

# *Becoming a Teacher*

## Teachers' Experiences of Initial Teacher Training, Induction and Early Professional Development

Final Report

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and Ipsos MORI Social Research Institute



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## **Abbreviations**

AST - Advanced Skills Teacher  
BA/BSc - Bachelor of Arts/Bachelor of Science  
BaT - Becoming a Teacher (research project)  
BEd - Bachelor of Education  
BME - Black and Minority ethnic  
BTEC - Business and Technology Education Council  
CEDP - Career Entry and Development Profile  
CPD - Continuing Professional Development  
DCSF - Department for Children, Schools and Families  
DfES - Department for Education and Skills  
D&T - Design and Technology  
EAL - English as an Additional Language  
EPD - Early Professional Development  
ESOL - English as a Second Language  
FE - Further Education  
GORs - Government Office Regions  
GTC - General Teaching Council for England  
GRTP - Graduate and Registered Teacher Programme  
GTP - Graduate Teacher Programme  
HEI - Higher Education Institution  
HMI - Her Majesty's Inspectorate  
HoD - Head of Department  
ICT - Information Communications Technology  
INSET - In-service Training  
ITE - Initial Teacher Education  
ITP - Initial Teacher Preparation  
ITT - Initial Teacher Training  
LA - Local Authority  
LEA - Local Education Authority  
LSA - Learning Support Assistant  
MFL - Modern Foreign Languages  
NQT - Newly Qualified Teacher  
Ofsted - the Office for Standards in Education, Children's Services and Skills  
PE - Physical Education

PGCE - Postgraduate Certificate of Education  
PPA - Planning, Preparation and Assessment  
PSHE - Personal, Social and Health Education  
QTS - Qualified Teacher Status  
RTP - Registered Teacher Programme  
SCITT - School-centred Initial Teacher Training  
SATs - Standard Assessment Tests  
SEF - Self-evaluation form  
SEN - Special Educational Needs  
SLT - Senior Leadership Team  
SMT - Senior Management Team  
TDA - Training and Development Agency for Schools  
TTA - Teacher Training Agency

# Executive Summary

## Introduction

The *Becoming a Teacher* (BaT) study, a six-year longitudinal research project (2003-2009), set out to explore beginner teachers' experiences of initial teacher training (ITT), Induction and early professional development in England, including:

- the reasons that some did not complete their ITT, others completed ITT but did not take up a teaching post, and others took up a teaching post but subsequently left the profession; and
- the extent to which beginner teachers' experiences of ITT, Induction and early career progression, and their retention or attrition, were subject to variation relating to the ITT route that they followed, encompassing university-administered undergraduate and postgraduate programmes, employment-based and school-based programmes.

## Research Design

The study tracked teachers who sought to enter the profession via a range of different ITT routes, between the beginning of one-year programmes or the beginning of the final year of two-, three- or four-year ITT programmes, and (for those who took up teaching posts and were still in teaching at this point the end of their fourth year in post. Data were generated via:

- an annual survey, completed by an initial sample of 4790 student teachers ('Wave 1') and by 1443 respondents in the final year of the study ('Wave 6');
- annual in-depth, face-to-face interviews with a sub-sample of 'case study' beginning teachers (85 participants at Wave 1; 48 at Wave 6); and
- regular email exchanges ('ejournals') with case study teachers between Wave 3 (46 participants) and Wave 6 (25 participants) of the study.

## Key Findings

### ***Student teachers' motives for undertaking ITT and their preconceptions, expectations and concerns about ITT and teaching***

- The two motives which were reported as having 'strongly attracted' the largest percentage of survey respondents to undertake ITT were the prospect of '*helping young people to learn*' (78%) and of '*working with children or young people*' (59%).
- The majority of student teachers reported that prior to starting their ITT:
  - they had been particularly looking forward to '*being in classrooms and interacting with pupils*' (reported by 84% of survey respondents), '*developing an understanding of teaching and learning*' (73%) and '*learning to teach my subject*' (60%);

- they had been concerned about workload (69% of survey respondents) and behaviour management (66%); and
- they had thought that it was very important that they developed their '*ability to bring about pupil learning*' (91%) and their '*ability to maintain discipline in the classroom*' (86%).
- Prior to starting their ITT, most trainees reported that they had held a practical, classroom-orientated approach to learning to teach and had been sceptical about the value of the more 'theoretical' aspects of ITT provision.
- Nine-tenths of survey respondents were following their first choice ITT route and nearly half (46%) were attracted to their ITT programme by the '*balance of in-school and out-of-school training*'.
  - The geographical location of their ITT programme had been influential in the choices of route and provider of over three-quarters of respondents (78%).
  - Almost half of case study interviewees (40 out of 85) reported being attracted to their ITT course by the duration of the programme, with some wanting to complete their ITT in the shortest period possible and others wanting to ensure that their course was long enough to enable them to receive a thorough preparation.
- Ninety-two per cent of student teachers reported that they had been ('very' or 'fairly') confident, prior to the beginning of their teacher training, that their ITT would prepare them to be effective teachers.
- Four-fifths of respondents indicated that they expected to be in teaching in 5 years' time and 5% reported that they did not intend to still be in the teaching profession by this time.
- In a number of respects there were significant differences between the reported motives, preconceptions and concerns of student teachers who chose to follow different ITT routes. For example:
  - those following university-administered PGCE programmes were more likely than those from other ITT routes to state that a desire to '*train alongside people in my peer group*' was an influence on their choice of route.

### ***Student teachers' experiences and evaluations of their ITT***

- Most student teachers who took part in the telephone survey (97%) reported feeling ('very' or 'fairly') confident that their ITT had prepared them to be an effective teacher.
- Positive aspects of student teachers' experiences were most commonly associated with:
  - establishing good relationships with pupils;
  - feeling that they were bringing about pupil learning;

- experiencing good relationships with and support from their mentors and/or tutors; and
  - their perceptions of their development as teachers.
- Over three-quarters of survey respondents (79%) rated the support they received during their ITT as ‘good’ or ‘very good’.
- The majority of case study trainees stated that their school-based experiences were the most valuable aspect of their ITT.
- Most survey respondents (84%) reported their relationships with their school-based mentors as ‘very good’ or ‘good’ and 88% reported ‘good’ or ‘very good’ relationships with other teachers in their school-based placements.
- Case study interviewees perceived that school-based mentors were most helpful when they:
  - provided ideas and techniques for teaching;
  - provided encouragement;
  - advised on workload issues; and
  - were accessible and available.
- Case study data indicate that HEI-based aspects of ITT were considered most valuable where they were perceived to have clear practical utility for trainees’ work in schools and, specifically, where they related to:
  - lesson planning;
  - classroom management;
  - differentiation; and
  - educational policy and legal obligations.
- Interviewees also valued the opportunities for meeting fellow student teachers that time in the HEI setting afforded.
- Whilst some case study interviewees were sceptical about the value of ‘theoretical’<sup>1</sup> work:
  - 66% of survey respondents stated that the balance between the theoretical and practical elements of the programme was ‘about right’; and

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<sup>1</sup> By ‘theoretical’ work, trainees tended to refer to those elements of ITT which, for them, did not have direct ‘practical’ relevance to classroom teaching. This might include, for particular trainees, knowledge about how children learn, the study of developmental psychology, subject content knowledge, legal issues such as those relating to child protection, and the preparation for and writing of assignments.

- 85% felt that the links between the theoretical and practical elements of their programme were 'usually' or 'always' clear.
- Negative experiences of being a student teacher were most frequently associated with:
  - issues relating to pupil behaviour;
  - feeling unsupported;
  - assessments of their teaching; and
  - workload.
- Where trainees experienced problematic relationships with their formal mentors some described benefiting from a (compensatory) type of *informal dispersed mentoring*, where other teachers in the placement school offered support.
- Teacher educators from the ITT programmes that case study trainees were following identified pressures of time and workload, plus the availability of suitable placement schools and school-based mentors, as constraints on their ITT provision.
- There were some differences in the reported experiences of those student teachers who followed different ITT routes. For example:
  - trainees who had followed employment-based and school-centred programmes tended to give higher ratings of the support they received and their relationships with mentors and other school-based colleagues than those who had followed other ITT routes; while
  - those who followed Flexible PGCE and more traditional university-administered PGCE programmes tended to give lower ratings of the support they received.
- Nevertheless, we should be wary of making generalisations about differences between ITT routes: on some questions (e.g. trainees' ratings of the support they received) there were also statistically significant differences between the reported experiences of student teachers following the *same* ITT route with *different* providers.

### ***Newly qualified teachers' experiences of their first year of teaching and Induction***

- Nearly nine-tenths (87%) of respondents to the Wave 3 survey reported obtaining a permanent or fixed-term teaching post in the year after completing their ITT. A further 7% were working as supply teachers.
  - Nearly a third (32%) of NQTs secured a post in a school in which they had undertaken a placement during their ITT.
  - The most frequently reported difficulty in finding a first teaching post was finding a post in a preferred location (34%).

- The majority (93%) of survey respondents indicated that they were enjoying teaching. High points during the first year in post were most associated with:
  - good relationships with pupils;
  - perceptions of pupil learning and their role in bringing this about; and
  - good relationships with colleagues.
- 97% of survey respondents stated that they had enjoyed 'good' (26%) or 'very good' (71%) relationships with their pupils; while
  - 97% also rated their relationships with '*other teaching staff*' as 'good' or 'very good'; and
  - over three-quarters (77%) of respondents rated the support they had received as 'good' or 'very good'.
- The majority of survey respondents who had held a teaching post during their first year of teaching (88%) reported having had access to a formal Induction programme.
  - Nearly all of these (99%) reported having had an Induction mentor; and
  - 94% reported 'good' or 'very good' relationships with their mentor.
- '*Colleagues at school / college*' was the most frequently given response (44%) to a survey question asking who or what had most helped respondents in working towards the Induction Standards.
- Over half of the survey respondents (54%) stated that nothing had hindered them in working towards the Induction standards, whilst others mentioned workload (11%) and lack of support from other staff (5%) as hindrances.
- Forty-nine of the 73 case study participants interviewed at the end of their first year of teaching described their workload as extensive.
  - 49 per cent of those surveyed stated that in a standard working week, they worked 16 hours or more in addition to the timetabled school day;
  - Over a third (35%) of respondents who worked full-time reported receiving 5 hours or more of non-contact time a week, whilst a quarter reported receiving 2 hours or less.
- Other 'low points' of the first year of teaching included, for some:
  - poor relations with pupils (mentioned by 41 case study NQTs); and
  - poor relations with colleagues (mentioned by 27 interviewees).
- In general, NQTs' experiences were less differentiated by the ITT route they had followed than their experiences of ITT had been.

### ***Teachers' second year in post***

- Two-thirds (68%) of second year primary school teachers reported having taken on the role of subject co-ordinator.
- Amongst secondary teachers around a quarter (24%) stated that they had held a subject co-ordinator role and 9% reported being a head of department.
- 94% of survey respondents reported that they enjoyed working as a teacher.
- The factors contributing to second year teachers' enjoyment of teaching included:
  - positive work-based relationships;
  - feeling supported;
  - receiving additional training;
  - feeling more established and autonomous; and
  - being recognised by others as established teachers.
- 98% of survey respondents reported their relations with pupils as 'good' or 'very good'.
- 97% rated their relationships with teaching staff as 'good' or 'very good'.
- 76% reported that the support they had received during their second year of teaching was 'good' or 'very good'.
- 88% reported that they had received formal professional development or training opportunities during the year.
- A third (34%) reported having had a post-Induction mentor during their second year of teaching, 94% of whom reported 'good' or 'very good' relationships with their mentor.
- Approximately half of both case study teachers (13 out of 25 who discussed this) and survey respondents (49%) mentioned '*colleagues at school/college*' as helping their development as a teacher during their second year.
- 99% of survey respondents described themselves as either 'very' (46%) or 'fairly' (53%) effective teachers.
- Case study data show that relationships with pupils and colleagues were (or remained) sources of 'lows' as well as 'highs' for some teachers.
- Just under a third (30%) of second year teachers surveyed reported having worked up to 10 hours a week in addition to their timetabled hours, almost a third (32%) between 11 and 15 additional hours a week, and over a third (37%) 16 additional hours or more a week.

### ***Teachers' third and fourth years in post***

- By the end of their third year in post, 80% of primary phase respondents reported that they had taken on the role of subject co-ordinator; by the end of their fourth year, this had risen to 83%.
- Amongst those working in secondary schools, over a third (36%) of respondents in their third year of teaching and nearly a half (46%) in their fourth reported taking on subject co-ordinator roles; and the proportion taking on the role of head of department rose from a sixth (16%) to a quarter (25%) over the same period.
- The vast majority of survey respondents (95% Wave 5 and 92% Wave 6) reported that they either 'strongly agreed' or 'tended to agree' that they enjoyed teaching.
- Case study and ejournal data indicate that positive aspects of third and fourth year teachers' experiences included:
  - inter-personal support from colleagues;
  - confidence in their ability or perceptions of their effectiveness as teachers;
  - positive or effective relationships with pupils; and
  - achieving a good or improving work-life balance.
- Approximately two-thirds of respondents in both surveys (68% and 67% respectively) rated the support they received during the previous academic year as either 'good' or 'very good'. Just over a fifth of third and fourth year teachers reported having a mentor.
  - In both waves of the survey those third and fourth year teachers who reported having a mentor were more likely to rate the support they received as 'very good' than those teachers who did not.
- The majority of survey respondents were positive about their development as a teacher, with 33% (Wave 5) and 31% (Wave 6) stating that '*nothing*' had hindered their development. However, the most common specific hindrances reported were:
  - '*lack of support from colleagues*' (22% and 25%);
  - '*workload*' (14% and 11%); and
  - '*amount of administration / paperwork*' (10% in both surveys).
- Nearly half (49%) of third year teachers and over half (55%) of fourth year teachers rated themselves as 'very effective' teachers. At least 99% rated themselves as 'very' or 'fairly' effective at both waves.

- Characteristics of the majority of case study teachers in both their third and fourth years since completing their ITT were that they:
  - expressed aspirations for career advancement;
  - demonstrated a positive attitude towards change in their professional lives; and
  - thought and / or acted as team players.

### ***Change in beginner teachers' experiences***

- In each year between their first and fourth year of teaching, a minimum of 92% of survey respondents 'strongly agreed' or 'tended to agree' with the statement '*I enjoy working as a teacher*', though the overall agreement levels of those who remained in teaching throughout this period showed a small but statistically significant decrease.
  - Those respondents working in primary schools, as a group, consistently rated their enjoyment of teaching slightly more highly than those working in secondary schools.
- Survey respondents' overall ratings of their effectiveness were consistently high and showed a small but significant increase between the second and fourth years of teaching.
- '*Colleagues at school/college*' were consistently mentioned (without prompting) by the highest proportions of survey respondents, between the second and fourth year after completing their ITT, as a factor in helping them in their development as teachers.
  - The percentage of respondents mentioning '*additional training*' as a factor helping their development as a teacher more than doubled between the end of the second and third years of teaching (from 10% to 23%).
- Beginner teachers' ratings of their relationships with teacher colleagues showed a slight increase between their first and second years after completing their ITT, followed by a slight decline in the third and fourth years of teaching.
- Beginner teachers' overall ratings of the support they received declined between the first and fourth years of teaching.
  - At each Wave of the telephone survey, older teachers consistently tended to rate the support they felt they received less highly than their younger colleagues.
- The proportion of respondents mentioning a '*lack of support from colleagues*' as a hindrance to their development as teachers increased from 18% in their second year of teaching to 22% in their third and fourth years.
  - Whilst '*workload*' remained the second most frequently mentioned hindrance, the proportion of respondents citing this decreased between the second and fourth years in post (from 15% to 11%).

- In contrast the proportion of respondents mentioning '*the amount of administration / paperwork*' increased over the same time period (from 3-10%).
- There was a significant decline in the reported number of additional hours worked over the course of the first four years of teaching. By the fourth year of teaching survey respondents reported working an average of approximately 15 extra hours per week.
- Increasing and significant numbers of beginner teachers were advancing beyond classroom teacher positions to take on additional roles and responsibilities within their schools. For example:
  - the proportion of primary teachers who had become subject co-ordinators increased from under a fifth (18%) in their first year of teaching to over four-fifths in their fourth year; and
  - the proportion of secondary school teachers who had become heads of department increased from 4% in their first year to around a quarter in their fourth.

### ***Retention and attrition amongst beginner teachers***

#### *Withdrawal from and take-up of teaching posts following ITT*

- One in twenty (5%) of Wave 2 survey respondents reported that they had withdrawn from their ITT programme during the final (or only) year of their ITT.
  - Secondary GRTP trainees were less likely to report having withdrawn from their ITT than those following other routes (3% compared, for example, to 13% of those following secondary Flexible PGCE programmes).
  - Survey respondents who had previously (in Wave 1) indicated that they had been 'strongly attracted' to teaching by the idea of '*working with children or young people*' were less likely to withdraw from ITT than those who had not stated this. Those who had stated (at Wave 1) that they were 'strongly attracted' by the '*salary*' or the '*financial incentives attached to ITT*' were more likely than those who had not stated this to withdraw.
- The main reasons given by those who withdrew from their ITT related to workload (22% of 135 survey respondents), a change of mind about teaching as a career (19%) and a perceived lack of support (15%).
- A minority of beginner teachers (62 respondents, 2%) stated that they did not anticipate taking up a teaching post on completion of their ITT, although three-quarters (47) of these anticipated taking up a teaching post at some point in the future.

### *Factors associated with leaving teaching*

- The reasons given by the highest proportions of those who left teaching during the first four years since completing ITT (and who did not plan to return) related to pupil discipline and workload. For example:
  - of those survey respondents who left the profession at some stage during the four year period following completion of their ITT, around a quarter cited pupil behaviour as a cause.
- Attrition from the profession was also statistically associated with low ratings, by beginner teachers, of their enjoyment of teaching and of the support given in or by their schools.

### *Factors associated with beginner teacher retention*

- The vast majority (84%) of fourth year teachers who planned to be in teaching the following term (after the Wave 6 survey) also planned to still be in teaching in 5 years' time.
  - Factors associated with retention included whether or not beginner teachers strongly agreed that they enjoyed teaching and whether or not they had received additional training.
  - The most frequently mentioned motivations for remaining in the profession were 'helping young children to learn' (84%) and 'working with children or young people' (76%).

### ***Key, common influences on the experiences of beginning teachers***

The *BaT* research shows that the experience of becoming and being a teacher is invariably an intensely demanding and challenging one, which can be a source of great reward, satisfaction and enjoyment on the one hand, yet a source of frustration and unhappiness on the other.

Over the course of the study, three key, common factors were found to be associated with beginner teacher enjoyment, retention and perceived effectiveness, with beginner teachers more likely to 'strongly enjoy' teaching, more likely to perceive themselves as 'very effective' and more likely to complete their ITT and remain in teaching where:

- they felt 'very well' supported by (for example) mentors and other teacher colleagues;
- they reported 'very good' relationships with pupils and did not regard the behaviour of the pupils they taught as problematic or unacceptable; and
- they indicated that they had a manageable workload and a healthy or acceptable work-life balance.

Additional, contributory factors which were found to be associated with beginner teachers' enjoyment and retention, and with their perceptions of their effectiveness, included:

- their participation in appropriate training (post-ITT) and the availability and use of further opportunities for continuing professional development;
- collegiality and teamwork, including (for example) planning, sharing resources and team-teaching with colleagues; and
- having positive relationships with their head teacher.<sup>2</sup>

Our findings suggest that beginning teachers need to be supported by people (mentors and others) who:

- (1) are 'there for them' - are accessible, willing and able to listen, and act as a sounding board;
- (2) treat them as a 'whole person';
- (3) have regard for their emotional and practical as well as professional needs, for example by providing encouragement, reassurance and 'positive strokes';
- (4) make them feel welcome and 'safe' within their schools, and provide them with important information about (for example) school policies and access to resources;
- (5) provide ideas relating to their teaching, and help them deal with specific problems, such as those relating to pupil behaviour and time and workload management;
- (6) will empower them and give them confidence, e.g. through 'recognition', 'trust' and enabling them to be (or to feel) autonomous;
- (7) will facilitate access to additional training or opportunities for CPD, such as attendance on courses, observing colleagues' lessons and working as part of a team; and
- (8) can guide them, for example in terms of their career development.

### ***Variation in the experiences of beginning teachers***

The *BaT* research has uncovered evidence of variation in beginner teachers' experiences (of ITT, Induction, early professional and career development, and retention and attrition) relating to a range of factors, especially:

- the ITT route that they followed;
- their motives for undertaking ITT, and their preconceptions, expectations and concerns about ITT and teaching (which we refer to collectively as 'preconceptions');
- their ethnicity; and
- their age.

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<sup>2</sup> Evidence for the importance of these themes is presented in Chapters 3-9 of this report, with their salience for individual beginner teachers (and leavers) illustrated more fully in the stories presented in Chapter 10.

While there were a large number of statistically significant variations in beginner teachers' experiences of ITT and, to a lesser extent, the first year of teaching, relating to the ITT route they had followed and their preconceptions and expectations of ITT and teaching, such variation was largely 'washed out' over time by teachers' subsequent experiences of teaching. Variation relating to beginner teachers' ethnicity and (particularly) age tended to be more persistent, however. In general, minority ethnic and older entrants to the profession tended to report less positive experiences of ITT, Induction and EPD. Both groups, for example, tended to give lower ratings of their relationships with teaching colleagues, of the support they received and of their enjoyment of teaching.

### **Implications of the *Becoming a Teacher* Findings**

The *BaT* research has a number of implications for (amongst others) teacher educators, mentors of beginning teachers, head teachers and policy-makers. It is suggested, for example, that:

- ITT providers should:
  - try to ensure that applicants who are accepted onto their programmes possess genuine, intrinsic motivations for wanting to become teachers;
  - try to ensure that they are sufficiently sensitive and responsive to the unique characteristics (e.g. relating to age, ethnicity, motivations, prior experience and conceptions) and needs (with respect to emotional states as well as learning) of individual trainees;
  - prepare trainees as fully as possible to be able to deal effectively with pupil behaviour and to manage a heavy teacher workload; and
  - continue work to strengthen 'partnerships' between schools and HEIs;
- school-based mentors and other supporters of beginning teachers should:
  - ensure that they pay particular attention to beginner teachers' individual characteristics and needs;
  - ensure that they take sufficient account of beginner teachers' emotional states and welfare; and
  - support beginner teachers' development of strategies for managing their workloads and pupil behaviour;
- head teachers and others who facilitate beginner teachers' access to formal opportunities for CPD should:
  - attempt to foster and maintain a collegial whole school ethos in which beginner teachers feel supported and part of a team;
  - have clear and effective school procedures to support beginner teachers in dealing with problematic pupil behaviour; and
  - ensure that there is provision to address the development needs not only of beginning teachers but also of those who support them, through access to appropriate programmes of mentor preparation and training; and

- policy-makers should:
  - investigate further the reasons for the comparative early difficulties experienced by beginning teachers following or having followed certain ITT routes – most notably the Flexible PGCE (despite the reduction over time of noticeable differences in the experiences of beginner teachers who had undertaken different ITT routes);
  - investigate further and address the underlying causes of the apparent non-provision, in some cases, of newly and recently qualified teachers' entitlements to reductions in their teaching workloads;
  - continue to consider the content, format and use of the CEDP, and possible alternatives to this, as one means of facilitating continuity and complementarity between and across ITT, Induction and early professional development;
  - ensure that provision is in place for appropriate forms of individually tailored support and CPD for beginner teachers beyond the first year of teaching; and
  - ensure that there also exists appropriate CPD provision for those who support the early development of teachers, with particular emphasis on mentor (and school-based coach) development and, more generally, on the implications for responsive teacher education of the range of characteristics of beginner teachers (relating, for example, to issues of age and ethnicity).

# 1 Introduction

During the 1990s and the early years of the 21st Century, a number of initiatives were introduced in England with the intention of:

- boosting recruitment to the teaching profession;
- making teaching accessible to a broader range of potential entrants;
- achieving greater integration between initial teacher training (ITT)<sup>3</sup> and teachers' first and early years in the profession, thus helping beginner teachers to negotiate these transitions; and
- minimising the number of trainee, newly and recently qualified teachers who withdraw from ITT, and who choose not to seek a teaching post on completion of their ITT or who take up a teaching post but subsequently leave the profession within a few years of qualifying.<sup>4</sup>

The initiatives designed to achieve these goals included:

- a diversification of pathways into teaching, including the introduction of employment-based and school-centred routes alongside more established HEI-administered programmes (Department for Education, 1993a; Department for Education and Employment, 1996; Teacher Training Agency, 1998);
- an increase in the amount of time that all student teachers must spend in schools during their ITT (Department for Education, 1992; Department for Education, 1993b);
- the introduction of coherent, developmental Standards (formerly known as Competences) for student teachers and newly qualified teachers (NQTs) (e.g. Department for Education and Employment, 1998a; Department for Education and Employment, 1998b; Department for Education and Employment / Teacher Training Agency, 2002);
- the introduction of a statutory Induction period, during which NQTs would be supported through (for example) the allocation of a restricted teaching timetable and a school-based Induction tutor or mentor (Teaching and Higher Education Act, 1998; Department for Education and Skills, 2003b);<sup>5</sup> and

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<sup>3</sup> Throughout this report we refer to programmes for the pre-service preparation of teachers as *initial teacher training (ITT)* as this is the official term used in England at this time. This term is, however, contentious on the grounds, for example, that 'training' is sometimes associated with a view of teaching as 'performing a set of mechanical tasks' (Stephens *et al.*, 2004), to the exclusion of 'understanding and intelligent awareness' (Tomlinson, 1995: 11; Cameron and Baker, 2004: 13). Some writers thus prefer the terms 'pre-service' training (or education), 'initial teacher education' (ITE), 'initial teacher education and training' (ITET) or initial teacher preparation (ITP) (Hobson *et al.*, 2008).

<sup>4</sup> The terms 'trainee' and 'student teacher' are used interchangeably, to refer to those following different kinds of ITT programme. The term 'newly qualified teacher' (NQT) is used to refer to those in their first year of teaching after successfully completing ITT, while 'recently qualified teacher' refers to those in their second, third or fourth years of teaching post-ITT. The terms 'beginner teacher' and 'beginning teacher' are used more broadly to relate to the whole period from ITT to the end of the fourth year of teaching (inclusive).

<sup>5</sup> Some of these initiatives have been developed since the beginning of the *Becoming a Teacher* study: e.g. the Standards for Qualified Teacher Status (QTS), Induction and beyond (Training and Development Agency for Schools [TDA], 2008).

- the introduction of the Career Entry Profile (CEP).<sup>6</sup>

Against this background, the *Becoming a Teacher (BaT)* study (2003-2009) was conceived, by the (then) Department for Education and Skills (DfES), General Teaching Council for England (GTC) and the Teacher Training Agency (TTA), as a means of examining would-be and beginning teachers' experiences during their ITT and (for those who remain in the profession) their first four years in post. The Research Specification which accompanied the Invitation to Tender for the proposed study stated that:

*Research is required to investigate the different ITT routes, experiences during induction and early career development. This should be achieved by following cohorts of ITT trainees through their training and early career progression in order to analyse their experiences and identify factors which promote, or hinder teacher retention. (DfES, 2003a)*

The study was thus to include a particular emphasis on comparing the experiences (of ITT, Induction, early professional development and career progression) of those who sought to enter or entered the profession via a range of different ITT routes, an aspect of teacher education about which little was previously known (Chan and Lai, 2002). However, acknowledging that learners view and interpret new information and experiences through their existing network of personal knowledge, experience and beliefs (Fosnot, 1996; Richardson, 1997), and recognising the changing demographic profile of those entering the teaching profession, particularly the increase in the proportion of more mature entrants (Smithers and Robinson, 2004), the design of the *BaT* research also facilitated examination of the extent to which would-be and beginner teachers' experiences may have been influenced by or might vary according to:

- their original motives for seeking to become teachers;
- their preconceptions and expectations (pre-ITT) about teaching and initial teacher preparation;
- their age;
- their gender;
- their ethnicity; and
- whether they were seeking to become or were becoming teachers in primary or secondary schools.

The main aims of the research were thus:

- (1) to explore teachers' experiences of ITT and their first four years of teaching, including their experiences of Induction, early professional development (EPD) and early career progression;

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<sup>6</sup> The CEP was designed to facilitate the identification of new teachers' development needs at the end of ITT, needs which would (or should) be followed up during their first year in teaching and beyond. It was introduced in 1997, revised to take account of the new statutory Induction arrangements in 1999, and subsequently developed in 2003 as the Career Entry and Development Profile (CEDP). At the time of writing, it is undergoing further transformations.

- (2) to examine the extent to which there was continuity and coherence between beginner teachers' experiences of ITT, Induction and their subsequent opportunities for early professional learning, up to the end of their fourth year in post;
- (3) to explore possible relationships between trainees' preconceptions and expectations of teaching and ITT, and their actual experiences of ITT, Induction, and early career progression;
- (4) to ascertain the extent to which beginner teachers' experiences of ITT, Induction and early career progression were subject to variation relating to the ITT route that they followed (encompassing university-administered undergraduate and postgraduate programmes, employment-based and school-based programmes) and other factors and characteristics (e.g. their age);
- (5) to identify factors contributing to attrition from ITT programmes;
- (6) to establish why some people choose not to take up teaching posts on completion of ITT; and
- (7) to identify factors contributing to teachers' decisions to leave the profession within four years of completing their ITT.

The empirical strand of the *BaT* study, the design of which is discussed in Chapter 2 and findings from which are presented in Chapters 3-10 of this report, was accompanied by a review of literature which was designed to refine our thinking about issues pertinent to the research, to inform the development of research instruments and methods of data analysis, and to establish the broader knowledge base within which findings from the empirical strand of the study might be situated. A comprehensive account of this review of literature, which was ongoing and updated regularly between 2003 and 2008, has been published as a separate report (Ashby *et al.*, 2008).

In our previous, interim reports of the empirical *Becoming a Teacher* research, we have presented findings relating to:

- student teachers' motivations for undertaking ITT, and their experiences and prior conceptions of teaching and ITT (Hobson and Malderez, 2005);
- student teachers' experiences of ITT (Hobson *et al.*, 2006a);
- newly qualified teachers' experiences of their first year of teaching and of Induction (Hobson *et al.*, 2007); and
- second year teachers' experiences of teaching and early professional development (Tracey *et al.*, 2008).

In this (final) report we summarise the main findings relating to these first four phases of the *BaT* research (Chapters 3-6), and present new material relating to:

- findings on teachers' experiences of their third and fourth years in post (Chapter 7);<sup>7</sup>
- a longitudinal comparison of beginner teachers' experiences (Chapter 8);
- findings on beginner teacher retention and attrition (Chapter 9); and
- stories of the lived experiences of ten beginning teachers (Chapter 10).

Finally, in Chapter 11 we highlight some of the main factors associated with positive and negative features of the experience of becoming a teacher, explore the factors associated with variation in beginner teachers' experiences, and discuss a number of implications of the *BaT* research findings. First, though, in Chapter 2, we provide information regarding the design of the study, including the methods of data generation, sampling and data analyses which were employed.

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<sup>7</sup> Further details of the *Becoming a Teacher* 'Wave 5' and 'Wave 6' survey findings, relating to the experiences of third and fourth year teachers respectively, can be found in the accompanying Technical Reports (Homer *et al.*, 2009a and Homer *et al.*, 2009b).

## 2 Research design

### 2.1 Introduction

This chapter outlines specific aspects of the research design of this study, including the overall design of the study, the methods of data generation, sampling and data analysis employed.

### 2.2 Overall design

The *Becoming a Teacher (BaT)* research project is a longitudinal study employing an ‘equal status mixed methods design’ (Tashakkori and Teddlie, 1998: 43-45). Data were generated over a five year period (2003-2008) and consisted of complementary ‘qualitative’ (case study) and ‘quantitative’ (survey) elements. This design enables us to provide detailed insights into the lived experiences of a relatively small number of beginner teachers (the case study strand) whilst addressing similar and additional issues amongst a larger, national sample (the survey strand). Consequently, whilst the survey strand allows us to comment with some confidence on, for example, the extent to which the reported experiences of beginner teachers were differentiated according to various factors such as the ITT route they had followed, their age, and whether they were teaching (or were trained to teach) in primary or secondary schools, the case study strand enables us to explore more fully the interaction of these various characteristics as experienced by individual beginner teachers.

The *BaT* research was not conducted within, nor did it seek to advance, any single theoretical framework. Nevertheless, the study had a phenomenological slant insofar as the primary concern was to investigate human experience (that of beginning teachers) from the perspective of the individual actor (Schutz, 1967; Bogdan and Taylor, 1975), while (as suggested in Chapter 1) the research design was also informed by the social constructivist position that learners view and interpret new information and experiences through their existing network of knowledge, experience and beliefs (Hollingsworth, 1989; Fosnot, 1996; Richardson, 1997). As a commissioned study, the research design was part-shaped, too, by the perspectives, expectations and needs of those individuals representing the commissioning bodies and serving on the project steering group.

### 2.3 Methods of data generation

The research instruments used and the phases and dates of data generation are detailed in Table 2.1. This shows that the principal forms of data generation were:

- an initial self-complete survey questionnaire followed by a yearly telephone survey;
- yearly in-depth face-to-face case study interviews;<sup>8</sup> and
- regular email exchanges (‘ejournals’) with case study teachers.<sup>9</sup>

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<sup>8</sup> In a small number of instances, interviews with case study participants were conducted by telephone due to difficulties in arranging a face-to-face interview.

<sup>9</sup> The ejournals, which were introduced after participants had completed their ITT, involved members of the research team sending an email to each case study participant prompting them to recount their experiences during the previous half-term; though participants were also encouraged to email their contact *BaT* researcher at any time.

**Table 2.1: Research instruments and phases of data generation**

<b>Wave</b>	<b>Beginner teachers' career stage</b>	<b>Research instruments</b>	<b>Date of main phase of data generation*</b>
<b>1</b>	Beginning of one-year or beginning of final year of two-, three- or four-year ITT programmes	Self-complete questionnaire survey	Autumn 2003
		Case study interviews	
<b>2</b>	End of ITT programmes	Case study interviews	Summer 2004
		Telephone survey	
<b>3</b>	End of 1 <sup>st</sup> year since completion of ITT	Case study ejournals	September 2004-July 2005 <sup>#</sup>
		Case study interviews	Summer 2005
		Telephone survey	
<b>4</b>	End of 2 <sup>nd</sup> year since completion of ITT	Case study ejournals	September 2005-July 2006
		Case study interviews	Summer 2006
		Telephone survey	
<b>5</b>	End of 3 <sup>rd</sup> year since completion of ITT	Case study ejournals	September 2006-July 2007
		Case study interviews	Summer 2007
		Telephone survey	
<b>6</b>	End of 4 <sup>th</sup> year since completion of ITT	Case study ejournals	September 2007-July 2008
		Case study interviews	Summer 2008
		Telephone survey	

\*A small minority of case study interviews were administered outside the main fieldwork period due to the need to arrange times that were convenient to participants.

<sup>#</sup> Ejournal data were generated at approximately half-termly intervals throughout each academic year over Waves 3 to 6.

Table 2.1 also shows the career stage of our research participants at each 'wave' of data generation.<sup>10</sup> Consequently, there was a different focus for each phase of the study:

- at Wave 1 participants were asked about their perceptions concerning teaching and ITT prior to starting their training programmes;
- at Wave 2 they were asked about their experiences of ITT and their expectations of the their first year in teaching and beyond;
- at Wave 3 the focus was on investigating newly qualified teachers' (NQTs') experiences of teaching, Induction, CPD and support;
- across Waves 4 to 6 participants were asked about their experiences of teaching, CPD and support.

At all waves of data generation, participants were asked about their future career plans and, where appropriate, why they had either left or deferred completion of their ITT, or had left the profession within the first few years of completing ITT.

To add to our understanding of case study teachers' experiences, at a relatively early stage in the project interviews were also conducted with:

- **ITT programme personnel** associated with the programme followed by case study trainees, including course leaders, subject- and age-specialist tutors and school-based mentors (interviewed at Wave 2, i.e. Summer 2004); and
- **Induction tutors and mentors** associated with the Induction programmes followed by our case study teachers during their first year of teaching (interviewed at Wave 3, i.e. Summer 2005).

Research instruments were chiefly informed by: firstly, an ongoing review of the literature relating to beginner teachers' experiences of ITT, the early years in teaching, and issues relating to the retention of new teachers (Ashby *et al.*, 2008);<sup>11</sup> and secondly (from Wave 2 onwards), emergent findings from earlier phases of the *BaT* research.

The survey, interview and ejournal instruments used in the *BaT* research, together with additional background information, are available at [www.becoming-a-teacher.ac.uk](http://www.becoming-a-teacher.ac.uk).

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<sup>10</sup> It should be noted that where, elsewhere in this report, we refer to 'first year teachers', 'second year teachers' etc. this does in fact refer to the length of time since our beginner teachers' completed their ITT. A small proportion of our beginner teachers did not enter teaching at the start of the academic year after completing their ITT; nor did all participants remain in continuous employment throughout their first four years after gaining QTS.

<sup>11</sup> See Ashby *et al.* (2008, pp. 1-3) for further detail regarding the design of the review of literature.

## 2.4 Sampling strategies and sample characteristics

In this section we outline the original *BaT* sampling strategy and the samples achieved in each phase of the project. In Sections 2.4.1 and 2.4.2 we provide separate details regarding the survey and case study samples respectively.

### 2.4.1 The survey sample

The sampling strategy underlying the initial questionnaire survey was informed by two main concerns. Firstly, the research team sought to generate a representative sample of student teachers (in England) for (or within) each of the ITT routes being studied - namely university-administered PGCE, Flexible PGCE, BEd, BA/BSc with QTS, SCITT, and GRTP.<sup>12</sup> Secondly, it was hoped to ensure that a sufficient number of trainees were recruited from among the routes with the least training places, in order to enable viable statistical analysis by route up to the end of the project in 2009 (allowing for attrition over a 5 year period). ITT providers were thus stratified by route and a random sample of providers within each route was selected, with a small number of providers being purposively selected to boost the numbers of trainees from the smaller ITT routes.

