) CROSS ONE BOX FOR EACH SUBJECT

	Do not teach this subject	Less than a quarter	A quarter, but less than half	About half	More than a half, but less than three quarters	Three quarters or more
Maths	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Science	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Modern languages	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Design and Technology	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Music	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
English (with drama)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Religious Education	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
ICT	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

7 How many years pensionable teaching service do you have? CROSS ONE BOX
IF UNSURE, PLEASE CROSS THE BOX THAT YOU THINK IS NEAREST

Less than 5	<input type="checkbox"/>	20-24	<input type="checkbox"/>
5-9	<input type="checkbox"/>	25-29	<input type="checkbox"/>
10-14	<input type="checkbox"/>	30-34	<input type="checkbox"/>
15-19	<input type="checkbox"/>	35 or more	<input type="checkbox"/>

8 Have you also contributed to another occupational pension fund relating to previous employment? CROSS ONE BOX

Yes GO TO **9** No → GO TO **10**

9 For how many years have you contributed to this fund? CROSS ONE BOX

Less than 5	<input type="checkbox"/>	15-19	<input type="checkbox"/>
5-9	<input type="checkbox"/>	20 or more	<input type="checkbox"/>
10-14	<input type="checkbox"/>		

Do you anticipate having a pension from any other source (not including state pension) e.g. from a partner or ex-partner's work, Additional Voluntary Contributions (AVCs) either through the Prudential Scheme for teachers or another scheme or another pension fund? CROSS ONE BOX

Yes No Uncertain

THINKING ABOUT RETIREMENT

11

As you move towards retirement, there are some factors that may encourage you to continue working, and others that may make you want to leave teaching.

a) Please consider all the factors in the list below that may encourage you to stay in teaching and rank the three that are most important to you.

(PLEASE WRITE THE NUMBERS 1 TO 3 IN THE BOXES PROVIDED, WITH 1 BEING MOST IMPORTANT).

- A I enjoy teaching ★
- B I want to build up a larger pension ★
- C I enjoy the social aspects of work in school ★
- D I have financial commitments that prohibit retirement (e.g. mortgage, children's education) ★
- E I don't know what I will do with myself when I retire ★
- F I still I have a lot to offer in teaching ★
- G I cannot yet afford to retire ★
- H I enjoy the status gained from my current role ★
- I I have always expected to work until I am 60 or over ★
- J My partner is still working ★
- K I hope to take on new challenges or roles at work ★
- L I am not yet old enough to retire ★
- M Other (please give details below) ★

Office Use Only

(X)		

b) Please consider all the factors in the list below that may encourage you to leave teaching and rank the three that are most important to you.

(PLEASE WRITE THE NUMBERS 1 TO 3 IN THE BOXES PROVIDED, WITH 1 BEING MOST IMPORTANT).

- A I want to spend more time with my family ★
- B I want to move to another area / country ★
- C I have already built up an adequate pension ★
- D I want to retire when I am still healthy and able to enjoy it ★
- E I can rely on my partner's income / pension ★
- F My partner has already retired ★
- G I have responsibilities as a carer ★
- H I feel that my future is financially secure ★
- I My health is poor ★
- J I do not enjoy some aspects of my current work (e.g. paperwork, initiatives, pupil behaviour) ★
- K I am not currently achieving a satisfactory work-life balance ★
- L I would like to move to more flexible work or self-employment or voluntary work ★
- M I want to pursue my hobbies and interests ★
- N Other (please give details below) ★

Office Use Only

(X)		

12

In relation to the whole range of factors that you may be taking into account in thinking about your retirement, how important is...? CROSS ONE BOX FOR EACH QUESTION

	Very important	Somewhat important	Not very important	Not at all important
The size your teachers' pension	★	★	★	★
The arrangements about how and when you can access it	★	★	★	★

AWARENESS OF PENSIONS' INFORMATION

13

How would you describe your attitude to pensions' information?
CROSS ONE BOX THAT **BEST DESCRIBES** YOUR VIEWS

- I keep up to date with pensions' information and know exactly how my pension is calculated, what income I will have when I retire and what my options are

- I have a broad awareness of how my pension is calculated but do not know exactly what I can expect or what my options are

- I find pensions' information confusing and I don't understand it

- I have not yet looked at the pensions' information or considered how much pension I will receive

14

The enclosed information sheet sets out the various options available to you under the revised Teachers' Pension Scheme. To what extent were you aware of the changes before receiving this questionnaire? CROSS ONE BOX

- I had a detailed awareness and understanding of the changes
 - I had a general awareness of the changes made
 - I had a limited awareness of the changes made
 - I was not aware the scheme had changed
- } GO TO **15**
- GO TO **18**

15

Thinking about your previous awareness of the Teachers' Pension Scheme, please select the statement below that most applied to you... CROSS ONE BOX

- The only change I was aware of was the increase to employees' and employers' contributions

- I was aware of changes to employees' and employers' contributions AND other changes

- I was not really aware of many changes at all

16

From what sources had you previously learned about the changes?
CROSS ALL THAT APPLY

- Teacher union
- Employer (Local Authority)
- Head teacher
- Newspaper
- Teachers' Pension Scheme website
- Teachers' Pension Scheme poster or leaflet
- DfES website
- DfES electronic mailing
- Pensions' advisor
- Talk with colleagues
- Other (please give details below)

Office Use Only

(X)		

17

How clear and easy to understand is the information that you have previously received about the Teachers' Pension Scheme changes? CROSS ONE BOX

- Very clear
- Fairly clear
- Not very clear
- Not clear at all
- No information received

18

Have you received personal financial advice in the last 5 years about how to optimise your pension? CROSS ONE BOX

Yes No

19

Having completed this questionnaire and read the enclosed information sheet, to what extent do you now feel that you understand the retirement options available to you under the revised Teachers' Pension Scheme? CROSS ONE BOX

Fully understand Mostly understand Partly understand Do not understand Not sure

YOUR CAREER AND RETIREMENT PLANS

Before you retire/leave teaching, do you intend to.... CROSS ONE BOX

- Stay on current salary scale and hours
- Become a supply teacher
- Move from full-time to part-time work
- Reduce responsibilities and pay
- Remain in current leadership role but move to a post in a larger school with an increased salary
- Gain promotion by
 - Gaining a TLR
 - Moving to Upper Pay Spine
 - Becoming an Excellent Teacher
 - Becoming an Advance Skills Teacher
 - Becoming an Assistant head
 - Becoming a Deputy Head
 - Becoming a Head teacher
- Don't know

21

At what age do you anticipate that you will.....

a. leave teaching PLEASE WRITE IN AGE IN THE BOX BELOW. E.G.

5 9

b. start drawing your pension (including actuarially reduced and phased retirement pensions)

22 How definite are these plans? CROSS ONE BOX

- Certain
- Highly likely
- Fairly likely
- Not definite
- Currently have no idea what I will do

23 Which one of the options listed below do you currently anticipate you will take, in relation to your retirement?

For more detail about these options, see the information sheet about the recent changes to the Teachers' Pension Scheme (enclosed with this questionnaire).

PLEASE SELECT THE ONE MOST LIKELY OPTION, EVEN IF YOU ARE NOT YET SURE OF YOUR PLANS.

- A Leave teaching and draw my teachers' pension at age 60 or later
- B Leave teaching before I am 60, start drawing my pension when I reach the age of 60 (or later)
- C Leave teaching between the ages of 55 and 59, and take an actuarially reduced pension
- D Phased retirement: work in a reduced capacity (reducing hours or shedding responsibilities such that salary reduction = 25% or more), and at the same time, draw actuarially reduced pension
- E Take premature retirement (i.e. retire because your employer makes you redundant or you leave pensionable employment on the grounds of organisational efficiency)
- F Take ill-health retirement (i.e. if you are assessed as being permanently unable to teach)

24 How likely is it that you will take the course of action identified at question 23?

CROSS ONE BOX

- Certain Not definite
- Highly likely GO TO **26** Currently have no idea what I will do GO TO **25**
- Fairly likely

25 If your plans are not yet definite, which other options are you considering?

PLEASE WRITE THE LETTERS (FROM THE OPTIONS LISTED IN **23**) IN THE BOXES BELOW. E.G.

C

26 As you may have seen in the enclosed information sheet, phased retirement is a new option that has been introduced, and that you may not have had time to consider seriously. Is it an option that you would explore further and give consideration to? CROSS ONE BOX

- Yes
- No
- I have not thought about it

IF YES TO **26** PLEASE ANSWER THE QUESTIONS BELOW. OTHERWISE PLEASE GO TO **35**

27 In your phased retirement, do you anticipate that you would reduce...
CROSS ONE BOX

- Hours Hours and responsibilities
Responsibilities Don't know

28 If you intend to reduce your hours as part of a phased retirement, please indicate both the fraction of the week you currently teach and the fraction you would like to teach in phased retirement.

CROSS ONE BOX FOR CURRENTLY AND ONE FOR PHASED RETIREMENT.

Fraction of week worked		Currently	In phased retirement
Full-time	1.0	★	★
	0.9	★	★
	0.8	★	★
	0.7	★	★
	0.6	★	★
Part-time	0.5	★	★
	0.4	★	★
	0.3	★	★
	0.2	★	★
	0.1	★	★

29 If you intend to reduce your responsibilities in phased retirement, please write in below how you would like to do this.

PLEASE WRITE IN BELOW

Office Use Only

	(X)	

30 Do you anticipate any difficulty in finding suitable employment in which to take phased retirement? CROSS ONE BOX

- Considerable difficulty Slight difficulty No difficulty Don't know

31 The provision for phased retirement allows you the option of reducing your responsibilities by working as a teaching assistant. How likely is it that you would take up this option? CROSS ONE BOX

- Very likely Fairly likely Not very likely Not at all likely

32 Have you had any formal or informal discussions about the possibility of taking phased retirement? CROSS ONE BOX FOR EACH QUESTION

	Yes, formally	Yes, informally	No
With the Local Authority	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
With your head teacher	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

33 To what extent would you be interested in each of the following roles in a phased retirement position? CROSS ONE BOX FOR EACH ROLE

	Very interested	Fairly interested	Not very interested	Not at all interested
Class teaching (possibly part-time or job-share)	★	★	★	★
Enrichment work with small groups of pupils	★	★	★	★
Covering PPA time	★	★	★	★
A school leadership role as a job share	★	★	★	★
Mentoring or working alongside less experienced teachers	★	★	★	★
Mentoring less experienced school leaders	★	★	★	★
Working with student teachers	★	★	★	★
Primary only: teaching specific subjects such as music or art	★	★	★	★

34 In what other ways could effective use be made of your skills and experience? PLEASE WRITE IN BELOW Office Use Only

(X)		

35 When you leave your full-time or part-time teaching post, do you anticipate that you will... CROSS ONE BOX

- Seek full-time employment in another sector (i.e. not teaching in a school) ★
- Seek part-time employment in another sector ★
- Do some supply teaching ★
- Become self-employed ★
- Not seek any further employment ★
- Don't know ★
- Other (please give details below) ★

Office Use Only

(X)		

HAVE YOUR PLANS CHANGED AS A RESULT OF THE CHANGES TO THE TEACHERS' PENSION SCHEME?

36 Have your retirement plans changed as a result of the changes to the Teachers' Pension Scheme? CROSS ONE BOX

Yes Possibly No —→ GO TO 41

37 Please indicate what your previous plans were: CROSS ONE BOX

- Continue in current role until 60+ ★

- Continue to teach but reduce my responsibilities or hours (accepting that this might reduce my pension) ★

- Leave teaching before the age of 60, start drawing my pension when I reached the age of 60 or later ★

- Leave teaching between the ages of 55 and 59, and take an actuarially reduced pension ★

- Take the 'stepping down' option that previously existed ★

- Premature retirement (i.e. retire because your employer makes you redundant or you leave pensionable employment on the grounds of organisational efficiency) ★

38 At what age did you previously anticipate that you would...
a. leave teaching PLEASE WRITE IN AGE IN THE BOX BELOW. E.G.

5	9
---	---

--	--

b. start drawing your pension (including actuarially reduced and phased retirement pensions)

--	--

39 Which of the changes below has impacted on your plans?
 CROSS ALL THAT APPLY

- Changes in the way that the pension is calculated
- Flexibility in relation to lump sum
- Introduction of phased retirement option
- Other (please give details below) ★

Office Use Only		
(X)		

40 Have the changes to the Teachers' Pension Scheme made it more likely that you will stay longer in teaching than you had previously anticipated? CROSS ONE BOX

Definitely Possibly Uncertain Definitely not

41 To what extent, if at all, were the previous pension arrangements a barrier that prevented you from reducing your hours or shedding responsibilities in the run up to retirement?
 CROSS ONE BOX

Yes To some extent No Never thought about it

42 Did you take any of the following actions before Dec 2006 as a result of the changes to the Teachers' Pension Scheme? CROSS ONE BOX FOR EACH QUESTION

	Yes	No
As part-time teacher, opting into the old scheme	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Buying additional years under the old arrangements	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Investigating with school and/or Local Authority prospects for phased retirement	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

43 Would you be willing for the DfES or someone working on behalf of the DfES to contact you again in the future to talk about any issues arising from this survey?

Yes
 No

44 Please fill in your contact details below.

Your contact details will be used only for the purpose of contacting you in relation to this research

Name:

Phone Number:

E-mail:

Headteachers as employers

TEACHERS' PENSIONS: YOUR VIEWS

How to fill in this questionnaire:

Please put a **cross** in the appropriate box to indicate your answer [☒]. If you have made a mistake in your answer, please completely fill a box to show the mistake [■] and then cross the correct answer.

You will need to use **blue or black ink**

Your answers will be treated in the strictest confidence and all findings will be made anonymous in the reporting of results so that responses cannot be traced back to individuals.

About You

1 Please place yourself into one of the age categories below: CROSS ONE BOX

20-29 ★ 30-39 ★ 40-49 ★ 50-54 ★ 55-59 ★ 60 or over ★

2 Are you male or female? CROSS ONE BOX

Male ★ Female ★

About Your School

3 How many teachers are there in your school (including you)?

PLEASE WRITE IN NUMBER BELOW FOR FULL AND PART TIME CATEGORIES. IF YOU ARE UNSURE, PLEASE ESTIMATE.

	Under age 50	Age 50 and over
Full time		
Part time		

4 Please estimate how many teachers in your school are likely to retire...

PLEASE WRITE IN NUMBER BELOW FOR EACH SCHOOL YEAR. IF YOU ARE UNSURE, PLEASE ESTIMATE.

