



Department  
for Education

# Equality Analysis

National Scholarship Fund

**Title**

National Scholarship Fund for Teachers

**Description of the policy:**

The Schools White Paper 'The importance of Teaching' published on 24 November 2010 announced that a 'competitive national scholarship scheme would be introduced to support the professional development' of teachers. The first round of the scheme was administered by the Training and Development Agency for Schools (TDA), and thereafter by the Teaching Agency, and will give teachers 'the opportunity to deepen their subject knowledge and renew their passion which brought them into the teaching profession'.

The aims of the scholarship scheme are to:

- Encourage serving teachers to pursue knowledge independently to Masters level and beyond making it easier for teachers to access Masters level CPD in their subject area or to access expert seminars. Other highly valuable CPD activities will also be included.
- Bring about culture change to create expectations within the sector about the importance of scholarship throughout a teachers' career.
- Share learning, knowledge and expertise across the school system.

The SEN Green Paper published on 9 March 2011 announced plans for a SEN Scholarship Scheme. The SEN Scheme will provide scholarships for teachers to extend their knowledge relating to SEN including specific impairments and disability.

£2m/£2m/£2m (in 2011-14) has been made available for the combined scholarships scheme. 50% of this funding has been earmarked for SEN scholarships and the remaining 50% split between the three priority subject areas of English, mathematics and science. We anticipate funding 600-800 scholarships per round.

The scholarship fund is open to all qualified teachers in eligible schools and sixth form colleges.

**The evidence base**

Evidence collected to indicate likely impact of this policy/project on race/disability/gender has focused on the benefits that CPD will have on the efficacy of teachers and the associated improvements in outcomes for children.

In 'The Case for Change' issued by the Department in 2010 it was noted that:

*'Providing good teaching is the most important thing a school can do for its pupils: progress depends more on the quality of teaching than on anything else.'*

The publication also notes that research in the US shows that an eight year old consistently given a teacher in the top quintile of performance was found to perform 50 percentile points better three years later than a similarly performing eight year old given a teacher in the bottom quintile of performance. Analysis of data in England supports these findings.

We know that whilst there does not appear to be a consistent relationship between teacher education (the level of their qualifications) and pupil outcomes, there is more agreement about the importance of subject knowledge.

A review by Wilson et al (2001) found a positive connection between teachers' preparation in their subject matter and student performance but also noted that there is a threshold of subject knowledge necessary for effective teaching, beyond which higher levels are not associated with student gains.

In maths and science, subject-specific degrees were found to have a positive impact on pupil test scores in those subjects.

Goldhaber & Brewer (1997, 1998, and 2000) found that pupil achievement gains in maths were positively associated with teachers who earned their Master's degree in the subject but that it is subject knowledge rather than general qualification level which is important.

Smithers and Robinson (2005) found that teachers' expertise in physics (as measured by qualification) was the second most powerful predictor of pupil achievement in GCSE and A-Level Physics (after pupil ability).

Much of the evidence is from secondary schools, and evidence from primary schools is more mixed.

Pupil achievement in terms of the 5 A\*-C GCSE (including English and Maths) indicator shows much lower achievement for both black pupils (44.5%) and pupils with SEN (16.3%) than for the average of all pupils (50.7%). Improvements can be related to teacher quality, so any initiative which is intended to improve teacher quality should also be likely to improve chances for pupils from BME, SEND and Gypsy Roma groups.

### **Challenges and opportunities**

The scheme has the potential to reduce existing inequalities in pupil achievement as set out above. Scholarships are awarded to teachers to increase their subject knowledge in the compulsory subjects (English, mathematics and science) for all children aged 5 – 16. The SEN element of the scheme has a similar potential in achievement for pupils with SEN, and also the potential to make positive steps towards promoting equality.

In Round 1 the equalities data collected was not robust enough as some 20% of awards did not have useable teacher reference numbers for matching with the School Workforce Census<sup>1</sup> data. In future rounds teacher reference numbers will be collected electronically and we expect this method to enable a more robust comparison of equalities data. Initial feedback from Round 2 shows this has not in fact been the case (some 23% of applications did not have useable teacher reference numbers), but has identified where improvements to the electronic form can be made to hopefully realise the expected improvement.

There is an information gap in the protected characteristics data as information about gender reassignment, marriage/civil partnership, pregnancy/maternity, religion/belief and

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<sup>1</sup> The School Workforce Census is a statutory collection of individual level data on teachers and support staff from local authorities, local authority-maintained schools and academies. It provides the Department with important information about the workforce, such as age, gender and ethnicity.

sexual orientation is not collected at either application stage or in the School Workforce Census. However, we do not foresee any adverse impacts on any teacher or group of teachers.

## **Equality analysis**

### Impact on teachers

All teachers in the maintained sector are eligible to apply for the National Scholarship Fund for Teachers. We have no way of anticipating the ethnicity or gender of applicants, or those that will be successful. The Scholarship Fund aims to raise teacher quality by giving teachers the opportunity to deepen their subject knowledge to Master's level. This scheme will enhance the skills and knowledge of the teachers awarded a scholarship and will therefore benefit children with SEN, disabilities and other disadvantaged groups to a greater extent than other groups.

Equal Opportunities monitoring took place at the application stage of the first round of the scheme in line with the following process:

Applicants are assessed anonymously using a pre-determined open and transparent assessment process against set criteria to ensure equality and fairness. Applicants are allocated a unique number and assessors will only be able to see this number and cannot trace back.

Further Equal Opportunities monitoring took place at the award stage of the first round. The results of the equal opportunities monitoring of application and award stages for Round 1 of the scheme were evaluated in a Quantitative Analysis document produced by the Teaching Agency in March 2012. Round 1 data indicated that protected groups were not adversely affected and in the case of Black Minority Ethnic groups they benefitted favourably from the scheme in comparison with other groups.

Equal opportunities monitoring at application stage of Round 2 indicate that protected groups were not adversely affected and in the case of Black Minority Ethnic groups they benefitted more favourably from the scheme in comparison with other groups, compared to Round 1.

We do not expect that the scholarship fund will impact adversely on any teacher or group of teachers.

Teachers receiving an award will have to provide evidence of impact resulting from their CPD activity on both their pupils and school. They will also be required to demonstrate how they have shared their increased subject knowledge across the profession.

### Impact on pupils

We would anticipate that improving teacher quality would have a positive impact on those pupil groups who would normally be at risk of low achievement for example, BME, SEND and Romany Gypsy.

**Next steps**

Further quantitative and qualitative reports will be produced periodically by the Teaching Agency between June 2012 to September 2013 and beyond. This on-going evaluation will include analysing the quality of applications and their associated progression rates and reviewing regularly lessons learnt from the scheme to inform policy development and future rounds.

Teachers receiving an award are required to provide plans on how they will demonstrate and evaluate the impact on pupils and their school following their CPD activity. This information will be used to help determine the impact on pupil outcomes by teachers with increased subject knowledge. We would expect to see relative benefits to / an impact on some of the minority groups of children such as BME, SEND, and Romany Gypsy over time.



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