As a result of this strategy, 110 ITT-providers were approached (in 2003) with the request that they allow their trainees to participate, if they wished to do so, in the initial (Wave 1) survey. Of these 110 providers, 74 agreed to do so, a response rate of 67 per cent. Where possible the self-completion questionnaire was administered face-to-face by a project fieldworker, though in some cases (notably in very small ITT providers) it was necessary for the survey to be administered postally. The Wave 1 questionnaire was completed by 4,790 student teachers, all of whom were expecting to complete a one-, two-, three- or four-year ITT programme in Summer 2004.<sup>13</sup> All those who agreed (in the Wave 1 questionnaire) to be re-contacted for subsequent waves of the survey were then approached to participate in the Wave 2 follow-up telephone survey, and interviews with 2,958 trainees were successfully completed in Summer 2004.<sup>14</sup> This process was repeated for Waves 3-6.

In order to ensure more robust sub-group sizes amongst the smaller ITT routes (i.e. the Flexible PGCE, SCITT and BEd programmes) by the end of the study, it was decided, with the support of the project sponsors, to undertake a 'top-up' survey of NQTs in Autumn 2004. A sample of 914 NQTs following these smaller routes, and whose providers were not involved in the initial phase of data generation, were identified using the General Teaching Council's *Register of Teachers*, and a letter was sent to each inviting them to take part in the survey strand of the project. Of the 914 contacted, 212 NQTs indicated that they were willing to participate and, of these, 204 were interviewed by telephone in the Autumn term of 2004.<sup>15</sup> These survey respondents were subsequently treated as part of the larger telephone survey sample.

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<sup>12</sup> In the survey strand of the project it was necessary to group the employment-based GTP and RTP routes together (GRTP) as the small number of RTP trainees nationally meant that a statistically viable sample could not have been generated. A brief overview of the different ITT routes is provided in Appendix I.

<sup>13</sup> As it was not possible to establish with any degree of confidence the precise number of trainee teachers following the sampled routes in the sampled providers at Wave 1, we are unable to calculate the overall response rate to the initial self-complete survey questionnaire.

<sup>14</sup> The decision to employ self-completion questionnaires, administered within ITT providers' institutions, for the initial survey, and telephone interviews using computer-assisted telephone interview (CATI) technology (see Bryman, 2004: 116-117) for subsequent phases of the survey strand, was taken primarily in order to maximise response rates.

<sup>15</sup> The 'top-up' survey employed many of the same questions that had been used for the Wave 2 survey, plus a number of additional questions, relating to participants' age, gender, etc., information which had been gleaned from other respondents in the Wave 1 survey. Further details of the top-up sample can be found in Hobson *et al.* (2006a), pp. 5-8.

Table 2.2 gives the breakdown of those who participated in Waves 1-6 of the survey strand of the project, along with the response rates.

**Table 2.2: *BaT* project survey participants and inter-wave response rates**

<b>Wave</b>	<b>Number of participants taking part</b>	<b>% of those who took part in previous wave</b>
<b>1</b>	4790	--
<b>2</b>	3162*	62
<b>3</b>	2446	77
<b>4</b>	1973	81
<b>5</b>	1638	83
<b>6</b>	1443	88

\* This figure includes the 204 NQTs who took part in the 'top-up' survey.

Table 2.3 gives the percentage of beginner teachers who had followed the different ITT routes involved in the *BaT* project nationally in 2003, and the breakdown of our survey sample respondents by route across the six waves. Tables 2.4-2.8 then provide further details of the profile of our survey sample across Waves 1-6 of the study:

- Tables 2.4 and 2.5 provide breakdowns of the respondents by ITT route for primary and secondary phase teachers respectively;<sup>16</sup>
- Table 2.6 gives the age ranges of survey participants;
- Table 2.7 gives their gender profile;
- Table 2.8 gives the breakdown of the respondents by ethnic group.

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<sup>16</sup> At each Wave of the study 'phase' was taken as the phase of education (primary or secondary) in which the participant was currently teaching. In the case of those who were teaching in middle schools, or those who had not completed their ITT, the phase at which they had trained to teach was used instead. Due to the small number of participants who followed Key Stage 2/3 ITT programmes and the small number who went on to teach in middle schools, we have retained a primary/secondary categorisation in order to avoid identifying the participants or their training provider.

**Table 2.3: Percentage of survey strand participants by ITT route, compared to the percentage following this route in England in 2004**

ITT route followed	Per cent (%)						
	Wave						England 2004*
	1	2	3	4	5	6	
<b>University-administered Postgraduate Certificate in Education (PGCE)<sup>17</sup></b>	37	34	32	32	31	31	61
<b>Flexible PGCE</b>	4	4	4	4	4	4	6
<b>Bachelor of Education (BEd)</b>	9	9	9	10	10	10	} 16 <sup>†</sup>
<b>Bachelor of Arts (BA) / Science (BSc) with Qualified Teacher Status (QTS)</b>	29	27	26	26	25	25	
<b>Graduate and Registered Teacher Programme (GRTP)<sup>18</sup></b>	16	16	17	18	18	18	14
<b>School-Centred Initial Teacher Training (SCITT)<sup>19</sup></b>	7	11	11	12	12	12	4
<b>Total number of participants</b>	<b>4790</b>	<b>3162</b>	<b>2446</b>	<b>1973</b>	<b>1638</b>	<b>1443</b>	

Percentages may not add up to 100 due to rounding.

<sup>†</sup> Data on the undergraduate routes (BEd and BA/BSc QTS) were not collected separately.

\* Source: TDA.

<sup>17</sup> Unless otherwise stated, references to 'PGCE' refer to the university-administered PGCE route.

<sup>18</sup> The GRTP cohort included SCITT-based GRTP trainees / respondents.

<sup>19</sup> The SCITT cohort excluded SCITT-based GRTP trainees / respondents.

**Table 2.4: Percentage of primary phase survey strand participants by route, Waves 1-6**

ITT route followed	Per cent (%) at each wave					
	Wave 1	Wave 2	Wave 3	Wave 4	Wave 5	Wave 6
<b>PGCE</b>	19	19	18	17	19	19
<b>Flexible PGCE</b>	5	4	5	4	5	5
<b>Bed</b>	13	13	16	17	13	13
<b>BA / BSc QTS</b>	42	43	39	39	41	40
<b>SCITT</b>	8	8	10	10	8	9
<b>GRTP</b>	13	12	12	13	15	15
<b>Number of participants*</b>	<b>1157</b>	<b>1487</b>	<b>1309</b>	<b>969</b>	<b>776</b>	<b>676</b>

Percentages may not add up to 100 due to rounding.

\* A small proportion of participants did not give the phase they were training to teach in the initial Wave 1 self-complete questionnaire.

**Table 2.5: Percentage of secondary phase survey strand participants by route, Waves 1-6**

ITT route followed	Per cent (%) at each wave					
	Wave 1	Wave 2	Wave 3	Wave 4	Wave 5	Wave 6
<b>PGCE</b>	53	55	49	48	50	50
<b>Flexible PGCE</b>	3	4	3	3	3	3
<b>Bed</b>	(0)*	(0)	2	2	(0)	(0)
<b>BA / BSc QTS</b>	10	10	12	12	11	11
<b>SCITT</b>	9	9	13	13	9	9
<b>GRTP</b>	25	21	23	23	27	27
<b>Number of participants#</b>	<b>1010</b>	<b>1341</b>	<b>1134</b>	<b>931</b>	<b>669</b>	<b>590</b>

Percentages may not add up to 100 due to rounding.

\* (0) equals less than 0.5 per cent.

# A small proportion of participants did not give the phase they were training to teach in the initial Wave 1 self-complete questionnaire.

**Table 2.6: Percentage of survey strand participants by age, Waves 1-6**

Age group	Per cent (%) at each wave					
	Wave 1	Wave 2	Wave 3	Wave 4	Wave 5	Wave 6
<b>20-24</b>	51	46	46	45	43	42
<b>25-29</b>	20	20	20	19	19	19
<b>30-34</b>	10	11	11	11	11	11
<b>35-39</b>	8	10	10	10	10	11
<b>40-44</b>	7	8	9	10	10	11
<b>45 or over</b>	4	6	6	5	6	6
<b>Number of participants *</b>	<b>4912</b>	<b>3136</b>	<b>2430</b>	<b>1960</b>	<b>1627</b>	<b>1433</b>

Percentages may not add up to 100 due to rounding.

\* Includes those respondents in the top-up survey. A small proportion of participants in the survey strand did not give their age in the initial Wave 1 self-complete questionnaire.

**Table 2.7: Percentage of survey strand participants by gender, Waves 1-6**

Gender	Per cent (%) at each wave					
	Wave 1	Wave 2	Wave 3	Wave 4	Wave 5	Wave 6
<b>Male</b>	24	22	21	20	20	20
<b>Female</b>	76	78	79	80	80	80
<b>Number of participants *</b>	<b>4754</b>	<b>3162</b>	<b>2446</b>	<b>1973</b>	<b>1638</b>	<b>1443</b>

\* A small proportion of participants in the survey strand did not give their gender in the initial Wave 1 self-complete questionnaire.

**Table 2.8: Percentage of survey strand participants by ethnicity, Waves 1-6<sup>20</sup>**

Ethnicity	Per cent (%) at each wave					
	Wave 1	Wave 2	Wave 3	Wave 4	Wave 5	Wave 6
<b>White</b>	92	93	94	94	95	95
<b>Black and minority ethnic (BME)</b>	8	7	6	6	5	5
<b>Number of participants *</b>	<b>4717</b>	<b>3134</b>	<b>2426</b>	<b>1959</b>	<b>1624</b>	<b>1430</b>

\* A small proportion of participants in the survey strand did not give their ethnicity in the initial Wave 1 self-complete questionnaire.

<sup>20</sup> The ethnic group variable was compiled from the original 'Wave 1' questionnaire survey which asked 'To which of the following groups do you consider you belong?' All those who indicated White (British or Other) were classed as belonging to the majority ethnic group ('White') and those who indicated that they were 'Mixed', 'Asian or Asian British', 'Black or Black British', 'Chinese or any other ethnic group' were grouped as belonging to the black and minority ethnic (BME) group. Those who declined to provide this information were excluded from any analysis based on ethnicity.

Since (as stated above) the *BaT* sampling strategy was designed to over-represent trainees from the smaller ITT routes, it follows that the initial (Wave 1) sample may not have been representative of the national body of student teachers in England who qualified in the academic year 2003/2004. Furthermore, attrition from each wave of the annual survey makes it difficult to state the extent to which those who remained in the survey were representative of the national body of student, newly and recently qualified teachers. Nevertheless, comparison with national profile data (TTA Performance Profile data for 2003) suggested that (for HEI-administered undergraduate and postgraduate ITT programmes and for employment-based routes) the Wave 1 achieved sample at least was representative of all trainees by gender and ethnicity.

#### **2.4.2 The case study sample**

##### *Beginner teacher case study sample*

The initial sample of 85 case study teachers was recruited from those student teachers who:

- i) were following ITT programmes with providers who had indicated, when first recruited to participate in the survey strand of the study, that they were also willing to take part in the case study strand;
- ii) indicated in their self-complete questionnaire that they would be willing to take part in face-to-face interviews; and
- iii) indicated in their questionnaire responses that they were likely to enter the teaching profession on completion of their ITT and to still be in teaching in five years' time.<sup>21</sup>

The research team aimed to recruit case study trainees from at least two different ITT providers for each route/phase being studied (e.g. a minimum of two providers for primary PGCE trainees, two providers for secondary PGCE trainees, two providers for the Graduate Teacher Programme (GTP), and so on). This was achieved with the exception of student teachers following (primary and secondary) Registered Teacher Programmes (RTP) and secondary BEd programmes. Case study participants were recruited from a total of 19 ITT providers. Within the overall sampling strategy, we also sought to achieve a balance of male and female trainees, and to recruit participants from a range of age groups and with a variety of subject specialisms.

Of the 85 case study trainees interviewed in Wave 1, 48 remained for the lifetime of the project and were interviewed at regular intervals between Waves 1 and 6. Attrition from the case study sample over the course of the project is explained by:

- i) participants leaving the teaching profession (or at Wave 2, withdrawing from or deferring completion of their ITT); or
- ii) declining to continue participation in the project; or
- iii) not being contactable at the time of the interviews.

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<sup>21</sup> This last criterion was applied in an attempt to minimise attrition from the case study sample over the lifetime of the project.

Table 2.9 gives a breakdown of the number of achieved interviews at each wave of the project, together with the response rate (based on those eligible for interview at each wave).

**Table 2.9: Response rates and number of achieved case study interviews, Waves 1-6**

Wave	No. of participants eligible for interview	No. of achieved interviews	Per cent response rate*	Participants known to have left the profession	No. of (additional) participants lost to the study**
1	85	85	100	-	-
2	85	79	93	1	5 <sup>#</sup>
3	84	73	87	6	5
4	72	64	89	1	8
5	58	56	97	6	2
6	51	48	94	4	4
<b>Total</b>				18	24

\* Based on those eligible for interview.

\*\* As we were unable to contact these participants we do not know whether they left the profession as well as leaving the study.

<sup>#</sup> These five case study participants were not interviewed at Wave 2 but returned to the study the following year (Wave 3).

Tables 2.10-2.14 give further details of the profile of the case study sample across Waves 1-6 of the study:

- Tables 2.10 and 2.11 provide breakdowns of case study participants by route for primary and secondary phase teachers respectively;
- Tables 2.12, 2.13 and 2.14 show breakdowns by age, gender and ethnicity respectively.

**Table 2.10: Primary phase case study participants by route, Waves 1-6**

ITT route followed	Wave					
	1	2	3	4	5	6
PGCE	7	7	7	7	6	6
Flexible PGCE	7	7	6	6	5	4
Bed	7	7	7	6	5	3
BA / BSc QTS	6	6	8	6	4	2
SCITT	6	5	5	5	4	4
GRTP	8	6	7	8	8	8
<b>Total</b>	<b>41</b>	<b>38</b>	<b>40</b>	<b>38</b>	<b>32</b>	<b>27</b>

**Table 2.11: Secondary phase case study participants by route, Waves 1-6**

ITT route followed	Wave					
	1	2	3	4	5	6
PGCE	9	8	6	4	4	4
Flexible PGCE	7	7	3	2	2	2
Bed	2	2	1	1	1	0
BA / BSc QTS	8	6	5	4	4	3
SCITT	8	8	8	8	7	6
GRTP	10	10	10	7	6	6
<b>Total</b>	<b>44</b>	<b>41</b>	<b>33</b>	<b>26</b>	<b>24</b>	<b>21</b>

**Table 2.12: Case study participants by age, Waves 1-6**

Age group <sup>#</sup>	Wave					
	1	2	3	4	5	6
20-24	29	26	29	22	21	18
25-29	16	15	13	13	10	9
30-34	12	11	9	8	8	7
35-39	9	9	8	8	6	3
40-44	13	12	9	8	6	6
45 or over	6	6	5	5	5	5
<b>Total</b>	<b>85</b>	<b>79</b>	<b>73</b>	<b>64</b>	<b>56</b>	<b>48</b>

<sup>#</sup>Age at the start of the *BaT* study (i.e. in Autumn 2003)

**Table 2.13: Case study participants by gender, Waves 1-6**

Gender	Wave					
	1	2	3	4	5	6
Male	20	18	17	17	14	12
Female	65	61	56	47	42	36
<b>Total</b>	<b>85</b>	<b>79</b>	<b>73</b>	<b>64</b>	<b>56</b>	<b>48</b>

**Table 2.14: Case study participants by ethnicity, Waves 1-6**

Ethnicity	Wave					
	1	2	3	4	5	6
White	76	71	65	57	50	42
Black and minority ethnic (BME)	9	8	8	7	6	6
<b>Total</b>	<b>85</b>	<b>79</b>	<b>73</b>	<b>64</b>	<b>56</b>	<b>48</b>

In addition to the yearly in-depth case study interviews, invitations to complete e-journals were also sent to case study participants on a half-termly basis. In total, 62 out of the 73 case study participants who were eligible to take part in e-journal correspondence (i.e. all those who took part in Wave 2 of the project and did not defer completion of or withdraw from their ITT programme) provided e-journal data at least once during the lifetime of the project. Table 2.15 provides the breakdown of the number of participants returning e-journal data across Waves 3-6, by each time period in which the invitations were sent.

**Table 2.15: E-journal responses at each time period, Waves 3-6**

Half-term sent*	Number of e-journal responses at each wave			
	3	4	5	6
Autumn half-term	23	20	11	13
End of Autumn term	24	22	17	13
Spring half-term	24	27	15	8
End of Spring term	19	18	15	12
End of Summer term	12	6	8	1
<b>Total number of respondents participating</b>	<b>46</b>	<b>45</b>	<b>36</b>	<b>25</b>

\* Invitations to complete e-journals were normally sent the week before half-term and end of term breaks during each academic year, except for the Summer half-term, when case study participants were contacted by telephone instead to arrange their end of year face-to-face interview.

#### *ITT programme personnel and NQT Induction tutor case study sample*

As mentioned in Section 2.3, interviews were conducted in 2004 with ITT programme personnel associated with a selection of the specific programmes followed by our case study teachers. In total, 46 such interviews were conducted, with:

- 18 programme leaders;
- 13 subject- or age-specialist tutors; and
- 15 school-based mentors.

At least two ITT programme personnel were interviewed from each ITT route. Whilst programme personnel were selected to be interviewed because of specific roles they fulfilled in relation to the ITT programmes followed by case study trainees, they were often associated with more than one ITT route, and sometimes (particularly in the case of school-based mentors) with more than one ITT provider. In addition, they sometimes fulfilled more than one role on a particular ITT programme (e.g. some programme leaders were also subject-specialist tutors).

Interviews were also conducted (in 2005) with Induction tutors and mentors associated with the NQT Induction programmes followed by our case study beginner teachers.<sup>22</sup> Twenty-seven interviews were conducted in total: 12 in primary schools and 15 in secondary schools.

## 2.5 Data analysis and presentation

### 2.5.1 Analyses of case study data

All the case study interviews for each phase of data generation were transcribed in their entirety. At each wave, transcripts of the interviews with *beginning teachers*, together (from Wave 3 onwards) with ejournal data generated during that school year, were initially subjected to an inductive or grounded analysis (Glaser and Strauss, 1967). This involved members of the research team reading a selection of the transcripts and independently identifying important aspects of beginner teacher experiences emerging from the data. The researchers then came together to share those interpretations and to develop, for each wave, a coding frame for the subsequent systematic and thematic analysis of the data using Nvivo software. The coding frame was also informed by the *BaT* research aims (see Chapter 1), by issues arising from the review of the literature, and (from Wave 2 onwards) by findings from previous waves of the project.

In the coding of data arising from Waves 5 and 6 of data generation, alongside the thematic coding of text by segment described above, a different type of analysis technique was introduced, built around an interpretative and holistic analysis of the available data by participant rather than by theme. On the basis of an appreciation of entire Wave 5 and 6 transcript and ejournal histories, every participant, where there was sufficient evidence to do so, was assigned to a category within each of six ‘teacher types’ (see Box 7.1 Chapter 7). These teacher types were intended to operationalise aspects of the attitudes and dispositions of beginner teachers as evidenced by the transcripts and ejournals at both waves. In relation to this (holistic) coding, an inter-coder reliability exercise was conducted at both Wave 5 and Wave 6, whereby four members of the research team independently coded a random selection of transcripts. The subsequent comparison of these codings allowed both for the validation of the ongoing coding and the refinement of the coding frames employed. The results of these analyses, and of the inter-rater reliability exercises, are reported in Chapter 7 (Section 7.7.2).

With regard to the analyses of data generated from interviews with *ITT programme personnel* (Wave 2) and *Induction tutors* (Wave 3), at each wave a coding frame was developed which drew on: (i) the results of a separate, grounded analysis of these data; and (ii) emergent findings from the analyses of beginner teacher case study and survey data for that wave of data generation.

The prevalence of particular positions within the case study data is normally indicated in the text of the following (findings) chapters by reference to the number of participants and/or the number of coded segments in that wave of data generation expressing a particular viewpoint. In reporting the results of these analyses of qualitative case study data, such figures are intended only to be indicative of the prevalence of particular viewpoints in the broader sample. Extracts from the end of year interviews and from ejournals are provided for the reader in order to: (i) illustrate the diversity of perspectives arising from participants’ accounts of their experiences; (ii) illustrate the complexity of the issues addressed; and/or (iii) unpack one particular standpoint.

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<sup>22</sup> Permission was sought from each case study teacher in advance of contacting their Induction tutor / mentor. Where permission was granted we then sought the consent of the head teacher to approach the relevant member of staff.

Unless otherwise stated, quotations are from the end of year face-to-face interviews. When presenting extracts from the ejournal exchanges, the month and year in which the data were generated is noted after the extract. All extracts from ejournal and interview data are presented with taglines which provide the reader with some biographical information about the participants (e.g. gender, age, and the ITT route they were following/had followed), though all extracts are anonymised in accordance with our ethical obligations to our participants. Furthermore, where the extract provides information which might enable the participant to be identified, or is sensitive in some way, the tagline has been truncated or removed in order to further protect the identity of the interviewee. Given that our interviewees have aged over time, the age bands in the taglines have been changed accordingly. Hence an interviewee who was in the age band 20-24 in Wave 1, for example, was placed in the age band 21-25 in Wave 2 and the band 25-29 in Wave 6.<sup>23</sup>

In Chapter 10 of this report we present the stories of a number of beginner teachers selected from among our case study participants. The cases were selected to illustrate a range and variety of beginner teachers' experiences from 'positive' to 'negative', as well as, for example, those of a participant who withdrew from ITT and one who worked as a supply teacher. In addition, cases were selected to represent a range of ITT routes followed, teachers who taught (or trained to teach) in primary and secondary schools, both genders and a range of age groups. Each of these case study participants was sent a copy of her or his 'story' and asked permission to use it in this report. They were also invited to comment on it and, should they wish, request that any details be removed or revised. As elsewhere in this report, some details relating to these research participants, who are provided with pseudonyms, have been omitted to protect their anonymity. In a further effort to ensure the non-traceability of these case participants, whose experiences are described in much more detail than most, some details of their stories have also been altered.

The choice to re-present case study data as 'stories' allowed for in-depth, holistic and longitudinal analyses on a case by case basis, and for a biographical contextualisation of the complex interplay of factors impacting on any one individual's experiences which earlier analyses had already established (Hobson and Malderez, 2005; Hobson *et al.*, 2006a; Hobson *et al.*, 2007; Tracey *et al.*, 2008). Furthermore, by employing a method of data analysis and presentation for some of our case study data which is associated with narrative enquiry approaches, we acknowledge the collaborative story-telling process, from data generation through to presentation, which took place between the researcher and the case study research participant.

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<sup>23</sup> In doing so we accept that some errors will have occurred, notably because the generation of data for Waves 2-6 (conducted in Summer 2004-2008) did not take place between one (Wave 2) and five (Wave 6) full years after that for Wave 1 (conducted in Autumn 2003). This means that a minority of participants (who had birthdays in the month or two prior to the Wave 1 survey) will have been placed in the next age band up when in fact they would not have reached the lower age in that band for another month or two.

## 2.5.2 Analyses of survey data

Survey data were analysed using *SPSS* software. Where tables of the aggregate responses to a survey question are provided in the text, they show the response frequencies and the percentage distribution of the sample responses.

As we discussed in Chapter 1, one of the main aims of the *BaT* study was to explore the extent to which teachers' experiences (or accounts) differed according to the ITT route they had followed, or according to other characteristics, including participants' age, their gender, their ethnicity, and whether they were teaching in primary or secondary schools. In addition, then, to presenting relevant descriptive and aggregate statistics, we also report the results of a variety of standard statistical analyses, namely the chi-square test, the t-test, McNemar test, correlation, binary logistic regression, and General Linear Model (GLM) repeated measures analysis. It should be borne in mind that where a result or a pattern of differences is found to be 'statistically' significant,<sup>24</sup> this does not automatically imply that it has any practical importance. Conversely, non-statistically significant results might, nevertheless, reveal valuable findings.

Minimal details of the results of the statistical analyses are provided in this report, and all findings reported in the text are statistically significant unless stated otherwise. Further details of such findings are available in the corresponding interim or technical reports; while further information about the statistical techniques employed can be found in Appendix II to this report.

## 2.6 Conclusion

Having outlined the methods of data generation and analysis employed in the *Becoming a Teacher* research, we now go on to present the findings of those analyses. In the main findings chapters (3-10) we have chosen to adopt a minimalist approach to the interpretation and discussion of findings (or outcomes of our data analyses), partly in order that readers can come to their own interpretations of what the findings may mean to them, and partly because we provide more substantive and holistic interpretations, and discuss some implications of our findings, in the final chapter (11) of the report. First, in Chapter 3, we report findings relating to beginner teachers' preconceptions and expectations of and their reasons for undertaking ITT.

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<sup>24</sup> That is, the result is statistically significant at the standard probability or p-value of 5 per cent, thereby implying a 5 per cent chance, or less, of the result occurring randomly.

### 3 Student teachers' motives for undertaking Initial Teacher Training and their preconceptions, expectations and concerns about ITT and teaching

#### Key Findings

- The two motives which were reported as having 'strongly attracted' the largest percentage of survey respondents to undertake ITT were the prospect of '*helping young people to learn*' (78%) and of '*working with children or young people*' (59%).
- The majority of student teachers reported that prior to starting their ITT:
  - they had been particularly looking forward to '*being in classrooms and interacting with pupils*' (reported by 84% of survey respondents), '*developing an understanding of teaching and learning*' (73%) and '*learning to teach my subject*' (60%);
  - they had been concerned about workload (69% of survey respondents) and behaviour management (66%); and
  - they had thought that it was very important that they developed their '*ability to bring about pupil learning*' (91%) and their '*ability to maintain discipline in the classroom*' (86%).
- Prior to starting their ITT, most trainees reported that they had held a practical, classroom-orientated approach to learning to teach and had been sceptical about the value of the more 'theoretical' aspects of ITT provision.
- Nine-tenths of survey respondents were following their first choice ITT route and nearly half (46%) were attracted to their ITT programme by the '*balance of in-school and out-of-school training*'.
  - The geographical location of their ITT programme had been influential in the choices of route and provider of over three-quarters of respondents (78%).
  - Almost half of case study interviewees (40 out of 85) reported being attracted to their ITT course by the duration of the programme, with some wanting to complete their ITT in the shortest period possible and others wanting to ensure that their course was long enough to enable them to receive a thorough preparation.
- Ninety two per cent of survey respondents reported that they had been ('very' or 'fairly') confident, prior to the beginning of their teacher training, that their ITT would prepare them to be effective teachers.
- Four-fifths of respondents indicated that they expected to be in teaching in 5 years' time and 5% reported that they did not intend to still be in the teaching profession by this time.
- In a number of respects there were significant differences between the motives, preconceptions and concerns of student teachers who were about to follow different ITT routes. For example:
  - those following university-administered PGCE programmes were more likely than those following other ITT routes to state that a desire to 'train alongside people in my peer group' was an influence on their choice of route.

### 3.1 Introduction

While the principal focus of the *Becoming a Teacher (BaT)* research was to seek to understand beginning teachers' experiences of initial teacher training, Induction and early professional development, as stated in Chapter 1 we felt that it was important to acknowledge that learners view and interpret new information and experiences through their existing network of knowledge, experience and beliefs. Hence, in Wave 1 of the study we sought to learn about our (then student teacher) participants' motives for undertaking ITT and their preconceptions, expectations and concerns about ITT and teaching. In this chapter we report the main findings from this phase of the research, and in the chapters which follow we discuss the extent to which some of these considerations did, in fact, appear to shape our participants' subsequent experiences of becoming teachers.

We begin this chapter by reporting student teachers' stated reasons for deciding to become teachers, followed by their reasons for undertaking the particular ITT route and programme they were following. We then outline the reservations about ITT and becoming a teacher that trainees had prior to starting their courses, the things they were looking forward to about ITT and teaching, and their preconceptions about the value of different aspects of ITT course content and pedagogy. Finally, we examine the extent to which student teachers' motives, preconceptions and concerns were differentiated according to ITT route and other factors.<sup>26</sup>

### 3.2 Student teachers' motives for undertaking ITT

The 4,790 student teachers who completed the Wave 1 questionnaire were asked to think back to the time when they were weighing up whether or not to undertake a teacher training programme, and to indicate how much, if at all, various factors had attracted or deterred them. The results are listed in Table 3.1, in order of those items which strongly attracted the highest proportions of respondents.

The factor that was said to have 'strongly attracted' the largest percentage of respondents was the prospect of '*Helping young people to learn*' (78%), while 59 per cent of respondents indicated that the prospect of '*Working with children or young people*' had 'strongly attracted' them to training to be a teacher. These findings suggest that uppermost in trainees' minds (perhaps because they had felt the need to foreground these during the application process or perhaps because they were in fact the strongest motivators) were **intrinsic factors** related to the nature of the profession.

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<sup>26</sup> More detailed accounts of findings from this phase of the *BaT* research can be found in Hobson and Malderez (2005), Hobson *et al.* (2006b) and Malderez *et al.* (2007).

**Table 3.1 In weighing up whether or not to undertake a teacher training programme, how much, if at all, did the following factors attract or deter you?**

	Per cent (%)							N†
	Strongly attracted	Moderately attracted	Neither	Moderately deterred	Strongly deterred	Don't know	Not applicable	
Helping young people to learn	78	20	2	0*	0	0	0	4701
Working with children or young people	59	33	7	1	0	0	1	4694
Being inspired by a good teacher	48	36	12	1	0	1	2	4686
Giving something back to the community	33	46	19	1	0	1	2	4682
The challenging nature of the job	29	48	14	7	1	1	1	4686
Long holidays	26	42	28	1	0	0	3	4686
Staying involved with a subject specialism	25	32	30	2	1	1	10	4670
Job security	24	45	26	2	0	1	3	4681
Wanting to teach pupils better than in own experience	22	35	31	1	1	2	9	4672
The professional status of teaching	19	44	29	4	1	1	2	4680
Opportunities for career development	19	44	29	2	0	1	4	4675
Fit with family or other commitments	18	24	32	2	1	1	21	4682
Speaking to teachers about the profession	14	42	24	11	3	1	6	4680
Collegiality / teamwork aspects of teaching	11	46	36	1	0	2	4	4656
Financial incentives attached to teacher training	11	32	31	6	4	1	17	4662
One or more of friends is/was a teacher	9	26	19	3	1	0	42	4672
Spending more time in higher education	9	24	42	10	3	1	11	4664
One or both parents is/was a teacher	7	8	9	2	1	0	73	4663
Salary	6	35	35	15	5	1	3	4678
How the public perceives teachers / teaching	6	20	53	12	3	2	4	4667
Media campaigns (e.g. "Those who can, teach")	5	27	52	3	2	2	9	4663
Benefits package (e.g. Occupational pension)	5	24	45	3	2	4	19	4664
Teachers' morale	5	22	44	17	5	3	4	4668
Advertisements from ITT programme providers / institutions	3	23	52	1	1	5	16	4623
Being unable to get onto a course for a preferred profession	3	5	14	2	3	1	73	4650
TV drama programmes depicting the profession (e.g. <i>Grange Hill</i> , <i>Teachers</i> , <i>Hope and Glory</i> )	2	6	56	7	4	4	24	4663

† Totals vary as some trainees did not respond to particular items.

\* The figure '0' denotes less than or equal to 0.4 per cent.

A series of single response items. Due to rounding totals may not sum to 100.

The analysis of data generated from the 85 in-depth interviews conducted at Wave 1 provided more holistic insights about participants' motivations and suggested that decisions to undertake ITT were often the result of a relatively **complex interplay** of considerations related to individuals' **prior experiences**, their **preconceptions** and **expectations** about teaching, and their **circumstances** at the time they decided to train to be teachers. This is illustrated by the following quotation from one participant:

*It was really [about] contributing [somehow] rather than just making profits, which was a big factor. And I've got three young children so family and work-life balance was a big issue and really that was more important than money... I'd earn a bit less but I'd get a good balance on that. And interest. I was sort of groaning about my old job. It was too easy and a bit boring and I relished the idea of getting my brain going again... So it was interests as well, and stimulation... I couldn't do with just sitting in front of a computer; I needed to be on my feet, moving around, interacting, the whole of that really. (Male, 30-34, GTP, primary)<sup>27</sup>*

### 3.3 Influences on trainees' choices of ITT route and provider

Ninety per cent of respondents to the Wave 1 questionnaire indicated that they were following their first choice ITT route, and these trainees were asked which, if any, of a number of considerations had influenced their choice of route.<sup>28</sup> The responses are presented in Table 3.2, which shows that the item selected by the highest proportion of respondents (46%) was '*the balance of in-school and out-of-school training appeals to me*', followed by '*I thought it was the best option financially*' (39%) and '*I wanted to be trained by qualified teachers in schools*' (35%).<sup>29</sup>

Case study interview data confirmed the importance, to many trainees, of the '**balance of elements**' (notably between school-based and university-based inputs) in the ITT route, and of the importance of **financial considerations** and the **geographical availability** of particular routes. These data also suggest another key consideration for some. That is, while the Wave 1 survey did not ask whether **course duration** was a possible influence on respondents' choice of ITT route, 40 out of 85 interviewees indicated (without prompting) that this had influenced their decision. Duration may have been influential in one or other of two main ways, as illustrated by the following quotations from two interviewees:

*[I chose to do a] PGCE because it was the easiest and quickest way to do the one year; basically a conversion degree. (Female, 25-29, PGCE, primary)<sup>30</sup>*

*I want to be as good a teacher as I [can], and I'm doing it because I want to be a good teacher ... you've got to do the four year [course] to do it properly. (Male, 20-24, BA QTS, primary)*

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<sup>27</sup> As stated in Chapter 2, quotations provided are from end of year, face-to-face interviews with beginner teachers unless otherwise stated.

<sup>28</sup> For readers unfamiliar with ITT programmes in England, a brief overview of the different ITT routes being followed by the participants in this research is provided in Appendix I.

<sup>29</sup> Table 3.2 also shows that there were some interesting variations on this question according to the ITT route that trainees were following. Some of the more notable differences between the responses of those following different ITT routes - on this and other issues addressed in this chapter - are summarised in Section 3.7.

<sup>30</sup> For similar reasons, some undergraduates (who had identified that they wanted to teach at a relatively early stage in their lives) chose to undertake a three year ITT programme, which was quicker than a (non-teaching) undergraduate degree followed by a one year PGCE.

**Table 3.2 Why did you choose this particular teacher training route?**

	Per cent (%)						
	BEd	BA/BSc QTS	PGCE	Flexible PGCE	SCITT	GRTP	All trainees
The balance of in-school and out-of-school training appeals to me	45	44	54	28	56	37	46
I thought it was the best option financially	14	16	50	43	27	81	39
I wanted to be trained by qualified teachers in schools	27	25	31	16	66	65	35
I thought that prospective employers may prefer applicants who have followed this training route	59	45	26	12	34	23	34
I wanted to train alongside people in my peer group/in the same situation as me	33	31	43	22	29	19	34
It was available in my local area	22	25	33	25	57	42	32
It was available at the school/institution that I wanted to attend	26	30	22	17	20	32	26
I wanted to get a broader qualification before specializing in teaching	19	16	27	9	12	5	18
It was entirely school-based rather than based in a university	1	1	2	6	38	62	12
The flexibility of the programme suits my other commitments	4	7	5	67	13	22	10
It was the only option open to me	9	11	6	10	6	10	9
<b>N =</b>	<b>375</b>	<b>1300</b>	<b>1603</b>	<b>144</b>	<b>259</b>	<b>576</b>	<b>4257</b>

A total of 4257 respondents selected at least one item.

Respondents could give more than one answer so percentages do not sum to 100.

In addition to highlighting individual considerations which influenced trainees' choice of ITT route, our interviews also demonstrate the **complex interplay** of factors which impacted individual trainees' decisions, as illustrated in the following quotation:

*I wanted to go back to... where I did my degree but I couldn't afford it really so this was second best... It would have been a PGCE but I've done a SCITT because of the locality and finance [i.e. the programme is based close to the trainee's family home, allowing him to live with his parents while training]... GTP would have been my first option but I couldn't do it because of my age.<sup>31</sup> (Male, 20-24, SCITT, secondary, PE)*

<sup>31</sup> At the time applicants to the GRTP programmes had to be a minimum of 24 years of age. This restriction has subsequently been lifted.

Table 3.2 shows that 26 per cent of survey respondents indicated that their choice of ITT route was influenced, at least in part, by the availability of that route at a particular ITT provider that they wished to attend. In addition to issues affecting their choice of training route, respondents to the questionnaire survey were also asked about their reasons for choosing their particular training *provider*. They were asked to indicate which (if any) of twelve different items had influenced their choice. The results are presented in Table 3.3, which shows that over three-quarters (78%) of respondents cited the geographical location of the provider and three in five respondents cited the reputation of the provider. Thus for large numbers of trainees geographical issues were influential in their choice of both ITT route and training provider.

**Table 3.3 What were your reasons for choosing this particular training provider (e.g. university, school) to undertake your teacher training programme?**

	Per cent (%)
Geographical location of institution / school	78
Reputation of institution / programme	60
I live in the local area / I could stay at home	48
Good standard of schools in the local area	25
My partner lives / works / studies / trains in the area	14
I had previous experience of / in the school / institution	14
I know other people doing the programme	13
Reputation of particular trainers working on the programme	13
I know other people training at this school / institution	12
I had no other options available	9
I studied an undergraduate degree at this institution	8
I could not get onto the programme that I wanted to do	8

A total of 4,723 respondents selected at least one item from the list above.

Respondents could give more than one answer so percentages do not sum to 100.