	ENTER NUMBER
In 2006-07	
In 2007-08	
In 2008-09	

5 Which one of these statements most closely matches the situation in your school? CROSS ONE BOX

- Most teachers retire before they reach the age of 60 ★
- Most teachers work until they are 60 or more ★
- Retirement age varies enormously: there is no pattern ★
- We have had so few older teachers that it is not possible to suggest any pattern of retirement ★

Please indicate how much you agree or disagree with each of these statements

CROSS ONE BOX FOR EACH STATEMENT

	Strongly Agree	Agree	Neither Agree nor Disagree	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
We have no difficulty recruiting class teachers for this school	★	★	★	★	★
We have no difficulty recruiting people to leadership roles in this school	★	★	★	★	★
We often have to re-advertise for teacher posts in this school	★	★	★	★	★
We often have to re-advertise for leadership roles in this school	★	★	★	★	★
With an ageing teacher population, I would be happy for some to move on so that we can recruit younger staff	★	★	★	★	★
Retention is a greater concern than recruitment	★	★	★	★	★
It is easier to recruit to part-time posts than full-time	★	★	★	★	★
We often have to reject good candidates when we advertise a part-time post	★	★	★	★	★
In this school, staff often move from full-time to part-time, or vice versa	★	★	★	★	★
We try to support staff who wish to change their hours and /or responsibilities, and to retain them within the school	★	★	★	★	★

SECONDARY SCHOOLS: PLEASE ANSWER 7 ALL OTHERS GO TO 8

7 Please indicate how easy it has been for this school to recruit teachers in the subjects listed below in the last two years

CROSS ONE BOX FOR EACH SUBJECT

	Strong field, made an appointment	Weak field, made an appointment	Made an appointment after re-advertising	Unable to make an appointment	Have not advertised	Don't know/Been at school for less than 2 years
Maths	★	★	★	★	★	★
Science	★	★	★	★	★	★
Modern languages	★	★	★	★	★	★
Design and Technology	★	★	★	★	★	★
Music	★	★	★	★	★	★
English (with drama)	★	★	★	★	★	★
Religious Education	★	★	★	★	★	★
ICT	★	★	★	★	★	★

Please indicate to what extent you agree or disagree with the following statements about employing part-time / job-share teachers...

CROSS ONE BOX FOR EACH STATEMENT

	Strongly Agree	Agree	Neither Agree nor Disagree	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
Using part-time/job-share teachers has helped us to cover specific areas of the timetable (such as PPA time, EAL, shortage secondary subjects, music)	★	★	★	★	★
Employing part-time teachers makes timetabling more difficult	★	★	★	★	★
Children benefit from being taught by a wider variety of teachers including part-time and job-share	★	★	★	★	★
I would be happy to employ more teachers on a part-time/job-share basis	★	★	★	★	★
I prefer not to employ job-share teachers because of the additional costs	★	★	★	★	★

9 Does your school have any particular policies or practices to enable it to benefit from the skills and experience of older teachers? CROSS ONE BOX

Yes ★ No ★

Office Use Only

(X)		

IF YES: PLEASE GIVE DETAILS: PLEASE WRITE IN BELOW

About the Changes to the Teachers' Pension Scheme

10 The changes to the Teachers' Pension Scheme are summarised on an information sheet enclosed with this questionnaire. Before receiving this questionnaire, how much did you know about the changes? CROSS ONE BOX

- I had a detailed awareness and understanding of the changes ★
 - I had a general awareness of the changes made ★
 - I had a limited awareness of the changes made ★
 - I had no awareness of the changes made/I was not aware the scheme had changed ★
- } GO TO 1
 ★ → GO TO 2

11 Thinking about your previous awareness of the Teachers' Pension Scheme, please select the statement below that most applied to you...

PLEASE CROSS ONE BOX

- The only change I was aware of was the increase to employees' and employers' contributions ★
- I was aware of changes to employees' and employers' contributions AND other changes ★
- I was not really aware of many changes at all ★

12

How did you find out about the changes? CROSS ALL BOXES THAT APPLY

- Letter from Local Authority ★
- Mentioned at Headteachers' meetings ★
- Employer Toolkit ★
- Training provided by DfES, Teachers' Pensions ★
- Training provided by Local Authority ★
- Teachers' Pension Scheme website ★
- DfES/Prudential DVD ★
- Information from unions ★
- Other (please give details below) ★

Office Use Only

(X)		

13

Has this authority provided information to headteachers about the potential impact of the changes on school staffing? CROSS ONE BOX

- Yes ★ No ★ Don't know ★

IF YES, WAS THIS: PLEASE CROSS ALL BOXES THAT APPLY

- Written information ★
- Information via website ★
- Information given at a headteachers' meeting/training session ★
- Information given at a governors' meeting/training session ★

WE WOULD REALLY APPRECIATE IT IF YOU COULD ENCLOSE A COPY OF ANY RELEVANT INFORMATION ALONG WITH YOUR QUESTIONNAIRE (IN THE REPLY PAID ENVELOPE INCLUDED). PLEASE ONLY INCLUDE INFORMATION THAT CAN FIT EASILY INTO THE ENVELOPE ENCLOSED. PLEASE DO NOT INCLUDE HEAVY ITEMS.

14

Have you communicated any information about the changes to the Teachers' Pension Scheme (other than increased employee/employer contributions) to your staff?

- Yes ★ No ★ Don't know ★

IF YES, WAS THIS: PLEASE CROSS ALL BOXES THAT APPLY

- At a staff meeting ★
- By email ★
- Put up a poster in the staff room ★
- Teaching staff watched the DVD ★
- Other (please give details below) ★

Office Use Only

(X)		

The Potential Impact on School Staffing of Changes to the Teachers' Pension Scheme

The questions below focus on two specific changes to the Teachers' Pension Scheme that will allow older teachers greater flexibility to reduce their hours or their responsibilities in the period leading up to retirement:

- The possibility of calculating the pension using the average of the best three consecutive years salary in the last ten (if this is higher than the final salary);
- The introduction of phased retirement arrangements enabling teachers to reduce their hours or responsibilities, and at the same time draw some of their pension.

For more details, see the enclosed information sheet.

15 **Have the potential impact of these changes to the Teachers' Pension Scheme for school staffing arrangements been discussed.....**

CROSS ONE BOX FOR EACH QUESTION BELOW

	Yes	No	Don't know
At a meeting of headteachers	★	★	★
At a school governors meeting	★	★	★
At a senior leadership team meeting	★	★	★
At a staff meeting	★	★	★
Informally among staff	★	★	★

16a **In particular, has there been any specific discussion of potential roles for older teachers who opt to reduce.....** CROSS ONE BOX FOR EACH QUESTION BELOW

	Yes	No	Don't know
Their hours	★	★	★
Their responsibilities	★	★	★

IF YES TO HOURS OR RESPONSIBILITIES. PLEASE ANSWER Q16b. OTHERS GO TO Q17

16b **What specific roles have been identified?**

Please provide specific examples of any instances where such roles have already been planned or are already in place:

PLEASE WRITE IN BELOW

Office Use Only

(X)		

17

In order that schools can benefit from their skills and experience, what sort of roles could they take on? Please indicate how useful it would be in your school to have an older and more experienced teacher taking on each of the roles listed below ... CROSS ONE BOX FOR EACH STATEMENT

	Very useful	Fairly useful	Not very useful	Not at all useful	Don't know	Not applicable
Covering PPA time	★	★	★	★	★	★
Enrichment work with small groups of pupils	★	★	★	★	★	★
Mentoring or working alongside less experienced teachers	★	★	★	★	★	★
Working with student teachers	★	★	★	★	★	★
Teaching a fraction of a normal timetable (possibly as a job-share)	★	★	★	★	★	★
Primary only: teaching specific subjects such as music or art	★	★	★	★	★	★
Other (please give details below and cross one box to indicate how useful)	★	★	★	★	★	★

Office Use Only

(X)		

18

What do you perceive to be the benefits for your school of creating specific roles for staff who wish to reduce their hours or responsibilities as they approach retirement? PLEASE WRITE IN BELOW

Office Use Only

(X)		

19

What do you think are the main difficulties in your school that may prevent the creation of such roles? PLEASE WRITE IN BELOW

Office Use Only

(X)		

20

It is anticipated that these changes, allowing more flexible retirement patterns, are likely to impact on both individual teachers, and on staffing patterns in schools. Thinking of your school, please indicate how far you agree with each of the statements below

CROSS ONE BOX FOR EACH STATEMENT

	Strongly Agree	Agree	Neither Agree nor Disagree	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
Many of the older teachers will want to reduce their hours	★	★	★	★	★
Many of the older teachers are likely to want to reduce their responsibilities	★	★	★	★	★
The proportion of teachers working part-time is likely to increase	★	★	★	★	★
Teachers will extend their working lives, continuing in a reduced capacity beyond the age at which they would otherwise have retired	★	★	★	★	★
Teachers who might otherwise have continued to work full-time to age 60 will opt to reduce their hours or responsibilities before that age	★	★	★	★	★
The supply of teachers in shortage subjects will be improved	★	★	★	★	★
There will be greater opportunities for older teachers to pass on their skills and experience	★	★	★	★	★
Retention of experienced teachers within the school will be improved	★	★	★	★	★
Work-life balance for older teachers will be improved	★	★	★	★	★

21

Would you be willing for the DfES or someone working on behalf of the DfES to contact you again in the future to talk about any issues arising from this survey?

Yes ★ No ★

22

Please fill in your contact details below.

Your contact details will be used only for the purpose of contacting you in relation to this research

Name:

Phone Number:

E-mail:

LA Section A (pensions) TEACHERS' PENSIONS: YOUR VIEWS

How to fill in this questionnaire:

Please put a **cross** in the appropriate box to indicate your answer [☒]. If you have made a mistake in your answer, please completely fill a box to show the mistake [■] and then cross the correct answer.

You will need to use **blue or black ink**

Your answers will be treated in the strictest confidence and all findings will be made anonymous in the reporting of results so that responses cannot be traced back to individuals.

About You

1 What is your job title? PLEASE WRITE IN BELOW

Office Use Only

(X)		

2 Please describe your current role... PLEASE WRITE IN BELOW

Office Use Only

(X)		

3 How important a part do teachers' pension arrangements play in your work? CROSS ONE BOX

- Teachers' pensions are central to my work ★
- Teachers' pensions are a minor part of my work ★
- I do not work directly with teachers' pensions but the changes to the scheme will impact on my work ★

About the Changes to the Teachers' Pension Scheme

4 The changes to the Teachers' Pension Scheme are summarised on an information sheet enclosed with this questionnaire. Before receiving this questionnaire, how much did you know about the changes? CROSS ONE BOX

- I had a detailed awareness and understanding of the changes ★
 - I had a general awareness of the changes made ★
 - I had a limited awareness of the changes made ★
 - I had no awareness of the changes made/I was not aware the scheme had changed ★
- } GO TO
- } GO TO

5

How did you find out about the changes? CROSS ALL BOXES THAT APPLY

- Employer Toolkit ★
- Training provided by DfES, Teachers' Pensions ★
- Training provided by Local Authority ★
- Teachers' Pension (TP) website ★
- DfES/Prudential DVD ★
- Information from unions ★
- Other (please give details below) ★

Office Use Only

(X)		

6a

Has this authority provided information to teachers (in addition to that provided by the DfES and the unions)? CROSS ALL BOXES THAT APPLY

- A leaflet to each teacher ★
- A leaflet to each school ★
- Posters in schools ★
- Information with payslips ★
- Information on-line ★
- Other (please give details below) ★

GO TO 6b

Office Use Only

(X)		

No information ★ ► GO TO 7

WE WOULD REALLY APPRECIATE IT IF YOU COULD ENCLOSE A COPY OF ANY RELEVANT INFORMATION ALONG WITH YOUR QUESTIONNAIRE (IN THE REPLY PAID ENVELOPE INCLUDED). PLEASE ONLY INCLUDE INFORMATION THAT CAN FIT EASILY INTO THE ENVELOPE ENCLOSED. PLEASE DO NOT INCLUDE HEAVY ITEMS.

6b

Thinking about the information that this authority has sent to teachers, please select the statement below that best describes this information.....

CROSS ONE BOX

- The only information that this authority has sent relates to the increase to employees' and employers' contributions ★
- The information has included details of changes to employees' and employers' contributions AND other changes ★
- Other (please give details below) ★

Office Use Only

(X)		

The Impact of Changes to the Teachers' Pension Scheme

7

Before the changes took effect (i.e. in 2006), did you experience a greater number than usual of...? CROSS ONE BOX FOR EACH QUESTION BELOW

	Yes, a large increase	Yes, a small increase	No	Don't know
Teachers buying additional years under the previous arrangements	★	★	★	★
Part-time teachers opting into the scheme under the previous arrangements	★	★	★	★

LA Section B (HR)

NEW STAFFING FLEXIBILITIES: YOUR VIEWS

How to fill in this questionnaire:

Please put a **cross** in the appropriate box to indicate your answer [☒]. If you have made a mistake in your answer, please completely fill a box to show the mistake [■] and then cross the correct answer.

You will need to use **blue or black ink**

Your answers will be treated in the strictest confidence and all findings will be made anonymous in the reporting of results so that responses cannot be traced back to individuals.

Staffing of Schools in your Local Authority

1 Approximately what proportion of teachers and head teachers in your Local Authority are aged 50 or over?

CROSS ONE BOX FOR EACH QUESTION. PLEASE GIVE AN APPROXIMATE ANSWER IF YOU ARE UNSURE.

	Less than a third	A third, but less than half	About half	More than half, but less than two thirds	Two thirds or more	Don't know
Teacher	★	★	★	★	★	★
Head teachers	★	★	★	★	★	★

2 Thinking about your Local Authority, how much do you agree or disagree with each of these statements about secondary schools...

CROSS ONE BOX FOR EACH STATEMENT.