### 3.4 Student teachers' reservations about undertaking ITT and becoming a teacher

In Section 3.2 we discussed the factors that attracted student teachers to the idea of undertaking ITT and becoming a teacher. Table 3.1 also shows which considerations survey respondents regarded as deterrents to undertaking ITT. Of the 26 survey items, six items were each reported to have been (strong or moderate) deterrents to undertaking an ITT programme by over ten per cent of questionnaire respondents. These were:

- (1) Teachers' morale (17% 'moderately deterred', 5% 'strongly deterred').
- (2) Salary (15% 'moderately deterred', 5% 'strongly deterred').
- (3) How the public perceives teachers / teaching (12% 'moderately deterred', 3% 'strongly deterred').
- (4) Speaking to teachers about the profession (11% 'moderately deterred', 3% 'strongly deterred').
- (5) Spending more time in higher education (10% 'moderately deterred', 3% 'strongly deterred').
- (6) TV drama programmes depicting the profession (e.g. *Grange Hill*, *Teachers*, *Hope and Glory*) (7% 'moderately deterred', 4% 'strongly deterred').

It is important to note, however, that in the first five cases listed above, more respondents stated that they were attracted by these items than those who state that they were deterred. The only item which was reported to have deterred more respondents than it attracted was ‘*TV drama programmes depicting the profession*’, though the majority of respondents (56%) indicated that they were neither attracted nor deterred by this.

Questionnaire respondents were also asked which, if any, of eleven considerations they had concerns or worries about immediately before they started their ITT. The top five concerns are displayed in Table 3.4. The top item, ‘*Whether I would be able to manage the workload*’, was selected by almost seven-tenths (69%) of all respondents. The second ‘biggest’ concern or source of worry for trainees, selected by two-thirds (66%) of all respondents, was ‘*Whether I would be able to maintain discipline in the classroom*’, while the third, selected by over half (53%) of respondents, was ‘*Whether I would be able to manage financially*’.

**Table 3.4 Student teachers’ concerns prior to undertaking their ITT**

Item/concern or worry prior to starting ITT	Per cent (%)						
	BEd	BA /BSc QTS	Flexible PGCE	GRTP	PGCE	SCITT	For all of the trainees
Whether I would be able to manage the workload	72	70	63	68	69	68	69
Whether I would be able to maintain discipline in the classroom	55	56	62	71	75	63	66
Whether I would be able to manage financially	61	64	49	41	48	48	53
Whether I would be able to cope with the academic difficulty of the programme	64	63	33	27	47	41	49
Whether I would be able to bring about pupil learning	45	41	37	47	50	46	46

The top three concerns expressed by participants in the face-to-face interviews mirrored the responses of the survey respondents. When asked whether, prior to beginning their ITT programmes, they had felt teaching had any drawbacks, the considerations identified by the highest numbers of interviewees related to:

- **workload** (n=32; 38% of 85);
- **pupil behaviour and behaviour management** (n=21; 25%); and
- **teachers’ pay** (n=16; 19%).

The following quotations are illustrative:

*All the teachers [I spoke to] were saying, 'oh dear, we were here [at school] until 7.30pm last night and we still haven't got all our work done. I kept thinking [if I teach] I'm not going to have a life. (Female, 20-24, PGCE, primary)*

*[O]bviously you get the, the worry, the discipline worries and the behaviour, you-know, that's fairly prominent just [because] of the stuff there is in the press ... (Male, 20-24, BA QTS, primary)*

*[I]t's not very well paid, but then I was aware of that when I gave up my previous job. Teaching will never be as well paid as my previous job was, or at least the previous industry was. (Female, 40-44, GTP, secondary, MFL)*

The case study data suggested that some of the concerns or worries experienced by student teachers before they started their ITT related to their prior education or employment. For example, and firstly, those whose prior experience included working as support staff in schools - particularly as teaching assistants - reported concerns or worries about the transition from working *for* teachers, to training and working as a teacher. Secondly, student teachers who had pursued careers outside education, for example in business or banking, were more likely to report concerns about identifying transferable skills that might support their transition to becoming a teacher. Thirdly, for trainees who went straight from their A-levels (or equivalent) to teacher training, or directly from undergraduate courses, or who had spent less than two years in alternative careers, there tended to be two main sources of concern:

- (1) the *academic* transition, either from A-levels to undergraduate teacher training or from undergraduate to postgraduate level study and training; and
- (2) the *occupational* transition to a professional role / identity that has defined responsibilities and accountabilities - i.e. 'developing a teacher persona'.

While the majority of our research participants expressed some concerns about undertaking ITT and becoming a teacher, the majority also:

- (i) identified a number of things that they were looking forward to about ITT and teaching;
- (ii) stated they were confident that their ITT would prepare them to be effective teachers; and
- (iii) indicated that they anticipated becoming a teacher on completion of their ITT and still being teachers in five years' time.

We elaborate on each of these points in the section (3.5) that follows.

### 3.5 Student teachers' hopes and expectations

#### 3.5.1 What trainees had looked forward to about undertaking ITT and becoming a teacher

In the Wave 1 survey, respondents were asked to think back to the time immediately before they started their teacher training programme and to indicate which considerations (if any), from a list of six, they had been particularly looking forward to. Their responses are summarized in Table 3.5, which shows that the consideration selected by more student teachers than any other, and by over four-fifths (84%) of respondents, was '*being in classrooms and interacting with pupils*', followed by '*developing an understanding of teaching and learning*' (73%); and '*learning to teach my subject*' (60%). To a large degree, the findings reflect some of those presented in Section 3.1 above, relating to the reasons trainees gave for undertaking ITT, first and foremost amongst which were '*helping young people to learn*' and '*working with children or young people*'. The importance of these considerations to many trainees was confirmed in our face-to-face interviews. The following quotation from one student teacher serves to illustrate a fairly typical viewpoint:

*It's nice to be part of people's growing up. I look back at my teachers and I still remember the ones that I loved at primary school. I remember the impact they made on my life ... I'd like to be able to give that to children, that sort of enjoyment and the amount of pleasure I got out of it. ... I'd love to think that fifteen years down the line somebody would say that about me. (Female, 30-34, GTP, primary)*

**Table 3.5 What were student teachers looking forward to about ITT and teaching?**

Item/Expectation	Per cent (%)						
	BEd	BA/BSc QTS	PGCE	Flexible PGCE	SCITT	GRTP	All trainees
Being in classrooms and interacting with pupils	89	87	80	75	87	85	84
Developing an understanding of teaching and learning	74	71	73	69	76	76	73
Learning to teach my subject	48	51	70	48	57	59	60
Learning from practising teachers	57	55	53	53	66	72	58
Becoming part of a school community	36	38	47	37	51	60	45
Finding out about research on teaching and learning	23	21	24	22	24	27	23
<b>N</b>	<b>395</b>	<b>1378</b>	<b>1745</b>	<b>186</b>	<b>341</b>	<b>704</b>	<b>4749</b>

### **3.5.2 How confident were student teachers that their ITT would prepare them to be effective teachers?**

Survey respondents were also asked to think back to the time immediately before they started their initial teacher programme and to indicate how confident they were, if at all, that the programme would prepare them to be effective teachers:

- ninety-two per cent of respondents indicated that they were ‘very confident’ (25%) or ‘fairly confident’ (67%) that their ITT would prepare them to be effective teachers; and
- seven per cent of respondents stated that they were ‘not very confident’ (6%) or ‘not very confident at all’ (1%).

### **3.5.3 Did trainees think they would become teachers on completion of their ITT and still be teachers in five years’ time?**

Across all ITT routes, 87 per cent of trainees stated that they were ‘very likely’ and 12 per cent that they were ‘fairly likely’ to enter teaching after completing their ITT, with only one per cent stating they were (fairly or very) unlikely to enter teaching.

When asked whether they expected to be teachers in five years’ time:

- eighty per cent of all survey respondents indicated that they did expect to be teaching;
- five per cent stated that they did not expect to be teachers in five years’ time; and
- fifteen per cent stated that they did not know.

### **3.6 Student teachers’ preconceptions about ITT course content and the provision of opportunities for learning and development**

In the Wave 1 survey, respondents were asked to indicate how important they had thought it was, immediately prior to beginning their ITT, that they should develop each of fourteen different kinds of knowledge and skills listed. The majority of student teachers surveyed stated that they had considered it very or fairly important for them to develop their:

- ‘*ability to bring about pupil learning*’ (91% stating very important, 8% stating fairly important);
- ‘*ability to maintain discipline in the classroom*’ (86% very important, 13% fairly important);
- ‘*knowledge about their teaching subjects*’ (74% very important, 23% fairly important);
- ‘*knowledge / understanding of pupil motivation and behaviour*’ (73% very important, 24% fairly important);
- ‘*knowledge / understanding of how pupils learn*’ (71% very important, 25% fairly important); and
- ‘*ability to use a range of teaching methods*’ (70% very important, 26% fairly important).

Fewer respondents had considered that it was important for them to develop (for example) their:

- 'ability to deal with pastoral issues' (35% very important, 53% fairly important);
- 'knowledge / understanding of education policy' (31% very important, 54% fairly important);
- 'awareness of research findings about effective teaching methods' (23% very important, 56% fairly important); and
- 'knowledge / understanding of the philosophy of education' (10% very important, 41% fairly important).

In a related question, respondents were also asked to indicate how important they had thought it was that their ITT programmes should provide each of number of different opportunities for learning. High proportions of trainees had thought that it would be important for their ITT to include the following opportunities for learning:

- being observed and given feedback by experienced teachers (75% stated very important, 22% fairly important);
- watching other teachers teach (74% and 23% respectively);
- getting assistance with lesson planning (71% and 26%); and
- being given specific strategies for teaching specific topics (66% and 30%).

On the other hand, relatively smaller numbers of trainees had considered the following to be (very or fairly) important:

- having university / college tutors observe your lessons and give feedback (60% very important, 32% fairly important);
- studying ideas about how pupils learn (48% and 42%); and
- studying current research on teaching methods (22% and 50%).

In general, most student teachers were starting out on their ITT journey with a very practical, classroom-oriented approach to learning to teach, and were slightly sceptical of the benefits of more academic forms of study and of what our interviewees often termed more 'theoretical' aspects of ITT course provision.

*I felt at the time [i.e. prior to starting my training] that [ITT] would need to involve people who were experienced, good teachers, because they are the people who can tell you from experience, you know, that this works and this works and you can have realistic conversations with them about how to tackle it. (Male, 35-39, BEd, primary)*

*[O]ne of the key things that I thought they would teach us on the course because ... that was one of the first things that everyone was concerned about when they were going into their schools, was the discipline. (Female, 25-29, PGCE, secondary, English)*

*With the best will in the world, I don't think classroom management can be taught from a book. You need the life experience outside the classroom and you need to see it in action.* (Female, 40-44, GTP, secondary, MFL)

In the following Chapter (4) we will see whether student teachers' views on these matters endured throughout their ITT and whether there is evidence that their preconceptions were influential in shaping their subsequent experiences. Before that, we end this chapter by highlighting some of the ways in which student teachers differed *before* they began their ITT.

### **3.7 Variation in student teachers' concerns and expectations by ITT route and other factors**

As stated in the Introduction to this report, one of the main aims of the *Becoming a Teacher* research was to examine whether there were significant or substantial differences between the experiences of ITT, Induction and early professional development of beginner teachers entering the profession via different ITT routes. It is important to be aware however that, as our research shows, beginner teachers entering the profession via different training routes were *already different* in a number of respects *before starting* their ITT. In fact, there were statistically significant differences between the responses of survey participants who chose to follow different ITT routes on almost all of the issues discussed so far in this chapter. In some cases, route differences are related to - and might potentially be explained by - differences between:

- male and female trainees;
- trainees of different ages; and
- those seeking to teach in primary schools and those seeking to teach in secondary schools.

That is, there are what might be termed 'gender-', 'age-' and 'phase-biases' within or between the different ITT routes. For example, the undergraduate (BEd and BA / BSc QTS) routes tend to be populated by a majority of female trainees and those training to become primary school teachers, while trainees following GRTP, Flexible PGCE and SCITT programmes have a higher average age than those following the other ITT routes. Some of the differences between the motives, preconceptions, expectations and concerns of trainees from different ITT routes are highlighted below.<sup>32</sup>

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<sup>32</sup> All the findings presented in this section are statistically significant unless otherwise stated. Further details of these analyses can be found in Hobson and Malderez (2005).

*(i) Factors influencing trainees' choice of ITT route*

Firstly, Table 3.2 (in Section 3.3) highlighted some interesting variation between the responses of trainees from different ITT **routes** regarding the factors they said had attracted them to those routes. In fact, analysis reveals that on every item listed in Table 3.2 there were statistically significant differences between the responses of those following different ITT routes.<sup>33</sup> Amongst the more notable differences are the findings that:

- trainees following employment-based and school-centred programmes were far more likely than those following other ITT pathways to state that their decisions had been influenced by a wish to be 'trained by qualified teachers in schools';
- approximately two thirds of trainees following the Flexible PGCE route stated that 'the flexibility of the programme suits my other commitments', compared with 22 per cent of GRTP trainees and less than 15 per cent of those following all other routes;
- a higher proportion of respondents following the BEd route than those from all other routes stated that they 'thought prospective employers may prefer applicants who have followed this training route'; while
- those following the university-administered PGCE route were most likely to state that they 'wanted to train alongside people in my peer group/in the same situation as me', followed by those taking the undergraduate BEd and BA/BSc QTS routes.

The last finding presented above relates to and may be partly explained by the differing **age** profiles of ITT routes. That is, trainees following these university-administered routes have a lower average age than those following non-traditional routes, and respondents in the youngest (20-24) age group were more likely than those in all other age categories to state that they were attracted by the desire '*to train alongside people in my peer group/in the same situation as me*'.

*(ii) Student teachers' concerns*

Regarding the concerns that student teachers felt prior to undertaking ITT, the following variations by respondents' ITT route were found, amongst others (see Table 3.4 above):

- higher percentages of BEd (64%) and BA/BSc QTS (63%) students indicated that they had worries or concerns about whether they '*would be able to cope with the academic difficulty of the programme*' than trainees following GRTP (27%) and Flexible university-based PGCE (33%) routes.
- higher percentages of student teachers following the GRTP (71%) and university administered PGCE (75%) programmes indicated that they had concerns or worries about whether they '*would be able to maintain discipline in the classroom*', compared with BEd (55%) and BA/BSc QTS (56%) students.

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<sup>33</sup> Statistical analysis reveals that there are also significant differences in the responses to some of these questions according to gender, age and phase of education (primary / secondary), but analysis of variance (ANOVA) indicates that ITT route accounts for the greatest systematic variance. Whilst the use of ANOVA (designed for use with parametric data) may be justified given the size of the sample and the fact that the requirements of normality and independence have not been violated, the less sensitive non-parametric tests confirm these findings.

The latter finding may be largely explained by the fact that a higher proportion of trainees on the BEd and BA/BSc QTS programmes were preparing to teach in primary schools,

where discipline is less of an issue (there was a statistically significant difference between the responses of primary and secondary **phase** trainees, across all routes, on this question).

*(iii) What student teachers were looking forward to*

Table 3.5 above also revealed some interesting variations between trainees from different ITT routes regarding what they were looking forward to about their ITT. Perhaps most strikingly:

- seventy-two per cent of GRTP trainees and 66 per cent of SCITT trainees indicated that they were particularly looking forward to 'learning from practising teachers', compared to under 60 per cent of respondents from all other routes;
- sixty per cent of GRTP respondents and 51 per cent of SCITT trainees stated that they were particularly looking forward to 'becoming a part of the school community', while under 40 per cent of those following BEd, BA/BSc QTS and Flexible PGCE programmes gave this response; and
- seventy per cent of those following university-administered PGCE programmes stated that they were particularly looking forward to 'learning to teach their subject', compared with approximately half of BEd, BA/BSc QTS and Flexible PGCE trainees.

Again, with regard to the last finding presented here, the route differences are related to differences by **phase** - and by **gender**, with secondary phase and male trainees statistically more likely than primary and female trainees to state that they were looking forward to teaching their subject.

*(iv) ITT course content and design*

In general, a higher proportion of trainees following employment- or school-based ITT routes than those following other training routes indicated that they had a classroom-oriented perspective to teaching and learning to teach. For example:

- ninety-two per cent of GRTP respondents stated that they thought it was very important to develop the '*ability to maintain discipline in the classroom*', compared with 84 per cent of those following BEd and BA/BSc QTS programmes.

Regarding aspects of ITT course design that trainees thought would be most valuable, amongst the more notable (and statistically significant) findings between the responses of student teachers following different ITT routes were:

- over two-thirds (68%) of trainees pursuing university-administered PGCE programmes indicated that it was very important that a teacher training programme should include having '*university / college tutors observe lessons and give feedback*', while only just over half of GRTP (51%) and BEd and BA / BSc QTS (56%) students gave this response; and

- almost three-fifths of BEd students (59%) indicated it was very important that a teacher training programme should include '*studying ideas about how pupils' learn*', compared with a relatively low 33% of Flexible PGCE students and 43% of GRTP trainees.

### **3.8 Conclusion**

In this chapter we have outlined key findings from the first wave of the *Becoming a Teacher* project, which sought to clarify, given their likely influence on subsequent experiences, student teachers' motives for undertaking Initial Teacher

Training and their preconceptions, expectations and concerns about ITT and teaching. In the following chapter we report key findings from the second wave of the project, which sought to examine student teachers' experiences of ITT.

## 4 Student teachers' experiences and evaluations of their ITT

### Key Findings

- Most student teachers who took part in the telephone survey (97%) reported feeling ('very or fairly') confident that their ITT had prepared them to be an effective teacher.
- Positive aspects of student teachers' experiences were most commonly associated with four factors: establishing good relationships with pupils; feeling that they were bringing about pupil learning; experiencing good relationships with and support from their mentors and/or tutors; and their perceptions of their development as teachers.
- Over three-quarters of survey respondents (79%) rated the support they received during their ITT as 'good' or 'very good'.
- The majority of case study trainees stated that their school-based experiences were the most valuable aspect of their ITT.
- The majority (84%) of survey respondents reported their relationships with their school-based mentors as 'very good' or 'good' and 88% reported 'good' or 'very good' relationships with other teachers in their school-based placements.
- Case study interviewees perceived that school-based mentors were most helpful when they provided ideas and techniques for teaching, provided encouragement, advised on workload issues and were accessible and available.
- Case study data indicate that HEI-based aspects of ITT were considered most valuable where they were perceived to have clear practical utility for trainees' work in schools and, specifically, where they related to lesson planning; classroom management; differentiation; and educational policy and legal obligations. Interviewees also valued the opportunities for meeting fellow student teachers that time in the HEI setting afforded.
- Whilst some case study interviewees were sceptical about the value of 'theoretical' work, 66% of survey respondents stated that the balance between the theoretical and practical elements of the programme was 'about right' and 85% felt that the links between the theoretical and practical elements of their programme were 'usually' or 'always' clear.
- Negative experiences of being a student teacher were most frequently associated with issues relating to pupil behaviour; feeling unsupported; assessments of their teaching; and workload.
- Where trainees experienced problematic relationships with their formal mentors some described benefitting from a (compensatory) type of *informal dispersed mentoring*, where other teachers in the placement school offered support.
- Teacher educators from the ITT programmes followed by case study trainees identified pressures of time and workload, plus the availability of suitable placement schools and school-based mentors, as constraints on their ITT provision.
- There were some differences in the reported experiences of those student teachers who followed different ITT routes. For example, trainees who had followed employment-based and school-centred programmes tended to give higher ratings of the support they received and their relationships with mentors and other school-based colleagues than those who had followed other ITT routes.

## 4.1 Introduction

This chapter presents findings on student teachers' experiences and evaluations of their ITT. Drawing predominantly on the analysis of the Wave 2 (end of ITT) survey of 3,162 student teachers and in-depth interviews with 79 student teachers, it includes findings on:

- the causes of the emotional highs and lows experienced by trainees (Section 4.2);
- trainees' accounts of the school-based, higher education institution-based and theoretical components of their ITT (Sections 4.3-4.5); and
- the extent to which trainees' experiences were subject to variation according to the ITT route they followed and to other factors (Section 4.7).

The chapter also reports the perceptions of (46) ITT programme personnel regarding issues relating to school-university partnerships and constraints on ITT provision (Sections 4.5 and 4.6 respectively).<sup>35</sup> Finally, drawing on data generated in later (Waves 3-5) surveys, we report findings on beginner teachers' retrospective evaluations of the extent to which they felt their ITT prepared them to be effective teachers (Section 4.8).

## 4.2 The highs and lows of undertaking ITT

Survey data provide a number of indications that the majority of student teachers in this study had positive overall experiences of ITT and felt, on completion of ITT, that the programmes they had followed had effectively prepared them to enter the world of teaching as newly qualified teachers. For example:

- (i) as shown in Table 4.1, 79 per cent of survey respondents rated the support they received during ITT as either 'very good' or 'good'; and
- (ii) Table 4.2 shows that 97 per cent of survey respondents reported feeling 'very confident' or 'fairly confident' that their ITT programme had prepared them to be an effective teacher.<sup>36</sup>

**Table 4.1 Thinking about your ITT programme, how would you rate the support you received during your training?**

	Frequencies	Valid per cent (%)
Very good	1170	37
Good	1321	42
Neither good nor poor	354	11
Poor	152	5
Very poor	50	2
Can't generalise	108	3
Don't know	1	(0) <sup>37</sup>
<b>No. of cases</b>	<b>3156</b>	

N=3,162 (missing values=6). Percentages may not sum to 100 due to rounding.

<sup>35</sup>More detailed accounts of findings reported in Sections 4.1-4.6 ('Wave 2' findings) can be found in Hobson *et al.* (2006a) and Hobson *et al.* (2008). Findings presented in Section 4.7 are reported for the first time here.

<sup>36</sup>On both of these questions, and some others, there were statistically significant differences between the responses of those who followed different ITT routes. These findings are discussed in Section 4.6 below.

<sup>37</sup>(0)% stands for 'less than 0.5' here and elsewhere in this report.

**Table 4.2 How confident are you, if at all, that your ITT has prepared you to be an effective teacher?**

	<b>Frequencies</b>	<b>Valid per cent (%)</b>
Very confident	1494	50
Fairly confident	1388	47
Not very confident	66	2
Not at all confident	12	(0)
Don't Know	7	(0)
<b>No. of cases</b>	<b>2967</b>	

N=3162 (missing values=195). Percentages may not sum to 100 due to rounding.

This generally positive account is qualified by the evidence from the face-to-face interviews, which tells us not only that the experience of undertaking initial teacher training was, for most, a very demanding one, but also that, for many, this experience did not take the form of a steady progression but was punctuated by a series of emotional high points and low points.

The highs or positive aspects of student teachers' experiences were associated with four factors in particular, which are listed below with illustrative quotations from the in-depth interviews:

- (1) good relationships with pupils in their teaching placement schools;

*I did enjoy it actually... I mean the kids, although they had their problems, and there were some really problem children there, it was actually enjoyable. The children in the class were really nice and very sociable and friendly...* (Female, 36-0 GTP, secondary, history)

- (2) (trainees') perceptions that they were bringing about pupil learning;

*[W]hen something clicks... and [the pupils] realise that all [the] work and effort they've put in throughout the lesson culminates in something worthwhile and relevant to them... you kind of think 'wow breakthrough', definitely.* (Male, 21-25, SCITT, secondary, drama)

- (3) good relationships with and support from their mentors and/or tutors;

*I have always had a fear of assignments and tests but the tutor was fantastic... she completely dispelled the fear, her outlook, her approach to it [was] very positive ... it gave me the confidence, the spark really. I think I owe that to her because I know that I can now give that to my students.* (Female, 41-45, Flexible PGCE, primary)

- (4) their perceptions of their development as teachers.

*I think professionally, yes, I have become a teacher... I went from somebody who thought I would love to be a teacher and now I am a teacher and I have kind of made that, it has taken me three years to take this giant leap to get from one to the other.* (Male, 36-40, BEd, primary)

Less positive experiences and, for some student teachers, emotional low points, were most frequently associated with:

- (1) problems with pupil behaviour or indiscipline;

*[The placement I'm in] it's just got incredibly poor discipline and behaviour problems... people kind of think 'oh you know, they're only students what can they do?' But if it's different students all the time giving you lip... it wears you down emotionally... There are days when I just come home thinking 'blooming heck', you know, almost in tears, going 'I can't do this' (Male, 21-25, SCITT, secondary, drama)*

- (2) a perceived lack of support from mentors and/or other teachers in their placement schools;

*The teacher used to come in at about half past eight and leave at half past three, so I didn't really get much support from her at all... I think it was two weeks into my placement and I thought I really can't do this because obviously I wasn't getting the support and I was in floods of tears. (Female, 26-30, Flexible PGCE, primary)*

- (3) the assessment of their teaching or ways in which some tutors and mentors provided them with 'feedback';

*[I]t was a really oppressive atmosphere in the school. Off my actual mentor... I got nothing but criticism and pressure from her from day one. She was criticising everything I did... I mean we had been doing a lot on the course on the power of positive feedback... and I got none whatsoever. (...)<sup>38</sup>*

- (4) their workload, including the volume of 'paperwork' they had to deal with, and the impact of undertaking ITT on their home and social lives:

*[T]here is so much to do... it just isn't doable, and it gets really demoralising. (Male, 41-45, PGCE, secondary, maths)*

*There's so many forms. At the beginning I was handed so many forms and it just threw me into a panic. I've done them all and I've got folders full of them but they don't go anywhere. (Female, 26-30, PGCE, primary)*

*[I]t is hard because if I am honest I have probably given teacher training more than I have given my family... which is why there is the guilt. (Female, 36-40, BA QTS, primary)*

It is worth noting that two of the contributory factors to student teachers' highs and lows, reported above, relate to two of the three major concerns about becoming a teacher that were reported by trainees as already causing them some anxiety before they began their ITT (and which we reported in Chapter 3), namely concerns about **pupil behaviour** and teacher **workload**. Trainees' working **relationships** with - and the extent to which they felt supported by - their mentors and other teachers in their placement schools emerged as an additional major influence on their experience of ITT, and we elaborate on this issue in Section 4.3 below.

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<sup>38</sup> Here, and in some other places in this report, we have chosen not to include biographical details of individual trainees / beginner teachers in an attempt to ensure non-traceability.

It is interesting to note too, in this context, that almost a quarter (18) of the 79 trainees that we interviewed at the end of their ITT programmes indicated, without specific prompting, that they now believed that ‘being a teacher’ was harder than they had originally envisaged, and some pointed out that the support of family and/or friends was crucial in helping them to survive the experience:

*I don't think [undertaking ITT is] possible without support from home if you've got a family... Christmas this year [was] organised by my husband. (Female, 41-45, GTP, primary)*

### 4.3 Student teachers' experiences in schools

The majority of case study trainees (48 out of 79) stated (without specific prompting by the interviewer) that their school-based experiences were the most valuable aspect of their ITT.<sup>39</sup> As suggested above, one of the key factors reported as having a major impact upon student teachers' experience in schools is the extent to which they enjoy productive **relationships** with, and feel supported by, their mentors and other teacher colleagues. Such relationships - and positive and less positive aspects of student teachers' school-based experiences more generally - are discussed further in 4.3.1 and 4.3.2 below.

#### 4.3.1 Positive aspects of trainees' school-based experiences

When asked in the Wave 2 survey to rate their relationships with their school-based mentors, the majority of respondents indicated that such relationships were generally positive. More specifically:

- eighty-four per cent of respondents reported that their relationships with their school-based mentors were ‘*very good*’ (50%) or ‘*good*’ (34%);
- seven per cent stated that such relationships were ‘*neither good nor poor*’;
- four per cent stated that they ‘*couldn't generalise*’; and
- four per cent indicated that they had ‘*poor*’ (3%) or ‘*very poor*’ (1%) relationships with their mentors.

The in-depth interviews with student teachers tell us that mentors who were considered helpful were seen as supporting their trainees in a range of different ways, including:

- the provision of ideas and techniques for teaching, including strategies for classroom management;
- the provision of encouragement and boosting trainees' confidence;
- ‘being there / available’;
- offering guidance for managing time and workload; and
- enabling trainees to have an input into decisions about the kinds of activities they would take part in.

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<sup>39</sup>In contrast, only three case study trainees identified their HEI-based training as the most valuable.

Aspects of positive school-based experiences which were highlighted by our trainee-interviewees also included:

- in general, the opportunity to talk with colleagues, whether mentors or others, who were concerned with their well-being and progress (37 out of 79 case study trainees);
- more specifically, the opportunity to engage in professional dialogue which helped them to think about their practice as teachers (32); and
- being helped to feel part of the teaching community and having positive relationships with other teachers (31).

Survey data suggest that most student teachers enjoyed positive relationships not only with their mentors but also with other teachers in their placement schools:

- forty-two per cent of respondents reported ‘*very good*’ relationships with ‘other teachers’;
- forty-six per cent reported ‘*good*’ relationships;
- seven per cent stated that they had ‘*nether good nor poor relationships*’;
- two per cent reported ‘*poor*’ relationships; and
- three per cent said they ‘*could not generalise*’.

Where they experienced it in their placement schools, trainees were appreciative of and benefited from a culture of ‘openness’, collaboration and teamwork, in which established teachers were willing to share their knowledge and expertise, and to be observed teaching. Twenty-four interviewees talked, without specific prompting, about the benefits of observing other teachers, often because it enabled them to witness first hand important and potentially useful techniques, such as those relating to behaviour management:

*I have been very lucky with the teacher I’ve been placed with. Her behaviour management is superb. The course did give us [lectures] on behavioural management but obviously it was very general but my teacher uses a lot of non-verbal techniques to start them working and to quieten them down [and] I’ve never shouted since I’ve been there... It’s very nice and calming. It’s really nice to see that in action. I’ve been very lucky in that placement.*  
(Female, 21-25, SCITT, primary)

#### **4.3.2 Less positive aspects of trainees’ school-based experiences**

Though the findings presented above suggest that, in general, most student teachers had good relationships with their mentors and other school-based colleagues, this was not always the case. In relation to their mentors, as many as 20 out of 79 case study interviewees referred to problematic relationships, with some suggesting that their mentors had been ‘too busy’ to help them, and others that their mentors were reluctant to let them take on responsibilities in the classroom:

*In my first placement the teacher didn’t want to let go of her class, she loved them too much and it was like ‘no, they’re mine’.* (Female, 26-30, BA QTS, secondary, ICT)

Nevertheless, interview data suggest that for some trainees who experienced problematic or dysfunctional relationships with their ('formal') mentors, the consequences of this were not as detrimental to their development as they might have been because other teachers in their placement schools had stepped in to offer support. Here student teachers were benefiting from what might be referred to as informal '*dispersed mentoring*' (Hobson *et al.*, 2009a: 103).

*In my placement my class teacher [and mentor] wasn't so great, but the deputy head and a teacher that I had got quite friendly with from Year 1, she was absolutely fantastic and she went through all the planning with me and, because I really did, in my first week, I really did want to throw in the towel and think I'd had enough because I wasn't getting the support.*  
(Female, 26-30, Flexible PGCE, primary)

Other student teachers who reported having *negative* experiences in schools talked about the existence of a school ethos in which some of the characteristics listed in Section 4.3.1 above, such as openness and collaboration, were lacking. Some (15) interviewees indicated that they had found their placement schools unwelcoming:

*[N]one of the other teachers would talk to us and there were five students there, so we were always sticking together but we were in different subjects in five different departments. In general we were shunned in the staffroom and I was like 'maybe that's what it's like in a secondary school, I don't know'. If I was on my own I would find this quite an isolating experience.* (Female, 26-30, BA QTS, secondary, ICT)

Evidence suggests that ways in which trainees are introduced to pupils in schools can also have some bearing on the subsequent success or otherwise of their school-based experiences, notably via their ability to establish themselves as teachers in the eyes of pupils. Several (15) trainees suggested that being introduced as a 'trainee' or 'student' made them feel vulnerable and/or made it difficult for them to establish themselves in a teaching role:

*I think if the children know, especially the older children, if they find out that you're a student... they tend to try and wind you up basically. We were given a badge... and it said 'graduate teacher training programme' and I just thought 'I am not wearing it' so it got shoved in the bag and left there until I left because I just thought that is going to be a hurdle for me to get over.* (Female, 26-30, Flexible PGCE, primary)

## **4.4 Student teachers' experiences of higher education institution- (HEI-) based elements of ITT**

### **4.4.1 Positive aspects of trainees' HEI-based preparation**

Although most student teachers considered their school-based experiences to be the most valuable aspect of their ITT, many of those (65) case study interviewees who experienced an HEI-based input into their training talked about ways in which this had helped them. In particular, 23 interviewees stated, without specific prompting, that their HEIs helped them to develop their subject specialist or Key Stage specific knowledge, as illustrated in the following quotations:

*The work we did during university, on the subjects, was exceptionally useful.*  
(Male, 36-40, BA QTS, primary)

*The beginning was good when we used to come [to college] and do all the curriculum courses. That was really helpful... I feel my subject knowledge was really improved, especially science because a lot of the science I hadn't looked at for years so that was really helpful.* (Female, 31-35, GTP, primary)

In addition, some trainees stated that their HEI-based tutors had helped them to develop their knowledge, understanding and expertise in relation to:

- (i) lesson planning;

*We've got lectures on lesson planning and that was very, very helpful, especially the first time, as a practice in the university before going to the school. A tutor asked me to write a lesson plan after the lecture and I didn't really have a clue and I was quite surprised because the tutor said you really have to break down things when trying to teach, so that really kind of caught me by surprise. I didn't expect you have to break it down, break it down, break it down even in lesson planning and that was a lesson I actually learnt from university and that helped me when I really had to plan for a lesson in the actual situation.* (Female, 31-35, Flexible PGCE, secondary, science)

- (ii) educational policy and legal obligations;

*We had a few good lectures on things like governance which is helpful... I have probably found this year's lectures the most helpful actually because of the professional side of things, you know, about Ofsted, governance, parental involvement, health and safety, and I think that has been really helpful.* (Female, 21-25, BEd, primary)

*There was an introduction to teaching which covered the sort of legal side of things, what your duties are, the duty of care and what your responsibilities are as a teacher... this was the sort of stuff I hadn't come across and was really quite informative, so I would say I got a lot out of that.* (Female, 36-40, Flexible PGCE, primary)

- (iii) classroom and behaviour management;

*[M]odules on... classroom management and things like that were just crucial.* (Female, 21-25, BA QTS, primary)

*[It was good learning] strategies used for behavioural problems, basically your classroom management, your theory behind that, where it has come from ... I thought that was very good.* (Female, 21-25, BA QTS, primary)

- (iv) differentiation

*[The courses at the university] have made me aware that children learn in different ways and how you can try and identify and then incorporate that in your planning so in practice, [sessions on] inclusion and differentiation [were beneficial].* (Female, 26-30, PGCE, primary)

Trainees were particularly appreciative of those elements of HEI-based preparation that they saw as having clear practical utility for their work in schools, for example where their tutors suggested specific strategies or modelled specific approaches to facilitating learning in their own teaching, as the following quotations illustrate:

*In terms of the subject sessions, what was really useful about it was when [the tutors] came up with genuine practical things you could apply in the classroom, for example, looking at starters and plenaries, and different sorts of activities you can do, or looking at delivering thinking skills through history. They were most useful because you could relate them directly to your practice, to what you were doing...*

(Female, 26-30, PGCE, secondary, history)

*I think what worked was exactly for the tutor to help us be taught in the way that you would teach a class. I think in a way what I was experiencing [was] little tasters of the kind of things you could do with specific bits of information or specific activities on specific exercises, so ... I teach regularly with ideas that have come out of lectures that I had at university and they worked.* (Male, 36-40, BEd, primary)

In addition, 20 interviewees referred in positive terms, and without being prompted to do so, to the more general support provided by their HEI-based tutors, and in particular to tutors' availability and willingness to help them resolve any issues they might encounter in their school placements:

*We've had tutorials where we've gone to talk to our lecturers or our subject tutors with any problems or any issues that we've had and they've been really supportive and really easy to get hold of on email and things like that. So if you've got any problems, I've done just that.* (Female, 26-30, PGCE, secondary, English)

Some student teachers also felt that their HEIs provided a valuable forum for meeting with their fellow trainees, which enabled them to discuss their experiences, share resources and exchange ideas about schools and teaching, and to form and develop an effective peer support network:

*I think the contact, the fact we got together as trainees for college sessions was helpful and we swapped ideas. That was really good.*

(Female, 26-30, GTP, secondary, business studies)

*[In the university] we had lots of opportunity to discuss what we've done and what we've learnt and how different schools do things... it's one of the most useful things really to hear what goes on in other schools... because that's how you pick up a lot of good practice and good ideas.* (Female, 21-25, BA QTS, primary)

*[University sessions] were the only occasion that you could actually get together with everybody in one room and find out that although you might have thought that you had done really badly at something someone would say 'yes I have done that as well'.*

(Female, 36-40, Flexible PGCE, primary)

#### **4.4.2 Less positive aspects of trainees' HEI-based preparation**

Despite the various reported benefits of HEI-based preparation outlined above, some trainee-interviewees identified what they saw as shortcomings in the HEI-based components of their ITT. One of the most frequent criticisms was that the HEI concerned did not provide sufficient help for 'practical' teaching in the ways that some of the interviewees quoted above suggested. In fact, just over half (33 out of 65) of those interviewees who had experienced an HEI-based input into their ITT programmes indicated that some aspects of this appeared to lack relevance to authentic classroom settings or to being a teacher.

*[S]ome of the stuff we have written about in maths, it doesn't make you a better teacher because it wasn't related to the teaching of that subject, it was about the subject, whereas I think we should have done more about the actual teaching...* (Male, 36-40, BEd, primary)

*Behaviour management is one aspect I think that I have found difficult... comparatively very little weight has been given [to this] in training us... We all at one point said 'we need it, don't just try to give it for future struggles, we need it now, before we qualify, we need it now', and so I was a bit disappointed that it was just a session of looking at videos and listening to someone tell us how they could do it. So behaviour management is one aspect that I think something more could have been done definitely.*  
(Female, 41-45, Flexible PGCE, primary)

Those aspects of course provision which were said to lack relevance to practical teaching were often referred to by trainees as 'theory', about which we say more below.

#### **4.5 Student teachers' perceptions of theoretical components of ITT**

As suggested above, many trainees conceptualised their ITT programmes as comprising 'theoretical' and 'practical' components. 'Practical' components of ITT included 'hands-on' teaching in schools and those aspects of ITT which trainees saw as having clear practical utility for their work as teachers, such as 'tips' for classroom or behaviour management or the teaching of specific topics. Those elements of ITT which didn't have obvious relevance to teaching (and were thus not 'practical') tended to be regarded as 'theory', and covered a broad range of knowledge and activities including, for example, knowledge about how children learn, the study of developmental psychology, subject content knowledge, legal issues which teachers need to be aware of, such as child protection, and the preparation for and writing of assignments. That said, and while trainees appeared to share broadly similar understandings of what constituted 'theory', it is important to recognise that any given 'topic' might be perceived as either 'practice' or 'theory' depending upon how it was addressed by ITT tutors, and that different trainees' perceptions of the very same session might also differ insofar as some might recognise its practical relevance and potential value and others might not.

As the following quotations illustrate, our interview data suggest that many trainees were sceptical of the value of 'theoretical' work, and especially of the value of writing assignments, to helping them achieve their goal of becoming a teacher:

*When all is said and done you are actually training to teach so all the theory goes out the window when you're actually stood in front of a class full of children.*  
(Female, 31-35, BEd, secondary, ICT)

*I mean, we have to do assignments and they're expecting you to find all these references and reference all this research and you're starting to think, that's not really relevant, what's relevant is what I can do in the classroom.* (Female, 21-25, PGCE, primary)

*For the life of me, I don't see the relevance of assignments to the real world. I mean, I don't see it because it is just, I have gone to read something and I am just regurgitating it onto a piece of paper...* (Female, 31-35, Flexible PGCE, primary)

Student teachers' perceptions of the theoretical aspects of their ITT programmes were also addressed in our end of ITT course (Wave 2) survey, where (to facilitate comparison between different categories of student teacher) 'theory' was defined for respondents as 'professional studies and subject or methods studies' and where respondents were asked about:

- (i) their views on the balance between theory and practice in the ITT programme they had followed; and
- (ii) the extent to which the links between theory and practice were clear to them.

On the first question it was found that, across all ITT routes:

- sixty-six per cent stated that the balance between the theoretical and practical elements of their programmes was '*about right*'; whilst
- a third of respondents felt that there was an imbalance between the theoretical and practical elements of their programmes, with the majority of these feeling that their programmes were too heavily weighted in favour of the theoretical elements.<sup>40</sup>

On the second question:

- eighteen per cent stated that the links between the theoretical and practical aspects of the ITT programmes they had followed were '*always clear*' to them;
- sixty-seven per cent stated that the links were '*usually clear*';
- fourteen per cent indicated that the links were '*often not clear*'; and
- one per cent indicated that they were '*never clear*'.

Case study data provide some student teacher explanations for their perceptions of the lack of 'balance', lack of clear links between theory and practice, and 'irrelevance' of some aspects of their ITT programmes - perceptions which, as suggested in Section 4.4 above, tended to be more common amongst (though were not restricted to) trainees who had followed HEI-administered or 'partnership' programmes. These explanations relate to:

- (i) an apparent failure of some ITT providers to effectively address and (where appropriate) challenge and seek to modify respectively trainees' concerns and their preconceptions about what ITT *should* involve.

*I thought there would be far more on how to actually write your lesson plans, actually get the subject across, teaching strategies... But this course hasn't really addressed them nearly as much as they should have. (Male, 31-35, BEd, secondary, ICT)*

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<sup>40</sup> GRTP trainees were the exception to this rule. Variation between the responses to these questions of student teachers who had followed different ITT routes is discussed in Section 4.6.1 below.

- (ii) unhelpful sequencing of activities

*There wasn't much follow-through, so you couldn't learn something on a Tuesday and put it into practice on a Wednesday. In that sense it just didn't work that way. It might have done in some schools but it certainly didn't in mine.*

(Female, 26-30, PGCE, secondary, RE)

- (iii) a lack of appreciation or support for HEI-based work by school-based 'partners'

*I haven't seen the relevance of all the things we were doing with the university... the teachers in the schools would say 'oh, you don't want to take any notice of all that theory, you just get on with it all'... I mean they pooh-pooled a lot of the theory and... the assignment I was doing in the university...* (Male, 41-45, PGCE, secondary, maths)

*[T]he emphasis [in my ITT course] is on being able to write a good essay and knowing this person said this and this... In the opinion of people I've spoken to, the head teachers and teachers, you're never going to use it, you need to have practical experience and confidence.* (Male, 21-25, BA QTS, primary)

There is further support for the existence of a lack of 'connection' between different components of some ITT programmes, and for some of the explanations for this offered above, in data generated from interviews with our case study participants' ITT programme personnel.<sup>41</sup> Firstly, despite the discourse of 'partnership', our evidence suggests that in at least some of the ITT programmes with which our research participants were associated, course structure and design were largely controlled by the HEI, whose view of 'partnership' appeared to involve consultation with rather than the 'hands on' involvement of school-based teacher educator colleagues.

Secondly, and for some (HEI-administered) providers perhaps partly in consequence of the first point noted above (the lack of 'ownership' of course design amongst some school-based partners), there is evidence of a lack of shared understanding between different programme personnel regarding different aspects of the programme. For example, in some providers there appeared to be no shared understanding amongst different teacher educators about whether any particular theoretical framework underpinned their ITT programme.

Thirdly, and related to the two previous points, some school-based mentors referred to communication difficulties with their HEI partners, which also resulted, in some cases, in the repetition of course content:

*[S]ometimes the students feel things are repetitive and that's because, although I know the title of the university's lecture, I don't know the content.* (School-based mentor, PGCE)

It is important to recognise, however, that, as the survey findings reported above suggest, many trainees did 'see' (or come to see) the relevance and potential value of 'theoretical' aspects ITT course provision. The following quotations are illustrative:

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<sup>41</sup>Further details of the findings summarised here can be found in Hobson *et al.* (2006a), Chapter 9.

*The theory side of things, like the constructivist theory is something that I've really taken on board and it's something that at the time when they told me as a theory I didn't understand it and I thought 'why am I learning this? This doesn't apply to me.' But actually as I've developed as a teacher... I've thought 'oh hang on, the thing I believe in relates to this theory', so... on reflection it was good that we had that because now I can see where to take it from the theory, or [how] to extend it in different ways.*

(Female, 21-25, PGCE, primary)

*I think one of the things that really hit home is that you learn quite a lot while you're at university but it never really, like you can say you understand it, but it never really makes sense until you're in a school situation I don't think and I think that you can forget things, go into school and do something and your mentor says 'you could do this' and you think 'I learnt that at university but I'd just forgotten it' because it has no real relevance till you're in school...* (Female, 21-25, BA QTS, secondary, MFL)

In addition, where shortcomings did exist, whether in relation to the connections between 'theory' and 'practice' or to some other aspect of ITT provision, these might be in part explained, or better understood, in the light of some of the reported constraints under which ITT providers were operating, the issue to which we now turn.

## **4.6 Constraints on ITT provision**

Teacher educators from the ITT programmes followed by our case study trainees identified two main categories of constraints on their ITT provision, relating to time and workload on the one hand, and to the availability of suitable placement schools and school-based mentors on the other. We briefly discuss each of these in turn.

### **4.6.1 Constraints relating to time and workload**

Firstly, the constraints referred to by most (21 of the 46) interviewees were pressures of time and workload, which were considered to affect ITT programme leaders, tutors and mentors as well as the student teachers themselves:

*I think the biggest [constraint] is time... My worst days are when it's like a factory. I wish I had time to get to really know them more, [time] to reflect and debate and challenge... time to read myself and prepare myself. I'm rushing constantly.* (Programme Leader, BA QTS)

*[B]alancing all the balls in the air. I am sure everybody says that but I feel that's the point, balancing all the balls in a very heavy teaching timetable on a weekly basis.*

(Subject Tutor, BA QTS)

*Generally they [trainees] get that one period when they know they can [see their] mentor but a huge amount of other support goes on at lunchtime and after school and you see that happening quite a lot in the staffroom and in departmental areas. That one hour simply isn't enough.* (School-based mentor, PGCE)

Some (7) programme personnel linked the time and workload pressures they were experiencing to a lack of funding within, or for, ITT:

*The main thing which is negative is just lack of time and that's a result of lack of money because really if you look at this one hour a week business, what's one hour of a teacher's time worth, it must be something like twenty pounds but it really isn't enough and all the extra time that is given out of goodwill and I think really if you wanted to train people 'properly' you probably need two or three hours per week with each trainee in addition to group activities. (School-based mentor, PGCE)*

A number of programme personnel felt that workload issues were exacerbated by the amount of paperwork and administrative tasks they had to undertake (a complaint also made by some student teachers and reported earlier), which tutors said constrained their ability to undertake their ITT work as effectively as they might:

*[Y]ou get inundated with paperwork with something you haven't got time to properly analyse. (Programme Leader, BA QTS)*

*Sometimes because of commitments within the school, I feel I'm clutching at straws or it's very farcical what I'm having to write out because it's obvious... It seems to be like this burden on us almost, that we've got to churn something out, when they're getting feedback from me all the time. (School-based mentor, GRTP)*

Ten programme personnel interviewees (including a third of all programme leaders) felt not only that pressures of time and workload were particularly acute on one year ITT programmes (effectively 9 months for some) but also that such programmes were too short to prepare student teachers adequately for the profession:

*I think the postgrad[uate] route is too compressed. I can't see how a twelve month course can equip an intending teacher with the range of sophisticated skills they will need and indeed it is just my own personal view but I think PGCE courses are survival packages. (Subject Tutor, BA QTS)*

*It's such a pressured year, they have to learn so much, they have to do so much simultaneously... You know, it's bloody hard, it's so hard and I think giving it more time would help a lot of those things sink in and become more meaningful. (Programme Leader, PGCE)*

#### **4.6.2 The availability of placement schools**

In relation to the second category of constraints on ITT provision, nearly a third of the programme personnel we interviewed (14 out of 46) stated that they encountered difficulties in finding schools willing and able to take on student teachers, and some programme leaders and subject tutors indicated that the success with which student teachers were 'placed' in suitable schools could be a 'hit or miss' affair:

*Personally I think some schools do a lot better job supporting their students than others. So I think that is the issue of quality assurance in school placements, that is key. (Subject Tutor, PGCE)*

In addition, some programme leaders and tutors talked about a high incidence of turnover of school-based mentors on their programmes, which might also be seen as detrimental to the development of shared understandings and a coherent ITT programme.

Having highlighted some potential explanations for some of the perceived shortcomings of ITT provision, in the final part of this chapter we illustrate a number of ways in which the findings on student teachers' experiences appear to be differentiated according to the ITT route they had followed and according to other considerations, including their age, their preconceptions of teaching and ITT, and whether they were training to teach in primary or secondary schools.

#### 4.7 Variation in student teachers' experiences of ITT

A number of different analysis techniques show that student teachers' experiences of ITT were subject to systematic variation in relation to a number of factors. For example, Table 4.3 shows the number of occasions different 'explanatory variables' were employed in each of 14 regression models,<sup>42</sup> the number of occasions they produced independent statistically significant effects, and the number of occasions in which they had the largest effect size and thus proved to be the best predictor of trainees' responses to specific questions. The overall picture which emerges from these analyses is that (i) the ITT **route** being followed, (ii) student teachers' **age**, and (iii) student teachers' motives for undertaking ITT and their **preconceptions**, expectations and concerns about ITT and teaching<sup>43</sup>, each had independent statistically significant effects on trainees' responses in the majority of cases in which they were employed, with ITT route having the biggest effect size on more occasions (and a higher proportion of the occasions in which it was employed) than any other variable.<sup>44</sup>

**Table 4.3 An overview of findings from logistic regression analyses: key variables**

Variable	Number of times employed in regression models	Number of independent statistically significant effects	Number of times having largest effect size
ITT route	14	11	5
Age	13	10	3
Phase	13	6	2
Gender	13	4	2
Ethnicity	13	5	0
Preconceptions	7	6	2

We selectively illustrate in Section 4.7.1 below, in relation to the issues and questions discussed in Sections 4.2-4.5 of this chapter, how student teachers' responses, or accounts of their experiences, varied according to the ITT route they followed. In Section 4.7.2 we provide some brief examples of how student teachers' experiences were also differentiated by their age, their preconceptions and other considerations, including their gender, their ethnicity and the phase of

<sup>42</sup> The use of this method of analysis, and the selection of 'explanatory variables', is explained in Appendix II.

<sup>43</sup> For simplicity this variable, or cluster of variables, which was based on potentially relevant 'Wave 1' survey responses, is labelled 'preconceptions'. Preconceptions variables were used in fewer regression models because, in relation to some aspects of student teachers' experiences of ITT, it was felt that none of the Wave 1 questions could reasonably be hypothesised to predict trainees' responses to particular Wave 2 questions.

<sup>44</sup> Further details of these analyses can be found in Hobson *et al.* (2006a), Appendices B-G.

education in which they were seeking to teach. (Unless otherwise stated, all findings of the analyses of survey data which are reported in this section were found to be statistically significant, using both logistic regression and chi-square analysis.)

#### 4.7.1 Variation by ITT route

On several aspects of their ITT, including most of the issues reported in this chapter, trainees who had followed employment-based and school-centred ITT tended to be more positive than those who had followed other ITT routes, with trainees who had taken university-administered PGCE and Flexible PGCE programmes often the *least* positive.

For example, and firstly, Tables 4.4 and 4.5 show that, for student teachers training to teach in the primary and secondary sectors respectively, a higher proportion of GRTP trainees than those who followed other routes reported feeling ‘*very confident*’ that their ITT route had prepared them to be an effective teacher. In contrast, those who followed both primary and secondary phase (university-administered) PGCE programmes were the least likely to report that they felt ‘*very confident*’.

**Table 4.4 How confident are you, if at all, that your ITT has prepared you to be an effective teacher? (Primary phase trainees)**

	Per cent (%)					Scale Mean <sup>45</sup>	No. of cases
	Very Confident	Fairly Confident	Not very Confident	Not at all confident	Don't know		
GRTP	68	31	1	0	0	3.7	179
SCITT	55	42	2	0	1	3.5	111
BEd	51	46	2	1	0	3.5	195
BA/ BSc QTS	46	51	2	(0)	0	3.4	608
Flexible PGCE	37	57	7	0	0	3.3	60
PGCE	31	64	4	1	1	3.3	271
<b>Total</b>	<b>47</b>	<b>50</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>(0)</b>	<b>(0)</b>	<b>3.4</b>	<b>1424</b>

Chi-square=69.47, df=10, p<0.001.

<sup>45</sup>Unless otherwise stated, subgroups of trainees in this and other two-way tables have been rank-ordered by the highest arithmetic mean. Where the mean is equivalent across two or more subgroups of trainees, or if it cannot be calculated, these have been rank-ordered by the highest percentage selecting the most positive rating category (e.g. ‘very good’ or, in this case, ‘very confident’). Where this percentage is still equivalent across two or more ITT routes, these have been rank-ordered by the highest percentage selecting the second most positive rating category (e.g. ‘good’ or ‘fairly confident’).

**Table 4.5 How confident are you, if at all, that your ITT has prepared you to be an effective teacher? (Secondary phase trainees)<sup>46</sup>**

	Per cent (%)					Scale Mean (X)	No. of cases
	Very Confident	Fairly Confident	Not very Confident	Not at all confident	Don't know		
GRTP	65	30	3	1	(0)	3.6	<b>283</b>
BA/BSc QTS	61	38	2	0	0	3.6	<b>133</b>
Flexible PGCE	60	38	0	0	2	3.6	<b>47</b>
SCITT	55	44	1	0	0	3.5	<b>163</b>
PGCE	48	50	2	(0)	(0)	3.5	<b>655</b>
<b>Total</b>	<b>55</b>	<b>43</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>(0)</b>	<b>(0)</b>	<b>3.5</b>	<b>1281</b>

Chi-square=38.84, df=8, p<0.001.

Secondly, as Tables 4.6-4.9 show, trainees who had followed GRTP programmes were also more likely than those who had followed other ITT routes to give higher ratings of their relationships with their mentors and other school-based colleagues, while (again) student teachers who had taken university-administered PGCE programmes were the least likely to report 'very good' relationships either with mentors or other teachers.<sup>47</sup>

**Table 4.6 Thinking about your ITT programme, how would you rate your relationships with school mentors in your teaching placement schools? (Primary phase trainees)**

	Per cent (%)							Scale Mean (X)	No. of cases
	Very Good	Good	Neither good nor poor	Poor	Very poor	Can't generalise	Don't know		
GRTP	67	18	6	5	2	2	0	4.5	<b>190</b>
SCITT	47	39	6	2	2	5	0	4.3	<b>119</b>
BA/BSc QTS	44	42	6	4	1	3	(0)	4.3	<b>630</b>
Flex. PGCE	43	38	8	5	0	5	2	4.3	<b>63</b>
BEd	40	46	7	3	1	3	0	4.2	<b>198</b>
PGCE	38	39	12	3	0	7	(0)	4.2	<b>287</b>
<b>Total</b>	<b>45</b>	<b>39</b>	<b>8</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>(0)</b>	<b>4.3</b>	<b>1487</b>

Chi-square=64.82, df=15, p<0.001. Percentages may not sum to 100 due to rounding.

<sup>46</sup>Here and elsewhere, comparisons of the responses of secondary phase trainees between the different ITT programmes they had followed exclude the small number from BEd programmes, since it was considered that the number of cases was too low for meaningful analysis.

<sup>47</sup>In the regression model, ITT route was found to have an independent statistically significant effect on responses to the second question (relationships with 'other teachers') but not the first (relationships with mentors). As the table notes suggest, chi-square analysis finds that, on the first (mentor) question, the differences between the responses of trainees from different ITT routes were statistically significant amongst primary phase but not secondary phase trainees.

**Table 4.7 Thinking about your ITT programme, how would you rate your relationships with school mentors in your teaching placement schools? (Secondary phase trainees)**

	Per cent (%)							Scale Mean (X)	No. of cases
	Very Good	Good	Neither good nor poor	Poor	Very poor	Can't generalise	Don't know		
BA/BSc QTS	57	30	7	2	0	4	0	4.5	137
SCITT	52	27	3	3	1	14	0	4.5	172
GRTP	62	23	8	5	1	2	(0)	4.4	301
Flex. PGCE	53	31	10	0	2	2	2	4.4	58
PGCE	53	30	7	3	2	7	(0)	4.4	732
<b>Total</b>	<b>55</b>	<b>28</b>	<b>7</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>6</b>	<b>(0)</b>	<b>4.4</b>	<b>1400</b>

Chi-square=16.77, df=12, p<0.158. Percentages may not sum to 100 due to rounding.

**Table 4.8 Thinking about your ITT programme, how would you rate your relationships with other teaching staff in your teaching placement schools? (Primary phase trainees)**

	Per cent (%)							Scale Mean (X)	No. of cases
	Very Good	Good	Neither good nor poor	Poor	Very poor	Can't generalise	Don't know		
GRTP	65	30	3	2	0	0	1	4.6	190
BA/BSc QTS	43	48	5	1	(0)	2	(0)	4.4	631
Flex. PGCE	40	49	6	0	0	5	0	4.4	63
BEd	43	42	8	3	0	4	0	4.3	198
SCITT	39	49	8	1	0	4	0	4.3	119
PGCE	33	52	9	1	1	4	(0)	4.2	287
<b>Total</b>	<b>43</b>	<b>46</b>	<b>6</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>(0)</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>(0)</b>	<b>4.3</b>	<b>1488</b>

Chi-square=54.13, df=15, p<0.001. Percentages may not sum to 100 due to rounding.

**Table 4.9 Thinking about your ITT programme, how would you rate your relationships with other teaching staff in your teaching placement schools? (Secondary phase trainees)**

	Per cent (%)							Scale Mean (X)	No. of cases
	Very Good	Good	Neither good nor poor	Poor	Very poor	Can't generalise	Don't know		
GRTP	55	36	6	2	0	2	0	4.6	301
BA/BSc QTS	38	53	5	1	1	3	0	4.4	137
Flex. PGCE	35	44	9	4	2	5	2	4.4	57
SCITT	45	44	4	2	1	5	1	4.3	172
PGCE	37	47	9	2	1	3	(0)	4.2	728
<b>Total</b>	<b>42</b>	<b>45</b>	<b>7</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>(0)</b>	<b>4.3</b>	<b>1395</b>

Chi-square=35.12, df=12, p<0.001. Percentages may not sum to 100 due to rounding.

Thirdly, across the primary phase, proportionately more SCITT trainees (46%) reported having received 'very good' support during their ITT than trainees who had followed other ITT routes (see Table 4.10). Of those training to teach in secondary schools, however, those who followed BA/BSc QTS courses (53%) were more likely than those who followed other routes to report receiving 'very good' support, with SCITT trainees a close second at 51 per cent (Table 4.11).

Conversely, amongst both primary and secondary trainees, those who followed Flexible PGCE programmes were least likely to rate the support they received during their training as 'very good' (16% and 31% respectively), followed by those on university-administered PGCE programmes (21% and 41% respectively).

**Table 4.10 Thinking about your ITT programme, how would you rate the support you received during your training? (Primary phase respondents)**

	Per cent (%)							Scale Mean (X)	No. of cases
	Very Good	Good	Neither good nor poor	Poor	Very poor	Can't generalise	Don't know		
SCITT	46	38	8	4	2	2	0	4.2	119
GRTP	41	36	13	7	1	2	0	4.1	190
BEd	34	47	13	4	1	2	0	4.1	198
BA/BSc QTS	31	51	11	5	2	1	0	4.0	631
PGCE	21	53	19	5	1	2	0	3.9	289
Flex. PGCE	16	43	24	14	0	3	0	3.6	63
<b>Total</b>	<b>31</b>	<b>47</b>	<b>13</b>	<b>5</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>4.0</b>	<b>1490</b>

Chi-square=75.66, df=20, p<0.001. Percentages may not sum to 100 due to rounding.

**Table 4.11 Thinking about your ITT programme, how would you rate the support you received during your training? (Secondary phase respondents)**

	Per cent (%)							Scale Mean (X)	No. of cases
	Very Good	Good	Neither good nor poor	Poor	Very poor	Can't generalise	Don't know		
BA/BSc QTS	53	33	9	2	0	4	0	4.4	137
SCITT	51	33	2	2	2	9	0	4.4	171
PGCE	41	39	11	4	2	3	0	4.2	728
GRTP	43	33	11	7	3	3	(0)	4.1	301
Flex. PGCE	31	53	9	7	0	2	0	4.1	59
<b>Total</b>	<b>43</b>	<b>37</b>	<b>9</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>(0)</b>	<b>4.2</b>	<b>1396</b>

Chi-square=41.59, df=16, p<0.001. Percentages may not add up to 100 due to rounding.

Fourthly, Tables 4.12 and 4.13 show that student teachers who had followed SCITT programmes indicated that they were more satisfied than those who followed other ITT routes with the balance between the 'theoretical' and 'practical' elements of their courses, whilst the least satisfied on this question were those who followed the (primary phase) BEd route, who were more likely to perceive that there was too great an emphasis on 'theory', and the (secondary phase) GRTP route, who were more likely to perceive too great an emphasis on 'practice'.

**Table 4.12 Thinking about your ITT programme, how would you rate the balance between the theoretical and the practical aspects of your ITT programme? (Primary phase respondents)**

	Per cent (%)				No. of cases
	Too heavily weighted in favour of the theoretical	About right	Too heavily weighted in favour of the practical	Don't Know	
SCITT	12	82	6	1	<b>118</b>
Flexible PGCE	21	71	8	0	<b>63</b>
PGCE	33	64	3	(0)	<b>286</b>
BA/BSc QTS	38	61	1	(0)	<b>629</b>
GRTP	5	61	33	1	<b>186</b>
BEd	46	52	2	0	<b>197</b>
<b>Total</b>	<b>31</b>	<b>62</b>	<b>6</b>	<b>(0)</b>	<b>1479</b>

Chi-square=350.44, df=10, p<0.001. Percentages may not sum to 100 due to rounding.

**Table 4.13 Thinking about your ITT programme, how would you rate the balance between the theoretical and the practical aspects of your ITT programme? (Secondary phase respondents)**

	Per cent (%)				No. of cases
	Too heavily weighted in favour of the theoretical	About right	Too heavily weighted in favour of the practical	Don't Know	
SCITT	10	82	8	0	<b>171</b>
BA/BSc QTS	26	70	3	1	<b>137</b>
PGCE	19	70	11	(0)	<b>728</b>
Flexible PGCE	26	67	7	0	<b>55</b>
GRTP	10	59	31	0	<b>297</b>
<b>Total</b>	<b>17</b>	<b>69</b>	<b>14</b>	<b>(0)</b>	<b>1388</b>

Chi-square=131.70, df=10, p<0.001. Percentages may not sum to 100 due to rounding.

Finally, trainees who had followed SCITT programmes were also more likely than those from other ITT routes to report that the links between the theoretical and practical elements of their training were ('always' or 'usually') clear (see Tables 4.14 and 4.15).

**Table 4.14 Generally speaking, how clear would you say the links between the theoretical and practical elements of your training have been? (Primary phase respondents)**

	Per cent (%)					Scale Mean (X)	No. of cases
	Always clear	Usually clear	Often not clear	Never clear	Don't know		
SCITT	30	59	10	1	0	3.2	119
GRTP	20	61	17	2	1	3.0	189
Flexible PGCE	19	68	11	2	0	3.0	63
BEd	16	72	13	0	0	3.0	197
PGCE	16	69	14	1	0	3.0	288
BA/BSc QTS	15	73	12	(0)	(0)	3.0	632
<b>Total</b>	<b>17</b>	<b>69</b>	<b>13</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>(0)</b>	<b>3.0</b>	<b>1488</b>

Chi-square=34.14, df=15, p=0.003. Percentages may not sum to 100 due to rounding.

**Table 4.15 Generally speaking, how clear would you say the links between the theoretical and practical elements of your training have been? (Secondary phase respondents)**

	Per cent (%)					Scale Mean (X)	No. of cases
	Always clear	Usually clear	Often not clear	Never clear	Don't know		
SCITT	28	62	11	0	0	3.2	172
BA/BSc QTS	26	65	8	1	0	3.2	137
Flexible PGCE	24	55	21	0	0	3.0	58
GRTP	20	62	16	1	1	3.0	298
PGCE	15	67	16	1	(0)	3.0	731
<b>Total</b>	<b>19</b>	<b>65</b>	<b>15</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>(0)</b>	<b>3.0</b>	<b>1396</b>

Chi-square=31.19, df=12, p=0.002. Percentages may not add up to 100 due to rounding.

Although, as we have demonstrated above, student teachers' experiences were differentiated by the ITT route followed, we should be wary of making generalisations about differences between ITT routes, not least because additional (chi-square) analyses showed that on some questions there were also statistically significant differences between the reported experiences of student teachers following the same ITT route with different providers.<sup>48</sup> For example:

- fifty-six per cent and 50 per cent of those who followed secondary PGCE programmes at two ITT providers, compared with 22 and 27 per cent of those at two others, reported that the support they received during training was 'very good';
- fifty-three and 49 per cent of primary BA/BSc QTS student teachers at two providers, compared with 46 and 22 per cent of those at two others, reported that their relationships with school mentors were 'very good'; and

<sup>48</sup> These analyses only included: (i) the BA (QTS) and (standard) PGCE routes, and (ii) providers with 50 or more student teachers following those routes. Since it was not possible to enter the 'ITT provider' variable into the regression models, we cannot state that this variable had an *independent* statistically significant effect on trainees' responses to specific questions.

- twenty-eight and 20 per cent of those following secondary PGCE programmes at two providers reported that links between the theoretical and practical elements of their courses were '*always clear*', compared with a relatively low 12 per cent of respondents from each of two other providers.

We should remember, too, that for a variety of reasons, some of which are briefly considered in Section 4.7.2 below, variation also exists between the experiences of student teachers *within* particular ITT programmes.

#### 4.7.2 Variation by other factors

##### *Student teachers' age*

In general, younger trainees tended to be more positive than older ones about a number of aspects of ITT course provision. For example:

- trainees under 25 years of age rated the support they received during their training more highly than those in the older age groups;
- more specifically, younger trainees tended to report more positive relations with their school-based mentors, with 52 per cent of those aged '25-34' rating such relations as '*very good*', compared with 42 per cent of those aged '45 or over'.

Case study interview data suggest that student teachers' age – and related issues of life experience and family commitments – may also influence their experience of ITT in other ways. For example, older trainees with more domestic responsibilities tended to find it especially difficult to manage the workload:

*[ITT] is a difficult thing to do when you have got a family and you have got a home... there is so much to do. The children must have clothes to wear, you know, they must have food to eat and somebody has got to do that...* (Female, 36-40, Flexible PGCE, primary)

##### *Student teachers' preconceptions*

As reported above, trainees' motives for entering ITT and their preconceptions, expectations and concerns about ITT and teaching, as evidenced in their Wave 1 survey responses, had independent statistically significant effects on a number of aspects of their subsequent experiences of ITT. For example:

- respondents who reported (at Wave 1) that one of the reasons for their choice of ITT route was that the *balance of in-school and out-of-school training* had appealed to them were statistically more likely to report, at the end of their ITT, that the *balance between the theoretical and practical elements* had been 'about right'; and
- trainees who had reported in the Wave 1 survey a higher degree of confidence that their ITT would prepare them to be effective teachers were more likely to state at the end of their courses that their ITT route had prepared them to be an effective teacher: for example, those who had reported feeling 'very confident' about this prior to starting their ITT course were 3.94 times more likely than those who were 'not at all confident' to give higher, rather than lower, ratings of their confidence that their ITT programme had actually prepared them to be an effective teacher.

### *Other influences on student teachers' experiences*

While student teachers' ITT route, age and preconceptions about ITT and teaching were found to be the most reliable predictors of variation in trainees' reported experiences of ITT, other factors also have particular relevance to certain aspects of student teachers' experience. For example:

- *educational phase* had an independent statistically significant effect on student teachers' ratings of the *support* they received during ITT, with 43 per cent of secondary respondents and a relatively low 31 per cent of primary respondents indicating that the support they received was '*very good*';
- trainees' ratings of both the balance and clarity of links between theoretical and practical elements of course provision were statistically differentiated by their *gender*. For example, 86 per cent of female respondents compared with 82 per cent of males reported that the links between theory and practice were '*always*' or '*usually*' clear, while 18 per cent of men and 14 per cent of women stated that such links were 'often not' or 'never' clear; and
- student teachers from *black and minority ethnic (BME)*<sup>49</sup> groups were statistically less likely than those from the majority *ethnic group* to report positive relationships with teachers in their placement schools, with 33 per cent of minority ethnic trainees rating such relationships as '*very good*', compared with 43 per cent of those from the majority ethnic group.

Two additional considerations could not be analysed in the regression models but are worthy of note here. First, amongst secondary phase trainees, chi-square analysis shows that there were statistically significant differences between the responses to some survey questions of trainees who followed different subject specialisms. For example, student teachers seeking to teach physical education or design and technology reported higher levels of confidence that their chosen route had prepared them to be effective teachers than those training to teach other subject specialisms, with mathematics specialists giving the lowest ratings overall:

- 69 per cent of those training to teach PE indicated that they were '*very confident*' that their route had prepared them to be effective teachers, compared with a relatively low 41 per cent of those who trained to teach mathematics.

Last but not least, and as suggested earlier in this chapter, case study data indicate that another key influence on student teachers' experiences of ITT is what we have previously referred to as the 'lottery-' or 'individual school factor' (Hobson *et al.*, 2006a: 291-2). That is, interviews with both student teachers and their ITT programme personnel suggest that the schools in which trainees are based during their ITT, and the individual teacher mentors they are allocated within those schools, have a major bearing on the extent to which they feel welcome, supported and 'safe' within their schools and, related to this, on their development as learner-teachers.

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<sup>49</sup> The distinction between BME and 'majority' ethnic groups is explained in Chapter 2, Section 2.4.1.

What all these findings tell us is that student teachers' experiences of ITT - sometimes positive, sometimes less so, and usually involving both highs and lows - are the result of a complex interplay of factors including the nature of the ITT route and programme they follow and the things that they (individual trainees) 'bring' to their courses. The things that they bring, including their preconceptions and prior experiences on the one hand and their personal characteristics such as age, gender and ethnicity on the other, will all impact on and help to shape their relationships with the significant others with whom they will come into contact during their ITT, including pupils, mentors, other teachers and tutors, relationships which are pivotal to the whole enterprise of becoming a teacher.

#### **4.8 Beginner teachers' retrospective evaluations of their ITT**

We saw in Section 4.2 that, at the end of their ITT programmes, 97 per cent of survey respondents reported feeling 'very confident' (50%) or 'fairly confident' (47%) that their ITT programme had prepared them to be an effective teacher, and we saw in Section 4.7.1 that there were statistically significant differences between the responses to this question of those who had followed different ITT routes. Data generated in subsequent waves of the *BaT* survey enable us to establish whether beginner teachers' confidence in their initial teacher preparation, and whether variations in the confidence of those who had followed different ITT routes, were to persist.

In the Wave 3, 4, and 5 telephone survey respondents were asked to indicate whether they 'strongly agree', 'tended to agree' 'neither agreed nor disagreed', 'tended to disagree' or 'strongly disagreed' with the proposition that '*My Initial Teacher Training programme prepared me to be an effective teacher*'.<sup>50</sup> While the question (and the set of response categories) is not identical to that asked in Wave 2, so we should treat any comparison with a degree of caution, the analysis<sup>51</sup> suggests that:

- (i) the majority of beginner teachers continued to evaluate their ITT in positive terms, regarding whether or not it had prepared them to be an effective teacher, though the proportion who did so showed a small but statistically significant decline over the period, as Table 4.16 confirms;
- (ii) beginner teachers' evaluations of their ITT, on this question, continued to be statistically differentiated by ITT route over the first three years of teaching; while
- (iii) the pattern of these route differences showed some changes from those recorded at Wave 2.

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<sup>50</sup>Amongst the subset of respondents who remained in the survey and in teaching by the time of the Wave 5 survey, the percentages feeling 'very confident' or 'fairly confident', at the end of their ITT programme, that their ITT had prepared them to be an effective teacher were 53 per cent and 45 per cent respectively. The differences between these figures and those reported above for all Wave 2 respondents (50% and 47% respectively) suggest that those who reported higher degrees of confidence that their ITT had prepared them to be an effective teacher were more likely to remain in teaching than those reporting lower degrees of confidence in their ITT. However, this apparent difference is not statistically significant. We deal with the main factors influencing beginner teacher retention and attrition in Chapter 9.

<sup>51</sup>The analysis technique employed was GLM repeated measure analysis. An explanation of this technique is provided in Section 2.5.2 of Chapter 2.

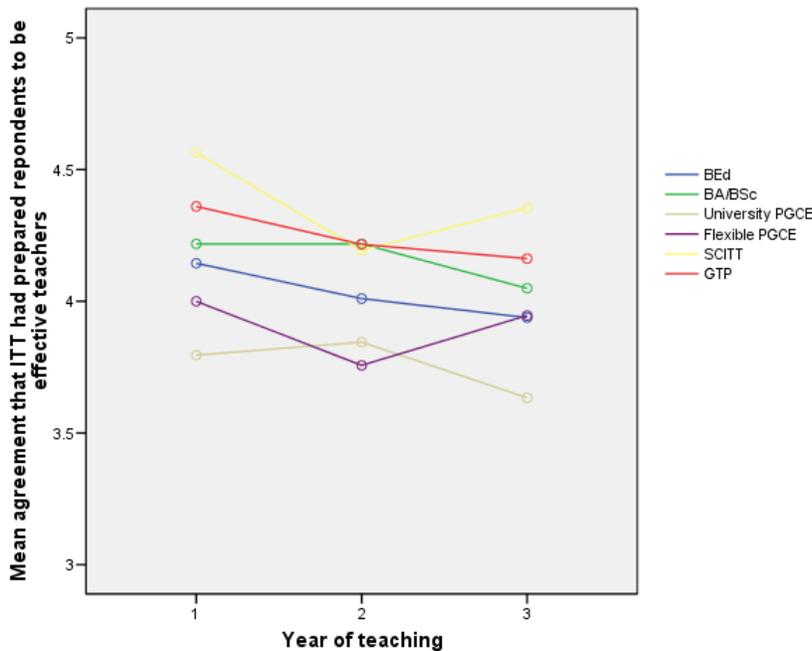
**Table 4.16 My Initial Teacher Training programme prepared me to be an effective teacher.**

Wave	Year of teaching	Per cent (%)					Scale Mean (X)	No. of cases
		Strongly agree	Tend to agree	Neither agree nor disagree	Tend to disagree	Strongly disagree		
3	1	42	44	6	6	2	4.19	1602
4	2	40	45	7	6	2	4.15	1604
5	3	34	47	9	7	3	4.03	1597

Percentages may not add up to 100 due to rounding.

For those respondents teaching in primary schools, Figure 4.1 shows that the degree of agreement with the statement ‘*My ITT programme prepared me to be an effective teacher*’ showed similar, approximately parallel, declines over the first three years of teaching across all ITT routes, with those respondents from SCITT programmes generally agreeing most strongly with the statement over the three year period, and those respondents from university-based PGCE programmes agreeing less strongly.<sup>52</sup> Thus, as a group, primary SCITT graduates now rated their ITT, in these terms, more highly than their GRTP counterparts who, at the end of their ITT course (and as we saw in Table 4.4 above), had been most confident that their ITT had prepared them to be an effective teacher. In contrast, university-administered PGCE (and Flexible PGCE) graduates were consistently less positive across the entire period. The most recent (Wave 5) percentage responses, differentiated by ITT route followed, are summarised in Table 4.17 below.