	Strongly agree	Agree	Neither agree nor disagree	Disagree	Strongly disagree	Don't know
In this Local authority secondary schools :						
Find it easy to recruit Maths teachers	★	★	★	★	★	★
Find it easy to recruit Science teachers	★	★	★	★	★	★
Find it easy to recruit Modern Languages teachers	★	★	★	★	★	★
Find it easy to recruit Design and Technology teachers	★	★	★	★	★	★
Find it easy to recruit Music teachers	★	★	★	★	★	★
Find it easy to recruit English (with Drama) teachers	★	★	★	★	★	★
Find it easy to recruit Religious Education teachers	★	★	★	★	★	★
Find it easy to recruit ICT teachers	★	★	★	★	★	★

3

And thinking about your Local Authority, how much do you agree or disagree with each of these statements... CROSS ONE BOX FOR EACH STATEMENT

	Strongly agree	Agree	Neither agree nor disagree	Disagree	Strongly disagree	Don't know
In this Local authority:						
Primary schools find it easy to recruit teachers	★	★	★	★	★	★
Primary schools find it easy to recruit head teachers	★	★	★	★	★	★
Primary schools find it easy to recruit deputy head teachers	★	★	★	★	★	★
Secondary schools find it easy to recruit head teachers	★	★	★	★	★	★
Secondary schools find it easy to recruit deputy and assistant head teachers	★	★	★	★	★	★
We anticipate a 'bulge' of head teacher retirements in the next 5 years	★	★	★	★	★	★
We anticipate a 'bulge' of head teacher retirements in the next 10 years	★	★	★	★	★	★
We anticipate a 'bulge' of deputy/assistant head retirements in the next 5 years	★	★	★	★	★	★
We anticipate a 'bulge' of deputy/assistant head retirements in the next 10 years	★	★	★	★	★	★

4

To what extent, if at all, is your Local Authority actively involved in developing the next generation of leaders for your authority's schools? CROSS ONE BOX

Involved a lot	★
Involved a little	★
Not very involved	★
Not at all involved	★
Don't know	★

5

What, in your experience, is the current attitude of schools in your Local Authority to employing part-time/job-share teachers?

CROSS ONE BOX FOR EACH TYPE OF SCHOOL BELOW

	Prefer full-time for all roles	Welcome part-time/job share teachers but only in specific roles	Happy to employ part-time/job-share teachers in any role	Don't know
Primary	★	★	★	★
Secondary	★	★	★	★
Special/PRU	★	★	★	★

About You

Office Use Only
(X)

6 What is your job title? PLEASE WRITE IN BELOW

7 Please describe your current role... PLEASE WRITE IN BELOW

Office Use Only
(X)

8 How important a part do teachers' pension arrangements play in your work?
CROSS ONE BOX

- Teacher Pensions are central to my work ★
- Teacher Pensions are a minor part of my work ★
- I do not work directly with teachers' pensions but the changes to the scheme will impact on my work ★
- My work has nothing to do with teachers' pensions ★

About the Changes to the Teachers' Pension Scheme

9 The changes to the Teachers' Pension Scheme are summarised on an information sheet enclosed with this questionnaire. Before receiving this questionnaire, how much did you know about the changes? CROSS ONE BOX

- I had a detailed awareness and understanding of the changes ★
 - I had a general awareness of the changes made ★
 - I had a limited awareness of the changes made ★
 - I had no awareness of the changes made/I was not aware the scheme had changed ★
- } GO TO 10 ■
 } GO TO 11

10 How did you find out about the changes? CROSS ALL BOXES THAT APPLY

- Employer Toolkit ★
- Training provided by DfES, Teachers' Pensions ★
- Training provided by Local Authority ★
- Teachers' Pension Scheme website ★
- DfES/Prudential DVD ★
- Information from unions ★
- Other (please give details below) ★

Office Use Only

(X)		

11 Has this authority provided information to schools about the potential impact of the changes on school staffing?

CROSS ONE BOX

- Yes ★
- No ★
- Don't Know ★

IF YOU ANSWERED 'YES' AT **11** PLEASE ANSWER **12** OTHERS GO TO **13**

12 Was the information provided..... CROSS ALL BOXES THAT APPLY

- Written information ★
- Information via website ★
- Information given at a headteachers' meeting/training session ★
- Information given at a governors' meeting/training session ★

WE WOULD REALLY APPRECIATE IT IF YOU COULD ENCLOSE A COPY OF ANY RELEVANT INFORMATION ALONG WITH YOUR QUESTIONNAIRE (IN THE REPLY PAID ENVELOPE INCLUDED). PLEASE ONLY INCLUDE INFORMATION THAT CAN FIT EASILY INTO THE ENVELOPE ENCLOSED. PLEASE DO NOT INCLUDE HEAVY ITEMS.

13 Has this authority provided any training to schools about the potential impact of the changes? CROSS ONE BOX

- Yes, training provided ★
- No, but planning to offer training in the future ★
- No ★
- Don't know ★

The potential impact on school staffing of changes to the Teachers' Pension Scheme

The questions below focus on two changes to the Teachers' Pension Scheme that will allow older teachers greater flexibility to reduce their hours or their responsibilities:

- The introduction of phased retirement arrangements
- The change to definition of 'average salary' to include re-valued average of best three consecutive years in last ten

14 Have the potential impact of changes to Teachers' Pension Scheme for school staffing arrangements been discussed..... CROSS ONE BOX FOR EACH QUESTION BELOW

	Yes	No	Don't know
At local authority level by the school staffing team / inspectors / advisors	★	★	★
At a meeting with headteachers	★	★	★

15

In particular, has there been any specific discussion of potential roles for older teachers opting to reduce CROSS ONE BOX FOR EACH QUESTION BELOW

	Yes	No	Don't know
Their hours	★	★	★
Their responsibilities	★	★	★

IF YES TO EITHER HOURS OR RESPONSIBILITIES AT 15 PLEASE ANSWER 16 OTHERS GO TO 17

16

What specific roles have been identified?

Please provide specific examples of any instances where such roles have already been planned or are already in place:
PLEASE WRITE IN BELOW

Office Use Only

(X)		

17

In your view, what would be the most appropriate roles for such teachers and headteachers in order that schools (or the Local Authority) can benefit from their skills and experience?

a) Potential roles for headteachers: PLEASE WRITE IN BELOW

Office Use Only

(X)		

b) Potential roles for teachers: PLEASE WRITE IN BELOW

Office Use Only

(X)		

18

What do you perceive to be the benefits of creating specific roles for staff who wish to reduce their hours or responsibilities as they approach retirement?

PLEASE WRITE IN BELOW

Office Use Only

(X)		

19

What do you think are the main difficulties that may prevent the creation of such roles? PLEASE WRITE IN BELOW

Office Use Only

(X)		

Appendix B: Information sheet

INFORMATION ON CHANGES TO THE TEACHERS' PENSION SCHEME

Introduction

Changes to the Teachers' Pension Scheme (TPS) have been introduced from January 2007 with the intention of increasing choice and flexibility while ensuring the financial sustainability of the scheme. These changes affect both those who were members of the scheme before January 2007 and those who join the scheme after this date. This information sheet deals *only* with the changes that affect teachers who paid into the scheme prior to January 2007.

For these teachers, some aspects of the scheme have stayed the same. For example, you will still be able to draw a full pension from 60 (the normal pension age). Your pension will be made up of $1/80^{\text{th}}$ of 'average salary' (formerly referred to as 'final salary') for each year of pensionable service, and you will receive a one-off 'lump sum' payment of $3/80^{\text{th}}$ of average salary (though as you will see below, there is now greater flexibility in relation to this).

EXAMPLE: Jane retires at age 60. Her salary in her last year of teaching is £33,000, and she has 35 years service. She would be able to draw a pension of £14,437, and would have a lump sum of £43,312.

The option to retire earlier with a reduced pension still exists. From age 55 you can opt to retire and receive a lower (actuarially reduced) pension.

EXAMPLE: Jane chooses to retire at age 55 and take an actuarially reduced pension. At that time she earned £32,000, and had 30 years service. In this case her pension would be £8,904, and her lump sum would be £30,348.

Other aspects of the pension scheme have changed. You may already be aware that the contributions you make towards your pension have increased. Two other important changes offer you greater flexibility in how you manage your transition to retirement: changes to the calculation of 'average salary', and the introduction of 'phased retirement'. These are explained below.

Average Salary

The way in which your 'average salary' is calculated has been altered, allowing greater flexibility. Previously, the salary on which your pension was based was the best 365 days in the final 3 years of work leading up to retirement. This will be replaced by the higher of either:

- your average salary in the last 12 months before retirement, or
- the average of your best three consecutive years' salaries in the 10 years before retirement. This will be re-valued in line with the Retail Price Index.

This change will benefit any teachers who experience a drop in salary prior to retirement, for example, as a result of reducing responsibilities, or following the loss of a Management Allowance.

EXAMPLE: a teacher retiring in 2010, who had a Management Allowance until 2005 but did not gain a TLR (and had their salary protected to 31 Dec 2008), would have their pension based on their average salary between 2005 and 2008 (re-valued in line with RPI), rather than their reduced salary in their final years of teaching.

Phased retirement

From the age of 55, you now have the option of drawing part of your pension while continuing to work in a reduced capacity (either by moving to part-time work or by relinquishing some responsibilities). It is also possible to choose to work as a teaching assistant under this arrangement.

You could supplement your reduced income by drawing down up to 75% of your pension benefits. In order to choose this option you must take a reduction in pensionable salary of at least 25% for at least a year.

EXAMPLE: Jane, the teacher in examples 1 and 2, chooses to reduce her hours to work half-time when she is 55. This reduces her salary to £16,000. She decides to draw an actuarially reduced pension on half her service to date: this would be £4,452, and her lump sum at this time will be £15,174. When she finally takes full retirement at age 60, her salary will have increased to, say, £16,500. She will now have 17.5 years service on which she has not yet drawn her pension (15 years up to age 55 and a further 2.5 from the 5 years half-time work). Her pension on this service will be £7,219, and her lump sum £21,657. This gives her a total pension of £11,667*. This is higher than the £8,904* she would have received if she had taken an actuarially reduced pension at age 55, but lower than the £14,437 pension she would have received if she had continued in full-time work to age 60.

* Note that as pension payments increase in line with the Retail Price Index, both these figures will probably be higher.

Additional changes

A number of other changes to the scheme affect existing members. These include:

- Increased flexibility to take a higher tax free lump sum and a lower level of pension;
- Automatic membership for part-timers and returning retirees rather than having to 'opt-in' to the scheme;
- Unmarried partners, including same-sex partners, receive the same benefits as married and civil partners from any contributions paid after 1 January 2007;
- Spouses', surviving civil partners' and nominated dependant partners' pensions will be paid for life;
- A revised ill-health retirement package based on a tiered approach with a higher level of benefits for total incapacity and lower level of benefits for partial incapacity;
- The opportunity to buy up to £5000 of extra annual pension; this replaces the former facility to buy Past Added Years;
- An increase in the death grant from 2 times the salary to 3 times the salary.

For more details go to the Teachers' Pensions website at:

www.teacherspensions.co.uk

Appendix C: Technical appendix

Sample selection

Employees

Teachers

A total of 6,600 teachers were selected for the employee survey. From these we anticipated receiving 2,500 returned questionnaires.

There was a total of 115,210 teachers in the sample population; Table C.1 provides a breakdown of the population by school phase, age and gender (highlighted in red)

The selected sample was boosted so that certain minority groups were adequately represented in the survey; below is a breakdown of the selected sample by school phase, age and gender (highlighted in black)

Table C.1

School type						
Primary and Nursery 51,698 45% 2,640 40%	49-54		Male		Female	
	30141	58%	2713	9%	27428	91%
	1320	50%	396	30%	924	70%
	55-60		Male		Female	
	21557	42%	2156	10%	19401	90%
	1320	50%	396	30%	924	70%
Secondary 56,101 49% 3,300 50%	49-54		Male		Female	
	33746	60%	13836	41%	19910	59%
	1650	50%	683	41%	967	59%
	55-60		Male		Female	
	22355	40%	10507	47%	11848	53%
	1650	50%	774	47%	876	53%
Special and PRU 7411 6% 660 10%	49-54		Male		Female	
	4422	60%	1106	25%	3318	75%
	330	50%	132	40%	198	60%
	55-60		Male		Female	
	2989	40%	777	26%	2212	74%

	330	50%	132	40%	198	60%
--	-----	-----	-----	-----	-----	-----

Headteachers

A total of 2,000 headteachers were selected for the employee survey. From these we anticipated receiving 750 returned questionnaires.

There was a total of 11,966 headteachers in the sample population; Table C.2 provides a breakdown of the population by school phase, age and gender (highlighted in red)

The selected sample was boosted so that certain minority groups were adequately represented in the survey; below is a breakdown of the selected sample by school phase, age and gender (highlighted in black)

Table C.2

School type						
Primary and Nursery 9,378 78% 1,000 50%	49-54		Male		Female	
	5,297	57%	1,642	31%	3,655	69%
	500	50%	200	40%	300	60%
	55-60		Male		Female	
	4,081	43%	1,388	34%	2,693	66%
	500	50%	200	40%	300	60%
Secondary 1,893 16% 800 40%	49-54		Male		Female	
	1,117	59%	704	63%	413	37%
	400	50%	200	50%	200	50%
	55-60		Male		Female	
	776	41%	566	73%	210	27%
	400	50%	200	50%	200	50%
Special and PRU 695 6% 200 10%	49-54		Male		Female	
	430	62%	213	50%	217	51%
	100	50%	50	50%	50	50%
	55-60		Male		Female	
	265	38%	130	49%	135	51%
	100	50%	49	49%	51	51%

Employers

Headteachers as employers

A total of 2,000 headteachers were selected for the headteachers as employer survey. From these we anticipated receiving 750 returned questionnaires.