**Figure 4.1: Mean degree of agreement that ITT had prepared respondents to be effective teachers (primary phase)**



<sup>52</sup> Between-subjects effect,  $F(5,746)=9.97$ ,  $p<0.001$ , effect size 6 per cent.

**Table 4.17 My Initial Teacher Training programme prepared me to be an effective teacher (primary phase respondents at Wave 5)**

	Per cent (%)						No. of cases
	Strongly agree	Tend to agree	Neither agree nor disagree	Tend to disagree	Strongly disagree	Scale Mean (X)	
SCITT	48	44	3	5	0	4.35	62
GRTP	42	41	9	5	3	4.16	111
BA/BSc QTS	30	53	9	4	3	4.05	305
BEd	27	54	9	7	3	3.94	97
Flexible PGCE	21	55	18	5	0	3.92	38
PGCE	17	49	18	13	4	3.63	142
<b>Total</b>	<b>30</b>	<b>50</b>	<b>11</b>	<b>6</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>3.99</b>	<b>755</b>

Chi-square=54.30, df=20, p<0.001. Assumption of minimum count not met.

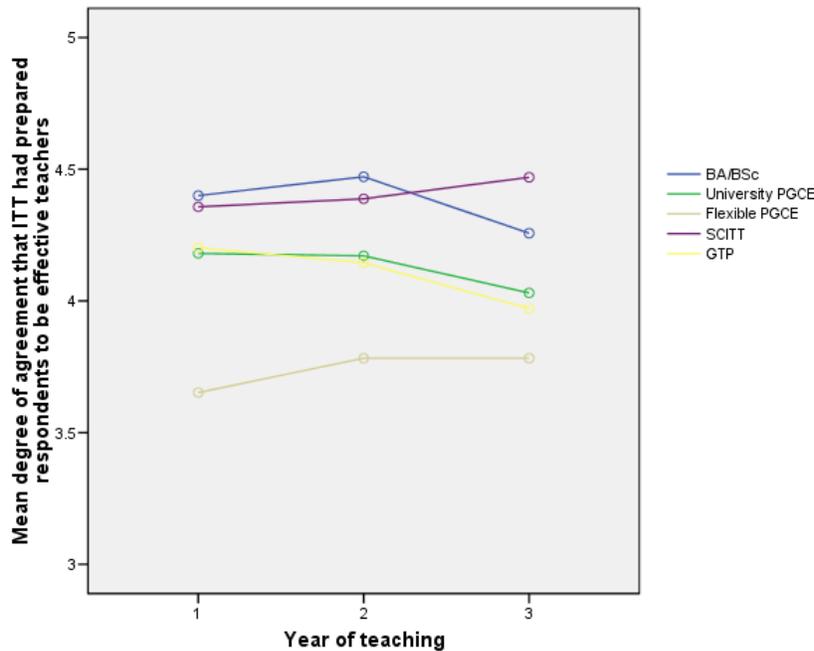
Percentages may not add up to 100 due to rounding.

Again, at the end of their ITT programmes those student teachers who had followed secondary phase GRTP programmes tended to be more confident than those who followed other routes that their ITT route had prepared them to be an effective teacher (as we saw in Table 4.5 above). But at the end of their first, second and third year of teaching (post-ITT) those who had followed the GRTP route were *not* the most likely to give higher levels of agreement with the statement 'My ITT programme prepared me to be an effective teacher' (see Figure 4.2). The secondary phase teachers most likely to 'strongly agree' with this statement were those who had followed BA/BSc QTS and SCITT programmes, with the latter group increasing their degree of agreement with the statement by a small amount each year between the Wave 3 and Wave 5 surveys.

Secondary phase respondents who had followed university-based PGCE and BEd programmes, as well as GRTP graduates, all showed a small decline in their degree of agreement that their ITT programmes had prepared them to be effective teachers.<sup>53</sup> Although those who had followed Flexible PGCE programmes increased their degree of agreement with the statement by a small amount over the three years, these levels were consistently lower than those reported by respondents who had followed any of the other routes. The Wave 5 responses to this question, differentiated by the ITT route respondents had followed, are presented in Table 4.18 below.

<sup>53</sup> Between-subjects effect,  $F(4,686)=6.06$ ,  $p<0.001$ , effect size 3 per cent.

**Figure 4.2: Mean degree of agreement that ITT had prepared respondents to be effective teachers (secondary phase)**



**Table 4.18 My Initial Teacher Training programme prepared me to be an effective teacher (secondary phase respondents at Wave 5)**

	Per cent (%)						No. of cases
	Strongly agree	Tend to agree	Neither agree nor disagree	Tend to disagree	Strongly disagree	Scale Mean (X)	
SCITT	57	36	4	3	0	4.47	<b>98</b>
BA/BSc QTS	51	34	6	6	3	4.26	<b>70</b>
PGCE	34	48	9	7	2	4.03	<b>328</b>
GRTP	38	42	5	9	6	3.98	<b>175</b>
Flexible PGCE	26	43	17	9	4	3.78	<b>23</b>
Total	40	43	7	7	3	4.09	<b>694</b>

Chi-square=38.26, df=16, p=0.001. Assumption of minimum count not met.

Percentages may not add up to 100 due to rounding.

## 4.9 Conclusion

This chapter has examined student teachers' experiences and evaluations of ITT, and the factors related to variation in those experiences and evaluations. In the next chapter we examine the experiences of the same cohort of beginning teachers one year on, and discuss their experiences of their first year in post and of Induction.

## 5 Teachers' experiences of their first year of teaching and Induction

### Key Findings

- Nearly nine-tenths (87%) of respondents to the Wave 3 survey reported obtaining a permanent or fixed-term teaching post in the year after completing their ITT. A further 7% were working as supply teachers.
  - Nearly a third (32%) of NQTs secured a post in a school in which they had undertaken a placement during their ITT.
  - The most frequently reported difficulty in finding a first teaching post was finding a post in a preferred location (34%).
- A majority of survey respondents indicated that they were enjoying teaching (93%). Case study data show that the high points of participants' first year in post were most associated with:
  - good relationships with pupils;
  - their perceptions of pupil learning and their role in bringing this about; and
  - good relationships with colleagues.
- Ninety seven per cent of survey respondents stated that they had enjoyed 'good' (26%) or 'very good' (71%) relationships with their pupils; and
  - 97% also rated their relationships with '*other teaching staff*' as 'good' or 'very good'; while
  - over three quarters (77%) rated the support they had received as 'good' or 'very good'.
- The majority of survey respondents who had held a teaching post during their first year of teaching (88%) reported having had access to a formal Induction programme.
  - Nearly all of these (99%) reporting having had an Induction mentor; and
  - 94% reporting reported 'good' or 'very good' relationships with their mentor.
- '*Colleagues at school / college*' was the most frequently given response (44%) to a survey question asking who or what had most helped respondents in working towards the Induction Standards.
- Over half of the survey respondents (54%) stated that nothing had hindered them in working towards the Induction standards, whilst others mentioned workload (11%) and lack of support from other staff (5%) as hindrances.
- Forty-nine of the 73 case study participants interviewed at the end of their first year of teaching described their workload as extensive, while:
  - 49 per cent of those surveyed stated that in a standard working week, they worked 16 hours or more in addition to the timetabled school day.
- Other 'low points' of the first year of teaching included, for some:
  - poor relations with pupils (mentioned by 41 case study NQTs); and
  - poor relations with colleagues (mentioned by 27 interviewees).
- In general, NQTs' experiences were less differentiated by the ITT route they had followed than their experiences of ITT had been.

## 5.1 Introduction

This chapter is concerned chiefly with the experiences of Newly Qualified Teachers (NQTs) in the year following their Initial Teacher Training (ITT), which was, for the majority of our research participants, also the year in which they completed their statutory Induction. We also include some discussion of those teachers whose progress towards Induction was more protracted.<sup>56</sup> We therefore report findings based predominantly on the analyses of data generated via: (i) the ('Wave 3') telephone survey of 2446 respondents; (ii) in-depth, face-to-face interviews with 73 participants; and (iii) ejournal exchanges with 46 of the same participants.<sup>57</sup> We also draw briefly on the analysis of data generated from interviews with (27) Induction tutors associated with the case study NQTs.

In what follows, we explore the experiences and perceptions of our research participants in respect of:

- the nature of their employment as first year teachers (Section 5.2);
- the highs and lows they experienced during their first year in teaching, post-ITT (5.3);
- their experiences of Induction (5.4), support and continuing professional development (5.5); and
- the extent to which their experiences were subject to variation with respect to the ITT route they had followed and to other factors (5.6).<sup>58</sup>

## 5.2 Working as a teacher

In this section we report findings on the success or otherwise of our participants in securing employment, on the experience of those who found employment in schools in which they had formerly undertaken an ITT placement, on the nature of NQTs' teaching posts, and on participants' future employment intentions at this stage.

### 5.2.1 Securing a teaching post

The overwhelming majority of our respondents were successful in obtaining some form of employment as a teacher in the year following the completion of their ITT. Table 5.1 below details the employment status of Wave 3 survey respondents and shows, for example, that 87 per cent had managed to obtain permanent (66%) or fixed-term (21%) teaching posts, with a further seven per cent working as supply teachers. Only one per cent of respondents were unemployed and looking for work in teaching.

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<sup>56</sup> We use the term 'Newly Qualified Teacher' (NQT) to refer to all those who successfully completed their initial teacher training (ITT) in 2004, regardless of whether or not they were actually working as teachers at the time of data generation (in 2005) or whether or not they had been able to undertake/complete a formal programme of Induction. For a definition and discussion of Induction see Section 5.3 below.

<sup>57</sup> As stated in Chapter 2, the ejournals involved members of the research team sending an email to each case study participant prompting them to recount their experiences during the previous half-term; though participants were also encouraged to email their contact *BaT* researcher at any time.

<sup>58</sup> Further details of these findings may be found in: Hobson, *et al.* (2007).

**Table 5.1 Can I check which of the following best describes your current employment status?**

	Frequencies	Valid per cent (%)
In a permanent teaching post at a school or college	1617	66
In a fixed-term teaching post at a school or college	503	21
Supply teaching	162	7
Working, but not as a teacher	82	3
On a break (e.g. maternity leave, carer's leave, sick leave, study leave) before taking up a teaching post	40	2
Unemployed but looking for a teaching post	18	1
Unemployed and not looking for a teaching post	16	1
On a break (e.g. maternity leave, carer's leave, sick leave, study leave) before taking up work but not as a teacher	8	0
<b>Total</b>	<b>2446</b>	

Percentages may not add up to 100 due to rounding.

Of those respondents who reported having held permanent or fixed-term contracts, 95 per cent were working full-time and five per cent part-time. Seventy-seven per cent of those teachers who had either held or had looked for teaching posts since the completion of their ITT reported that they had not encountered any particular difficulties when seeking a post. Amongst those (545) respondents who reported that they *had* encountered difficulties, the issue most commonly cited (by 34% of these) was finding employment in their preferred location (see Table 5.2).

**Table 5.2: What were the difficulties you encountered?**

	Frequencies	Valid per cent (%)
Couldn't find a post in the location I wanted	186	34
Couldn't find any type of post	80	15
Shortage/lack of supply work	72	13
Couldn't find a permanent post	53	10
Too many people applying for the same job	47	9
Lacked sufficient experience for the posts available	32	6
Couldn't find a post teaching the subject specialism I wanted	31	6
Couldn't find a part-time post	18	3
Couldn't find a fixed-term post	17	3
Couldn't find a full-time post	16	3
Couldn't find a post in a school/college I wanted	12	2
Couldn't find a post teaching the area specialism (e.g. SEN / ESOL)	10	2
Performed badly at the interviews	10	2
Couldn't find a post teaching the age range I wanted	9	2
Other	34	6

Includes all who had encountered difficulties when looking for a teaching post (number of cases 545). Responses to this question were unprompted. Respondents could give more than one response.

Of the 73 case study interviewees, 11 reported having experienced difficulties in securing employment as a teacher and, as with the survey, the issue of lack of vacancies, particularly in their local area or the area in which they wanted to work, was cited most frequently:

*[T]here were absolutely no jobs, unless I was prepared to move way out of the area, there were plenty of jobs if I went further up north. I actually had, I met somebody on holiday, a head teacher, and they were offering me a position, or to come up and be interviewed for a position... because they were crying out for teachers, they couldn't get teachers up there. That, I found very disillusioning. (Female, 32-36, BEd, primary)*

*It's not been great to be honest... when I finished last year there weren't any jobs advertised, so I couldn't find a job so I just didn't really do anything to be honest. So I found a job in October just doing maternity cover, and I started in February. (Female, 42-46, PGCE, secondary, geography)*

### **5.2.2 Obtaining a post in an ITT placement school**

Almost a third (32%) of those NQTs who had worked as teachers since completion of their ITT had obtained teaching posts in schools in which they had undertaken placements during their ITT. This average figure was boosted by the 58 per cent of respondents who had followed the GRTP route who reported finding work in an ITT placement school, which was perhaps unsurprising given the nature of this route. Nevertheless, over a quarter (26%) of respondents from the university-administered PGCE route had also managed to secure teaching posts in schools in which they undertook ITT placements.<sup>59</sup>

In the case study interviews, eight teachers said they were currently working at a school in which they had been placed during their initial teacher preparation. All those who expressed an opinion on the matter referred to advantages of remaining at the same school, notably in terms of familiarity with the school and continuity.

*[T]o go to a different school would've been a lot more stressful because you've got to learn the way they work, the people, the students, lots of different things. A number of the schemes I've taught this year, I had started to teach last year. (Female 42-46, GTP, secondary, English)*

*Although it's officially my first year of teaching, it almost feels like a second year as far as the familiarity with the school is concerned. (Female 42-46, GTP, primary)*

### **5.2.3 The nature of participants' work as teachers**

The vast majority (93%) of survey respondents who were teaching (or had taught) in secondary schools during their first year after completing their ITT reported that they had taught at least one of their stated specialist subjects, with almost two-thirds (65%) reporting that they had taught *only* those subjects that they had previously identified as their subject specialism on completion of their ITT. Around a third (35%) of secondary phase NQTs reported that they had been teaching at least one subject that they had not previously indicated as one of their specialist areas, and six per cent reported that they had *exclusively* taught subjects other than those that they had indicated were their subject specialisms.

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<sup>59</sup> All other examples of variation in the experiences of NQTs who had followed different ITT routes are presented in Section 5.6.1 below.

Four of the case study participants commented on their experiences of teaching subjects other than their specialisms. Two suggested that this had added some interest to their working life.

*[I]t is nice to keep that extra subject going really because it gives you a bit of variety going in the week. (Female 42-46, PGCE, secondary, history)*

Another two indicated that as non-specialists they felt they were reliant on others:

*I'm basically scrabbling around every geography lesson trying to find out what we are going to do. (Female 22-26, PGCE, secondary, PE)*

NQTs were less likely to report teaching pupils from those age groups (Years 6 and 11) taking public examinations than other year groups:

- twenty-one per cent of primary phase NQTs reported teaching Year 6 pupils compared, for example, with 37 per cent who stated that they had taught Year 1; and
- in the secondary phase, 79 per cent of NQTs had taught Year 11 classes, compared to between 89 and 91 per cent who had taught Years 7-10.

Of those case study participants who taught examination classes, some indicated that they felt a pressure to achieve results.

*I'm in Year 6 and there's certainly a lot of pressure to get the marks and the grades. (Male, 27-31, PGCE, primary)*

Survey respondents were also asked which of a number of specified roles or activities they had undertaken at school during the course of their NQT year:

- most (88%) reported that they had '*taught pupils with challenging behaviour*';
- sixty-nine per cent had '*covered classes*' for colleagues; and
- three-fifths (60%) had been a '*form tutor*'.

Having considered the patterns of participants' employment during their first year in post, we conclude this section by considering their views at this stage on the future development of their careers.

#### **5.2.4 Future employment intentions**

The vast majority (95%) of those who, at the time of the Wave 3 telephone survey, were teaching or looking for a teaching post indicated that they planned to be (or to remain) in teaching at the start of the following academic year. Eighty per cent of these expected to be employed in a permanent or fixed-term teaching post in the same school or college as that in which they were working at the time.

Case study data provide indications as to why the majority of NQTs wished to remain in their current posts. These included: taking on additional responsibilities, subjects or extra curricular activities (mentioned by 19 interviewees), liking the school and feeling settled (11), and the desire 'to consolidate' the previous year's work (5).

*I am definitely going to be here for another year. Unless things drastically change all of a sudden and I am unhappy, I'd think about moving on. But at the moment, I am so much enjoying this. I don't see much prospect of going anywhere.*  
(Female, 27-31, GTP, secondary, business)

*Yes, I am planning obviously to stay here next year, because I think it is good to consolidate the two years. I don't know whether I'd stay longer than that, I'd have to see sort of how next year goes. But I definitely always wanted to stay for two years.*  
(Female, 27-31, PGCE, secondary)<sup>60</sup>

Nine per cent of survey respondents who held permanent or fixed-term positions had already obtained or planned to move to posts in other schools. The main reasons given by these NQTs for moving or wanting to move schools were:

- their existing contract was ending (24%);
- they wanted to move elsewhere in the country (21%); and
- they were seeking career development opportunities (17%)

### **5.3 The highs and lows of NQTs' first year of teaching**

When surveyed at the end of their first year in teaching, 93 per cent of those respondents who had worked as NQTs since completing their ITT indicated that, generally speaking, they were enjoying teaching. Although the case study interviews reflected a more mixed view of NQTs' enjoyment of their work, positive responses (by 39 participants) to the question '*How do you think the year has gone overall?*' still outweighed the negative responses (14). Case study (interview and e-journal) data suggest, however, that this group of beginner teachers had experienced both high points and low points during the course of the year, and sometimes during the course of a single school day. In the following two sections the factors associated with participants' highs and lows are discussed.

#### **5.3.1 Factors associated with highs**

The highs experienced by NQTs were linked with six factors:

(1) Good relationships with pupils;

In the case study interviews, 30 NQTs stated that they found developing relationships with pupils to be a rewarding and engaging part of their work.

*I think the highs have been around the kids. At Christmas, completely unbeknown to me, two of my classes organised presents for me and that was one of my biggest highs because I'd only been in the school a term and that was just such a big high, it meant so much to me.* (Female, 32-36, BEd, secondary, ICT)

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<sup>60</sup> As for other quotations from (secondary phase) participants whose stories are told in Chapter 10, the subject specialism is not included to protect these teachers' anonymity.

*[T]here is nothing better than when you leave for the day and they say ‘Oh, you are teaching us tomorrow?’ and you say ‘No’ and they go ‘Ah! Listen, you are the best teacher in the world’. It’s just such a buzz. It really is.*  
(Female, 27-31, Flexible PGCE, primary)<sup>61</sup>

In the survey, the vast majority (97%) of NQTs stated that they had enjoyed ‘good’ (26%) or ‘very good’ (71%) relationships with their pupils.

(2) NQTs’ perceptions of pupil learning and their role in this;

Twenty-five of the 73 case study interviewees referred to ‘highs’ associated with perceptions that they had played a part in fostering pupil learning and development.

*I have one little boy whose behaviour has completely changed. I have worked very hard with him. When he came in he couldn’t sit still for 30 seconds and he made a noise all the time and it was very disruptive and he has changed beyond all recognition, so I suppose that’s a high, it’s incredibly satisfying.* (Female, 42-46, GTP, primary)

*I think in general the special needs lessons have been going well, you know just because those are the kind of thing where you can really see the reward, it’s challenging, even to get a child to know the alphabet is, knowing they have struggled for so many years and then they can do it.* (Female, 37-41, PGCE, secondary, SEN)

(3) Good relationships with colleagues;

Thirty-six interviewees described good relationships with individual colleagues or groups of colleagues, with 14 speaking positively about feeling part of a team or about having particular colleagues with whom they worked closely, and another 14 describing supportive relationships with teacher colleagues.

*Luckily, I ended up with two people that I really get on with and we all help each other out and if we’ve ever got a problem, we’ll sort it out and I think that’s helped a great deal actually getting on with people that I work with and it’s been a good laugh to be honest.*  
(Female, 22-26, SCITT, secondary, D&T)

These findings are also supported by the analyses of survey data, which show that there was a statistically significant association between reported enjoyment of teaching and reported positive relationships with colleagues: those NQTs who gave more positive ratings of their *relationships with other teachers* were 1.4 times more likely to give higher ratings of their enjoyment of teaching. The survey data shed additional light on the relationships these beginner teachers had formed with a variety of staff in their school:

- ninety-seven per cent rated their relationship with ‘other teaching staff’ as ‘good’ or ‘very good’;
- ninety-six per cent of respondents rated as ‘good’ or ‘very good’ their relationship with non-teaching staff;

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<sup>61</sup> This NQT was working as a supply teacher at this time.

- eighty-six per cent of NQTs reported 'good' or 'very good' relationships with their line manager; and
- eighty-two per cent rated their relationship with their head teacher/principal as 'good' or 'very good'.

The case study interviews attested to some of the strong and supportive relationships between NQTs and their line managers:

*I've got the support of my head of department and that I can go to him and ... sometimes we just sit and talk. He's got two young children ... we'd just sit and talk about our children, sometimes we'd talk about the work, sometimes we'd talk about computers, and that really has helped me to have someone I can go and talk to and somebody I can bounce ideas off. (Female, 22-26, SCITT, secondary, D&T)*

#### (4) A developing sense of autonomy;

Twenty-five interviewees talked about the 'highs' that resulted from their increased sense of autonomy during their first year of teaching, with some emphasising the importance of a sense of ownership of their classroom or even of 'their' pupils, of establishing personal classroom routines, and / or feeling a freedom to be more flexible in their lesson planning and teaching than they had had during their ITT.

*I think the big difference is that you begin to accept that this is your classroom and what you say goes so to speak... You get your own little systems organised... And I think you feel so much more on a par with the other teachers around you than you did when you were training... I think from your own point of view you feel you have taken a step up and now you are actually doing the job rather than having somebody allowing you to teach a lesson to their class. (Female, 42-46, PGCE, secondary, history)*

#### (5) Recognition and trust

Related to autonomy, and to their developing identity as teachers, many NQTs also talked about the positive feelings they derived from being recognised and trusted as established teachers, notably by experienced teacher colleagues and by parents:

*You realise that parents will come in and think, you know, I am a teacher. They don't look at me as being anything else, they don't look at me as being inexperienced or, you know, an NQT. They just look at me as being the teacher of their children. (Female, 37-41, Flexible PGCE, primary)*

#### (6) 'Survival'

'Surviving' or managing the intensity of a term or a full year as a teacher was linked to a sense of achievement for NQTs which was, for some, heightened by encouraging comments from colleagues, pupils, parents or carers of pupils, and from external agencies such as Ofsted.

*My biggest high was on Thursday, having realised that I had survived a whole term (albeit a short one) and was still enjoying it. I feel great knowing that the hardest term (according to all of the teachers in my particular school) is now over as I have survived report writing, parents' evening, a huge lot of assessment and a Year 4 trip.*  
(Female, 22-26, PGCE, primary, March ejournal)

### 5.3.2 Factors associated with lows

#### (1) Workload

The 'lows' experienced by NQTs were often related to the demands of the role or their reported workload. Forty-nine of the 73 interviewees described their workload as extensive, with some NQTs pointing in particular to what they perceived to be an excessive amount of 'paperwork' and 'administration' associated with being a teacher, on top of the already considerable demands of planning, preparation, teaching and assessment.

*Lows - having to learn and cope with all the administrative overload and the long hours. I have been working an average 70 hours a week.*  
(Male, 47 or over, Flexible PGCE, secondary, physics, October ejournal)

Survey respondents were asked about the additional hours that they were working outside of the timetabled school day. The results are given in Table 5.3 below which shows that 49 per cent of those surveyed stated that in a standard working week, they worked 16 hours or more in addition to the timetabled school day.

**Table 5.3 In addition to the timetabled school day, how many hours do you usually work in a standard working week?**

	Frequencies	Valid per cent (%)
1-5 hours	99	4
6-10 hours	421	18
11-15 hours	564	25
16-20 hours	462	20
21+ hours	662	29
Don't know	74	3
<b>Total</b>	<b>2282</b>	

Includes all who were teaching.

Responses to this question were unprompted.

Percentages may not add up to 100 due to rounding.

The demands that had been placed on NQTs were also reflected in participants' accounts of the allocation and use of non-contact time. Amongst survey respondents, over a third (35%) of those who had worked full-time reported being allocated five hours or more of non-contact time whilst a quarter said they found themselves with two hours or less non-contact time per week. This is in the context of the (then) statutory allowance of ten per cent non-contact time for NQTs.<sup>62</sup> In

<sup>62</sup> In addition to the statutory 10 per cent non-contact time provided for NQTs, all teachers are now entitled to at least 10 per cent Planning, Preparation and Assessment (PPA) time, as laid down in the *School Teachers' Pay and Conditions Document* (DCSF, 2008). NQTs should be given both a reduced timetable and PPA time.

the 73 case study interviews, 26 NQTs said they had been able to make use of non-contact time, whereas ten said they had experienced difficulties in taking this time.

It is conceivable that the emotional and physical demands that their first teaching post made on some NQTs were contributory factors to the illness reported by a number of case study participants (e.g. 10 interviewees).

*I am absolutely shattered, I actually got told by my doctor to slow down... I've actually become quite ill really with the stress.* (Female, 22- 26, BA QTS, primary)

Although workload was reported to be the cause of a major 'low' for many NQTs, 34 interviewees described their workload as manageable and 47 talked about strategies they had employed to manage their workload. These included the use of 'smart' approaches to the marking and returning of pupils' work and more pragmatic approaches to planning. Some NQTs also spoke of having attempted to keep a work-life balance by not working weekends, seeking to complete their work before leaving school each day, avoiding taking marking home, and showing a determination to continue with their out of school activities and enjoy a social life.

### (2) Pupil behaviour and relations with pupils;

While we saw in Section 5.3.1 above that the vast majority of survey respondents reported 'good' or 'very good' relationships with pupils, 41 case study participants deprecated poor pupil behaviour, with some describing traumatic individual incidents with pupils or groups of pupils and speaking of their associated feelings of powerlessness.

*If you can't control them and can't teach them, no matter how good your lesson plan is and what your resources are like, if you can't control them you might as well chuck them out of the window. And that's happened to me a lot of times, when I've had pretty good lesson plans, I've worked hard on it and it's been interesting and fun and I haven't managed to get them under control and the whole lesson has been wasted.* (Female, 47 or over, BA QTS, secondary, ICT)

In addition, 16 participants referred in their ejournal responses to challenging and disruptive behaviour by pupils, and seven participants focussed on the resultant emotional impact:

*[I teach the] Year 11 group from hell - on two occasions I have felt close to tears with this group and nearly walked out of the school. They are experts in humiliation. Six notorious 'waste of space' kids - though I know we are not supposed to say that about any of our students. [They] refuse to co-operate. 'Stop talking', 'listen', 'stay on task'. If I tell one to go out of the room and he refuses to go, I cannot do anything!*  
(Female, 47 or over, SCITT, secondary, March ejournal)

### (3) Poor relations with colleagues;

For 27 of the 73 case study interviewees, poor relationships with teaching and/or non-teaching colleagues, including their head teachers, Induction tutors and support staff, were said to have contributed to significant 'lows' during their first year of teaching. Some NQTs reported an unwelcome reception on their first day or in the early weeks or months of their teaching careers, and others reported a lack of approachability or even hostile or aggressive behaviour on the part of some of their colleagues.

*The biggest low was starting school on the first day. No one greeted me or even spoke on the first morning. I was trying to find the loo. When I asked a member of staff they told me that I should have been in the staff briefing in the hall and walked off. It took me about five minutes to find the hall at which time I was nearly 15 minutes late for the first staff meeting and had to walk in late, not knowing anyone. Talk about not feeling welcome. (Female, 32-36, BEd, secondary, ICT, October ejournal)*

*There's the other lady in the department, but to be honest with you she's not very approachable. In the first few months I think I said hello to her every day and I didn't get a response. It's kind of like that. (Male, 22-26, SCITT, secondary, PE)*

*An experienced teacher, who has been at the school for many years... has repeatedly found fault with what I am doing and how I am doing it. I am reassured by other members of staff that she does this to one person every year, and this year she appears to have focussed on me. The head and other teachers are aware of this and the situation is, hopefully, being dealt with. The real low point was two weeks ago when not a day went past without a curt, snappy comment. (Female, 22-26, SCITT, primary, October ejournal)*

#### (4) Relations with pupils' parents/carers;

Poor relationships with their pupils' parents or carers were also reported as generating 'lows' for some NQTs (mentioned, for example, by 12 interviewees). In this context, some NQTs talked of complaints made by parents:

*I got a roasting from a few Year 8 parents - some complained I go too fast and maybe I have a 'personality' conflict with some of the children in the class. Some complained I go too slow and that I do not control the class enough! Most others that I asked said it was fine. (Female, 47 or over, SCITT, secondary ... March ejournal)*

That said, 89 per cent of survey respondents rated their relationships with their pupils' parents as 'good' or 'very good', with less than one per cent stating that such relationships had been 'poor' or 'very poor'.

## 5.4 Experiences of Induction

Newly Qualified Teachers (NQTs) are required to successfully complete a period of statutory Induction in order to teach in maintained schools (in England). The Induction period normally lasts one year (three terms or equivalent) for full time teachers. Part-time teachers must complete an Induction period equal to the number of days in the academic year of the school in which they start Induction. NQTs must have a contract of employment for at least one term (where the academic year is three terms) in order for that period of employment to count towards their Induction period. They can undertake short term supply work in maintained schools for up to 16 months without having completed an Induction period (and can also ask for this limit to be extended by up to 12 months). Induction can also be served in FE institutions or independent schools, although it is not a requirement to complete Induction in order to teach in these institutions. In order to successfully complete their period of Induction, NQTs must demonstrate their capability against a set of Standards designed to be consistent with and build upon those

developed for ITT.<sup>63</sup> They must receive a monitoring and support programme facilitated by the head teacher and /or the Induction tutor which includes: a reduced timetable; support and guidance from an Induction tutor (or 'mentor'); observation of their teaching; and regular professional reviews of progress.

Of all the Wave 3 survey respondents who had worked as teachers since completing their ITT (2,357), 88 per cent indicated that they had access to a formal Induction programme, with 11 per cent indicating that they had not. Participants' experiences of Induction are discussed in this section, while more general experiences of support and professional development are addressed in Section 5.5

#### 5.4.1 Meeting the Induction Standards

Table 5.4 illustrates the percentage of respondents who indicated in the Wave 3 and 4 surveys that they had access to and had passed their Induction. It shows that although for many, the end of their first year following ITT marked the end of their Induction period, for a minority of participants this was not the case. Indeed, by the time of the Wave 4 survey:

- 10 per cent of all respondents who had worked as teachers since completing their ITT stated that they had not yet completed their Induction (two years after completing their ITT); although
- eight per cent of the same Wave 4 respondents indicated that they had not *had access* to Induction; and
- of those who indicated that they *had* had access, only three per cent stated that they had not successfully completed their Induction by the end of their second year since completing ITT.

Of the 164 Wave 5 respondents who had not had access to or passed Induction at Wave 4:

- 111 (67%) had access to Induction during their third year of teaching; and
- 88 (79%) successfully completed their Induction by the end of that year.

Of the 64 Wave 6 respondents who had not had access to or passed Induction at Wave 5:

- 38 (59%) had access to Induction during their fourth year of teaching; and
- 29 (76%) passed their Induction by the end of that year.

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<sup>63</sup> Since most participants involved in this research undertook their Induction, the Induction Standards have been assimilated into the 'core standards', which are part of the framework of 'Professional Standards for Teachers' (TDA, 2007).

**Table 5.4 Access to and passing Induction**

Survey Wave	Year(s) since completing ITT	Per cent (%) of survey respondents who had...		
		...access to Induction	...passed induction	passed Induction having had access to Induction
Wave 3	1	88	75	84 <sup>64</sup>
Wave 4	2	92	90	97

The reported lack of access to Induction of a minority of beginning teachers in their first few years since completing ITT can be explained, in some cases, by their employment situation. Firstly, those working on short term supply contracts should not have access to Induction since the regulations state that a supply placement should last for longer than a term for Induction to take place. Secondly, some of those working in the independent and further education (FE) sectors may not have had access to Induction since completing an Induction period is not a requirement for employment in those sectors. Hence, of the 263 respondents (11%) who stated in the Wave 3 survey that they had not had access to Induction:

- 116 (44%) had been working as supply teachers;<sup>65</sup>
- 22 (8%) were working in independent schools; and
- two (1%) were employed in sixth form or FE colleges.

The reasons for the reported lack of access to Induction of the remaining respondents are unclear, though there are some indications that head teachers, Induction Coordinators or heads of CPD in some schools did not fully understand (or else did not adhere to) the regulations relating to Induction, especially regarding those employed as supply teachers, as the following quotation may suggest:

*The [Supply] agency said, 'how's the Induction going on?' and I said 'well it's not, I haven't started it yet, I haven't got a contract' and so they said 'well, you should have started it'... But as it is, even having mentioned the Induction to the head teacher at my regular school that I've been at two terms, he's obviously not keen on the word 'Induction'. (Female, 37-41, BA QTS, primary)<sup>66</sup>*

When those (Wave 3) survey respondents who had not completed their Induction by the end of their first year following ITT were asked why this was not the case, the two most common reasons given were:

- firstly, that they had not been in the job long enough (52%); and

<sup>64</sup> While 3 per cent of Wave 3 respondents stated that they had not yet passed or been recommended to pass their Induction, a further 13 per cent (some 261 participants) reported that at the time of the survey they did not know the outcome of their Induction. Of this latter group, 207 (79%) had either passed or been recommended to pass Induction by the time of the Wave 4 survey.

<sup>65</sup> This figure includes those on short- and long-term supply contracts.

<sup>66</sup> In the case of this NQT it may actually be the case that the extended period of supply teaching in the school she refers to came about as a result of a rolling arrangement (in which case the lack of access to Induction was permissible) rather than being agreed at the outset (in which case it was not).

- secondly, that they had not received sufficient support from their school (13%).

This first finding is supported by evidence from the case study interviews, where 11 of the 18 participants (from a total of 73) who said they had not been recommended to pass Induction also indicated that they had not been teaching for a sufficient length of time; and amongst this group of 11, six participants had been working as supply teachers.

The second finding cited above is supported by additional analyses of survey data, which show that:

- those respondents who rated their **support** as 'very good' at Wave 3 were statistically more likely (99%) to pass Induction by Wave 4 than those who didn't rate their support so highly (96%); and
- those NQTs who rated their **relationships with their Induction tutor/mentor** more highly were also more likely to report (in the Wave 3 survey) that they had been recommended to pass their Induction by the end of their first year in post.

The importance of support, and of NQTs' Induction tutor or mentor, also featured strongly in participants' accounts of what had helped or hindered them in undertaking their Induction, considerations which we address in Sections 5.4.2-5.4.4 below.

#### **5.4.2 Factors that helped teachers in meeting the Induction Standards**

When participants were asked in the survey who or what, if anything, had helped them in working towards the Induction Standards, the seven most common responses all related to **people**. These included:

- 'colleagues at school / college' (44%);
- 'Induction tutor / mentor' (41%);
- 'head of department' (11%); and
- 'contact with other NQTs' (7%).

The support of colleagues was also cited by sixteen case study NQTs as helping their development in their first year of teaching.

*The fact that, you know, that there are people on either side of the room [i.e. in the classrooms next door] and there are people I can talk to about anything, about subject-specific teaching-related issues and also about, just organisation and not doing too much. Because I go the opposite way, I do too much. That kind of stuff, you know, background support, if you like. (Male, 27-31, PGCE, secondary, MFL)*

More specifically, 21 interviewees mentioned observing other teachers as an activity which they felt had helped them towards achieving the Induction Standards.

*Things that have helped have been watching other teachers do anything and thinking 'I could do that', or just it could be just small things like watching on playground duty and I see how other teachers deal with children, things like that. I think that's really helped and you sort of reflect and change. (Female, 22-26, BA QTS, primary)*

A variety of other factors were considered by case study participants to have helped in their development. Four NQTs mentioned the experience of working as a supply teacher as having been helpful, three referred to the continuing professional development (CPD) they had undertaken as useful, and two referred to working in more than one school as an advantage, while two others said the opposite. Interestingly, none of our survey or case study participants identified the Career Entry and Development Profile (CEDP) in their responses to questions which asked what had helped them towards achieving the Induction Standards. We briefly discuss address NQTs' accounts of the use of the CEDP in Section 5.4.6 below.

### **5.4.3 Factors that hindered teachers in meeting the Induction Standards**

Those survey respondents who reported that they had had access to a formal Induction programme were also asked what had hindered them in working towards the Induction Standards. Whilst the majority (54%) reported that nothing had hindered them in working towards the Induction Standards, the following emerged as factors that participants viewed as hindrances in this respect:

- workload (11%);
- lack of support from other staff (5%), specifically from
  - their Induction tutor (4%),
  - their head teacher (3%), and
  - head of department (2%);
- teaching pupils with challenging behaviour (3%).

A further burden on some NQTs, though related to the issue of workload, was a lack of non-contact time. As suggested in Section 5.3.2 above, our data suggest that not all of our participants appeared to be receiving their (then) statutory entitlement of ten per cent non-contact time during Induction. As Table 5.5 (below) indicates, a quarter of those survey respondents who had held full-time teaching posts reported that they had only had two hours or less non-contact time per week.

In addition, some (10) case study interviewees suggested that in a number of respects the NQT Induction programmes provided for them lacked flexibility or responsiveness to their individual needs, as illustrated in the following quotations:

*I was disappointed about some of the literacy courses. It was just reaffirming and confirming what we already knew ... I wanted to go there and learn ... It's wasting my time, wasting other people's time as well. (Female, 42-46, Flexible PGCE, primary)*

*Our English [session] was good, our Maths [session] was good but some of them that were really useful, we could've done with at the beginning at term and we've had them right towards the end of the year. (Male, 27-31, PGCE, primary)*

*We had a Key Stage 3 strategy day with our adviser and he came along with his various bits of paperwork and ... that was extremely frustrating because he clearly wasn't aware of what we had done. ... I said, 'oh yes, look at this, that's what I did in Year 8' and he was absolutely staggered because he didn't think that the upper schools would be teaching it in the way we were actually doing. (Female, 42-46, GTP, secondary, MFL)*

**Table 5.5 How much weekly non-contact time do you have?**

	Frequencies	Valid per cent (%)
None	55	3
Up to 1 hour	3	(0)
1-2 hours	476	22
3-4 hours	745	35
5-6 hours	578	27
7-8 hours	124	6
9-10 hours	42	2
Don't know	97	5
<b>Total</b>	<b>2120</b>	

Includes all who were in a permanent or fixed-term post and were working full-time.

Responses to this question were unprompted.

Percentages may not add up to 100 due to rounding.

#### **5.4.4 NQTs' relationships with Induction tutors/mentors**

As we reported above, an important aspect of Induction provision for NQTs is the support of an individual Induction tutor or mentor. Ninety-nine per cent of respondents in permanent or fixed-term posts reported having had an Induction tutor or mentor supervising their Induction programme, and the vast majority reported 'very good' (65%) or 'good' (29%) relationships with their mentor or Induction tutor, with only one per cent rating those relationships as 'poor'. NQTs were significantly more likely to rate their relationships with mentors in positive terms if the mentor worked in the same subject area, and less likely to do so if their mentor was also their head teacher.

NQTs' relationships with their mentor were also explored in the 73 case study interviews, with 20 interviewees describing positive and 14 negative relationships. Positive relationships included those where the NQT reported feeling supported by their mentor.

*The main support has been from [my mentor], one of the other Year 6 teachers. She's been brilliant, just keeping an eye on me, in terms of how many hours I'm doing and she'll come and tell me off and she'll come and check that I'm not doing too much marking. (Female, 22-26, BEd, primary)*

*[My] Induction tutor - a very helpful, supportive teacher... I feel very able to go to her with any problems or queries and she will sort them out for me. She is very interested in my personal as well as professional development, seeing me as a whole person rather than just a NQT to be 'got through' their Induction year. (Female, 22-26, SCITT, primary, October ejournal)*

Some of those case study NQTs who reported negative relationships with their mentors suggested that those mentors were not fully committed to the role, were disorganised or generally unavailable, or not sufficiently competent or 'up to date':

*Our relationship is prickly shall we say. She does the minimum she has to do and I allow her to do the minimum she has to do. (Female, 32-36, BEd, secondary, ICT)*

*The head of department is my, I suppose he is my mentor but actually he sits down about two days before the review has to be done and then panics because he can't find his bits of paper. I mean the last Induction [meeting we had], he asked for the wrong bit of paper and I didn't know what he was talking about and then he wrote something in and it wasn't terribly clear and he missed the deadline. (Female, 42-46, GTP, secondary, MFL)*

*He's head of geography and he's also head of PE. He's also head of Year 5 and Year 6 and he's an assistant head and he's been at the school for 27 years, never had a different job and I think he's still teaching the same as in the [19]70s. (...)*

Some interviewees bemoaned the lack of opportunities to meet their mentor during the school day - and sometimes the lack of planning, regarding teacher timetabling, which failed to facilitate this:

*The person that I was given as a mentor, it was all a bit ad hoc at the last minute I think and it turned out that the person who was mentoring me was always teaching when I was free and I was always teaching when they were free. (Female, 42-46, PGCE, secondary)*

The interview responses of Induction tutors themselves throw further light on (and to some extent corroborate) the reported problems regarding availability. The majority of those interviewed (18 of the 27) identified insufficient time as the biggest constraint on their ability to carry out their role effectively:

*The biggest thing really is just getting enough time to do the role as it should be [done]. Obviously, with so many different hats I don't spend enough time actually completing the role. (Induction tutor, secondary)*

*I think the biggest thing is the time aspect, you know... If I'm very busy with something...at a particular time, at peak time, my priority has still got to be making sure I meet with [NQT]. But I still have to squeeze some time somewhere else to do the other stuff that's important. (Induction tutor, secondary)*

The factors most frequently mentioned by the Induction tutors as facilitating effective Induction or mentoring were the allocation of designated time to meet with the NQT, and timetable management to ensure that they and their NQTs were both 'free' at certain times during the school week. Some of the mentors we spoke to enjoyed this luxury while others did not:

*[W]hen my NQT had his non-contact time, I was teaching so I couldn't get together with him then, so... that's the only thing I would say.* (Induction tutor, primary)

*[W]e're lucky, I'm released on the same day and we've got time to spend with one another as well.* (Induction tutor, primary)

#### 5.4.5 The observation and assessment of NQTs

An important feature of the Induction provision for beginner teachers is the observation and assessment of their teaching by more experienced and established colleagues. Ninety-five per cent of teachers who took part in the Wave 3 survey reported being observed in the course of the year, with over 70 per cent indicating that they had been observed at least five to six times. Participants were most likely to have been observed by their Induction mentor (66%) or by their head teacher/principal (49%). The majority of survey respondents indicated that the observation of their lessons - and the related activities of assessment and opportunities for professional development - were generally regarded as positive experiences. For example:

- eighty per cent of those respondents who reported being observed rated the 'feedback' on their teaching as 'good' or 'very good', while a relatively low seven per cent rated this as 'poor' or 'very poor'; and
- seventy-eight per cent rated the assessment of their teaching as 'good' or 'very good', with six per cent rating this as 'poor' or 'very poor'.

Some case study interviewees provided support for these findings, suggesting that being observed by other teachers and participating in post-observation discussions had helped their development by, for example, providing them with a different perspective on their teaching and their classroom, or by providing reassurance:

*They see different things, they observe it in a different way, point out things that you've not really thought about, so it's very beneficial in that respect.*  
(Female, 27-31, GTP, secondary, business studies)

*Being observed is actually quite useful, it kind of raises your game and when someone else is watching you it's quite reassuring. I actually said to [the person observing me] as soon as we'd finished, 'they were a bit of a handful then', and she said she thought I'd coped with them really well because they are a handful at the moment.*  
(Male, 27-31, PGCE, primary)

Other interviewees, however, stated that they found the observation, assessment and 'feedback' process to be a stressful experience:

*I've just had an observation for the second time which I thought went hideous but he [mentor] said wasn't that bad... But it's so out of your control isn't it, the minute you pass that toy over and say, 'right we are going to start', you think, 'oh my gosh, what are they going to say?'* (Female, 27-31, PGCE, secondary, English)

[Being observed is] *still nerve wracking. It's an odd situation because you let, like, I don't know, you tend to keep your temper a lot more. Like occasionally, it is good to snap at the children ... I would never do that whilst being watched by her which is strange, which is why I lose my patience. You always feel like it's never quite in control enough.*

(Male, 27-31, PGCE, primary)

A contributory cause of the trepidation some NQTs felt about being observed by others may be the use of observation (by Induction tutors or others) primarily as a method of assessment of NQTs' 'performance', rather than as an opportunity to facilitate the NQTs' (and their own) reflection and development. On the other hand, while some NQTs complained of a lack of opportunity for follow-up discussion after lesson observations, others were critical of some of their experiences of observation on the grounds that they were insufficiently formal. Both sentiments are evident in the following quotation:

*My last one [observation], it was a couple of lessons outside in the driving rain, and we only stayed out for twenty minutes because we got wet and he just said, 'yes, it was really good, there's a couple of things I think to work on, I'll tell you about them later' and I'm still waiting to hear what they are.* (Female, 22-26, PGCE, secondary, PE)

#### **5.4.6 The use of the Career Entry and Development Profile (CEDP)**

Towards the end of their ITT programmes, all student teachers are expected to complete a CEDP, which is designed to help them identify their professional development and training needs and provide some continuity between ITT and their first year of teaching / Induction. At the end of their first year of teaching, 96 per cent of participants in the survey said that they had a CEDP. However, while just over half (55%) of these respondents indicated that their Induction tutor/mentor was using their CEDP to support their development as teachers, there were some question marks surrounding the value or use of the CEDP as a tool for supporting an individualised development process and the transition from 'student teacher' to fully qualified teacher. For example:

- twenty-nine per cent of respondents disagreed with the proposition that their Induction tutor/mentor was using the CEDP to support their development;
- thirty-four per cent did not feel that the CEDP provided a useful link between ITT and Induction; and
- thirty-five per cent did not agree that the CEDP had been used effectively in arranging their Induction.

Some case study participants indicated that they had found the CEDP valuable in easing the transition from ITT to Induction:

*Well it was useful as a sort of starting point and gave you that sort of, something to talk about, having something to carry over from the end of your teaching practice into actually starting your job because obviously you have quite a gap in between.*

(Female, 42-46, PGCE, secondary, history)

Many case study participants indicated, however, that the CEDP had rarely, if ever, been used in their schools, and some suggested that this was either because it was not valued by the school or because the school was able to meet NQTs' needs without it:

*I haven't needed to look at it [the CEDP] because my head [teacher] knows exactly what she's doing. So I've rarely used it. It has appeared four times now, it'll appear again before Christmas, and that's it. I just bring it, we keep a record of the minutes of the meeting, my objectives, my lesson observations and that's it.*  
(Female, 47 or over, RTP, primary)

Having discussed issues most closely related to the statutory Induction of NQTs, we now turn to other and more general aspects of the support and professional development opportunities for first year teachers.

## **5.5 Support and professional development**

### **5.5.1 NQTs' experiences of support**

Seventy-seven per cent of survey respondents who had worked as teachers rated the overall support they had received during their first year of teaching as 'very good' (46%) or 'good' (31%), whilst nine per cent rated such support as 'poor' (7%) or 'very poor' (2%). Respondents' ratings of the support they received were closely associated with their ratings of their relationship with their Induction tutor or mentor - the more positive they rated this relationship (see Section 5.4.4 above) the more highly they rated the support they had received over the course of their first year.

In the case study interviews 47 NQTs spoke positively about the availability of support during their first year of teaching. The sources of support mentioned in this context were teaching staff in general (mentioned by 43 interviewees), mentors or Induction tutors (30), head teachers (18), support staff (16), and heads of department (8). NQTs were most positive about support which was:

- informal and easily accessible;

*I've had the usual type of support that I have received all through this year. Teachers have just 'been there' as and when I've needed help or advice.*  
(Female, 22-26, BEd, primary, February ejournal)

- helped them to deal with specific problems;

*When I had a problem with one of the Year 10 boys at the beginning of term I found that there was a very strong network of people to support you when you do need it.*  
(Female, 42-46, GTP, primary, October ejournal)

- addressed their emotional as well as 'practical' needs.

*I walked out today [because my daughter was ill] at 1.30. I split my class, they are so supportive of you having to take time off, for whatever reason, kids-related, you know, they are very good like that.* (Female, 27-31, PGCE, primary)

Whilst, as we have seen, the majority of case study NQTs spoke positively about the availability of support, 41 of the 73 interviewees nevertheless reported instances of support that they considered inadequate, often from heads of department, heads of year and/or Induction tutors or mentors.

*This term has been quite difficult because I have got so frustrated with [head of department] that it's just really knocked my confidence because I think you should be able to refer problem kids to the head of department and they will sort them out. But he doesn't do that. I have got more discipline in the classroom than he does.*

(Female, 22-26, PGCE, secondary, PE)

Some NQTs also reported feeling unsupported by school systems or procedures, or by the lack of such systems, especially for dealing with disruptive pupils:

*I had an incident with a child who told me to 'F' off and I just did not know how to handle it. I went for help and I didn't get any help and two days later this child is back in my class again and nothing's happened to them and I was very upset over it.*

(Female, 32-36, BEd, secondary, ICT)

Other areas in which some case study NQTs stated that they felt there was a lack of support during their first year of teaching included:

- a lack of dialogue with other teachers and a failure to make them feel part of the team (sometimes exacerbated by apparent geographical isolation within the school);

*There's only two of us in the department out here, everyone else is over the other side of the school, so it does mean that I really, from a professional development point of view, I haven't really had any day to day professional development.*

(Female, 27-31, PGCE, secondary)

- a failure to provide an introduction to the school when they first started their job.

*I certainly felt particularly dumped and I mean I didn't even know how the equipment worked. I didn't know where anything was. It was, you know, I went in the first day with a five period day and bang, you know, it was a shock!*

(Female, 42-46, PGCE, secondary, geography)

For some NQTs, the lack of support was at least partly due to the fact that the school did not feel that they needed it:

*[T]hat was down to the head [teacher] and she said 'look, we've decided that we'll cancel these [courses] because we need you here and also because we feel that you are OK and you don't actually need that extra support.* (Female, 32-36, Flexible PGCE, primary)

### **5.5.2 Formal training and development opportunities**

Eighty-eight per cent of survey respondents who had held a teaching post reported having undertaken additional training and development (additional to ITT) during their first year of teaching. In the case study interviews, the majority of NQTs (51) reported having had access to extensive programmes of early professional development (EPD) from a diverse range of sources including in-house provision in the form of in-service training (INSET) days, and external courses provided by local authorities and other agencies, as the following two quotations illustrate.

*I have been going to two courses for every term... in that way I think the school has been very, very supportive. ...our mentor has been very supportive and made sure that all the people [went] who wanted to. (Male, 42-46, Flexible PGCE, primary)*

*We had regular meetings with the guy [who was] responsible for teacher training and for the NQTs and we had weekly... and then monthly meetings and we met different people. Speakers were brought in to talk to us about varying aspects ... to help us in the school. (Female, 32-36, GTP, secondary, ICT)*

Only six NQTs amongst the case study interviewees reported having had no access to any training opportunities. However, a minority of NQTs also reported difficulties accessing formal professional development opportunities, notably due to limitations of available funds for this purpose.

In terms of NQTs' perceptions of the usefulness and effectiveness of the formal training and professional development provided for them, more ejournal participants wrote about this in positive terms (19 participants out of 46) than those (11) who reported negative experiences; while 46 of the 73 case study interviewees spoke about formal professional development opportunities that they felt had been effective. NQTs saw such professional development opportunities as having an impact where:

- they provided them with new ideas that were applicable to their situation;

*I have attended a course to teach Modern Foreign Languages at primary level... The training has been excellent and I have already started teaching French to Year 5 in my school. I have also attended Interactive Whiteboard training as I have recently had one installed in my classroom – this has added to my teaching in leaps and bounds. (Female, 32-36, GTP, primary, March ejournal)*

- they reinforced or reminded them of existing knowledge;

*Some of them were helpful, in a sense they refreshed some ideas and reminded [me] of things I had forgotten about. (Female, 27-31, GTP, secondary, business).*

- they enabled them to network with other teachers and NQTs (including from other schools).

*I think one of the most useful things about them has been the opportunity to get together with other NQTs to see how they feel about how they are doing and what they are having difficulties with etc. It is sort of reassuring for all of us I think that we are all in the same boat whereas obviously when you are speaking to more experienced colleagues... (Female, 32-36, BEd, primary)*

In contrast, forty case study interviewees expressed reservations about the value of some training, EPD or whole-school CPD that they had undertaken. The main reasons for this included:

- perceived repetition of content covered in NQTs' ITT or Induction-specific programmes;

*I have been on a couple of courses but I've got to say that I've avoided the NQT ones. A lot of them... I didn't want to go and hear it again because it's stuff that we'd only heard 12 months earlier... I felt like we'd had behaviour management until it had come out of our ears and I didn't really feel like I needed to go and waste a whole day sitting being told that again. (Female, 32-36, BEd, primary)*

- perceptions of content being too general or too theoretical;

*I mean one thing I tried with this particular class of Year 9s that were causing grief. While it all sounded very good in theory it, either I missed an element or it didn't work very well in practice. (Female, 22-26, PGCE, secondary, history)*

- comments on facilitators' lack of ability or effectiveness.

*[The CPD presenter's] entire behaviour policy was around you going up to children and saying 'stop!' ... He seemed to spend more time talking about himself and... how he'd helped all these other [schools] but he never actually told us what he'd done. (Female, 32-36, BEd, secondary, ICT)*

Having discussed key features of beginner teachers' experiences of their first year of teaching, and of Induction, support and opportunities for professional development, in the final section of this chapter we examine the extent to which those experiences were subject to variation in relation to the ITT route our research participants had followed and according to other variables.

## **5.6 Variation in beginner teachers' experiences of their first year of teaching and Induction**

### **5.6.1 Variation by ITT route**

When the experiences of first year teachers who had followed different ITT routes were compared, a number of statistically significant findings emerged, especially amongst primary phase teachers and in relation to securing teaching posts.

First, while the employment status of secondary phase teachers did not differ significantly according to the ITT route they had followed, amongst primary school teachers there was statistically significant variation, with 68 per cent of former SCITT trainees securing a permanent post, compared with only 47 per cent of those who had followed BEd programmes (see Table 5.6).

**Table 5.6 Current Employment Status by ITT route (primary phase)**

ITT Route	In a permanent teaching post at a school or college (per cent)	Number of cases
SCITT	68	131
GRTP	64	159
PGCE	61	236
BA/BSc QTS	56	509
Flexible PGCE	56	61
Bed	47	213
<b>Total</b>	<b>58</b>	<b>1309</b>

Chi-square=66.67, df=35, p=0.001

Secondly, a higher proportion of NQTs who had trained via the Flexible PGCE ITT route reported that they were unemployed and looking for a teaching post (5% amongst primary phase respondents and 3% for secondary respondents) than those who had followed all other routes.<sup>67</sup>

Thirdly, and related to the findings presented above, NQTs who had graduated from primary BEd and primary BA/BSc QTS, were significantly more likely than those graduating from other ITT routes to report that they had encountered difficulties in securing a teaching post (see Table 5.7); while amongst secondary NQTs, a higher proportion of those who had followed Flexible PGCE programmes reported encountering such difficulties (Table 5.8).<sup>68</sup>

**Table 5.7: Did you encounter/have you encountered any particular difficulties when looking for a teaching post? By ITT route (primary phase)**

ITT Route	Encountered difficulties (per cent)			No. of cases
	Yes	No	Don't know	
<b>Bed</b>	46	54	0	<b>212</b>
<b>BA/BSc QTS</b>	35	65	0	<b>493</b>
<b>PGCE</b>	25	75	(0)	<b>233</b>
<b>Flex. PGCE</b>	25	75	0	<b>60</b>
<b>SCITT</b>	27	73	0	<b>131</b>
<b>GRTP</b>	21	79	0	<b>157</b>
<b>Total</b>	<b>32</b>	<b>68</b>	<b>(0)</b>	<b>1286</b>

Chi-square=38.58, df=5, p<0.001. The 'don't know' category was not included in the test calculations.

Percentages may not add up to 100 due to rounding.

<sup>67</sup> The mean percentage for all primary phase NQTs was one per cent, and for secondary phase NQTs less than 0.5 per cent.

<sup>68</sup> As the table notes show, these route differences were statistically significant for primary phase but not secondary phase respondents. (The latter may be explained by the small number (31) of those who had followed the secondary Flexible PGCE route who responded to this question.)

**Table 5.8: Did you encounter/have you encountered any particular difficulties when looking for a teaching post? by ITT route (Secondary phase)**

ITT Route	Per cent (%) Encountered difficulties			No. of cases
	Yes	No	Don't know	
<b>BA/BSc QTS</b>	10	89	1	<b>131</b>
<b>PGCE</b>	12	88	0	<b>539</b>
<b>Flex. PGCE</b>	23	77	0	<b>31</b>
<b>SCITT</b>	13	87	0	<b>147</b>
<b>GRTP</b>	9	91	0	<b>253</b>
<b>Total</b>	<b>12</b>	<b>88</b>	<b>(0)</b>	<b>1101</b>

Chi-square=5.98, df=4, p=0.201. The 'don't know' category was not included in the test calculations.

Percentages may not add up to 100 due to rounding.

There were other differences, too. For example, amongst primary phase NQTs, those who had followed Flexible PGCE programmes, as a group, rated their relationship with pupils less highly than those who followed other routes. Here, 75 per cent of Flexible PGCE respondents stated that their relationships with pupils were 'very good', compared with 88 per cent of BEd, 86 per cent of GRTP and 85 per cent of BA / BSc QTS respondents who gave this response. In addition, lower proportions of primary and secondary phase Flexible PGCE respondents 'strongly agreed' with the statement '*I enjoy working as a teacher*' than those from any other route.<sup>69</sup>

However, in general, and as might be expected, NQTs' experiences were less differentiated by the ITT route they had followed than their ITT itself had been, and the ITT route that NQTs had followed had no significant effect on the time taken to pass Induction.

### 5.6.2 Variation by other factors

On a number of questions, NQTs' experiences of their first year of teaching were also differentiated by:

- (i) their (pre-ITT) preconceptions and concerns about teaching and teacher training;
- (ii) the phase of education in which they were teaching;
- (iii) their age
- (iv) their gender; and
- (v) their ethnicity.

<sup>69</sup> These findings were statistically significant amongst primary phase teachers (Chi-square=26.029, df=10, p=0.004) but not secondary phase respondents (chi-square=9.771, df=12, p=0.636).

In relation to NQTs' **preconceptions**, for example:

- those teachers who had expressed concerns about their future enjoyment of teaching / ITT in the Wave 1 survey were approximately 50 per cent more likely than those who had not expressed such concerns to give lower ratings of their actual enjoyment of teaching at Wave 3; while
- participants who stated that they were concerned, prior to starting their ITT, about '*whether [they would] get on with teachers and other staff*' were more likely than those who did not express such a concern to report a lower rating of their relationship with their mentor.

In relation to **phase**:

- the proportion of secondary NQTs holding permanent teaching posts (76%) was significantly higher than that for those teaching in primary schools (58%); and
- secondary phase NQTs indicated that they received, on average, nearly twice the non-contact time (5 hours per week) of those working in primary schools (2.7 hours).

Regarding **age** differences, the evidence suggests that in a number of respects younger NQTs tended to have (or report) more positive experiences of their first year of teaching and of Induction. Notably:

- 53 per cent of NQTs in the youngest age category (22-26) rated the support they received as 'very good', compared with 39 per cent of those aged 42-46 and 43 per cent of those aged 47 or over;
- 78 per cent of 22-26 year olds 'strongly agreed' that they enjoyed teaching, compared with 63 per cent of those aged 47 or over; and
- 90 per cent of 22-26 year olds stated in the Wave 3 survey they had been recommended to pass their Induction, compared with 70 per cent of those aged 47 or over.<sup>70</sup>

On the other hand, older NQTs were more likely to obtain teaching posts in their ITT placement schools:

- 44 per cent of those aged 37-47 and 36 per cent of those aged 27-36 did so, compared with 24 per cent of those aged under 27 years.

In relation to **gender**:

- male teachers (38%) were more likely than females (30%) to find teaching posts in schools in which they were based for their ITT.

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<sup>70</sup> Chi-square=59.43, df=5, p<0.001.

And regarding variation in NQTs' experiences according to their **ethnicity** it was found, for example, that:

- survey respondents from the (white) majority ethnic group were more likely than those from black and minority ethnic groups to rate the support they received during their first year of teaching as 'good' or 'very good'.

## **5.7 Conclusion**

In this chapter we have discussed teachers' experiences in the first year following their Initial Teacher Training. The chapter has addressed: (i) the challenges of finding a first teaching job; (ii) the highs and lows of being a Newly Qualified Teacher; (iii) the process of Induction as experienced by this group of beginning teachers; (iv) participants' experiences of support and CPD; and (v) some variations in beginner teacher experiences, relating to the ITT route they had followed and to other factors. In the following chapter (6), we explore participants' experiences of their second year of teaching.

## 6 Teachers' experiences of their second year in post

### Key Findings

- Nearly four in five respondents to the Wave 4 survey (78%) held permanent teaching posts, with 13% in fixed-term posts, 4% working as supply teachers, 2% on a break before taking up a teaching post and 1% unemployed and looking for a teaching position.
- Of those respondents in permanent or fixed-term positions:
  - 94% worked full-time and 6% part-time;
  - 85% were working in the same school that they had worked in during their first year of teaching.
- Two-thirds (68%) of primary school teachers reported having taken on the role of subject co-ordinator; while amongst secondary teachers around a quarter (24%) stated that they had held a subject co-ordinator role and 9% reported being a head of department.
- Ninety four per cent of survey respondents reported that they enjoyed working as a teacher, with the factors contributing to their enjoyment of teaching including: positive work-based relationships, feeling supported, receiving additional training, feeling more established and autonomous, and being recognised by others as established teachers.
  - 98% of survey respondents reported their relations with pupils as 'good' or 'very good';
  - 97% rated their relationships with teaching staff as 'good' or 'very good'.
  - 76% reported that the support they had received during their second year of teaching was 'good' or 'very good'; while
  - 88% reported that they had received formal professional development or training opportunities during the year.
- A third of survey respondents (34%) reported having had a post-Induction mentor during their second year of teaching;
  - 94% of these reported 'good' or 'very good' relationships with their mentor.
- Approximately half of both case study teachers (13 out of 25 who discussed this) and survey respondents (49%) mentioned '*colleagues at school/college*' as helping their development as a teacher during their second year.
- Ninety nine per cent of survey respondents described themselves as either 'very' (46%) or 'fairly' (53%) effective teachers.
- Case study data show that relationships with pupils and colleagues were (or continued to be) sources of 'lows' as well as 'highs' for some teachers.
- Just under a third (30%) of second year teachers surveyed reported having worked up to 10 hours a week in addition to their timetabled hours, almost a third (32%) between 11 and 15 additional hours a week, and over a third (37%) 16 additional hours or more a week.

## 6.1 Introduction

This chapter presents findings from Wave 4 of the *BaT* research and concentrates on beginning teachers' experiences of their second year of teaching. The findings are based on the analyses of data generated from: (i) a telephone survey of 1,973 second year teachers; (ii) in-depth face-to-face interviews with 64 'case study' teachers; and (iii) email exchanges ('ejournals') with 45 of the case study participants. The Wave 4 survey and case study interview data were generated in the summer of 2006, while ejournal data were generated throughout the 2005-6 school year.

We begin our presentation of findings, in Section 6.2, by examining the nature of our participants' employment as second year teachers, including the positions they held, the type of school they were working in and the demands of their teaching role, including any additional roles and responsibilities they may have undertaken.<sup>71</sup> We move on to report:

- second year teachers' reported levels of enjoyment of teaching and their ratings of their work-based relationships (Section 6.3);
- their perceptions of their effectiveness and strengths as teachers in (6.4); and
- their experiences of support and continuing professional development (CPD) (6.5).

Where significant variation exists between the experiences of second year teachers who had followed different ITT routes, or according to the type of school in which they were employed, their age, gender or ethnicity, these are addressed within Sections 6.2-6.5.<sup>72</sup>

## 6.2 The nature of teachers' employment during their second year of teaching

### 6.2.1 Employment status and type of post

Table 6.1 shows that 95 per cent of respondents to the Wave 4 survey were working as teachers:

- 78 per cent had permanent positions;
- 13 per cent held fixed-term positions; and
- four per cent were working as supply teachers.

Of those respondents who were not working as teachers at the time of the Wave 4 survey, some (2% of the total sample) were on a break before taking up a teaching position, while a small minority (1%) were looking for a teaching post.

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<sup>71</sup> In this chapter the reference to '*second year teachers*' includes all those who took part in 'Wave 4' of the *BaT* research and who had completed their ITT in 2004 (two years before the Wave 4 survey and case study interviews). However, as will be apparent from this and other chapters of this report, not all participants had taught or taught continuously since completing their ITT, and a small minority had not completed their NQT Induction programme by the end of their 'second year'.

<sup>72</sup> Further details of the findings presented in this chapter can be found in Tracey *et al.* (2008).

**Table 6.1: Which of the following best describes your current employment status?**

Current employment status		Frequencies	Valid per cent (%)
Currently teaching	In a permanent teaching post at a school/college	1542	78
	In a fixed-term teaching post at a school/college	259	13
	Supply teaching	81	4
Not currently teaching	On a break before taking up a teaching post (e.g. maternity leave, carer's leave, sick leave, study leave)	32	2
	Working, but not as a teacher	25	1
	Unemployed but looking for a teaching post	15	1
	Unemployed and not looking for a teaching post	14	1
	On a break before taking up work, not as a teacher (e.g. maternity leave, carer's leave, sick leave)	5	(0)
<b>Total</b>		<b>1973</b>	

Includes all respondents who were surveyed for Wave 4, i.e. all those who had taken part in the Wave 3 survey at the end of their first year of teaching since completing their ITT in 2005, and who were subsequently contacted and interviewed in Summer 2006.

Further analysis of the current employment status of the second year teachers in the survey showed that there was some significant variation in the nature of their employment status by **region**.<sup>73</sup> For example:

- teachers in the East of England and Inner London were more likely to report having permanent positions (91% for each region) than those in the North West (75%) and the North East (74%) of England; and
- second year teachers in the North West and Outer London regions were more likely to report holding supply contracts (7% and 6% of the Wave 4 teachers working in these regions respectively) than, for example, those teaching in the East of England (1%).<sup>74</sup>

The majority of the respondents who held permanent or fixed-term posts worked full-time (94%). This compared with six per cent who held part-time positions. In terms of those holding full-time positions there was significant variation by **phase** amongst the second year teachers. Notably:

- the majority of respondents working in secondary schools (85%) held full-time permanent positions compared with seventy-seven per cent of the primary teachers; and

<sup>73</sup> Unless otherwise stated, all references to variation between different groups of second year teachers are statistically significant. Further details are available in Tracey *et al.* (2008).

<sup>74</sup> The regions used in this analysis corresponded to the Government Office Regions (GORs) for England.

- primary school teachers were more likely than those working in secondary schools to report having full-time fixed-term contracts (23% and 15% respectively) and supply posts (12% and 5% respectively).

In terms of the type of teaching posts held by the second year teachers across the primary and secondary phases, there were some significant variations in terms of the **ITT route** they had followed. For example:

- in primary schools, those who had followed the SCITT route were more likely to have held a full-time permanent position in their second year of teaching than those who had followed another route, with those who had trained on Flexible PGCE programmes the most likely to have held part-time or supply posts; and
- amongst secondary teachers, those who had followed the GRTP or Flexible PGCE programmes were more likely to have had part-time posts than their colleagues who had followed other ITT routes.

In terms of the **type of school** in which our participants were employed:

- ninety-five per cent of the second year teachers were working in the state sector, with the majority (94%) teaching in a co-educational setting;
- over a third of the respondents (35%) reported that the school in which they worked was *'high up in the league tables'*, whilst
- the combined proportion of teachers working in schools *'in difficulties'* (that is, those reported as being *'in special measures'*, *'in serious weaknesses'* or *'in challenging circumstances'*) was 18 per cent.

The majority (85%) of those respondents in permanent or fixed-term posts reported that they were working in the same school as they had worked in during their first year of teaching, while 15 per cent had moved to a different institution. Supplementary analysis found that there were no significant associations between whether or not respondents had moved institutions and phase or gender. However, there were significant associations with other factors. For example:

- forty-one per cent of respondents who had stated at the end of their first year of teaching that they had not undertaken CPD during that year reported having moved to a different school, compared to 11 per cent of those who did report receiving additional support or training opportunities;
- those working, in their first year, in fixed-term or supply posts were more likely to move school than those holding permanent posts; and
- there was more mobility amongst teachers working in schools regarded as being *'in difficulties'*.

## 6.2.2 Roles, duties and responsibilities of second year teachers

### *Age ranges and subject specialisms taught*

Within the primary phase, fewer second year teachers reported teaching classes in Year 6 (the year group associated with the Key Stage 2 National Tests) than those who reported teaching other year groups:

- 15 per cent stated they had taught Year 6 pupils compared to at least 23 per cent who reported teaching pupils in each other year group.

In contrast, the percentage of second year teachers teaching Year 11 (i.e. the GCSE year) was the largest across the secondary phase (92% compared to no more than 87% teaching other year groups). This is an increase from the 80 per cent of respondents working in secondary schools who reported teaching Year 11 classes during their first year of teaching. It is also the same percentage figure for those who reported teaching Year 10 in the previous year, perhaps indicating a desire for consistency across the two years of GCSE teaching on the part of schools.

In order to examine the extent to which secondary teachers were teaching the subjects they had been trained to teach, secondary school teachers were asked about the subjects they had been required to teach during their second year of teaching:

- nearly two-thirds (63%) reported teaching only subjects they had identified as a subject specialism at the end of their ITT;
- twenty-nine per cent reported that they had been teaching at least one non-specialist subject in addition to their specialist subject(s); while
- seven per cent reported that they had exclusively taught subjects other than those they had earlier indicated were their subject specialism.

The subject reported most often as having been taught by non-specialists was Personal, Social and Health Education (PSHE).

### *Additional roles and activities*

Survey respondents were asked about the roles and activities they had undertaken during their second year of teaching. Amongst primary phase respondents:

- over two-thirds (68%) reported that they had taken on the role of subject co-ordinator; and
- over a third (35%) reported being a form tutor.

Amongst secondary teachers:

- the majority (92%) reported that they had been form tutors;
- around a quarter (24%) stated that they had held a subject co-ordinator role; and
- nine per cent indicated that they had occupied the post of head of department.

There were differences across the primary and secondary **phases** with regard to respondents' involvement in a number of school activities. Notably, secondary teachers were more likely than primary teachers to report that they had:

- '*covered classes*' for other teachers (95% and 52% respectively);
- taken '*part in extra-curricular activities* (87% and 78% respectively); and
- '*taught pupils with challenging behaviour*' (92% and 87% respectively).

On the other hand, primary teachers were more likely than those working in secondary schools to report '*taking pupils on school trips as part of the curriculum*' (93% and 74% respectively).

There were also some significant variations by **age** with regard to the roles and activities undertaken by second year teachers. For example:

- those primary school teachers who stated that they had become subject co-coordinators were approximately one and a half years younger than those who had not; while
- those secondary school teachers who said that they had taken on the role of form tutor were, on average, three years younger than those who had reported not taking on this role.<sup>75</sup>

In addition, across all (primary and secondary teacher) respondents:

- those who reported '*covering classes*' were, on average, approximately a year older than those who had not;
- those who had taken part in '*extra-curricular activities*' were, on average, approximately a year younger than those who had not; whilst
- those who reported '*taking pupils on school trips as part of the curriculum*' were on average three years younger than those who did not report doing so.

Second year teachers' responses to some questions about the additional roles and activities they had taken on were also differentiated by **gender**. In particular:

- male teachers (90%) were more likely than their female colleagues (77%) to report undertaking '*extra-curricular activities*' during their second year of teaching.

And amongst secondary teachers, there were significant variations in whether or not participants had taken on additional roles according to respondents' perceptions of their **school's effectiveness**. Specifically:

- 16% of teachers working in schools reported as '*in difficulties*' stated that they had taken on the role of head of department, compared to 7% of those teachers working in schools not reported as '*in difficulties*'; and

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<sup>75</sup> Although respondents' age is recorded here as a grouped variable, this analysis is based on estimating the mean age of a group of respondents.

- thirty-two per cent of those teachers in schools *'in difficulties'* reported taking on subject co-ordinator roles, compared to 22 per cent of those working in schools which were not classed as being *'in difficulties'*.

#### *Additional responsibilities*

Survey respondents were also asked about any additional responsibilities they had been involved with during their second year of teaching. The majority of respondents reported having been involved in:

- the *'discussion of goals and policies within their school and/or department'* (86%);
- *'curriculum development or course design'* (69%);
- *'formal discussions on any whole school issues with the head teacher'* (62%); and
- contributing *'to the development and training of other teachers'* (61%).

When the responses were analysed further there was significant variation according to the **age** of the participants, with younger teachers more likely than older teachers to report having these additional responsibilities. Analysis also revealed significant variation in the types of additional responsibility that teachers had been involved in according to **phase**. A higher proportion of secondary teachers reported involvement in *'curriculum development t/course design'* and *'contributing to the development and training of other teachers'* than their primary counterparts. However a higher proportion of primary teachers than secondary teachers reported having been involved in *'formal discussions about the allocation of financial resources'*.

Thirty six of the 64 case study interviewees also reported taking on additional roles and responsibilities during their second year of teaching. Eighteen of the 36 commented on these additional responsibilities with 13 making positive comments, for example:

*I'm a lot more confident this year. I think because I've been given more responsibility.*  
(Female, 28-32, GTP, primary, interview)

However, seven were less positive, five of whom made comments on the burden of the additional workload associated with taking on new roles.

#### *Additional hours worked*

Survey respondents were also asked about the number of additional hours they had worked over and above their timetabled school day. Just under a third of the second year teachers (30%) reported having worked up to ten hours per week in addition to their timetabled hours, almost a third (32%) between 11 and 15 additional hours a week and over a third (37%) reported working 16 additional hours or more a week.

There were statistically significant differences in responses to this question about the number of additional hours worked according to the **phase** the second year teachers were working in: primary school respondents indicated that on average they had worked an additional hour and a half per week more than their secondary counterparts (16.27 additional hours per week compared to 14.60 hours). Those teachers working in the state **sector** reported having worked

almost two additional hours per week more than those working in the independent sector (15.81 hours compared to 13.97 hours).

Several case study participants reported a conscious awareness that their workload in their second year of teaching had decreased from that experienced during their first year,<sup>76</sup> with some indicating that this was because they were able to draw on a bank of resources they had built up during their first year of teaching:

*I'm not as stressed as I was last year because obviously workload-wise, I've got everything that I used last year that I can use this year, so I've started to build up that bank of resources.* (Female, 28-32, Flexible PGCE, primary)

In other cases, teachers said that they felt their work-life balance had improved because they had learnt to manage their workload more effectively, as indicated in the following ejournal extract:

*I have been more careful this year about taking on too much work. Last year I really pressurised myself to do everything and as much as possible. This year I have backed off a bit. I find this hard but I think I need to stay normal without going insane.* (Female, 23-27, BEd, primary, October ejournal)

However, 14 of the case study teachers reported that they felt their workload was heavier than that experienced during their first year, with the majority of these reporting that this was due to the additional roles and responsibilities they had taken on:

*I've got the PE co-ordinator responsibility now. I do enjoy it, but it's a lot of work. It's a lot of work on top of your classroom duties.* (Female, 23-27, SCITT, primary)

#### *Non contact / PPA time*

The respondents who reported working full-time were asked about the amount of non-contact time they had been allocated (time in the school day during which they were not expected to teach):

- thirty-eight per cent of the second year teachers reported having been given two hours or less of non-contact time per week;
- nearly half (46%) reported receiving between three and four hours of non-contact time; and
- over 15 per cent reported receiving five or more hours of non-contact time per week.