There was a total of 20,638 headteachers in the sample population; Table C.3 provides a breakdown of the population by school phase and school size (highlighted in red)

The selected sample was boosted so that certain minority groups were adequately represented in the survey; below is a breakdown of the selected sample by school phase and school size (highlighted in black)

Table C.3

School type	School size					
	Up to 100		101 - 300		301+	
Primary and Nursery 16,713 81% 50% 1000	2,649	16%	9,592	57%	4,472	27%
	250	25%	300	30%	450	45%
Secondary 2,535 12% 40% 800	Up to 500		501-1000		1001+	
	240	10%	1,118	44%	1,177	46%
	160	20%	320	40%	320	40%
Special and PRU 1,390 7% 10% 200	Up to 50		51-100		100+	
	513	37%	563	41%	314	23%
	74	37%	82	41%	46	23%

Fieldwork figures

Employees (TEACHERS ONLY)

Total sent out	6,600
Total returned	3,152
Deadwood /Invalid sample	47
Ineligible	118
Eligible	2,987
- <i>Questionnaire Filled in</i>	2,926
- <i>Questionnaire Blank</i>	61
Response rate	45%

Employees (HEADTEACHERS ONLY)

Total sent out	2,000
Total returned	998
Deadwood/Invalid sample	23
Ineligible	29
Eligible	946
- <i>Questionnaire Filled in</i>	939
- <i>Questionnaire Blank</i>	7
Response Rate	48%

Headteachers as employers

Total sent out	2,000
Total returned	683
Deadwood/Invalid sample	4
Eligible	679
- <i>Questionnaire Filled in</i>	672
- <i>Questionnaire Blank</i>	7
Response Rate	34%

Local authority (pensions)

Total sent out	140
Total returned	70
Deadwood/Invalid sample	2
Eligible	68
- <i>Questionnaire Filled in</i>	67
- <i>Questionnaire Blank</i>	1
Response Rate	49%

Local authority (HR)

Total sent out	140
Total returned	41
Deadwood/Invalid sample	0
Eligible	41
- <i>Questionnaire Filled in</i>	39
- <i>Questionnaire Blank</i>	2
Response Rate	28%

SCHOOL CHALLENGE VARIABLE

As noted in the research design, a 'school challenge' variable was created so that we could compare responses given by headteachers based on the level of challenge faced by their school.

The variable took into consideration levels of eligibility for free school meals (FSM), pupils with special needs (SEN) and pupils speaking English as an additional language (EAL). When looking at secondary schools we also included average capped points score at Key Stage 4 (TTAPSCP) and for primary schools we worked out the average number of pupils achieving Level 4 English, Maths and Science at Key Stage 2.

The variable was only created for primary and secondary schools. This was because special schools have a very high SEN score and including them would have skewed the variable.

The raw variables were calculated using the separate school population data for primary and secondary schools. Bands were then created based on the average percentiles within the population. Thus, the low challenge is low challenge compared to the other schools in the population (strictly speaking it doesn't mean they face a low level of challenge). These variables were then linked back on to the survey responses using school urn and school phase.

Two variables were created: Challenge and Challenge 2. The Challenge variable was created by taking the mean SEN score (including both 'with statements' and 'without statements') and using this score to contribute 0.25 (i.e. a quarter) to the raw challenge variable (chal), with each of the other 3 factors (EAL, FSM and exam performance) contributing 0.25 each. The Challenge2 variable took 0.125 (i.e. an eighth) of SEN without statements and 0.125 of SEN with Statements and then 0.25 of each of the other 3 factors to create the raw variable (entitled chal2). We felt Challenge2 was the more even measure and used this variable for the analysis.

Please note that the challenge scores are made for Primary and secondary schools separately. The bands created are based on relevance to each other within the respective school phase population.

*

Appendix D: Cluster analysis

Headteachers as employers

Headteachers were surveyed about a number of key issues relating to the changes to the TPS and the context into which these changes were introduced. Questions asked included: provision of information about the changes by their local authority; communication about the changes to their staff; attitudes towards flexible working arrangements (for part-time and job-share teachers); the perceived impact of, and formal discussions about, the TPS changes.

Four clusters were produced, which created discrete groups based on responses to certain key questions:

- Cluster 1 – “Sceptics”
- Cluster 2 – “Unaware and undecided”
- Cluster 3 – “Progressives”
- Cluster 4 – “Open to change”

Headteachers as employers: Summary of clusters

Area of differentiation	Scale	“Sceptics”	“Unaware and undecided”	“Progressives”	“Open to change”
Provision of information from local authority	LMH	-	-	+	.
Communication to staff	YN	+	-	+	.
Attitudes towards flexible working arrangements (for part-time and job-share teachers)	NP	-	.	.	+
Formal discussions about impact of changes	YN	.	-	+	-
Perceived impact of changes	NP	-	.	+	./ +
	weighted	166	191	203	112
	unweighted	167	163	197	145

Based on headteachers as employers in clusters
Source: Headteachers as employers survey

Key

Scale: LMH – Low / Medium / High; YN – Yes / No; NP – Negative / Positive

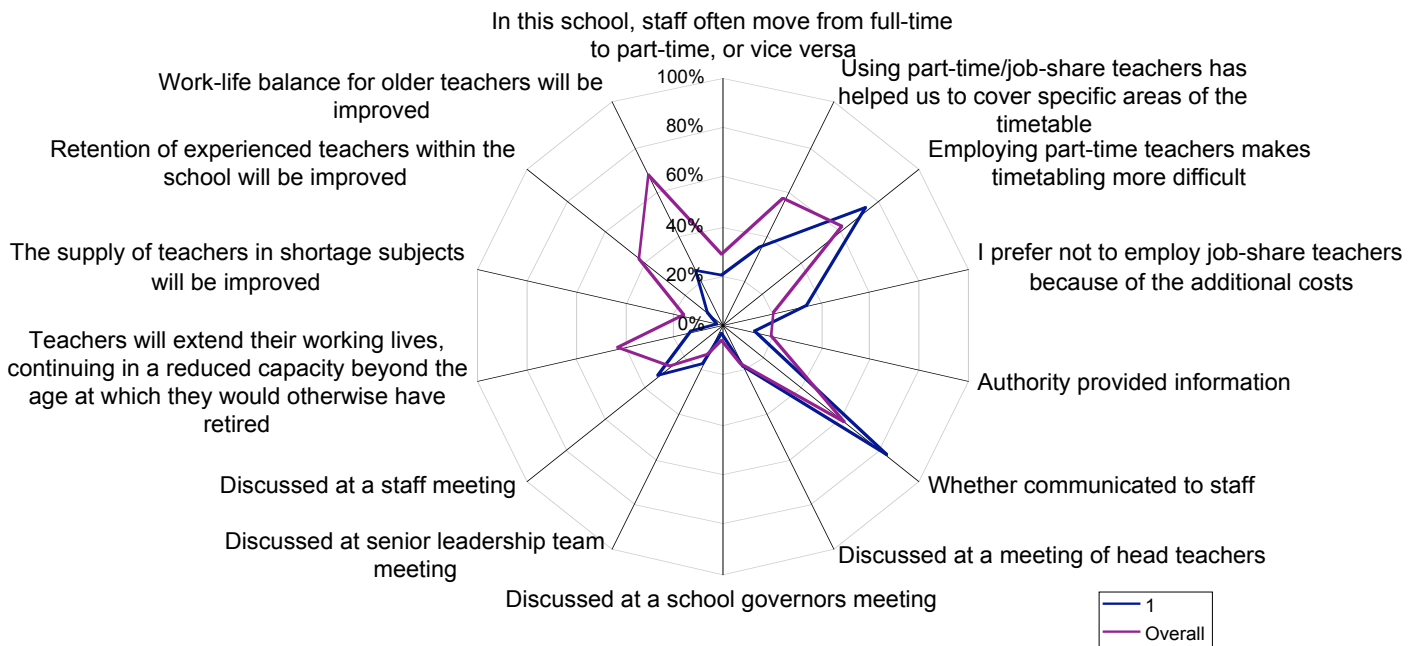
Opinions or actions compared against overall average: “+” – Positive; “-” – Negative; “.” – Average

Analysis was carried out using SPSS and the K-Means cluster method, which uses an iterative process to separate cases into clusters which are as different as possible to each other, but so that cases within clusters are as similar to each other.

The groups that emerge are those which show a tendency towards certain characteristics or traits, and they have been developed to show a range of attitudes towards the TPS changes.

The spider charts below shows the percentage of agreement to the statements included in deriving the clusters.

Cluster 1 – “Sceptics”
(25 per cent of the sample)

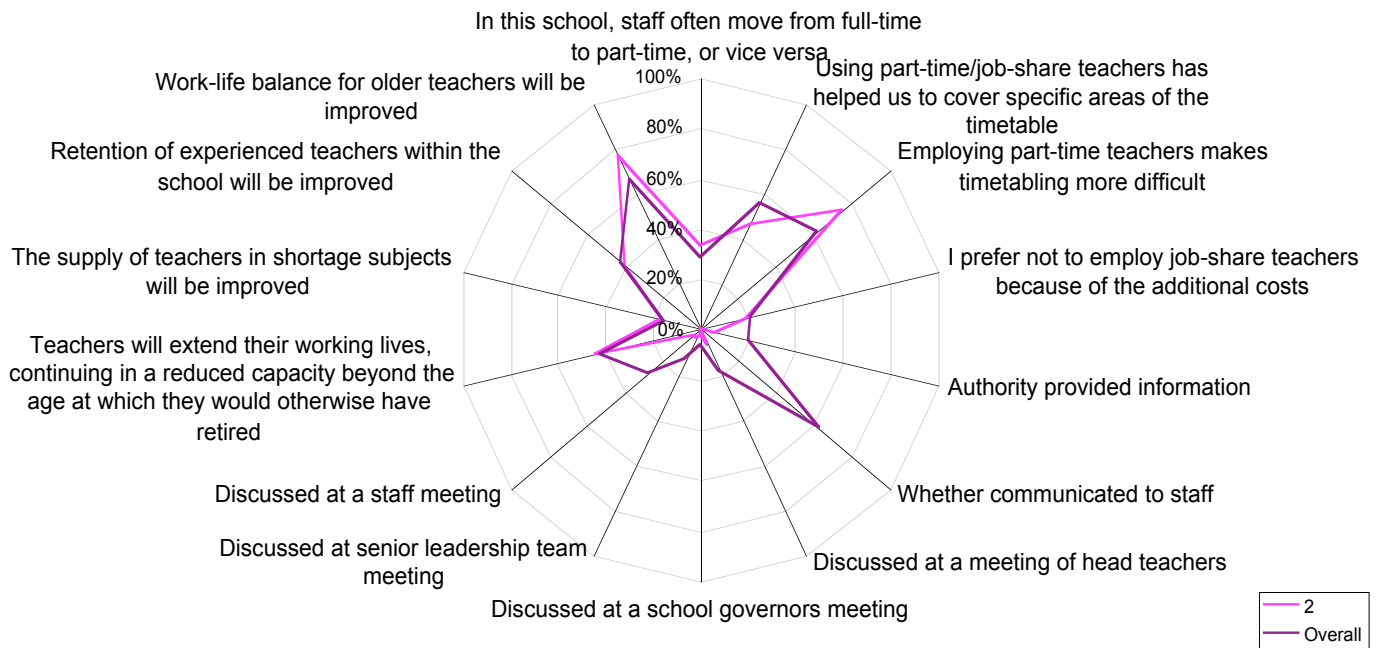


% in agreement with statements

Description

This group held the most negative attitudes towards flexible working arrangements (for part-time and job-share teachers) and also had the most negative perceptions of the impact of the TPS changes. They were no more likely than average to have held formal discussions about the impact of the changes. However, they were less likely than average to say they their local authority had provided them with information about the changes, but more likely than average to say they had communicated relevant information to their staff.

Cluster 2 – “Unaware and undecided”
(24 per cent of the sample)

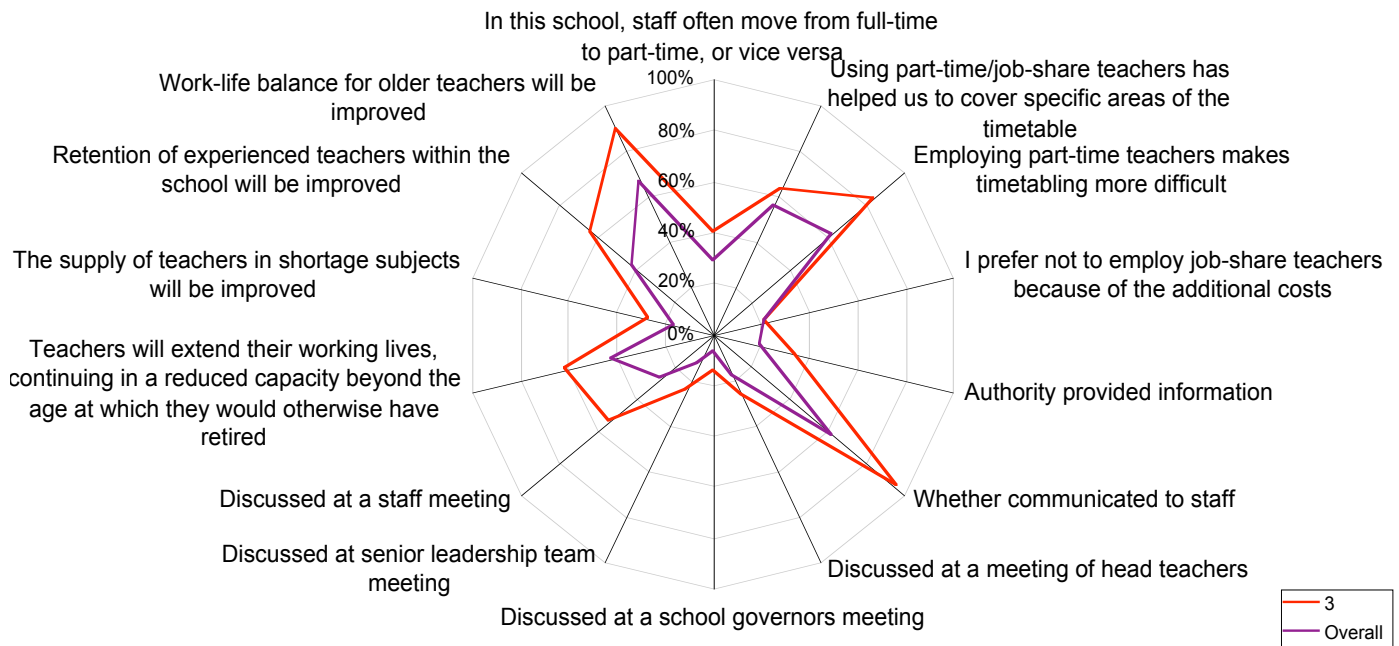


% in agreement with statements

Description

This group were the least likely to say that their local authority had provided them with information about the changes and also the least likely to say that they communicated information to their staff. Their attitudes towards flexible working arrangements (for part-time and job-share teachers) were in line with the overall average, as were their perceptions of the impact of the changes. They were less likely than average to say they had held formal discussions about the impact of the changes.