Secondary school teachers reported that they had received, on average, approximately 50 per cent more non-contact time per week than their primary counterparts.

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<sup>76</sup> Across all survey respondents, the mean number of additional hours worked per week in the second year of teaching was over five hours fewer than reported in the first year of teaching. This issue is explored further in Chapter 8 (Section 8.7).

Whilst survey respondents quantified the amount of non-contact time they had been allocated, case study participants were able to provide more detail about the ways in which their protected non-contact provision, Planning, Preparation and Assessment (PPA) time, had enhanced their practice. Twenty five case study teachers and three ejournal participants mentioned their PPA time with 15 of these reflecting positively on the contribution PPA time had made to their practice.

*The biggest change I think is obviously the introduction of PPA time where we get planning time in school and a good chunk of planning time. It allows you to really discuss ideas and then you share the ideas.* (Female, 28-32, PGCE, primary)

*[T]he introduction of PPA time has been great, it has meant that my NQT time of ten per cent is continuing and this has helped with work/life balance.* (Male, 38-42, BEd, primary, October ejournal)

### 6.3 Second year teachers' ratings of their enjoyment of teaching and their work-based relationships

#### 6.3.1 Levels of enjoyment in teaching

The majority of survey respondents were, in general, positive about their work as teachers. As Table 6.2 shows, 94 per cent indicated that they enjoyed working as a teacher, while just four per cent suggested that they did not.

**Table 6.2 'I enjoy working as a teacher'**

	Valid per cent (%)
Strongly agree	70
Tend to agree	24
Neither agree nor disagree	3
Tend to disagree	2
Strongly disagree	2

Includes all who are currently teaching or have worked as a teacher at some point in the academic year 2005-2006 (n = 1943).

Percentages may not add up to 100 due to rounding.

Respondents' reported enjoyment of teaching was statistically associated with their ratings of their work-based relationships, the support they were given and whether or not they had received additional training during their second year of teaching:

- teachers who reported more positive relationships with **pupils, head teachers** and other **teachers** were between a third more likely and twice as likely as those who rated these relationships less positively to report that they 'strongly enjoyed' teaching;
- respondents who stated that they felt very well **supported** in their job were approximately 50 per cent more likely than those who did not feel as well supported to report that they were 'strongly enjoying' teaching; and

- seventy-two per cent of those who reported that they had received **additional training** during their second year of teaching ‘strongly agreed’ that they enjoyed teaching, compared to 61 per cent of those who reported that they had not received any additional training.<sup>77</sup>

Aspects of the job that were mentioned as enjoyable by large numbers of case study participants also related to their *relationships with pupils and colleagues*, while some spoke of the enjoyment of witnessing pupil learning. In addition, 20 of the 45 ejournal correspondents wrote about the satisfaction associated with feeling more established, with being recognised by others as established teachers, or by the associated increase in professional autonomy:

*I like no longer being branded an NQT ('Not Quite a Teacher'). (Male, 28-32, PGCE, secondary, MFL, October ejournal)*

*The beginning of this year has been interesting. I have moved to Year 4 (from 5) and am now paired with a new teacher to our school. Being the one with the experience of our school and being treated as someone to defer to is a bit of a shock but good. (Male, 38-42, BEd, primary, October ejournal)*

*I suppose not being under the NQT package gives you a little bit more responsibility. People aren't looking over you so much, you feel like you've got a bit more freedom to do as you would want to do rather than having to satisfy all these bits and pieces. (Female, 23-27, SCITT, secondary, arts)*

Finally, it was found that survey respondents' ratings of their enjoyment of teaching in their second year were differentiated by the ITT route they had followed, with those who had trained via the Flexible PGCE route least likely to 'strongly agree' that they enjoyed working as a teacher (and about half as likely as those who had followed standard university-based PGCE programmes).

### 6.3.2 Work-based relationships

The second year teachers were asked about the relationships they had formed with pupils, with their pupils' parents and with school-based colleagues.

#### *Relationships with pupils*

When asked in the Wave 4 survey to rate their relationships with their pupils:

- ninety-eight per cent of the survey respondents reported that these were 'good' (23%) or 'very good' (75%); while
- fewer than one per cent described their relationships with pupils as 'poor' or 'very poor'.

There were statistically significant differences, on this question, between the responses of primary and secondary teachers:

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<sup>77</sup> Further details of these analyses can be found in Tracey *et al.* (2008), Chapter 5 (Section 5.4) and Appendix B. Each of these three issues (work-based relationships, support and training/CPD) is explored in more detail below – in Sections 6.3.2, 6.5.2 and 6.5.3 respectively.

- eighty-four per cent of second year primary teachers rated their relationships with pupils as 'very good', compared with 67 per cent of secondary school teachers.

Data generated from case study teachers illustrate some of the ways in which good relationships with pupils could be emotionally rewarding (as suggested by 19 participants in the ejournal exchanges):

*Highs - sitting and giggling with a member of my tutor group (Year 8) trying to play the keyboard. She has a reading age of about 8 and really struggles but we had a great 5 minutes!* (Female, 23-27, SCITT, secondary, arts, ejournal, October 2005)

However, poor relationships with pupils were reported by some as the cause of emotional 'lows':

*Yes - things seem to go along quite well and then all of a sudden a class really acts badly and my confidence gets knocked back again. I guess it happens to most teachers but it still affects me.* (Female, 48 or over, BA QTS, secondary, ICT, February ejournal)

### *Relationships with colleagues*

The vast majority of survey respondents also reported positive relationships with their school based colleagues:

- ninety-seven per cent rated their relationships with 'teaching staff' as 'good' or 'very good';
- ninety-seven per cent rated their relationships with 'non-teaching staff' as 'good' or 'very good'; and
- eighty per cent rated their relationship with their head teacher as 'good' or 'very good'.

Further analysis showed a significant association between respondents' **ethnicity** and their rating of relationships with their school-based colleagues. For example, black and minority ethnic (BME) teachers were less likely than their (white) majority ethnic group colleagues to rate relationships with 'other teaching staff' as 'very good' (42% and 61% respectively).

Case study data showed how relationships with colleagues could be a source of both 'highs' and 'lows' for our second year teachers. Those teachers who were positive about their relationships with their colleagues talked about: the professionally supportive environment provided by their school, developing good personal friendships, and enjoying being part of a young staff team:

*The support is just brilliant so we do all our planning together, all our assessment together so it's really, really supportive, really good.* (Female, 28-32, BEd, primary)

*I have some really good friendships with the staff: some of us go out and socialise out of school which is really good; we have a really good time in school as well as out of school which is really nice.* (Female, 28-32, Flexible PGCE, primary)

Negative comments about relationships with colleagues touched on: a lack of contact with other members of staff; a perceived lack of support from colleagues; issues relating to staff politics and generally poor morale at the school.

In general, case study participants working in primary schools tended to report closer relationships with their head teacher than those employed in secondary schools, as might be expected given the usual differences in the relative sizes of such schools. Hence, twenty of the 23 teachers who described a close working relationship with their head teacher worked in the primary sector:

*The head teacher, I've never met such an approachable head teacher, he's always got time for you.* (Female, 23-27, GTP, primary, interview)

*The head teacher is very friendly, you can have a real good laugh with him, he's not one of those head teachers that's locked away in his room all day, he comes down on a daily basis and visits all the classrooms and just checks and says, 'are you all right today?' and just has a quick chat.* (Female, 28-32, Flexible PGCE, primary)

### *Relationships with pupils' parents*

The majority (92%) of the second year survey respondents also reported that they rated their relationships with pupils' parents as either 'good' (49%) or 'very good' (43%), with just one per cent rating these as 'poor' or 'very poor' and six per cent stating that they were 'neither good nor poor'. While case study data tend to support these overall findings, they also reveal some sources of tension:

*When I first came [to this school] it was very difficult because the parents, a lot of them were the same age as me and I found it quite difficult to relate to some of them. Now it's absolutely fine, you learn I think how to relate and how to speak to them and it's been a lot better.* (Female, 23-27, PGCE, primary)

*I don't need parents telling me how to educate their kids, we don't as a school need parents to tell us how to educate their kids. If we put their kids into a group and a parent comes and moans about it, I just say, 'well what do you expect us to do, we teach them in a way that's most appropriate'. I think some parents like to bully teachers.* (Male, 38-42, BEd, primary)

When survey respondents' ratings of their relationships with pupils' parents were further analysed by whether teachers worked in primary schools or in secondary schools, it was found that:

- fifty-two per cent of teachers working in primary schools, compared to 35 per cent of those working in secondary schools, rated their relationships with pupils' parents as 'very good'.

Amongst teachers working in primary schools, there was also found to be a difference between the ratings of men and women respondents. Namely:

- forty-one per cent of male primary teachers rated these relationships with their pupils' parents as 'very good', compared to 53 per cent of their female colleagues.

## 6.4 Teachers' perceptions of their effectiveness and strengths

### 6.4.1 Teachers' perceptions of their effectiveness

The overwhelming majority (99%) of teachers described themselves as either 'very' (46%) or 'fairly' (53%) effective teachers. There were significant associations between teachers' perceptions of their efficacy and their perceptions about their **school's effectiveness**. Teachers working in schools reported as being '*high in the league tables*' were more likely than those in other schools to consider themselves to be '*very effective*' teachers (54% and 42% of teachers respectively).

Out of a total of 57 case study teachers who responded to this question, 47 said that they regarded themselves to be effective, while three interviewees felt themselves to be ineffective teachers and another seven expressed uncertainty about their teaching ability. Of the 47 case study participants who judged themselves to be effective teachers, 20 spoke of feelings of increased confidence in their role, nine felt that their subject and/or subject pedagogical knowledge was better than it had been previously, six felt that their behaviour management had improved and four referred to being more organised:

*I'm more confident to deal with certain situations as they arise.*  
(Male, 38-42, BA QTS, secondary, D&T)

*This year, I've got the experience of teaching them so I do have an idea maybe of what misconceptions that they may have or questions that they might ask.*  
(Female, 33-37, Flexible PGCE, secondary, science)

*All the things I was struggling to fit in before, I am just doing as a matter of course. Like you can tell three kids to stop swinging back on their chairs by just looking at them. That kind of stuff, things that I had to think about doing before, I don't have to think about that now.* (Male, 33-37, SCITT, secondary, ICT)

*I think I've become more settled myself in the teaching of the day to day jobs that I need to do and getting myself organised, doing work and getting things done. I suppose that's time management really.* (Female, 23-27, BEd, primary)

Many of the case study participants' perceptions about their effectiveness appeared to have been influenced by the judgements of others; twelve talked about receiving positive 'feedback' after lesson observations; nine mentioned feeling valued by colleagues and seven referred to favourable comments by members of the senior leadership team.

*[T]he deputy head teacher... said to me that you know you have a challenging class but you're really doing well and it just makes you feel, like at least I'm being recognised for the hard work that I'm doing.* (Female, 23-27, SCITT, primary)

## 6.4.2 Teachers' perceptions of their strengths

Survey participants were asked to report what they perceived to be their strengths as teachers. Their responses were unprompted and the perceived strengths mentioned most often were:

- the '*ability to develop productive relationships with pupils*' (25% of respondents);
- '*my organisational skills*' (23%);
- the '*ability to maintain discipline in the classroom*' (20%); and
- '*knowledge about my teaching subject(s)*' (18%).

There was some variation according to **gender** with regard to the perceived strengths mentioned. Notably:

- male primary teachers (34%) were more likely than female primary teachers (21%) to mention the '*ability to develop productive relationships with pupils*' as a perceived strength.

There was also variation in the pattern of responses according to the respondents' perceptions of their **school's effectiveness**:

- those second year teachers working in schools they reported as being '*high in the league tables*' were more likely than those working in schools not perceived as being '*high in the league tables*' to refer to their '*organisational skills*' (27% and 22% of respondents respectively) and their '*enthusiasm*' (14% and 11% respectively) as strengths; while
- teachers working in schools reported to be '*in difficulties*' were more likely than those working in other schools to state that their '*ability to maintain discipline*' was a teaching strength (26% and 19% of respondents respectively).

## 6.5 Teachers' experiences of support and professional development

This section presents findings relating to the experiences of support and professional development of those second year teachers who had successfully completed their NQT Induction programme.

### 6.5.1 Second year teachers' perceptions of the conditions affecting their development as teachers

Those survey respondents who had completed their NQT Induction during their first year<sup>78</sup> were asked what had helped them in their development as a teacher during their second year of teaching. The factors mentioned most frequently all related to specific individuals or groups of people, accounting for four out of five of the most common responses. The most commonly occurring responses were:

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<sup>78</sup> As reported in Chapter 5 (Section 5.4.1), 88 per cent of Wave 3 survey respondents reported (at the end of their first year of teaching) that they had access to an Induction programme, and 84 per cent of these (and 75% of all respondents) stated that they had successfully completed their Induction.

- their '*colleagues at school/college*' (mentioned by 49% of respondents);
- their '*head of department*' (14%);
- '*contact with other teachers with a similar amount of experience*' (10%);
- their '*head teacher/principal*' (10%); and
- receiving '*additional training*' (10%).

The case study participants also mentioned '*support from colleagues*' most often when discussing what had helped their development as teachers (mentioned by 13 of the 25 case study teachers who identified factors that had helped their professional development). For example:

*I would have to say it's got to be the staff really, all the members of staff here. This department is just incredible; you never feel that you're being a nuisance. They come to you and see what you need, past papers, example materials; the members of staff in this department are very helpful. Everyone works together, we've got these two rooms together, that door is never shut because we're in and out all the time.*  
(Male, 38-42, BA QTS, secondary, D&T)

Whilst nearly two-thirds of survey respondents (60%) indicated that nothing had impeded their professional development, some second year teachers (17%) commented on a perceived '*lack of support*' and a further 15 per cent reported that their '*workload*' had hindered their development as teachers. Amongst the case study teachers a lack of opportunity to attend external CPD courses was mentioned most frequently as an obstacle to professional development (mentioned by seven of the fifteen teachers who identified impediments to their CPD).

*What's hindered me this year is that we haven't been able to go on any courses this year, a bit of a financial worry. I don't really know why. It was clamped down in the beginning of the year and I haven't been on anything. I do feel at this point there's still so much that I need to take on board, so much that I need to learn.*  
(Female, 43-47, GTP, primary, interview)

*I think money, the school not having enough funds [has been an impediment] because there's some courses that I think I would really benefit from. For example, I've got an interactive whiteboard and what I know is what I've taught myself, I haven't been on a course for it.* (Female, 33-37, Flexible PGCE, primary)

### **6.5.2 Second year teachers' ratings of support received**

We have seen in previous sections of this chapter that the extent to which second year teachers felt 'supported' had a major bearing on their reported enjoyment of teaching, on their perceptions of their development as teachers, and on their ratings of their relationships with colleagues. When survey respondents were asked to rate the support they had received during their second year:

- the majority (76%) indicated that the support they had been given was 'good' (38%) or 'very good' (38%);
- twelve per cent rated the support as 'neither good nor poor'; and
- seven per cent rated the support they received as 'poor' (6%) or 'very poor' (1%).

There was variation in the responses to this question of those from different **age** groups, with younger respondents more likely than older ones to rate the support they had received more positively:

- forty-one per cent of those aged 23-27 described the support they had received as 'very good' compared with 28 per cent of those in the '48 or over' age group.

Interestingly, those respondents who reported that they had a mentor (a minority of second year teachers) were also significantly more likely to give higher ratings of the support they received:

- fifty per cent of respondents who reported that they had a mentor rated the support they had received as 'very good', compared to 35 per cent of those who reported that they did not have a mentor.<sup>79</sup>

Case study data provide an insight into the wide range of types of support offered to beginning teachers, the most common of which might be categorised as:

- formal external professional support (for example, attendance on courses);
- formal internal professional support (e.g. staff meetings, observing colleagues' lessons);
- informal internal professional support (e.g. support from peers in school, support from heads of department in secondary schools or subject co-ordinators in primary schools); and
- informal internal personal support (emotional support from colleagues and mentors).

While, as highlighted, the majority of second year teachers felt positive about the support they received, case study data provide some indications as to why some participants did not feel well supported, with some participants contrasting the support they received during their second year of teaching with that experienced during their NQT Induction:

*I don't know because you are now a qualified teacher, the support that you would have got ordinarily pretty much drops away. Like a booster rocket on a shuttle, that's the way it feels! ... I can't fault for the actual support when something occurs, but any run up and kind of debrief is a bit sparse. (Male, 33-37, SCITT, secondary, ICT)*

*I think when you come into teaching, yes, it's great, you have your NQT [Induction] year, you get a lot of support, you get a lot of money to go on training courses and stuff but then after that it feels like you're kind of just swimming and you're just kind of, that's it, you're left, you know. (Female, 28-32, SCITT, secondary, MFL)*

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<sup>79</sup> Second year teachers' experiences of mentoring are explored further in Section 6.5.6 below.

It should be noted, however, that some second year teachers felt that they no longer needed the support that they had done as NQTs:

*[I have had less support since my NQT year finished but I now feel that I do not need so much support and am ready to do things myself. My colleagues are still really supportive when I need anything. (Female, 33-37, primary, GTP, December ejournal)*

*Frankly at the moment, I don't want any support; I just want to be left alone to develop my style. If I want help on a specific issue, I ask for it. For example, I asked the maths [colleagues] for some input on teaching spreadsheets. (Male, 43-47, GTP, secondary, ICT, October ejournal)*

### 6.5.3 Formal professional development opportunities and training<sup>80</sup>

The majority (88%) of the respondents in the survey reported that they had received formal professional development or training opportunities during their second year of teaching. The most frequently mentioned activities were:

- *training related to teaching and learning approaches (34% of respondents);*
- *subject-specific training (34%);*
- *subject-specific training related to teaching and learning approaches (27%);*
- *training related to specialism-specific teaching/learning approaches (e.g. SEN, ESOL) (13%);*
- *training to develop pastoral skills/knowledge/role (e.g. child protection); and*
- *management and leadership training (9%).*

There were statistically significant differences in responses on this issue according to the **phase** the respondents worked in:

- second year primary teachers were more likely to report receiving formal training opportunities than those working in secondary schools (91% and 84% respectively).

Fourteen case study interviewees and 11 ejournal participants described successful CPD activities undertaken during their second year. Some of these described programmes of sustained CPD (i.e. activity on a similar theme lasting more than one session):

*I've done a five day residential course through fast track which was also really helpful. (Female, 23-27, PGCE, primary)*

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<sup>80</sup> In this chapter, *formal CPD* refers to opportunities for learning or professional development for teachers which are planned in advance by others and/or the recipients, and designated by others and/or the recipients prior to the event as being part of the (beginning) teachers' CPD. Examples of these opportunities could range from whole school CPD events to CPD aimed principally at one or more beginning teachers. In contrast, we use the term *informal CPD* to refer to opportunities for learning or professional development which are typically not planned in advance but are seen after the event as contributing to recipients' CPD. Such opportunities may include activities involving individual, pairs or groups of teachers.

*I am on a year-long course at the moment, [on] behaviour and attendance, helping me understand more. (Female, 23-27, SCITT, primary)*

Formal CPD activities closely and explicitly linked to pupil learning accounted for other positive accounts of CPD. For example, some spoke about their experience of CPD linked with cognitive development strategies such as 'brain gym',<sup>81</sup> while one participant spoke of an 'inspiring' session on barriers to learning:

*I mean something that's new that we've been discussing this week, which has inspired me is barriers to learning. If you can identify the barriers to learning that kids have, and remove them... then it's just like opening the gate and letting them through. (Male, 43-47, GTP, secondary, ICT)*

Thirteen case study interviewees and six ejournal participants commented on what were, for them, less successful experiences of formal CPD. The reasons given for teachers' dissatisfaction included:

- the training being perceived as being at too basic a level;
- the presentation being considered to be un-engaging; and
- the material repeating training they had already undertaken or being out of date:

*One on ICT was an absolute joke because they've been very basic, you know, how to do PowerPoint. I just [drank] my coffee. (Female, 33-37, BEd, secondary, ICT)*

*[I] [w]ent on a training day re: German GCSE Speaking Exam, but not very professional or enlightening. Bit of a shame. (Male, 28-32, PGCE, secondary, MFL, March ejournal)*

*Some of the teaching training courses that I went on, I'd never found them particularly good, I think they tend to go over things that you already know and older things. You know perfectly well that there are newer initiatives they could talk about. (Female, 23-27, PGCE, primary)*

#### **6.5.4 Collaborative professional development activities**

The vast majority of survey respondents (99%) indicated that they had taken part in some form of collaborative professional development activities during their second year of teaching. The activity they referred to most frequently was the '*sharing of teaching resources*' (mentioned by 92% of respondents), 86 per cent also reported taking part in '*joint Inset days with colleagues from other departments / key stages / year groups*'.

Twenty-nine case study teachers discussed their involvement in collaborative activities. The most frequently mentioned activities were planning lessons with colleagues, taking part in joint curriculum development activities, and team teaching.

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<sup>81</sup> Brain Gym is an educational, movement-based programme which, according to its founders and proponents, used certain exercises and postures to enhance learning. Further information is available at: <http://www.braingym.org.uk/>

*We started up a group about assessment for learning and there were nine members and I was part of that team and we've changed the lesson plans and structure [for] the school. (Female, 23-27, BA QTS, secondary, geography)*

*On Friday, me and the head of English planned two weeks worth of work for the whole department. (Female, 23-27, SCITT, primary)*

*You see we team teach often so at the start of particular topic lessons, we'll introduce it as a group, and we'll go off and do it. (Male, 38-42, BEd, primary)*

### 6.5.5 Reviewing and planning professional development during the second year of teaching

The majority (90%) of survey respondents who had completed their NQT Induction during their first year of teaching reported that they had had an opportunity to review and plan their formal professional development during their second year. Table 6.3 shows the second year teachers' responses to a list of possible opportunities to review and plan their progress. It can be seen that the most frequently reported activities were:

- *'using the appraisal system to review progress and development'* (mentioned by 64% of respondents); and
- *'planned courses to meet identified needs'* (63%).

**Table 6.3 Since completing your Induction, which of the following have been put in place for you?**

	Frequencies	Valid per cent (%)
<b>Use of appraisal system to review progress and development</b>	885	64
<b>Planned courses to meet identified needs</b>	868	63
<b>Opportunities to follow-up issues (e.g. areas for development) identified in Induction/NQT year</b>	788	57
<b>Continued use of career entry and development profile (CEDP)</b>	690	50
<b>Formal/timetabled meetings to review your progress</b>	630	46
<b>Support groups/ networks of recently qualified teachers</b>	354	26
<b>None of these</b>	143	10

Includes all who had completed their Induction at the end of their first year of teaching and were currently teaching or intending to teach (number of cases=1377).

Respondents could give more than one response to this question.

There were some significant differences between the responses to this question of primary and secondary school teachers across **phase**. For example:

- teachers working in primary schools were more likely to report having had *'formal timetabled meetings to review their progress'* than their secondary colleagues (53% compared to 39%).

In addition, younger teachers were, on average, more likely to report having been given opportunities to review and plan their professional development. For example:

- second year teachers who reported that they had used the appraisal system '*to review progress and development*' were, on average, two years younger than those who did not report using the appraisal system in this way.

Table 6.3 indicates that half of the survey respondents reported that they had continued to use their career entry and development profile (CEDP) during their second year of teaching. Of the 690 survey respondents who reported that they had used the CEDP during their second year of teaching, over half (52%) agreed that it had been used effectively in assisting their development as a teacher whilst 29 per cent disagreed with this statement. Interestingly, those respondents who said that they had had a post-Induction mentor in their second year of teaching were more likely (61%) than those who did not (47%) to agree that their CEDP had been used effectively in assisting their development as teachers. It is to the subject of mentoring that we now turn, in the final findings section of this chapter.

### 6.5.6 Mentoring support for second year teachers

A third of the survey respondents (34%) reported having had a post-Induction mentor during their second year of teaching whilst 65 per cent reported that they did not. Those who had a post-Induction mentor most commonly:

- were formally assigned the mentor by the school (77%);
- had been mentored by the same teacher during their NQT Induction (62%);
- were in the same key-stage as their mentor (78%);
- worked in the same subject area as their mentor (64%); and
- were line managed by their mentor (60%).

The majority of those respondents (94%) who had a mentor during their second year reported '*very good*' or '*good*' relationships with their mentor. In addition to being more likely to rate the support they received more highly (see Section 6.5.2 above) and being more likely to report that their CEDP had been used effectively in assisting their development, those teachers who had a post-Induction mentor were also slightly (and statistically significantly) more likely to '*strongly agree*' (77%) with the statement '*I enjoy teaching*' than those who did not have a mentor during their second year (70%).

Of the 40 case study interviewees who had completed their NQT Induction during their first year of teaching, only three said that they currently had a formal in-school mentor, while eleven reported that there was an individual providing them with informal mentor support. Twelve of the fourteen case study participants who reported having access to either formal or informal mentors gave an indication of the kinds of assistance they gained from their mentors, which included both professional and personal support:

*I would see the role of the mentor I suppose as someone guiding you, pushing you in the right directions, that's what really, my colleague does there. (Male, 28-32, PGCE, primary)*

*I have got a mentor who is a colleague in the language department. She's great; a very nice lady and if I want to have a moan about something or anything else, I'll go and speak to her, she's lovely.* (Female, 43-47, GTP, secondary, MFL)

In spite of the apparent benefits of mentoring to second year teachers, and while some interviewees who reported no longer having a mentor regretted this, others stated that they no longer felt the need:

*I think it would be beneficial if I had a mentor for the post-Induction year, but I haven't got a mentor this year.* (Female, 33-37, Flexible PGCE, primary)

*I don't have a mentor, I almost feel as if we've done that now, that's happened, you're off, go.* (Male, 38-42, BEd, primary)

*I see a NQT needing a mentor but I don't see it as a role that needs to continue as a formal role.* (Male, 33-37, GTP, primary)

## **6.6 Conclusion**

In this chapter we have discussed teachers' experiences of their second year in post. We have reported their experiences of teaching during this second year, examined their roles and responsibilities within the school, and explored the extent to which they enjoyed teaching and their ratings of their work-based relationships. We have also examined their perceptions of their effectiveness and strengths, and their experiences of support and professional development. In the next chapter (7) we examine many of the same issues in the context of our teacher participants' third and fourth years in post.

## 7 Teachers' experiences of their third and fourth years in post

### Key Findings

- The vast majority of Wave 5 and 6 survey participants were working as teachers three and four years after completing their ITT (96% and 94% respectively).
- The majority of survey respondents working in primary schools reported taking on the role of subject co-ordinator (80% of third year and 83% of fourth year teachers).
- Amongst those working in secondary schools, over a third (36%) of respondents in their third year of teaching and nearly a half (46%) in their fourth reported taking on subject co-ordinator roles; and the proportion taking on the role of head of department rose from a sixth (16%) to a quarter (25%) over the same period.
- The vast majority of survey respondents (95% Wave 5 and 92% Wave 6) reported that they either 'strongly agreed' or 'tended to agree' that they enjoyed teaching.
- Case study and ejournal data indicate that positive aspects of third and fourth year teachers' experiences included:
  - inter-personal support from colleagues;
  - confidence in their ability or perceptions of their effectiveness as teachers;
  - positive or effective relationships with pupils; and
  - achieving a good or improving work-life balance.
- Approximately two-thirds of respondents in both surveys (68% and 67% respectively) rated the support they received during the previous academic year as either 'good' or 'very good'. Just over a fifth of third and fourth year teachers reported having a mentor.
  - In both waves of the survey those third and fourth year teachers who reported having a mentor were more likely to rate the support they received as 'very good' than those teachers who did not.
- The majority of survey respondents were positive about their development as a teacher, with 33% (Wave 5) and 31% (Wave 6) stating that '*nothing*' had hindered their development. However, the most common specific hindrances reported were:
  - '*lack of support from colleagues*' (22% and 25%);
  - '*workload*' (14% and 11%); and
  - '*amount of administration/paperwork*' (10% in both surveys).
- Nearly half (49%) of third year teachers and over half (55%) of fourth year teachers rated themselves as 'very effective' teachers. At least 99% rated themselves as 'very or fairly' effective at both Waves.
- Characteristics of the majority of case study teachers in both their third and fourth years since completing their ITT were that they:
  - expressed aspirations for career advancement;
  - demonstrated a positive attitude towards change in their professional lives; and
  - thought and/or acted as team players.

## 7.1 Introduction

This chapter presents selected findings from Wave 5 and 6 of the *BaT* study and focuses on beginner teachers' experiences of their third and fourth years of teaching (i.e. the period from autumn 2006 to summer 2008). The analyses of the data generated from these two phases of the project are presented together here since, as teachers are becoming more established in their careers, their experiences seem less obviously linked to their length of service in the profession. The findings presented in this chapter thus draw on the analyses of data generated from:

- 1,638 Wave 5 and 1,443 Wave 6 survey respondents;
- 56 Wave 5 and 48 Wave 6 interviewees; and
- ejournal correspondence with 36 third year and 25 fourth year teachers.

This chapter includes discussion of participants' experiences of teaching, including analysis of their roles and responsibilities within their school or college (Section 7.2), their enjoyment of teaching (7.3), their perceptions of their effectiveness as teachers (7.4), their ratings of their relationships with pupils and colleagues (7.5), and their experiences of support and continuing professional development (CPD) (7.6). The chapter ends with a discussion of the identity and characteristics of third and fourth year teachers.

Further details of the survey findings presented in this chapter can be found in two accompanying technical reports (Homer *et al.*, 2009a; Homer *et al.*, 2009b), while additional case study findings relating to beginner teachers' experiences of their third and fourth years in post are included in the stories presented in Chapter 10.

## 7.2 The nature of teachers' employment in their third and fourth years of teaching

This section reports on the nature of teachers' employment during their third and fourth year of teaching following the completion of their initial teacher training. It includes discussion of third and fourth year teachers' employment status, the nature of the teaching posts held, and the types of schools participants were working in, as well as detailing the types of roles, responsibilities and activities that third and fourth year teachers were involved in during their third and fourth years of teaching.

### 7.2.1 Current employment status

The vast majority of those who took part in the telephone surveys at the end of the third and fourth years (96% and 94% respectively) were working as teachers, with the proportions in permanent posts, fixed-term posts and working as supply teachers very stable across the two surveys (at approximately 80%, 10% and 5% of the total sample in each of these three categories respectively). The remaining few per cent of those surveyed were mostly either on a break before taking up a teaching post (2% in both surveys) or working, but not as teachers (between 1 and 2%).

A comparison by **phase** of the nature of third year teaching posts held indicated that:

- teachers in the primary phase were less likely, compared to their secondary colleagues, to report having held full-time permanent posts (78% and 83% respectively). They were also more likely to have held full-time fixed-term (14% and 11%) or supply posts (7% and 3%).<sup>82</sup>

There was only limited evidence of statistically significant variation by the **ITT route** that respondents had followed when comparing the types of teaching posts held during the third year of teaching.<sup>83</sup> Within both the primary and secondary phases, third year teachers who had followed GRTP and Flexible PGCE routes into teaching were more likely than those who had followed other training routes to have held part-time permanent posts. For example:

- amongst third year teachers working in primary schools, 18 per cent of those who had followed the Flexible PGCE route into teaching had worked in part-time permanent posts, compared to two per cent of those teachers who had followed the BA/BSc initial training route; and
- amongst third year teachers working in secondary schools, 13 per cent of those who had followed the GRTP route into teaching had worked in part-time permanent posts, compared to two per cent of those teachers who had followed the BA/BSc initial training route.

There was little evidence of any statistically significant **regional variation** in the nature of employment status during the third and fourth years of teaching when comparing the proportions of respondents in permanent or fixed-term posts, or working as supply teachers, across the different Government Office Regions.

### 7.2.2 The type of post and school

During both the third and fourth years of teaching:

- ninety per cent of survey respondents working in permanent or fixed-term posts were teaching full-time, with the remaining ten per cent working part-time.

The characteristics of the school or college that respondents (in either permanent or fixed-term posts) were working in during their third and fourth years were again very similar across the Wave 5 and 6 surveys. For example:

- only a handful of teachers were working outside of the UK, with just under half the sample in each year teaching in primary schools, and a very similar proportion working in secondary schools;

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<sup>82</sup> As in previous chapters, these and other findings which report differences between respondents working in primary and secondary schools, and between (for example) those of different ages, those who followed different ITT routes, etc, are statistically significant unless otherwise stated. Further details of the results of the statistical analyses can be found in Homer *et al.* (2009a and 2009b).

<sup>83</sup> This question was omitted from the Wave 6 survey in order to provide space for questions relating to other areas of research interest.

- ninety-five per cent of respondents (in both years) were working in the state sector, with the remaining five per cent in the independent sector; and
- the proportion of teachers reporting working in schools '*high up in the league tables*' increased slightly from 34 per cent at the end of the third year of teaching, to 36 per cent the following year.

The proportion of fourth teachers working in schools classed as being of '*high socio-economic disadvantage*' was 24 per cent, with the remaining 76 per cent working in schools classified as '*low socio-economic disadvantage*'.<sup>84</sup>

In the Wave 6 telephone survey carried out at the end of the fourth year of teaching, two new questions were included asking secondary respondents specifically about the academy and specialist school status of their institutions. It was found that:

- three per cent of secondary respondents reported teaching in an academy, whilst 75 per cent were working in specialist schools.

Respondents working on permanent or fixed-term contracts were asked whether or not they were working in the same school as they had been in the previous July (i.e. at the end of the previous school year):

- the same proportion in both surveys, 13 per cent, reported having moved school over the relevant summer.

Further analysis revealed evidence that those respondents who had reported receiving **additional training**<sup>85</sup> were less likely to **move schools** the following year:

- amongst those third year teachers who reported having received additional training, 88 per cent were teaching in the same school, compared to 78 per cent of those who did not report having received any additional training.

However, there was no indication that teachers working in schools judged as '*in difficulties*',<sup>86</sup> or '*high in the league tables*' were more or less likely to move schools than colleagues who were not working in such schools.

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<sup>84</sup> These classifications are based on the proportion of pupils in a school who are eligible for Free School Meals. More details of these categorisations may be found in Homer *et al.* (2009b).

<sup>85</sup> That is, training or professional development opportunities received at some time over the course of the particular school year. There is detailed reporting of exactly what types of professional development teachers were afforded later in this chapter, in Section 7.6.2.

<sup>86</sup> The term '*in difficulties*' is a general term used throughout this report to refer collectively to schools reported by respondents as either: (i) '*in special measures*', '*with serious weaknesses*' or '*in challenging circumstances*' (in relation to Wave 5 or earlier findings), or (ii) '*in special measures*' or '*with a significant improvement notice*' (in relation to Wave 6 findings). The change in the definition of this term between Waves 5 and 6 was deemed necessary to be consistent with changes in Ofsted terminology, although this does create some problems of comparability.

### 7.2.3 Age ranges taught

Within the primary and secondary phases respectively, the pattern of age ranges taught by respondents was very similar across the third and fourth years of teaching. It can be seen in Table 7.1 that, for example:

- in the primary phase, 23 per cent of respondents reported teaching Year 6 in their third year of teaching, with the same corresponding percentage a year later; and
- in the secondary phase, 91 per cent of teachers reported teaching Year 11 during their third year of teaching and 89 per cent did so the following year, while over the same period the percentage of respondents reporting that they taught post-16 students increased from 54 per cent to 57 per cent.

**Table 7.1: Which year groups/age ranges have you taught over the last school year?**

Year group	Age range	Valid per cent (%) for the same sample over the...	
		... <i>third</i> year of teaching (Wave 5)	... <i>fourth</i> year of teaching (Wave 6)
<b>Primary</b>			
<b>Nursery</b>	Under 3	6	5
<b>Foundation</b>	3 to 4	7	6
<b>Reception</b>	4 to 5	21	21
<b>1</b>	5 to 6	29	27
<b>2</b>	6 to 7	26	27
<b>3</b>	7 to 8	27	25
<b>4</b>	8 to 9	27	26
<b>5</b>	9 to 10	26	23
<b>6</b>	10 to 11	23	23
<b>Secondary</b>			
<b>7</b>	11 to 12	88	83
<b>8</b>	12 to 13	90	86
<b>9</b>	13 to 14	93	90
<b>10</b>	14 to 15	94	91
<b>11</b>	15 to 16	91	89
<b>Post-16</b>	16 +	54	57

Includes all who were teaching or who had worked as a teacher at some point in the academic year 2007-2008 (number of cases, 1413). Responses to this question were unprompted and respondents could give more than one response.

## 7.2.4 Roles and responsibilities undertaken

Third and fourth year survey respondents who had taught in the 'current' academic year were asked which of a list of roles, activities or responsibilities, they had undertaken during that academic year.

Amongst teachers working in **primary** schools:

- the majority (80% of third year and 83% of fourth year teachers) had taken on the role of subject co-ordinator;
- a similar proportion (87% and 85% respectively) reported having '*taught pupils with challenging behaviour*'; and
- over half (54% of third year, and 56% of fourth year, teachers) reported having '*covered classes*' for colleagues.

There was no significant variation in the proportions of third or fourth year respondents in the primary phase who had undertaken specific roles when comparing responses between the **ITT routes** that teachers had followed. There was, however, statistically significant variation in the responses when comparing activities undertaken by **perceived school effectiveness**.<sup>87</sup> For example, as might be expected, amongst teachers working in primary schools:

- third year teachers working in schools reported as '*in difficulties*' were more likely than those working in schools *not* reported to be '*in difficulties*' to have '*taught pupils with challenging behaviour*' (96% and 85% respectively); and
- conversely, third year teachers working in schools reported as '*high in the league tables*' were less likely than those working in schools not reported to be '*high in the league tables*' to have '*taught pupils with challenging behaviour*' (81% and 91% respectively).