Cluster 3 – “Progressives”
(29 per cent of sample)

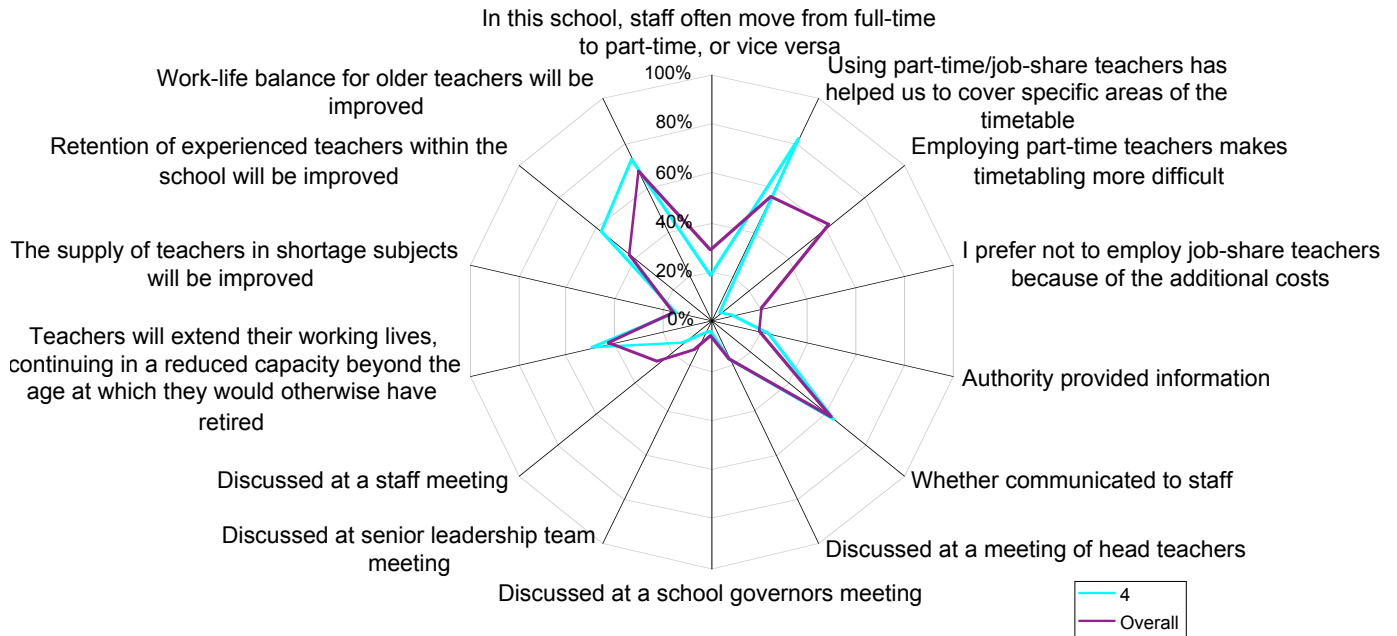


% in agreement with statements

Description

This group were the most likely to have positive perceptions about the impact of the TPS changes, although their attitudes towards flexible working arrangements (for part-time and job-share teachers) were more mixed. They were also the most likely to say that their local authority had provided them with information about the changes, that they had communicated information to their staff and that they had had held formal discussions about the impact of the changes.

Cluster 4 – “Open to change”
(22 per cent of sample)



% in agreement with statements

Description

This group held the most positive attitudes towards flexible working arrangements (for part-time and job-share teachers) and their perceptions about the impact of the changes were either in line with the overall average or more positive than average. They were no more or less likely than average to say that their local authority had provided them with information about the changes or that they had communicated information to their staff; however, they were slightly less likely than average to say that they had held formal discussions about the impact of the changes.

Employees

We tried to replicate the cluster analysis model used for headteachers as employers for employees. However, there was not enough differentiation in the way employees had responded to key questions and statements in the employee questionnaire to be able to produce distinct clusters; the models attempted were therefore not statistically significant.

Appendix E: School case studies

Secondary A (small, rural, part of a soft federation)

Key issues

- The school had an unusually high proportion of part-time teachers and headteacher and governor perceived this as problematic, but as being an inevitable consequence of the small size of the school.
- Despite this, there was a willingness to consider requests from teachers who wanted to reduce their hours or responsibilities. Some teachers had '*retired*' and taken on support roles. However, the pension changes played no part in these arrangements, and their potential in this respect was not recognised.
- The high proportion of older teachers appeared to contribute to awareness of pensions through staffroom conversation and contact with colleagues who were retiring. However, the TPS changes had not been discussed at staff meetings, and information had not been circulated to staff.
- Interviewees did not anticipate the changes to the pension scheme impacting on their plans.

Introduction

Secondary A is a very small (less than 500 pupils) 11-16 school in a small town serving a wide rural area. While recent GCSE results have been below the national average, the contextual value added is in the top 25% nationally. The school achieved a good Ofsted report with outstanding for behaviour. Interviewees included the headteacher, and two male and three female teachers, one of whom worked part-time. The head was in his early forties, and the teachers were all aged 54 –57. All but one had responsibilities within their subject /department. A governor body was also interviewed.

Staffing

The low pupil numbers and rural location both impact on the staffing of the school. In order to cover the curriculum, the school has a low pupil-teacher ratio, and a very high proportion of part-time teachers (more than twice the national average). While the headteacher sees the number of part-timers as inevitable, and identified some advantages such as having two teachers to each tutor group, he also talked of the difficulties that this created in timetabling:

I think there's a critical mass and I think we're probably at the wrong side of critical mass from the school's point of view.

The governor noted that the number of part-timers was a '*real issue*'. He said:

For some of the teachers the part-time nature of the post suits them nicely.... It doesn't suit the school quite so much because it's very difficult to build a team.

The number of teachers aged 50 and over is also well above average and the highest in any of the case study secondary schools. In such a small school, the more experienced teachers inevitably have '*a broad portfolio*' of responsibilities; this was the case for some of the interviewees.

Generally the school has been able to recruit the teachers it needs, but retention of younger teachers is a concern; they tend to leave after a couple of years '*for no other reason than the rural location*'. The high price of housing (related to the number of second homes in the area) is also a factor. However, some older staff have worked in the school for many years, enjoying the rural setting and the friendly and supportive school community. While the school is rather small to talk of a pattern of teacher retirements, two teachers had recently retired before they were 60. Two

others had retired from teaching before they were 60 and had become 'associate' members of staff (i.e. support staff) taking on responsibility for timetabling and exams.

The school is part of a soft federation of secondary schools. While this is important in many ways (including sharing of support staff), it had as yet been used relatively little in relation to teaching staff, though this was seen as a potential development.

Pensions

It was clear that, as a result of the high proportion of older teachers and some recent retirements, teachers in this school had sometimes talked with each other about pensions. This did not necessarily mean they had a clear understanding of the scheme. Only one had sought individual pensions advice. One said that restructuring had created a greater awareness of pensions; '*an awful lot of people were thrown quite quickly into, well how does this affect me?*' The interviewees generally had a reasonable idea of the pension they could expect. Nevertheless interviewees had some questions about aspects of pensions that they did not fully understand.

The information that interviewees had about the pension scheme changes before receiving our information sheet was limited. Some knew nothing; others knew only about certain changes (particularly those to average salary calculations). There was little or no awareness of phased retirement. The headteacher knew about the changes affecting new recruits, but little about those affecting other teachers.

Interviewees' information had come from a variety of sources; one said that he had received a letter from the local authority; one thought that he might have heard through the union. None of them had any awareness of the DVD; the head did not remember receiving it. The TPS changes had not been discussed at school staff meetings or at local headteachers' meetings.

In general the interviewees did not see the changes as having any major impact on their plans. The change they thought most likely to impact was that to the average salary calculations. They felt it was positive that older teachers could now reduce their responsibilities. In the light of the high number of part-time teachers, the head said that he would not welcome many older teachers asking to go part-time, but said, '*I think we'd look at it on a case by case basis. If it's feasible we would agree.*'

Teacher retirement

Financial issues played a very important part in keeping most of the interviewees in teaching. Most also spoke of enjoying relationships with pupils and staff. School A was described as a friendly and supportive community. However, while most hoped to work until they were 60, if they had the energy and remained healthy, they were not entirely happy about this. As one put it, if she won the pools, she would leave teaching tomorrow. There was considerable unhappiness with the pace of change imposed on schools and the amount of work that this created. Some felt that their teaching styles were seen as old-fashioned and inappropriate. Others felt that their particular skills were not valued; the restructuring process had in one case contributed to this perception.

Only one interviewee had a definite retirement date (at the end of the term in which the interview took place. None intended to seek further promotion or to work in another school. Three said that they would consider reducing their hours, or possibly shedding some responsibilities; however, they would do this only if it were possible to do so in School A.

Secondary B (very large, oversubscribed, in affluent area)

Key issues

- Interviewees were generally confident that they understood their own pensions and were aware in general terms of the TPS changes.
- There was a concern about teachers continuing to work when they were 'burnt out' and less

effective.

- Teachers welcomed the changes to TPS because reducing responsibilities would now have less of an impact on the level of pension, and would free up promotion opportunities for younger teachers. One teacher had already arranged to reduce her responsibilities as a result of the TPS changes.
- The school was willing to make flexible arrangements that enabled them to retain the skills and experience of older teachers. It was seen as the responsibility of individual teachers to ask for such arrangements; senior staff were wary of appearing to offer pensions advice or being perceived to encourage teachers to relinquish their responsibilities.

Introduction

Secondary B is a very large 11-18 school with more than 2000 pupils. The school is in an affluent small commuter town, and is oversubscribed. The majority of students are from white backgrounds. The proportion entitled to free school meals is very low. The school's results at GCSE are above the national average; contextual value added is average. The most recent Ofsted report was very good.

Interviewees included the headteacher and three teachers. All but one were women. Two were in their early fifties, and two in their late fifties. A governor and a member of support staff were also interviewed.

Staffing

The school experiences relatively few difficulties in recruiting, and has recently appointed a new headteacher from a strong field. Retention is good, and many of the teachers have been in the school for a very long time. Teachers considered the school to be a good place to work, with a good reputation and in a pleasant area. The proportion of part-time staff working in the school is similar to the national average. A senior member of the support staff said that the school tries to take into account work-life balance and accommodate teachers who wish to work part-time, but argued, *'the students at the end of the day are our clients and we have got to be able to provide for them'*. While one interviewee suggested that the school offered flexibility to part-time teachers, another said that teachers wanting to work part-time would probably be given a timetable that requiring them to work for part of every day, which was not what she wanted.

There was no clear pattern of retirement, with some teachers retiring early, and others late. Some older teachers had reduced responsibilities in the run-up to retirement, and in others cases teachers had moved to administrative or part-time roles on drawing their pension.

Pensions

Interviewees generally felt they had a good understanding of their pensions and were aware of the changes. Two of them had consulted financial advisers, and a third had taken specific questions to a teacher union. However, despite this general level of confidence about pensions issues, some were still uncertain about particular details.

The school had recently hosted a seminar on retirement planning from an independent financial services company which had contacted the school offering their services. Teachers mentioned information about the changes that had been circulated, though the source of this was unclear. The school had received the DVD; however the person who had watched it suggested it was not useful. A note had been put in the staff bulletin, and the DVD stored with the personnel manager. Teachers did not recall having heard about it.

Interviewees were concerned that working until 60 might cause burn out, or teaching to deteriorate. They were also aware that because of the good retention at the school, there were not always promotion opportunities for younger staff. They were therefore positive about the opportunities that might be provided by the pensions changes, especially older teachers reducing

hours or responsibilities so that their skills and expertise were retained while promotion opportunities for younger teachers were created.

As a direct result of the change to the calculation of average salary, one teacher was relinquishing her subject leadership role and returning to full-time class teaching. Some other teachers said they would feel uncomfortable doing this, particularly where they currently had high levels of responsibility; however, they were positive about others doing so.

However, pensions were seen by the school leadership as the concern of the individual teachers, and teachers wanting to talk about pensions would be directed to the LA, TPS or the personnel service. One interviewee summed up the general view that teachers should find out about their own pensions when she said '*I don't agree with spoon-feeding staff. I think they have responsibility themselves to find out*'. Teachers were expected to take the initiative if they wished to reduce hours or responsibilities. The governor was concerned that '*even discussing something might make them think, oh, do they actually want us to start thinking of reducing?*' Consequently there was no plan among senior staff or governors to actively promote the changes, or to make changes in the school staffing structure as a result.

Teacher retirement

There was a general feeling among teachers in this school that the most important aspect of the retirement decision was to retire before they became less effective as teachers. Interviewees spoke of the danger of becoming teachers who are '*working their ticket*'. All of the teachers also referred to family responsibilities and the role of health in their retirement decisions. Financial factors (especially children's higher education) were identified as important, but were not generally the over-riding concern, especially for the women whose husbands had larger pensions. One teacher had set a retirement date for the end of the year, approximately a year before she was 60. She did not intend to draw her pension immediately, but to wait until she reached 60, although she expressed some confusion as to what would happen to her pension in the intervening 12 months. None of the other teachers had definite retirement dates. One indicated that he had always planned to retire at 55, but was reviewing his financial situation to see whether that would be possible; he talked about taking up other work to bridge the gap until he was 60.

Secondary C (fairly small VA faith school, industrial town, succession planning pilot area)

Key issues

- There is a pattern of retirement through ill health in the school
- The interviewees had a good overall knowledge and understanding of their pensions which was mainly due to imminent retirement and information from teacher unions.
- The headteacher's unwillingness to employ part-time teachers may prevent teachers reducing their hours in Secondary C as they approach retirement.
- Interviewees indicated that the Local Authority's pension records are out-of-date, which means they cannot get accurate pensions estimates.

Introduction

Secondary C is a fairly small (less than 750 pupils), voluntary aided secondary faith school for pupils aged 11-16 in an industrial town. The proportion of pupils receiving free schools meals is in line with the national average. There are few minority ethnic pupils. The school's most recent Ofsted report was good, and attainment is above the local average.

The headteacher and three teachers were interviewed in the school. Two interviewees were in their early fifties, one was in their mid-fifties, and another was 60. A governor was also interviewed.

Staffing

The staff profile was described by the headteacher as '*fairly static*'. The school has a relatively high proportion of full-time teachers aged 50 and over, and many of the teachers have worked there a long time. The headteacher said that the school has '*major problems*' in terms of recruitment, particularly in religious education, but also in maths, science and modern foreign languages. He believed this was linked to people's perceptions of the town.

There are few part-time teachers working in the school and the headteacher was reluctant to have more part-time staff. He said that it made timetabling difficult, disrupted learning and was ultimately detrimental to the pupils' education. A colleague in a senior position agreed: '*Professionally, I think part-time is not an asset, because it restricts what is possible.*' In contrast, other interviewees could see benefits to employing part-time teachers in terms of recruitment and staff goodwill, arguing that if teachers were happy in their jobs the school would benefit.

The headteacher said that people tended to retire early in the school, and that the '*pattern unfortunately has been that people have retired on the grounds of ill health*'.

Secondary C is in a succession planning pilot area; all but one of the senior staff have completed the NPQH qualification.

Pensions

The teachers interviewed in this school had a good understanding of their own pensions and some awareness of the changes to the TPS. This was related to the fact that two of the interviewees were retiring imminently, while others had good links to their unions. Indeed, most interviewees had found out about the changes through their unions, and through pensions workshops. Some had also received independent financial advice. However, one interviewee had not realised that the way in which the average salary was calculated had changed.

All interviewees had used the TPS website and found it reasonably easy to use. Some had calculated how much they were entitled to. However, teachers referred to difficulties encountered with the local authority's record keeping which meant that pension estimates obtained online were '*two years out of date*'.

The governor said that the governing body had not received any information about the changes; she felt that it was important that governors knew about such matters: '*I think we should know under what terms and conditions our teachers are working*'.

Whilst teachers could see the benefits to the changes to the TPS, particularly in terms of the average salary calculation, they did not agree that the changes would induce teachers to stay in the profession longer. As one teacher put it, the changes to the TPS would not '*heal the haemorrhage*'. There was little support among the interviewees for the idea of reducing responsibilities and working as a classroom assistant.

The headteacher was concerned that the changes to the TPS would result in more part-time posts and did not think that either the governors or the teaching staff had fully understood what the changes to the TPS could mean:

I think most people haven't really clicked that they could, if they wanted to, ask to go part-time. I'm not sure that my governors have really full taken on board the consequences of that.

He went on to say that '*On educational grounds I don't think it is a good idea to encourage anybody to take part-time and wind their way down.*' He suggested that if teachers did make requests to move to part-time work as a result of the TPS changes, he would have to agree: '*it's their legal right to do so; I don't really have a choice.*'

Teacher retirement

The main factors identified as affecting retirement decisions were health, school and personal factors. These were perceived to be more important than finance. Two interviewees referred to

'mortality statistics' and to the supposed link between retiring late and poorer health and increased mortality. There was an overall feeling that generally teachers want to 'get out' as soon as they can, or before it affects their health too adversely. As one interviewee said, 'I think they're going to find that teachers at my stage of life are just desperate to get out.'

Teachers identified a number of school factors that encourage people to retire including perceived increases in stress levels associated with bureaucracy, and the ever-changing demands that are made of teachers.

Of the two interviewees who were about to retire at the time of the interviews, one was retiring early and taking an actuarially reduced pension, while the other had reached normal retirement age. The other two teachers had not decided when they would retire or what they would do when the time came, but thought that they might retire in their late fifties. Teachers' plans for what they would do in their retirement were varied, but included spending more time with family and being able to travel.

Secondary D (rural, part of soft federation)

Key issues

- The head had spoken to staff about the pensions changes and arranged outside speakers on the issue, but felt the attendance was disappointing.
- The interviewees in this school had some knowledge of the pensions scheme and the recent changes, but also some misunderstandings, despite attending a recent training session (only the week before).
- All the interviewees were attracted by retiring before 60, but had concerns about the size of their pensions after actuarial reduction.
- The possibility of reducing hours or responsibilities and continuing to work at Secondary D was dismissed; both school management and the teachers indicated that proposals of this type were unlikely to be agreed.
- The school was retaining a current retiree who was to be re-employed in a senior support staff role; however, the link between this type of arrangement and the possibilities created by the TPS changes was not recognised.

Introduction

Secondary D is a rural 11-16 secondary school in a very small town; 80% of the pupils arrive by bus from the surrounding area. The school has above average GCSE results, very high contextual value added, and an outstanding Ofsted report. It is planned that the school will gain a sixth form in the next few years. Interviewees included the head (aged 56), and three teachers aged 51-54.

Staffing

The headteacher has been in post about ten years. He believes that he has developed the culture of the school so that it has become a community where both staff and pupils feel valued. The success of the school makes it easier to recruit staff, as does the fact that the school is within commuting distance of a city; many of the younger staff live there. Retention of older staff is good. Recruitment and retention points have been used strategically so that staff who lost management points when TLRs were introduced did not lose out financially. The proportions of teachers over 50 and of part-time teachers are in line with the national averages for secondary schools. The head described a 'flat' management system with a large senior leadership team made up of older teachers.

The headteacher said that most teachers preferred to retire before age 60 and certainly did not continue beyond 60. He could recall only one older teacher moving to part-time work; this had

been on health grounds. He said that should older teachers request to reduce their hours or responsibilities, this would be considered, *'so long as it was in the interests of the school because the interests of the school must always come first'*. Another member of the leadership team said that agreeing to reduce teachers' hours or responsibilities was *'not the way to go forward ... there would have to be a good reason for keeping someone.'*

However, the head talked about a strategy for retaining the expertise of older teachers:

I think one of the very interesting things to do is when somebody has got whole school skills, ... and they actually want to retire, I thought one of the things to do was to allow them to retire from teaching and to draw their teacher's pension and actually re-employ them in a support role in the school.

Pensions

The teachers had some understanding of the pension scheme, but also had some inaccurate ideas about it, including misunderstanding the impact of part-time working on the pension award, and underestimating actuarial reduction.

The head said that he had spoken to the staff about new pensions arrangements, and had on a number of occasions arranged talks on pensions. He expressed disappointment that relatively low numbers of teachers attended such talks, and that the younger members of staff showed little interest. All three teacher interviewees had attended a recent pensions talk, and evidently understood some aspects of the changes. But their understanding of the scheme and its changes was still not entirely clear; for example, one thought that teachers aged 50 or less now had a Normal Retirement Age of 65.

One teacher talked about retiring on an actuarially reduced pension and then taking a part-time teaching post, but had not recognised that phased retirement would offer a way of doing this that was more beneficial financially; possibly this was a lack of understanding that a phased retirement post did not have to be in the same school. However, when it was pointed out that this could be done as phased retirement, the idea was received positively.

Teacher retirement

All the interviewees talked about the attractions of retiring before they were 60, though some were unsure if this would be feasible. The main factor in this was a feeling that teachers become worn out and less able to teach well as they grow older. Teaching was seen as a job that requires a great deal of energy to do well. Thus the interviewees all felt that there was a moment when would have *'had enough'*. There was also a perception that teachers who continued to work until they were 60 were likely to die younger: *'The rationale [for retiring at 58] is that I don't want to go on to 60 and keel over the day after I retire.'*

Two interviewees said that the planned development of a sixth form may impact on their thinking and persuade them to stay longer. Financial factors were also important in their plans. None of them expected to seek further promotion. Interviewees anticipated that they would miss the social community of the school, either because teachers are *'social animals surrounded by people'*, and would find the relative isolation of retirement difficult, or because they would miss being recognised members of a community. While all the interviewees said they were prepared to accept a lower pension and leave early, they also identified the degree of actuarial reduction as a deterrent to retiring early, and thought that in reality this would only be possible when they were 58 or 59. For all these interviewees, personal factors were less important than work and financial factors in deciding when to retire.

Three interviewees had definite aspirations to leave before they were 60; two of these intended to take actuarially reduced pensions; one intended to supplement this by working in some way – supply teaching, coaching, or part-time work – while the other expected to *'tighten [his] belt.'* Interviewees considered that moving to work part-time or shedding responsibilities would not be

possible within the case study school, and referred to the responses other teachers had had to such requests.

Secondary E (very large London school, some involvement in succession planning)

Key issues

- The school had a relatively low proportion of older teachers; the interviewees were younger than in most other schools and some were hoping to gain further promotion before retirement. These factors may have contributed to the attitude that knowing about their pensions was not (yet) important.
- The head was aware of information that had been sent out about the TPS changes and of the DVD, but had not yet disseminated this information to staff.
- All of the interviewees saw the changes as positive and gave examples of ways they might be useful. However, this thinking was still at an early stage.
- The headteacher identified ways in which the pension scheme changes could be of value in performance management and in succession planning.
- These teachers were very attached to the school, and found it difficult to imagine retirement. They were also felt attached to London and indicated that they wished to retire in London. They recognised that this might have financial implications and they might need to work longer to build up a large enough pension.

Introduction

Secondary E is a very large 11-16 school in London with more than 1,500 pupils. It is set in an area of high economic and social deprivation. The majority of the pupils come from minority ethnic backgrounds, many of whom have a first language other than English. Just over 50% are eligible for free school meals. The school was graded outstanding in its most recent Ofsted report. Attainment at GCSE has been steadily improving, with pass rates very similar to the national average. Contextual value added indicated that it was in the top 25% of schools nationally.

Interviewees included the headteacher, two assistant heads, a head of year and a head of department (two men and three women). Three were aged 49-51, and two were in their mid-fifties. A governor was also interviewed.

Staffing

The proportion of staff aged 50 and over is lower than the national average, as is the proportion of part-time staff. The school has experienced some difficulties in recruiting staff, particularly in English, maths and science. However, there is a strong focus on retention, in particular by giving younger staff leadership experience and allowing them to progress within the school and turnover was described as relatively low.

There were no particular patterns in retirement identified; some teachers retired early, while others stayed until after 60. Interviewees gave examples of the school's flexibility for older teachers who wished to reduce responsibilities or hours. This included part-time working after drawing the pension; teaching staff moving to the administrative team; and the creation of posts to fit particular skills and interests.

The head indicated that the school was flexible in relation to part-time working: '*we have people move in and out of part-time ... we've accommodated that.*' Conversely, the governor expressed less enthusiasm for part-time posts because of the potential impact on the pupils.

While this school was not in a succession planning pilot, the head had some involvement with NCSL in relation to succession planning, and envisaged that if she chose to move to part-time work she had *'two of the assistant heads coming through as sort of co-associate heads'*.

Pensions

Teacher interviewees felt that they had only a basic understanding of the Teachers Pension Scheme. In the main this was because they viewed themselves as still young, wished to develop their career further, and felt that money was not a motivating factor for them. Three said they found pensions uninteresting and *'dull'*. One said, *'your lump sum isn't going to get bigger or smaller because you know about it'*; there was therefore no need to bother to find out what you would be receiving. Some teachers in this school also made a point about the complexity of pensions. It was felt that the basic calculation was easy to grasp, but that the details were very complicated.

Most interviewees had got information about the TPS changes from their union or from the newspapers. None remembered being contacted by the LA. The headteacher had received the DVD, but it was still on her desk, waiting for her to deal with it. She was not aware of any discussion of the changes at any headteachers' meetings, and there had been no formal staff discussion about the pensions changes, although some staff had discussed it informally. Interviewees were very unclear about the details of the changes, and had not considered how they might be affected. They all talked positively of the possibility of reducing responsibilities, although one was aware that *'there is a large element of luck [in] what posts would come available and ... there's a large element of grace and favour, because in the end the management don't have to do that'*.

Despite having only a general understanding of the changes, the head had considered how the changes might relate to her succession planning work. She considered that both the phased retirement possibilities and the change to average salary calculations would provide *'another tool in managing performance'* at an individual level. She felt they might also enable heads to go part-time while colleagues took on some of their responsibilities. The governors were less aware of the potential impact of the changes to the TPS, and tended to leave issues of this kind to the headteacher.

Teacher retirement

Most of the teachers described factors such as workload, their effectiveness in their current roles, and their ability to continue to be effective (in terms of their health) as far more important than salary or pension. Several stressed that money was not their primary motivation and this was why they had not taken more interest in pensions. Only one interviewee felt that financial factors were the major reason for remaining in teaching; this was because of his frustration with current educational policies. Only one had definite retirement plans. The younger interviewees still planned to make further progress in their careers, or perhaps to move roles within the educational sector. This contributed to their fluid retirement plans and lack of interest in pensions. Most of the teachers were very attached to the school and to teaching and spoke about retirement in non-committal terms. All had lived in London for a considerable length of time, and hoped to remain in London during their retirement. London offered considerable attractions, including culture and family, although interviewees commented that living in London was expensive.

Secondary F (inner city academy)

Key issues

- The school had an unusually high proportion of young teachers, and so retirement and pensions were not central concerns.
- There were very few part-time staff.

- The principal was not aware of any information about the TPS changes being sent to the school; it seemed possible that academies may have missed out on information about the changes.
- There was a considerable contrast in attitude and career plan between the teachers from the predecessor school and those appointed to leadership roles in the academy.

Introduction

Secondary F is an academy in an inner city area of deprivation. It is housed in a new and well-equipped building. The GCSE results have been well below the national average, but are improving year on year. The school achieved a satisfactory Ofsted report in 2005, and Ofsted monitoring in 2006 reports satisfactory progress. Interviewees included the principal, deputy principal, a head of department and another teacher. There were two males and two females; two were in their mid-fifties, one early fifties and one late fifties.

Staffing

The academy started with 50% of the staff from its predecessor school; others took premature retirement (they were offered a package) or sought work elsewhere. This group formed about 75% of the original staff of the academy but they are now fewer in number. The academy now has a young staff (only 8% aged 50 and over). The average age was estimated to be about 30. The principal said that the staff was now *'more or less balanced between ... entry level teachers, the teachers in the first 3 or 4 years of teaching and others who have been over 6 years of teaching'*. Recruitment is not a problem; recent advertisements have attracted large and strong fields. Attractions include the building, the ICT facilities, and good training programmes run by the sponsor. The principal said, *'people come to earn their spurs here.'*

Very few staff work part-time (three teachers in all). The principal argued that part-timers could be problematic in terms of timetabling, particularly because they often specify when they want to work. She also identified having part-time teachers as problematic in terms of continuity for pupils, and referred to Every Child Matters, saying *'the continuity of care is a really critical one'*. In contrast the governor was very positive about the benefits of employing part-time staff, arguing that they provide *'value for money'*.

There is no pattern of retirements because so few staff have as yet retired from the new school. One teacher had retired at 60 from a post of responsibility and after a short break had returned on a part-time basis teaching three days. This was the only instance of reducing hours in the school's short history.

Pensions

The principal said that the DVD had not been received in the school, and no information had been circulated by the academy's sponsor organisation.

The four interviewees differed hugely in the level of their understanding of pensions and of the recent changes. The youngest knew very little about how pensions are calculated and was not aware that the scheme had changed before being invited to take part in the case study interview. This seemed to be mainly because retirement seemed a very distant prospect, and this interviewee was hoping take on new challenges before then. Another interviewee was well-informed about her own pension and had some awareness that there had been recent changes but thought the main impact of the changes was on new entrants to the profession; she acknowledged that her awareness was patchy and vague. The two oldest were aware of both the previous arrangements and of the changes. Their information came from teacher unions. One of them had also obtained financial advice about his pension. They also had ex-colleagues who had taken early retirement

One interviewee had reduced responsibilities from assistant head to head of department on the basis of the changed arrangements for average salary calculation.

Teacher retirements

For two of the interviewees, financial issues were a central aspect of their thinking about retirement. They both intended to work into their sixties. One had responsibilities as the only earner in the household, with children's higher education still to be undertaken and paid for. This was likely to continue for the next six years *'and so I think 61 will be the time when I would look to finishing full-time.'* This interviewee was very excited by many aspects of the job and working in the academy, but said, *'if I was absolutely secure financially I would go probably at the end of this year.'* The other was concerned about the gap between qualifying for the teachers' pension and the old age pension, and did not want to have to *'scrimp and save'*. School factors also played a part. He felt he was still making a positive contribution, and had *'something to offer'*.

For the other two interviewees, work issues were the main factors. One enjoyed her job and had given no consideration as yet to retirement or pensions. She hoped to become a headteacher, and at the moment, she could not imagine retiring and stopping work. The other still enjoyed teaching, but felt that the pressures of modern education were not what he wanted to be involved with, and so intended to retire on an actuarially reduced pension. His financial commitments were decreasing, and a number of his former colleagues had taken early retirement; he said, *'They are all having a wonderful time. They are all saying, if you want to retire get out if you can and do all the things that you want to do before it's too late.'*

Three of the interviewees talked about continuing to earn after their retirement from teaching, setting up a small business, taking on a system leadership role, and possibly working in education overseas.

Primary G (home counties commuter belt, planned co-headship)

Key issues

- Staff generally believed that the teachers' pension was a good one and that they were well off being in the scheme. However, two of the interviewees (aged 56 and over) had no idea how much they would receive and expected to investigate this much nearer the time.
- Staff were aware that the TPS had changed but had misunderstandings / limited understanding of how it had changed.
- Scheme changes had not been discussed in staff meetings or the staff room, or in headteachers' meetings. Most interviewees indicated that a letter had been circulated.
- This school has found ways to offer flexibility (of hours and responsibilities) to older teachers for a long time. None of the interviewees had made the connection that the new pensions arrangements could support and indeed enhance such opportunities for flexibility.

Introduction

Primary G is a two-form entry primary school in a small town in the home counties. The intake is predominantly white. Some classes have a high proportion of children with SEN. The percentage of pupils eligible for free school meals is around the national average level. The last three years' KS2 SATs results also matched national figures. The most recent Ofsted visit reported most aspects of the school to be *'good'*. Interviewees included three class teachers, and the deputy head and headteacher (three women, two men). With the exception of one class teacher, the interviewees were 56 or older. A governor and the LA adviser were also interviewed.

Staffing

Pupil numbers in the area are falling, and while Primary G has suffered less from this than some neighbouring schools, it has been agreed that from September it will gradually reduce to one and a half form entry. This will inevitably impact on staffing.

The head has been in post for 31 years, and the deputy for 20. The proportion of teachers aged 50 and over is above the national average for primary schools, but there are also several recently qualified teachers. It is '*relatively easy*' to recruit NQTs. However, schools in the LA have found it '*extremely difficult*' to attract heads and deputies. The head at Primary G is about to retire, and the succession arrangements are discussed in Chapter 7.

Retention in the school is good; the head said '*we seem to be able to keep our staff*'. Recruitment and retention payments have been used in particular cases to allow older teachers to shed responsibilities without losing pay. The school leadership has for many years encouraged flexibility in employment; three of the interviewees had moved between part-time and full-time work, or changed the number of days they worked part-time, to suit their particular circumstances. In addition several examples were given of teachers who have found ways to '*wind down*' as they approach retirement. For example, one teacher had first shed her curriculum responsibilities but continued to teach full-time; later she had reduced her hours to two days a week, and even after she finally '*retired*', she continued to work one morning a week on a voluntary basis and to undertake occasional supply teaching.

The headteacher felt that the presence of older teachers on the staff was beneficial '*because of their experience*', but recognised that older teachers get '*tired*'. He said:

You can rejuvenate some of them by giving them a part-time job ... and you can have a very effective 0.5 teacher because they've got the weekend and a couple of days to recover.

The teachers interviewed felt that their skills and experience were used effectively, both in undertaking a range of responsibilities, and in mentoring roles.

Pensions

While none of the interviewees considered that the pension scheme had been a factor in becoming a teacher, they had always understood that they were in a good scheme, and that they would receive a reasonable pension. However, they had little detailed understanding of how the scheme worked ('*something to do with eightieths*'), or what they themselves would receive. For example, one older interviewee said that having worked 40 years the expected pension would be two-thirds of the annual salary (rather than half, which would be correct). Only the youngest interviewee and the headteacher had sought financial advice about pensions; others said they would do so nearer the time of their retirement (despite already being in their late fifties).

Most interviewees said that a letter from the local authority about the changes to the pension scheme had been circulated to all staff, though no-one seemed to be able to remember what it said. One teacher said that the DVD had arrived, but that another teacher had taken it home to watch, and it had not been seen again. The headteacher did not remember it at all. The interviewees had not discussed TPS changes at a staff meeting or in conversation in the staff room (one teacher said this was because '*we are too busy really*'). Nor had the changes been discussed at local headteachers' meetings or meetings of the governing body.

Understanding of the TPS changes was limited, and there were a number of evident misunderstandings. Several interviewees had understood that the age at which teachers could draw their pension had been increased to 65 for younger teachers currently in post, and expressed relief that this had not affected them. One interviewee had not understood that working part-time reduces the number of years worked, rather than the average salary. None of the interviewees had a clear understanding of the phased retirement option, or saw it as in any way applicable to them.

The flexibility offered by the pensions scheme changes is clearly very much in tune with existing practice in the school. In relation to phased retirement, the head said,

If a teacher came to me and said 'I want to take half my pension and change my hours and all the rest of it, can we work something out?' I would spend the time with them trying to

work it out, and as long as I could see some benefits to the school and the children as well as them, why not?

The teachers shared this perception; one said:

I would feel fairly confident that if I did want to reduce my hours or change my working situation that I would be listened to, and if it was possible for the school to help me do that they would do it.

Teacher retirement

Four out of the five interviewees spoke of financial commitments of their children's higher education as a major factor in continuing to work to age 60; some also added mortgage payments. However, it was clear that they all enjoyed their work, and the school, and most said they would stay there until they were 60, providing their health held out. None of them intended to seek further promotion. They all spoke of paperwork as a negative aspect of teaching, and the thing they would be most happy to leave behind, but all enjoyed working with children and the satisfaction of helping the children to achieve. There was a feeling that the time would come when they had had enough of teaching: *'I will give up when I don't think I can do the job well'*. Most of them indicated that they would continue to work in some way after they retired. This was partly because, having worked in a 'people' job for so long, they would find the lack of human contact very difficult, and partly because they wanted some regular structure to their lives. Suggestions included supply teaching, and a variety of types of voluntary work. Only the headteacher, who was already 60, had a definite plan as to when and how he would retire. Even a teacher approaching his 59th birthday was undecided whether to work just one more year, or three or four.

Primary H (small industrial town, large school, co-headship arrangement)

Key issues

- There is a developing pattern of older teachers reducing their hours, which the teachers strongly advocate.
- This has partly come about from the headteacher's move to part-time work, which, although not planned, has stimulated other older teachers to do the same.
- The provision of pensions information in plain English with worked examples was very much appreciated.

Introduction

Primary H is a large primary school for pupils aged 3-11 in a small industrial town. The school is very popular and is over-subscribed. The majority of pupils are white. The school has a higher than average level of achievement and was given a good Ofsted report at the last inspection.

Interviewees included the two part-time head teachers (one acting), and two class teachers. Two of the interviewees were in their late fifties, one was in their mid-fifties and another was in their early fifties. Three interviewees worked part time (0.5 in each case). A governor was also interviewed.

Staffing

The school has a lower than average proportion of full-time staff aged 50 and over. However, it has higher than average proportions of part-time teachers, and of the four teachers in the school aged 50 and over, three are working part-time.

Staff retention is good, and recruitment has not been problematic. The headteacher explained that he had appointed all the teachers in the school during the time in which he had been there, and

that he would *'move heaven and earth to keep them there'*. There has only been one retirement in the 20 years that the headteacher has been there.

The headteacher, and consequently the governing body, are very supportive of those teachers who wish to work part-time. Recently, three members of older staff, including the headteacher, have reduced their hours and moved to part-time working. The headteacher moved to part-time work two years ago, when recovering from an illness. He now works 0.5 as a part-time head, and is usually assisted by a full-time younger colleague who works 0.5 as headteacher and 0.5 as deputy head. She is assisted by a deputy head who works 0.5. To further complicate this situation, the co-head /deputy had had a maternity leave, and consequently the 0.5 deputy had worked part-time as acting head.

Interviewees were very positive about this arrangement, explaining that it benefited both the staff involved, who have been able to reduce their hours as they near retirement, and the school, which has retained its headteacher for longer than it would otherwise. Teachers who had moved to part-time working were also very positive:

I think having this chance to ease yourself into retirement is extremely useful, something that all teachers should think about before they actually stop.

The younger co-head has also benefited from professional development and mentoring. The headteacher said that part-time working was a *'real advantage for schools if they are prepared to be flexible and to think outside the box a bit.'* He explained that there were benefits to the school in terms of budget. For the price of 0.5 of an older, more experienced teacher, he can employ a full-time NQT. In this way, he has been able to increase his pupil-teacher ratio, while older staff can also be energised and pass on experience to younger teachers. The headteacher also explained that he felt that part-time working was more flexible for the school than job-share positions. He believed these could be restrictive and more difficult to fill.

Pensions

There were varying degrees of understanding in relation to pensions and the changes to the TPS. Apart from the headteacher who was clearly quite knowledgeable about pensions, the other interviewees understood their pensions less and were less aware of the changes made to the scheme.

Interviewees appreciated the information sheet provided by the research team and spoke of the complicated nature of much of the information they had received about their pensions prior to this. One teacher was relieved to see *'in writing'* confirmation of the changes to the calculation of the average salary as she had been unsure of these. Another had not realised that she could retire at 55. Sources of information mentioned by interviewees included teacher unions, the TPS phone line and informal discussions with colleagues.

There were varying views as to the benefits of the phased retirement option. As three of the interviewees had already moved to part-time working as they neared retirement, the introduction of phased retirement was of less relevance to these interviewees, although they could see the benefits of it. The headteacher was not sure how attractive an option phased retirement would be for people, but acknowledged that it opened up other possibilities. In contrast, class teachers could see more benefits to phased retirement.

Teacher retirement

While finance was perceived by all the interviewees to be an important factor in their retirement decisions, the teachers explained that the most important factor was whether or not they were still enjoying teaching and whether they were able to be an effective teacher. There was also a view that it was better to retire while you were still enjoying teaching. As one teacher explained, *'I've enjoyed teaching too much to finish it on a low really.'*

While the interviewees clearly enjoyed their jobs very much, and loved working with children, like many teachers in other schools, they also spoke of increasing tiredness and *'burn-out'* as they got

older. Time spent planning and finding an acceptable work-life balance was an issue for all of the teachers. Other personal factors were also taken into account, with teachers talking about their partners' retirement plans, and the desire to spend more time with their partners.

Two of the interviewees have set retirement plans for 2008; one will retire a few months early and another planned to take normal age retirement. Both teachers planned to delay drawing their pensions until they were 60 or later. All three teachers who had moved to part-time working as they near retirement felt that their retirement will have been made easier by the fact they had reduced their hours prior to leaving completely. It has allowed them to get used to the idea of retirement and to consider what they would like to do when they leave teaching. As one teacher explained, *'it is a nice gentle way in'* to retirement. The idea of reducing hours prior to retirement also appealed to the full-time interviewee.

Primary J (large urban school in deprived area with transient population)

Key issues

- Finance is a major factor encouraging teachers to stay in the profession in this school.
- Some support for the changes which have been introduced but none of the interviewees felt able to take advantage because of the issues relating to finance and the need to maximise pensions.
- Headteacher and senior leadership team members could see benefits for the school to some of the teachers taking phased retirement. These included financial benefits of employing younger, cheaper teachers, as well as bringing in *'new blood'*.

Introduction

Primary J is a very large, urban primary school (3-11 years). The school has a transient population and is in an area of deprivation, but was praised in the most recent Ofsted report for making good progress in terms of improving its pupils' attainment levels.

The headteacher, two members of the school leadership team and three class teachers were interviewed (five women and one man). Most of the interviewees were in their early fifties, while two were in their mid-fifties. A governor was also interviewed.

Staffing

Recruitment is an issue for the school and the headteacher believed this is related to people's perceptions of the area; that it is *'a hard area to teach in'*. Many of the pupils have issues with personal and social development.

While recruitment is problematic, the school has few difficulties with teacher retention; many of the staff have only ever worked in this school, and the proportion of teachers over the age of 50 working in the school is slightly higher than the national average.

The headteacher has only experienced one retirement in her time with the school; most teachers tend to work up until they are 60, and two members of staff still work at the school on a supply basis having retired at 60.

There are few part-time teachers in the school. This is not because the headteacher is against part-time working, but because no one has requested this type of working. The headteacher thought that it would be beneficial for some of the older staff to move to part-time in the lead up to their retirement, but that people were mainly happy to just *'carry on doing what they've always done'*.

Pensions

Broadly speaking, the teachers in this school had quite a good understanding of their pensions and of the options available to them. Some of the female interviewees acknowledged, however, that it was something about which their partners were more knowledgeable.

The main sources of their information about pensions mentioned by the interviewees were teacher unions and partners. Some also referred to the Prudential DVD which had been shown to all staff at a staff meeting. This was the only case study school in which this happened. Not all of the staff remembered having watched the DVD, and its usefulness was questioned by some of those interviewed.

While there had been little formal interest from teachers in the possibility of phased retirement or moving to part-time working, it had been discussed informally among headteachers at headteachers' meetings. There were a number of heads in the area who could see the potential in the changes and would perhaps think about moving to part-time as they reach retirement age.

The headteacher did not see the changes to the TPS having any real impact on the staffing of the school, because the teachers there were reluctant to change. She did, however, think that it might be beneficial for some of the teachers to consider phased retirement or moving to part-time working as a means of achieving a better work/life balance:

Some teachers are very, very expensive and they are hanging on by their fingernails and they haven't got the energy and enthusiasm that perhaps is needed. And so working part-time might give them more of a work/life balance but some people...a lot of people particularly in this school carry on doing what they have always done and I think it takes quite a bold person to decide that they are going to take part-time.

The governor agreed that there were potential benefits for individual teachers, and also thought there might be budgetary benefits for the school. If an older, more expensive teacher was to go part-time this would free up money for NQTs and would subsequently bring 'new blood' into the school.

While the teachers interviewed could see the benefits to phased retirement, they all indicated that it was not financially viable in their personal situations. As one explained:

It would have been lovely, that would have been excellent at 55 and then just go back to doing 2 days a week or support work that would be lovely. But I really can't see that at the moment anyway.

Teacher retirement

The most prominent retirement factor in this school was finance. A number of the female interviewees had breaks in their contributions to the scheme, either having worked part-time, and/or done supply teaching, and not all of the interviewees had opted in to the scheme when working part-time. Consequently, all but one of the interviewees emphasised the importance of the need to maximise their pension. Financial commitments such as mortgages and the cost of funding children through university were mentioned by nearly all the interviewees.

All the teachers clearly still enjoyed working with children. However, there were some aspects of teaching which they enjoyed less, such as paperwork and changing government initiatives. Achieving a satisfactory work-life balance was also an issue, with preparation and planning taking up teachers' personal time.

The fact that most interviewees were in their early to mid 50s meant that most of their retirement plans were very fluid. All but one anticipated continuing in teaching to age 60 rather than retiring early, but acknowledged that they might not feel that way once they were nearer that age. Most of those who anticipated remaining in the profession until they were 60 indicated that they would have to do so mainly for financial reasons.

Primary K (small rural school serving several villages)

Key issues

- The impact of retirement can be very significant in a small primary school.
- Information about pensions and the pensions changes can be more difficult to obtain in a small primary school
- The balance between respecting an individual's privacy and encouraging them to think about retirement may be even harder to strike in a small primary school.

Introduction

Primary K is a community primary serving a number of small villages outside a medium sized town. The school has three classes, and numbers on roll vary considerably between years depending on the demographics of the village. Currently the school is oversubscribed. The most recent Ofsted report described an effective school with good teaching and good standards.

Most of the pupils come from white backgrounds, and pupil mobility is low. The proportion of children eligible for free school meals is well below average, and the proportion with special educational needs below average. A teacher described the area as *'quite a posh village, it's mostly white middle-class'*.

Interviewees included the headteacher, and two female teachers. They were in their mid-fifties. A governor was also interviewed.

Staffing

There are four members of teaching staff: two full-time class teachers, a part-time teacher and the headteacher who shares a class with the part-time teacher. For many years the school staff has been very stable, with the same teachers in the school for almost ten years. Last year, one teacher retired, and a NQT has been recruited. There were a number of applicants for this post. While the staff felt that the new teacher had settled in well, they commented that it was a difficult time, because *'it's a quarter of your workforce'*.

The staff is too small to identify a pattern of retirement. The three long serving staff members are likely to retire *'over the next five or ten years'* (two are the same age, and it is possible that *'half the workforce will go in the same year'*). There was some awareness among the staff that this would have a significant effect on the school, and bring change:

[The head is] *not going to be here forever*. [The head has] *spent 10 years doing everything you know sort of being chief governor and headteacher and you know that's going to have to change*.

However, in a small school such as this, it is perhaps more difficult to get the balance between planning for when staff retire while not making staff feel pressured into making retirement decisions. A governor explained:

I don't really want to worry about [teacher retirements] at the moment but yes, ... there's some stability in the school and that's rather nice. There will be some turnover in the school, I'm sure, in the course of the next five or ten years. I'm not entirely certain of the age of the teachers. I've got some indication from [the head] about his future plans. There will be a new headteacher some time in the next ten years I guess and other teachers ... there will be other teachers I'm sure, in due course.

Pensions

The teachers did not feel that they understood the details of their pensions. One teacher was convinced that she would have to work until 65.

Prior to the research visit, teachers in the school had not been aware of the detail of the changes made to the pension scheme. As one teacher said *'We're out on a limb here. In a big school information would circulate more easily but here nobody's got it to circulate it.'*

However, teachers' workload levels were also a factor contributing to their lack of information about pensions. The head's recent absence, the new member of staff, and the sick-leave of another member of staff meant that teachers felt *'far too busy'* to look at much of the paperwork they received. In addition, they felt that much of the paperwork they received was unnecessary, and this made them less likely to attend to it.

Teacher retirement

All of the interviewees commented on the changes that they had seen to the profession during their teaching career. They felt less autonomous and more pressured. The changes that teachers identified in their work were factors pushing them towards retirement. All were attracted by the idea of some voluntary work overseas, and the prospect of more time for activities such as this made (early) retirement more attractive.

The teachers were aware that in order to gain promotion they would need to leave the school. However, they were very attached to the school and pupils, and unsure if they wished to disrupt the routines they had established. They were also unsure if any other school would take them on at their age. One teacher was explicit that she was not interested in career development, even though it would *'bump up'* her pension.

None of the teachers had firm retirement plans. Their plans were shaped by the kinds of things they hoped to do in retirement (all of the teachers expressed interest in some form of voluntary work) and by their families and partners. Financial commitments (to ex-partners and children) were a smaller consideration.

Special L (non-maintained selective residential secondary for pupils with a specific physical/sensory need)

Key issues

- As in most special schools, the teachers in this school tend to be older, and many work part-time.
- The school is keen to retain teachers with the necessary specialist skills and knowledge, and the interviewees intend to stay in the school where their skills are needed until they retire.
- The headteacher felt that the TPS changes could be useful in encouraging older teachers within management to return to the classroom where their expertise would be valuable.

Introduction

Special L is a non-maintained residential special school (4-19) with charitable status. The interviews were conducted with staff in the secondary school. The school caters for pupils of above average educational potential, who have a specific physical/ sensory need. Pupils attend the school from all over the UK. The school's GCSE results are well above the national average and it was described as excellent in the latest Ofsted report.

Interviewees included the headteacher, and four teachers (four women and one man). The majority of the interviewees were in their early fifties, and one was near to normal retirement age. A governor was also interviewed.

Staffing

The specialised nature of the school and the attention paid to staff training means that staffing is fairly stable. The number of full-time teachers over 50 was in line with the national average for

special schools. Teachers in the school recognised, however, that they were *'getting a fairly aged staff'*. The school has not encountered many problems in recruiting staff to the school, although the head admitted that he did foresee *'problems coming'* in the future because of the age of the workforce.

The headteacher explained that the school tries to accommodate teachers who wish to work flexibly. Part-time posts are generated internally when teachers move from full-time to part-time within the school when their circumstances change; most often this has been women returning to work part-time after having children. The head said that he is therefore *'always trying to appoint full-timers.'*

There is not a pattern of early retirement in the school. As the head explained, *'It's normally 60 really. It's quite, as Tony Blair would say, bog standard really.'*

The headteacher thought that it is vital that schools try and retain older teachers, particularly in the classroom. Both he and some of the other teachers felt that older staff should be brought back into the classroom rather than moving up into management as they near retirement.

There was an awareness of succession planning at a senior level in the school. The current head was *'succession planned'*, and was groomed for the headship as a deputy head, while succession planning for future heads is also ongoing in the school.

Pensions

There was a sliding scale of understanding of pensions amongst those interviewed, ranging from the headteacher who was very knowledgeable to those who knew nothing about their pension and had little idea of what they would be entitled to when they retired. One teacher had not realised that the phased retirement option was available from the age of 55, and said that *'it just changes the goalposts slightly for me'*.

Much of the interviewees' knowledge as to the most recent changes to the TPS appeared to have been prompted by their involvement with this research. The school did not appear to have received any information relating to the changes, and they had not been formally discussed in the school, although teachers indicated that they had discussed them informally with colleagues. Most of the teachers had received some kind of financial advice, and some had also attended union workshops. There was little awareness of the changes to the TPS amongst governors, and the governing body had not discussed the potential impact of the changes.

The headteacher felt that the previous pension arrangements had acted as a barrier and that the actuarial reduction was seen as *'punitive'* by many teachers. He was hopeful that the new changes would make a difference, in that they would give teachers more options.

I think it's this fact that you can continue in a school where you have status and a real place in the firmament really. Go back to teaching which is what brought us all into the profession in the beginning. Undertake a few years of lower level work in terms of remuneration but have the scope to call upon your previous salary in the calculations that will ultimately determine your pension.

Teachers agreed that there was potential in the recent changes for a possible impact on teachers' retirement trends. Several indicated that they might realistically take up phased retirement, but that they would need to have a more definite idea of the financial side of things before committing to it. However, while interviewees were positive about the changes to the scheme, they did not think that these changes would encourage teachers to stay in the profession beyond the normal retirement age. Interviewees also dismissed the idea of teachers working as classroom assistants. As one teacher said, *'it would drive me potty'*.

Teacher retirement

The teachers identified a number of different factors which impacted on their retirement decisions. Factors encouraging teachers to remain in teaching included financial commitments such as

university fees and mortgage repayments, as well as the need to remain in teaching to increase their pensions.

Other factors included their enjoyment of teaching and their love of working with the pupils. However, teachers also spoke of how physically tiring teaching was and how they felt they had less energy as they got older. Factors outside the school also encouraged teachers to retire, such as travel, property development and spending more time with partners and family.

Only one of the interviewees had definite retirement plans, and planned to retire nearly a year early, in summer 2007. The rest of the interviewees had no set retirement plans, but the majority anticipated that they would leave teaching before reaching 60. All of the teachers thought they would remain teaching in Special School L until they retired.

Special M (large school in urban area for pupils aged 2 to 19 with physical and multi-sensory impairments)

Key issues

- The headteacher had initially been concerned about the number of part-time teachers, but had grown to realise the benefits of this way of working.
- There was considerable misinformation about pensions in this school, in part because teachers did not wish to retire yet, and were not interested in investigating pensions issues, and also because they felt uncomfortable discussing them in the staff room in front of the large number of support staff in the school.
- Many teachers stay in the school after the age of 60. Interviewees were positive about the effects of the new pensions regulations on creating even more possibilities for this.

Introduction

Special M is a large special school catering for pupils from 2 to 19 with a range of severe physical and multi-sensory impairments. It is located in a large urban area, and provides support to many physically disabled pupils in other schools in the area. Pupils come from a wide area and from very diverse backgrounds. Almost half of the pupils are eligible for free school meals, and half speak English as an additional language. Approximately one-fifth of pupils have a life-limiting condition. The school has very low attainment due to the nature of pupils' disabilities. Ofsted described the school as good, with some excellent features, and noted that the teaching was good and sometimes outstanding.

In the school we interviewed the headteacher and four teachers. Three interviewees were in their mid-fifties, and two in their late fifties. We also interviewed a governor and a member of support staff.

Staffing

Almost three-quarters of the teaching staff are aged 50 or over. This is well above the national average (nationally, fifty per cent of special school teachers are aged 50 or over). The percentage of staff working part-time is lower than the national average for both special schools and primary schools. The head and the governor both talked about the value of having part-time teachers: *'When I first started I was very worried by it, but was completely won over by it, and now, where we can, we take that flexible approach with support staff and teaching staff.'*

Recruitment of teaching staff has not been a problem; however both the head and governor expressed concern over recruitment to more senior positions. Several of the senior teachers interviewed explained they had no desire to take on a headship. Retention in the school is good, and all of the teachers that we spoke to had more than ten years service in the school.

At the time of the interviews, three members of the teaching staff had continued to work beyond age 60, and several interviewees commented that there was a pattern of working past 60.

We spoke with one member of support staff who had been a teacher at the school for twenty years, and had built up 35 years of pensionable service, ending up as deputy head. At age 60 she had drawn her pension, but continued to work three days a week in an administrative role, doing work much of which she had previously done as deputy head. She explained that what she was earning in this role did not compare to what she had been earning as a teacher, but that she enjoyed being in school, and knew the school very well. She envisaged staying in the school for the time being, but *'not long'*.

Pensions

The teachers who were interviewed had only a limited understanding of their pensions. Several had incorrect understandings of aspects of the scheme including the rights of partners to benefits; the feasibility of taking the lump sum separately from monthly pension; and the way in which the pension was calculated.

Several teachers were unaware of the details of the changes to the TPS. One was unaware of the average salary changes, and several believed the Normal Retirement Age had changed to 65 for existing members of the scheme. None of them understood phased retirement. Several interviewees said had hoped that the researcher could answer some questions, and commented that they now realised they needed to take more interest in the information they received.

Teachers' sources of information were their unions (several were union reps), talking to their partners, or to teachers who had already retired, or (in one case) a financial advisor. None reported any discussion of pensions issues in the staffroom, despite the large number of older teachers. One teacher said she actively avoided talking about the teachers' pensions in the staff room, because teachers were a minority in the staff, and she was conscious that support staff would not have such good pensions.

Teacher retirement

All except one interviewee expressed immense job satisfaction, and had not really considered what they might do in retirement or at what age they might retire. This was put forward by several interviewees as a reason for their lack of interest in pensions information.

Several interviewees were considering working past 60. This resulted from a combination of high job satisfaction and a concern over the impact of a large number of retirements on the school. Even an interviewee who was recovering from major surgery expressed the hope that he might be able to continue in teaching until 65. Financial factors were seen as much less important.

Only one teacher described retirement as an attractive option and planned to undertake further study and to move to the country. For this interviewee, building up a larger pension was the main reason to continue in teaching. This teacher was the only teacher with plans for retirement, and even she was not sure at what age she would leave teaching, and talked about options such as moving to part-time work or supply teaching before retiring.

Ref: DCSF-RR024

ISBN: 978 1 84775 108 9

© British Market Research Bureau 2008

www.dcsf.gov.uk/research

Published by the Department for
Children, Schools and Families