A statistically significant difference in teachers' **age** was found when comparing those third year teachers working in primary schools who had taken on the role of subject co-ordinator with those who had not:

- those teachers in primary schools who had assumed the role of subject co-ordinator were, on average, approximately 1½ years younger than those who had not (the mean ages were 32.4 and 34.0 years respectively).

Amongst third and fourth year teachers working in **secondary** schools:

- most respondents (87% of third year and 82% of fourth year teachers) reported that they had taken on the role of form tutor;
- over a third of respondents (36% and 46% respectively) reported that they had taken on the role of subject co-ordinator, and between a sixth and a quarter (16% and 25%) the role of head of department; and

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<sup>87</sup> The term '*perceived school effectiveness*' is used to collectively refer to respondents' views on whether or not their school is 'in difficulties' and whether or not it is 'high in the league tables'.

- the vast majority also reported that they had both '*covered classes*' for colleagues (97% of third year and 95% of fourth year teachers), and had '*taught pupils with challenging behaviour*' (93% and 91% respectively).

No significant variation was found between the proportions of third or fourth year teachers who had followed different ITT routes, regarding their likelihood of taking on any of the specific roles referred to above. However, as was the case with third year teachers in the primary phase, there were significant differences in the proportions of third year secondary teachers being involved in certain activities when comparing responses by **perceived school effectiveness**. For example:

- teachers working in secondary schools reported as '*in difficulties*' were more likely than those working in secondary schools not reported to be '*in difficulties*' to report having '*covered classes*' (97% and 93% respectively);
- forty-eight per cent of teachers in schools '*in difficulties*' reported taking on subject co-ordinator roles, compared to 34 per cent of those working in schools that had not been classified by respondents as being '*in difficulties*';
- conversely, 32 per cent of those teachers in schools '*high in the league tables*' also reported taking on subject co-ordinator roles, compared to 43 per cent of those working in schools which were not classed as being '*high in the league tables*'.

In addition to the specific roles and activities discussed above, respondents in both phases were also asked about their involvement in any other non-teaching responsibilities during the course of their third and fourth years of teaching. It was found, for example, that:

- approximately 90 per cent of respondents (during both their third and fourth years of teaching) reported '*involvement in the discussion of goals and policies within their school and / or department*';
- approximately 70 per cent were involved in '*contributing to the development and training of other teachers*'; and
- a much smaller percentage (16% during the third year, and 23% during the fourth year of teaching) reported being involved in the '*recruitment of staff*'.

There were no significant differences in the pattern of responses to reported involvement in any of these additional types of work when comparing the responses of third year teachers who had followed different ITT routes. However, there was evidence of statistically significant differences in such responses when comparing between teachers working in the primary and secondary **phases** respectively. For example:

- a higher proportion of third year teachers in secondary schools (86%), compared to those working in primary schools (71%), reported being involved in '*Curriculum development/course design*'.

In addition, third year teachers who had taken on certain additional roles and responsibilities, or specific types of work, tended to be **younger** than those who had not. For example:

- those who reported being involved in '*discussions about the goals and policies of your school / department*' were, on average, two years younger than those who had not reported such involvement (mean ages 33.4 and 35.7 years respectively); and
- conversely, those respondents who reported not being involved in any of the suggested categories of additional work were, on average, over three years older than those who reported involvement in at least one of the additional activities (mean ages 37.2 and 33.5 years respectively).

### 7.2.5 Additional hours worked

Respondents were asked about the number of weekly additional hours they worked on top of their timetabled school day:

- in their third year of teaching, the mean additional number of hours worked was 14.5 hours per week, and in the fourth year this had increased by a small amount to 15.2 hours.

There is statistically significant evidence that in both the third and fourth years of teaching:

- primary **phase** respondents reported working, on average, approximately 1.5 more additional hours per week than their secondary colleagues.<sup>88</sup>

There were also statistically significant differences in the number of additional hours worked when comparing between respondents who had or had not taken on specific roles. For example, amongst both primary and secondary phase respondents in their fourth year of teaching:

- those who had taken on the role of **subject or Key Stage co-ordinator** reported working more additional hours per week compared to those who had not taken on this role (for primary phase respondents this difference was approximately four hours; for secondary school teachers it was two hours).

In addition, amongst secondary phase respondents in their fourth year of teaching:

- those who had taken on the role of **head of department** reported working approximately two more additional hours per week than those who had not taken on this role.

### 7.3 Beginner teachers' enjoyment of teaching

As in the previous (Wave 3 and 4) telephone surveys, teachers who had taught in the 'current' academic year were asked the extent to which they agreed (or otherwise) that they enjoyed teaching, and as before, the responses were overwhelmingly positive. From Table 7.2 it can be seen, for example, that:

- over 90 per cent of respondents to both the Wave 5 and 6 surveys reported that they either 'strongly agreed' or 'tended to agree' with the statement that they enjoyed teaching; and

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<sup>88</sup> The results of additional, longitudinal analysis of data on the additional hours worked by beginner teachers during their first four years in post is presented in Chapter 8.

- the proportions that ‘strongly disagreed’ or ‘tended to disagree’ with this statement were two per cent and four per cent for the two successive surveys respectively.

**Table 7.2: ‘I enjoy working as a teacher’**

	Per cent (%)						No of cases
	Strongly agree	Tend to agree	Neither agree nor disagree	Tend to disagree	Strongly disagree	Don't know	
<b>Wave 5</b>	70	25	3	1	1	(0)	<b>1618</b>
<b>Wave 6</b>	67	25	4	2	2	0	<b>1413</b>

Includes all who were working as a teacher or who had worked as a teacher at some point during the academic year. Percentages may not add up to 100 due to rounding.

It should be noted that that these findings are not particularly surprising, some three or four years after the respondents completed their ITT, since (as we will see in Chapter 9) those beginner teachers who report lower levels of enjoyment of teaching are statistically more likely to have left the profession.

In an attempt to illuminate the key characteristics and attitudes that might affect beginner teachers’ views on their enjoyment of teaching, a logistic regression analysis was carried on the survey responses indicating whether or not the fourth year teachers reported ‘strong agreement’ with the statement ‘*I enjoy teaching*’.<sup>89</sup> In summary, the main predictors of positive ratings of enjoyment of teaching were, in descending order of effect size:

- **positive ratings of perceived effectiveness** - those who rated themselves as more effective as teachers were over two and a half times more likely than those who rated themselves less effective to ‘strongly agree’ that they enjoyed teaching;
- **positive pupil relationships** - those fourth year teachers who rated their pupil relationships more highly were over two times more likely, compared to those who rated these relationships less highly, to ‘strongly agree’ that they enjoyed teaching;
- **positive ratings of support received** - those who rated the support they received more highly were 68 per cent more likely than those who rated the support less highly to ‘strongly agree’ that they enjoyed teaching;
- **having acted as a mentor** - those teachers who reported having acted as mentors to students or NQTs were 62 per cent more likely than those who had not done so to ‘strongly agree’ that they enjoyed teaching;
- **positive head teacher relationships** - those who rated their relationship with their head teacher more highly were 28 per cent more likely than those who rated this relationship less highly to ‘strongly agree’ that they enjoyed teaching; and

<sup>89</sup> The resulting statistical model was satisfactory, explaining over a quarter of the variation in the responses. The full details of the analysis can be found in Homer *et al.* (2009b), Section 4.2.

- **number of additional hours worked** - every additional hour worked (on top of the standard timetable) made it two per cent less likely that a fourth year teacher would 'strongly agree' that they enjoyed teaching.<sup>90</sup>

### 7.3.1 Positive and negative aspects of third and fourth year teachers' experiences of teaching

A different light is cast on the factors contributing to teachers' enjoyment (or otherwise) of teaching by our analyses of the 'case study' interview and ejournal data. The factors found to be most associated with positive aspects of teachers' experiences of their third and fourth years of teaching are listed below, together with illustrative quotations from their interview or ejournal transcripts.<sup>91</sup>

- Inter-personal support from colleagues

*I have received tremendous amounts of support in my efforts to change things at my new school, from the Leadership team to departmental staff, caretakers, cleaners and my peripatetic staff. Mostly words of encouragement, but they do a lot to help me believe I'm doing the right thing.* (Female, 24-28, SCITT, secondary, Arts, October ejournal, Wave 5)

- Beginner teachers' confidence in their ability or perceptions of their effectiveness as teachers

*I got an adjusted residual of 7.3 which means that on average people taught by me got more than a grade better than if they were taught by someone else. These were amongst the very best results in the school and better than my boss... [T]o get such exceptional results was a real tonic ... it's the first real evidence I have that a lot of my ideas about how to teach are right.* (Male, 44-48, GTP, secondary, ICT, October ejournal, Wave 5)

- Good or effective relationships with pupils

*When one child comes up and says 'is this alright?' and I say 'yes', and they say 'oh fantastic I've done it, I can do it' and they've got a smile on their face, you think 'fantastic, that one person that's been struggling with that for a week or so has finally grasped it.' And also if they've anything that's really upsetting them, if they come and talk to you about it, they won't talk to anybody else but they come and talk to you and you try and help them through it and then they keep coming back to you and saying 'can I just have a chat?' That's really lovely as well because you feel they trust you enough.* (Female, 29-33, Flexible PGCE, primary, Wave 5)

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<sup>90</sup> Other variables that were included in the model but were found *not* to play a significant role were teachers' age, their gender, their ethnicity, the ITT route respondents had followed, whether they were teaching full-time or part-time, whether or not they had a mentor between Waves 4 and 6, their ratings of their relationships with other teachers, whether or not they had been involved in team-teaching, whether or not they received any additional training or professional development, whether or not they were working in a school 'high in the league tables', whether or not they were working in a school 'in difficulties', whether or not the school in which they were working was an academy, and whether or not the school was classified as being of 'high socio-economic disadvantage'.

<sup>91</sup> More detailed and holistic insights into the lives of teachers whose experiences of teaching ranged from the highly positive to the highly negative (across Waves 1-6 of the BaT research) are provided in Chapter 10.

- Having, or achieving, an improved work-life balance

*I think the workload has changed. I think its got easier because I don't have to do as much planning and with me being in Year 2 next year I think it will stay the same because I've still got the resources there from when I worked there previously and having [colleague] in Year 1 this year has been a great help.*

(Female, 30-34, Flexible PGCE, primary, Wave 6)

- Good or effective professional relationships

*I got this chap, wonderful man who works next door to me. He has worked here thirty years and he's the sort of guy when you ask him a question, he doesn't give the standard answer, he gives you the real answer, which is what you don't get at university see - they tell you how it should be and he tells you how it is.*

(Female, 44-48, BA QTS, primary, Wave 5)

- Collegiality

*I find the teamwork and the support that you get and the fact that you are never on your own very motivating. I like that a lot.* (Female, 45-49, GTP, primary, Wave 6)

- Being trusted by more senior colleagues

*I got to "be in charge" for the first time the other day. Our head was out for the day and as we have no Deputy Head I asked the head what should happen. As the next longest serving member of staff she said it was me! [It] [w]as quite nice to hear her say it - thankfully no decisions had to be made!!*

(Female, 25-29, GTP, primary, December ejournal, Wave 6)

- Gaining recognition for their work and respect as teachers

*I got compliments from other members of staff the next day about how supportive I'd been on the trip and that I'd done a good job of looking after the kids and making sure they were doing the right thing, making my presence apparent as well.*

(Male, 44-48, GTP, secondary, ICT, Wave 5)

- New challenges

*In my new role we're actually going to be doing a new creative curriculum and I'll be researching lots of different things and drama and I feel like I've got my buzz back now and I can't wait to get going on it again. I mean its still in the back of my head all of that stuff and I'm just desperate to use it all again.* (Female, 25-29, PGCE, primary, Wave 6)

- Gaining promotion

*[One of] the highs is definitely getting the Head of Year [position]. I was really pleased in that senior management obviously thought I could handle it even though I'd only been teaching for two years.* (Female, 24-28, BA QTS, secondary, geography, Wave 5)

- Participating in effective external CPD

*Actually it's quite nice because it feels like a bit of a treat, you're out of school, in a new place, everybody's interested in the same thing so that enthuses you. I think that's one of the nice things when you go on training, it re-boosts your enthusiasm.*

(Female, 45-49, PGCE, secondary, history, Wave 6)

Finally, many case study participants were positive about what they considered to be the rewards of teaching, which were associated most frequently with the achievements of pupils and with social interaction with children, though some participants also referred in this context to the financial rewards of their work:

*[K]nowing you've actually made a difference to students. Our sixth formers, we went out for a meal and at the end of the night one of my sixth formers said, 'I wouldn't have gone to university if it weren't for you'.* (Female, 25-29, SCITT, secondary, D&T, Wave 6)

*Because I love seeing the kids' faces when they 'get' something and I really enjoying just working with the children and teaching them things. It is ridiculous isn't it? It is almost like a vocation. I couldn't imagine myself doing anything else.*

(Female, 24-28, SCITT, primary, Wave 5)

*I mean I can't grumble about the pay, I'm looking at next year's pay increase and what I would be on next year if I'd stayed in the job and I'd be getting something like £36,000, because I get an allowance for being head of department, I don't think that's bad, not considering I've only been in it 5 years.* (Female, 45-49, GTP, secondary, MFL, Wave 6)

Having considered the issues that third and fourth year teachers felt positive about, we now turn to the features of their working life that case study teachers talked (or wrote) about in less positive or in negative terms. The most mentioned factors were:

- Perceptions of a lack of support from or poor relationships with colleagues

*This last term was probably one of the low points of my professional life. I had a lot of problems with my Head of Department and this has had an adverse effect on my working and private life. I was unhappy with the way she was talking to me (as if I were a troublesome, naughty pupil) and told her so. She responded to this by teaming up with the second in the dept. in an 'informal' meeting with myself and between the 2 of them told me for 45 min[ute]s. about all the things I was supposedly doing badly and about how senior members of staff were unhappy with me. As you might imagine, this had a very demoralising effect on me.* (Male, secondary, January ejournal, Wave 5)<sup>92</sup>

- High workload or poor work-life balance

*I think that the education system kind of sucks the life out of people, that's my feeling about it, I think its very difficult to get a work-life balance, just because of the nature of the job and I don't actually think that the government recognises quite how awful that is and in fact being a teacher is a great job, being in a classroom with people who want to*

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<sup>92</sup> Some of the potentially identifying characteristics of this participant (and some other participants quoted) are not included in an effort to protect their anonymity.

*learn and who are interested is fantastic, but it's all of the other stuff that takes up your time. (Female, 40-44, GTP, secondary, history, Wave 6)*

- Too much paperwork

*[I] still [have] loads of reports to write, including my tutor reports which take a good half an hour each (x 30) so you can understand that all this time is not available within the school timetable! ... I seem to be constantly assessing one year and writing reports for another year so marking is still difficult to control. (Female, secondary, February ejournal, Wave 5)*

- Poor relationships with pupils and/or poor pupil behaviour

*I think on a couple of occasions it had me thinking 'Am I just a bad teacher?' When you are used to kids doing what you tell them to do and responding and moving things on ... to find that things you planned [would] take a lesson they have barely started, and you have spent most of your time shouting at them or, you know, with 20 names on the board and you are spending all your time filling in [behaviour report] forms... (Female, 30-34, PGCE, secondary, history, Wave 6)*

- Lack of access to external support for CPD

*We're not allowed out of school at all, unless we're not missing any lessons and if the course is free, if there's a free course then its okay. (Male, 25-29, BA QTS, secondary, English, Wave 6)*

- Lack of involvement in decision making

*Whole school decisions are made just by the head and we have very little say. Its almost we give our opinion just for the sake of us having a say and it doesn't matter if we agree or disagree, whatever's been decided goes, that's how it feels. (Male, 25-29, BA QTS, secondary, English, Wave 6)*

- Perceptions of poor leadership at departmental and/or school level

*As a department, we don't get pushed a lot and it could be a lot better, that sounds awfully disloyal because I quite like my boss but there's things that could've been pushed harder and better. (Female, secondary, Wave 6)*

*I felt that sometimes the head teacher didn't understand the importance of early years but apart from that, sometimes you'd have to say things a little tactfully for him to understand where we were coming from. (Female, primary, Wave 6a)*

- Feeling that their efforts were not appreciated

*Work used to be everything really, making sure the lesson's perfect ... and buying resources out of my own money and testing the lessons on my children... Now I realise what is it for at the end of the day? It's not like I'm appreciated so it's like, why bother? (Female, primary, Wave 6)*

- Feeling that their salary was insufficient reward for the work undertaken

*I wouldn't recommend my children to become teachers. It doesn't pay enough money for the work that you've got to do. I enjoy it, it does give me a sense of satisfaction, but a lot of jobs out there do, and they pay a lot better and for less work. (Female, 24-28, SCITT, primary, Wave 5)*

- Perceptions of initiative overload

*I think one of the negative things is that ... quite a lot of the stuff that comes down in new initiatives and what have you is just irrelevant in some ways and once you get to my age it becomes very circular and I've not even been in teaching that long, but I can remember when we did it like this and I can remember when we did it like that and so on. I think the problem is they don't give anything a chance to embed and improve or for you to actually have the chance to look at it, think about it, how are you going to improve it, how are you going to refine it, it's no, let's chuck the baby out with the bath water and bring a whole new thing which can be frustrating. (Female, 45-49, PGCE, secondary, history, Wave 6)*

- Feeling unfairly 'judged' or criticised

*I failed in the first ten minutes because [the inspector] said to the deputy head, 'she's had them too long on the carpet before she sends them off to work'. When I went for my feedback they said they felt for me because the circumstances, with it being a rainy day, meant the kids turned up late and I had to manage it ... but at the end of the day it was still not satisfactory... (Female, primary, Wave 5)*

*One of the SENCO teachers I find is very critical, I don't find she gives much constructive comments or help, you write these education plans and you take them to her because she needs to have a copy of them and she'll just criticise what you've written down ... you know I've never had any training on how to do these education plans, you just get on with them and that's really annoyed me because I think, 'You know how much time I spend doing these and then you just say its wrong'. (Female, primary, Wave 5)*

- Feeling 'put upon'

*Things like, the one I had yesterday was 'Can I have your modules, modules 1-10, can I have your modules 3, 6, 9 and 7, 8, 9, 10? And I want it now [clicks fingers]'. Even though it's in the middle of a lesson which is a bit difficult, it's just... it's all the stuff you've got to do, 'can you just do this dead quick?' and you get moaned at if you don't then do the other stuff which aren't getting done, it drives you down. (Male, secondary, Wave 6)*

Some beginner teachers (23 interviewees in their third year of teaching and 17 in their fourth year) reported that they had experienced problems of stress and ill-health, which were sometimes attributed by participants to negative experiences in school relating to one or more of the above factors.

*The Monday after the doctor had said 'I'll sign you off' and I said 'no', I went in and I saw the head and I said to her 'Just so you know I'm right on the edge here of not being able to cope with this'. (Female, secondary, Wave 6)*

*Being a teacher is very, very hard work. It is not only physically straining but mentally also, when things are going well it is great. However it is possible to loose sight of why you went into teaching if you are not supported properly in schools, stress levels are extremely high and more so the demands on teachers in schools like ours.*

(Female, primary, December ejournal, Wave 5)

In the next three sections of this chapter we go on to explore in more detail three of the factors which have been shown to impact on beginner teachers' enjoyment of teaching, notably their perceptions of their effectiveness (Section 7.4), their work-based relationships (7.5) and their experiences of support and opportunities for CPD (7.6).

## 7.4 Third and fourth year teachers' perceptions of their effectiveness and strengths

### 7.4.1 Teachers' perceptions of their effectiveness as teachers

During both the Wave 5 and Wave 6 surveys, teachers 'currently' teaching or those who were intending to teach having done so in the previous year were asked to rate their effectiveness as teachers. As can be seen in Table 7.4, these ratings were consistently quite high with only a handful of respondents to either survey not rating themselves as either '*fairly effective*' or '*very effective*'. There was a small overall increase in the ratings of effectiveness over the course of the two years:

- forty-nine per cent of third year teachers, and 55 per cent of fourth year teachers rated themselves as '*very effective*'.<sup>93</sup>

**Table 7.4: How would you rate your effectiveness as a teacher?**

	Per cent (%)						No of cases
	Very effective	Fairly effective	Not very effective	Not at all effective	Prefer not to say	Don't know	
<b>Wave 5</b>	49	51	0	(0)	0	(0)	<b>1601</b>
<b>Wave 6</b>	55	44	(0)	0	(0)	(0)	<b>1393</b>

Includes all who were working as a teacher or who had worked as a teacher at some point during the academic year. Percentages may not add up to 100 due to rounding.

Additional analysis was carried out to investigate what characteristics, if any, distinguished respondents who stated (in the Wave 6 survey) that they considered themselves to be '*very effective*' teachers from those who did not do so.<sup>94</sup> The statistically significant predictors that emerged from the modelling are listed below, in descending order of effect size:

- **positive pupil relationships** - those fourth year teachers who rated their pupil relationships more highly were over three times more likely, compared to those who rated these relationships less highly, to class themselves as '*very effective*' as teachers;

<sup>93</sup> See Chapter 8 (Section 8.3) for additional longitudinal analysis of teachers' perceived effectiveness.

<sup>94</sup> The full results of the analysis are presented in Homer *et al.* (2009b), Section 4.1, where it is shown that the statistical model is satisfactory, explaining around a fifth of the variation in the responses. However, the findings here should be regarded as indicative only given the proportion of variation in the data that is not accounted for by the regression modelling.

- **being involved in team-teaching** - those teachers who reported being involved in team-teaching were 64 per cent more likely than those had not done so to rate themselves as 'very effective';
- **having acted as a mentor** - those teachers who reported having acted as mentors to students or NQTs were 63 per cent more likely than those who had not done so to rate themselves as 'very effective';
- **working in a school high in league tables** - those teachers who reported that they were working in schools '*high in the league tables*' were 40 per cent more likely than those who did not to rate themselves as 'very effective';
- **having followed a university-based PGCE route into teaching** - those teachers who had followed this type of ITT route were 39 per cent more likely than those who had followed other routes to rate themselves as 'very effective';<sup>95</sup>
- **positive head teacher relationships** - those teachers who rated their relationship with their head teacher more highly were 38 per cent more likely, compared to those who rated this relationship less highly, to rate themselves as 'very effective'; and
- **age** - an increase in age of a year implies a greater likelihood (2.5%) of a respondent rating themselves as 'very effective'. In other words, older teachers were more likely to rate themselves as 'very effective' compared to their younger colleagues.<sup>96</sup>

#### 7.4.2 Teachers' perceptions of their strengths as teachers

In the Wave 5 telephone survey, third year teachers who were 'currently' teaching or intending to teach, having done so in the previous year, were asked to state what they felt were their strengths as teachers.<sup>97</sup> The most frequently occurring (unprompted) responses given were:

- '*ability to develop productive relationships with pupils*' (given by 28% of respondents);
- '*my organisational skills*' (26%);
- '*ability to maintain discipline in the classroom*' (24%);
- '*knowledge about my teaching subject(s)*' (23%); and
- '*good inter-personal skills: e.g. patient, calm, fair*' (23%).

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<sup>95</sup> It should be recalled that this is the independent effect of this variable, having controlled for all other variables in the model. In fact, the overall differences by route in responses on this issue of perceived effectiveness are not statistically significant, with 56 per cent of those respondents who had followed university-based PGCE programmes classing themselves as '*very effective*' compared, for example, to 52 per cent of those who had followed BED programmes and 60 per cent of those who had followed the Flexible PGCE.

<sup>96</sup> Other variables that were included in the model but were found *not* to play a significant role were teachers' gender, their ethnicity, the phase (primary or secondary) in which they were teaching, the ITT route they had followed, whether or not respondents were working part- or full-time, whether or not they had a mentor between Waves 4 and 6, whether or not they reported receiving tailored CPD, their ratings of their relationships with other teachers, whether or not they were working in a school reported as '*in difficulties*', whether or not the school was an academy, and whether or not the school was classified as being of '*high socio-economic disadvantage*'.

<sup>97</sup> The Wave 6 telephone survey did not ask teachers specifically about their strengths as teachers.

There was significant variation in the pattern of reported strengths according to a respondent's **gender**, and by perceptions of their **school's effectiveness**. For example:

- female third year teachers were more likely than their male colleagues, within both the primary and secondary phases respectively, to give *'My organisational skills'* as a strength (28% of female primary teachers and 31% of female secondary teachers stated this as a strength, compared to corresponding figures of 13% and 17% of male teachers respectively);
- male third year secondary teachers were more likely than their female colleagues to give *'Knowledge about my teaching subject'* as a strength (37% of male secondary teachers gave this as a strength compared to 27% of their female colleagues); and
- respondents working in schools reported as *'in difficulties'* were more likely than those *not* working in such schools to give the *'ability to maintain discipline in the classroom'* as a strength (29% and 23% of third year teachers respectively).

## 7.5 Third and fourth year teachers' work-based relationships

### 7.5.1 Relationships with pupils

In the telephone surveys carried out at the end of the third and fourth years, all the teachers who were 'currently' teaching were asked how well they rated the relationships that they had formed with their pupils. As in earlier phases of the project, such relationships were generally perceived as very positive:

- ninety-eight per cent of respondents to both surveys stated that had *'good'* or *'very good'* relationships with their pupils; and
- only a handful of respondents to either survey described their relationships with pupils as *'poor'* or *'very poor'*.

There were significant differences between primary and secondary **phase** teachers' ratings of their relationships with pupils:

- fourth year teachers working in the primary phase tended to rate relationships with their pupils more highly than their secondary colleagues did (80% of primary, and 69% of secondary respondents, rated their relationships with pupils as *'very good'*).

While secondary teachers' ratings of their relationships with pupils were not statistically differentiated by ITT route, there were significant differences between the ratings of their relationships with pupils of those fourth year **primary** teachers who had followed different **initial teacher training routes**. Specifically:

- eighty-seven per cent of primary teachers who had followed the Flexible PGCE route rated these relationships as '*very good*', compared to 57 per cent of those from the standard university-based PGCE route.<sup>98</sup>

Respondents' **age** played a small, but significant, role in the variation in ratings of pupil relationships given by fourth year teachers:

- there is a small but significant negative correlation between the age of the respondents and their ratings of their relationships with pupils, with younger teachers tending to rate their relationships a little more positively – e.g. 70 per cent of teachers aged 25-29 rated their relationships with their pupils as '*very good*', compared to 57 per cent of teachers aged 50 or over.<sup>99</sup>

Amongst fourth year teachers, **full-time** staff were more likely to rate their relationships with pupils as '*very good*' compared to their **part-time** colleagues:

- seventy-four per cent of full-time, and 59 per cent of part-time teachers, rated these relationships as '*very good*'.

There was no significant variation in respondents' ratings of relationships with their pupils when comparing between those fourth year teachers working in schools designated as of '*high socio-economic disadvantage*' and those teaching in schools categorised as of '*low socio-economic disadvantage*'.

### 7.5.2 Relationships with pupils' parents

Teachers who were 'currently' teaching (at the end of their third and fourth years of teaching respectively) were also asked how well they rated the relationships that they had formed with their pupils' parents. Again, these were positive overall:

- approximately 90 per cent of third and fourth year teachers rated their relationships with their pupils' parents as either '*good*' or '*very good*';
- fewer than one per cent of these teachers rated their relationships with their pupils' parents as either '*poor*' or '*very poor*'; and
- the remainder (9% and 10% of third and fourth year teachers respectively) either rated the relationships as '*neither good nor poor*' or were not able to give a specific rating.

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<sup>98</sup> It should be noted that the number of primary teachers who had followed the Flexible PGCE route and who were asked this question was quite small (n=31). The corresponding figures for the other routes were: BEd, 80 per cent; BA/BSc QTS, 76 per cent; SCITT, 67 per cent; and GRTP, 72 per cent.

<sup>99</sup> Spearman's rho=-0.127, p<0.001, effect size 2 per cent; so only 2 per cent of the variation in these ratings can be attributed to respondents' age.

### 7.5.3 Relationships with leaders and other staff

Teachers who took part in the telephone surveys at the end of their third and fourth year of teaching were also asked to rate the relationships they had formed with their head teacher and other staff in their school. The overall ratings of beginner teachers' relationships with such colleagues were all generally positive, for example:

- over three quarters of third and fourth year teachers rated their relationship with their head teacher/principal as 'good' or 'very good'; and
- over 95 per cent in both surveys rated their relationship with other teaching staff as 'good' or 'very good'.

When fourth year teachers' ratings of their relationships with their head teacher/principal were analysed by the **training route** that they had followed significant differences became apparent.<sup>100</sup> For example:

- forty six per cent of respondents who had followed the BEd training route rated these relationships as 'very good' compared to 30 per cent of those from the university-based PGCE route.

In addition, there was a significant difference in the pattern of responses when rating *relationships with other staff* between teachers in the **primary** and **secondary** phases. For example:

- fifty-six per cent of primary, compared to 44 per cent of secondary, teachers rated their relationships with other colleagues as 'very good'.

## 7.6 Teachers' experiences of support and CPD during their third and fourth years of teaching

This section reports on third and fourth year teachers' experiences of support and continuing professional development. It includes analysis of those factors that teachers felt helped or hindered their professional development, their views on the support they received and professional development opportunities they were afforded, and their perceived needs in terms of further professional development.

### 7.6.1 Factors helping and hindering teachers' development

Respondents who had taught during the 'current' year (2006-2007 and 2007-2008) were asked (via an open-ended question) what had helped and what had hindered them in their development as a teacher during each of these years. The two factors mentioned most frequently across both surveys as helping their development were:

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<sup>100</sup> In most cases, analysis relating to potential ITT route differences was carried out separately within the primary and secondary phases respectively, and in this case such analyses showed no significant variation in responses by route. However, since this result might, in part, have been due to the smaller sample sizes obtained in the last round of data generation, the two phases were combined to bring greater power to the statistical analysis, and subsequently revealed statistically significant variation by ITT route.

- '*colleagues at school/college*' (mentioned by 44% of third year teachers, and 36% of those in their fourth year); and
- *additional training*' (23% and 22% respectively).

The next most commonly given factors helping development were '*gaining more teaching experience/learning from experience*' (20% and 13% at Waves 5 and 6 respectively) and '*the head teacher / principal*' (13% and 15% respectively).

On this last factor, there was a statistically significant difference in the proportion of respondents reporting the **head teacher/principal** as a help in their development when comparing between teachers working in schools classified as either '*low*' or '*high socio-economic disadvantage*':

- twenty per cent of fourth year teachers working in schools of '*high socio-economic disadvantage*', compared with 13 per cent of those working in schools of '*low socio-economic disadvantage*', reported that their **head teacher/principal** had helped in their development as a teacher,.

The most common response across both surveys in terms of hindering development was '*nothing*', given by 33 per cent of third year teachers, and by 31 per cent of fourth year teachers. However, the most common specific hindrances reported were:

- '*lack of support from colleagues*' (given by 22% and 25% of third and fourth year teachers respectively);
- '*workload*' (14% and 11% respectively); and
- '*amount of administration / paperwork*' (10% in both surveys).

### 7.6.2 The support and mentoring of third and fourth year teachers

Third and fourth year survey respondents were asked to rate the overall support that they felt they had received during the 'last' academic year. Generally, the reported levels of support were high:

- approximately two thirds of respondents in both surveys (68% of third, and 67% of fourth year, teachers) stated that the support they received was either '*good*' or '*very good*'; whilst
- eleven per cent (in both surveys) stated that the support they received was '*poor*' or '*very poor*'.

The stated levels of support tended to be higher for teachers working in schools '*high in the league tables*', compared to teachers not working in such schools. For example:

- thirty-five per cent of fourth year teachers who worked in schools '*high in the league tables*' reported that they felt that the support they received was '*very good*', compared to 26 per cent of teachers working in schools not reported as being '*high in the league tables*'.

There were also significant positive correlations between respondents' ratings of support and their ratings of **relationships** with their head teacher/principal, with other teachers and with pupils. For example:

- the correlation between fourth year teachers' ratings of support and their ratings of their relationship with their head teacher/principal had an effect size of 29 per cent.<sup>101</sup>

All third and fourth teachers in permanent or fixed-term posts were asked whether or not they had a mentor:

- twenty-three per cent of third year and 21 per cent of fourth year teachers reported having such a mentor.

Additional analyses were conducted to explore whether there were any significant differences between the experiences of respondents who reported having a **mentor** and those who did not. It was found that:

- of those fourth year teachers who had a mentor, 44 per cent rated the support they received as 'very good', compared to the corresponding proportion of 27 per cent for those not having a mentor; and
- teachers who had a mentor during their third year of teaching were more likely than those who did not to report that they 'strongly agreed' with the statement '*I enjoy teaching*': 77 per cent of respondents with a mentor 'strongly agreed' that they enjoyed teaching compared to 70 per cent of those who did not have a mentor.

### **7.6.3 Beginner teachers' perceptions of the professional development opportunities experienced**

Third year teachers who had taught during the 'current' year (2006-2007) were asked what additional training or professional development activities they had undertaken during the course of the year. The most frequently occurring responses were:

- '*training related to general teaching/learning approaches*' (given by 39% of respondents);
- '*subject specific training*' (33%); and
- '*training related to subject-specific teaching/learning approaches*' (30%).

Fourteen per cent of respondents reported receiving '*no training*' in their third year of teaching, and statistically significant differences in these responses were found relating to whether respondents were working in **primary** or **secondary** schools:

- third year teachers working in secondary schools were more likely than those teaching in primary schools to report having received some additional training or professional development opportunities during the year (89% of teachers working in secondary schools and 84% of teachers working in primary schools had had such opportunities).

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<sup>101</sup> In other words, the variation in relationships with the head teacher/principal accounts for nearly a third of the variation in ratings of support.

In the survey the following year, fourth year teachers who had taught in that 'current' year (2007-2008) were asked specifically whether or not they had received any training or professional development during the course of the year:

- eighty-four per cent of teachers reported having received some training or professional development opportunities during the course of their fourth year of teaching; whilst
- sixteen per cent reported having had no such opportunities.

In addition, fourth year teachers were also asked a series of questions about their general views on their development needs and their experiences of the professional development they had received over the course of the year. The first question asked whether or not they felt they had needed any CPD during the course of the year:

- twelve per cent of respondents 'tended to agree' or 'strongly agree' that they had not felt that they needed any CPD during the course of the year; whilst
- seventy-nine per cent of respondents 'strongly disagreed' or 'tended to disagree' with this statement, thus indicating that they felt they had needed some form of CPD.

Amongst those fourth year teachers who *had* received CPD during their fourth year of teaching Table 7.5 shows that:

- more than two thirds (70%) either 'tended to agree', or 'strongly agreed' that their CPD had been tailored to meet their needs, with one sixth (16%) of respondents either 'tending to disagree' or 'strongly disagreeing' with this statement;
- more than three quarters (78%) either 'tended to agree', or 'strongly agreed' that this CPD had generally been of high quality, with approximately one eighth (12%) of respondents either 'tending to disagree' or 'strongly disagreeing' with this statement;
- a strong majority (78%) either 'tended to agree', or 'strongly agreed' that this CPD had helped them to develop as teachers, with a tenth (10%) of respondents either 'tending to disagree' or 'strongly disagreeing' with this statement; and
- four fifths (80%) either 'tended to agree', or 'strongly agreed' that they had found aspects of CPD provision practically applicable, with ten per cent of respondents either 'tending to disagree' or 'strongly disagreeing' that this was the case.

**Table 7.5: The CPD I have experienced since September 2007...**

	Per cent (%)					
	Strongly agree	Tend to agree	Neither agree nor disagree	Tend to disagree	Strongly disagree	Don't know
...has been tailored to meet my needs	29	41	13	11	5	(0)
...has generally been of a high quality	30	48	11	8	4	(0)
...has helped me to develop as a teacher	35	43	10	7	3	(0)
...I have been able to put into practice	36	44	9	7	3	(0)

Includes all who were working as a teacher or those who intended to work as a teacher in the future (having done so in the academic year 2007-2008) and who had received CPD in the academic year 2007-2008. Number of cases=1,164. Percentages may not add up to 100 due to rounding.

Case study participants provided some indications of what it was about the better CPD they experienced that made it, in their view, 'high quality', with four main themes prominent in their accounts.

First, participants valued CPD that offered specific skills training with clearly identifiable applications in the classroom:

*I went on one for Politics for the A level and that was largely a sort of understanding how they mark the papers and it was run by one of the chief examiners for a paper and a group leader/moderator who has written quite a few books and things. That was really good, a really good course. (Female, 34-38, PGCE, secondary, history, Wave 5)*

*I managed to go on a swimming course this year which was really useful. I was really pleased because I have been taking children swimming without any training so that was really helpful, especially the resources and things that we got at the end. (Female, 45-49, GTP, primary, Wave 6)*

Secondly, some beginning teachers spoke of CPD that enabled them to reflect productively on their own practice:

*I would probably say the training for the SCITT mentor: its been quite interesting actually breaking things down and watching videos of SCITT trainees and having to assess their development and things like that and their lessons, so that's been quite interesting because I'm sure if I look back I've had lessons exactly the same so actually making me think about the past and being reflective of my own teaching has been quite interesting. It's been quite good. (Female, 30-34, Flexible PGCE, primary, Wave 6)*

Thirdly, some participants were appreciative of CPD that had offered opportunities for them to work with and learn from practitioners based in other schools and institutions:

*One of my performance management objectives, which I came up with, was to actually spend some time with other Heads of Music in the city. So I've been spending some time with them, once actually at another school. I'm talking to the Head of Music there and she's been really supportive, both kind of emotionally and in terms of developing how I actually manage my department and deal with things.*

(Female, 24-28, SCITT, secondary, Art, Wave 5)

Finally, favourable judgements of CPD by participants were sometimes related to the personal qualities of those facilitating the CPD or to the quality of the materials which were made available as part of the CPD opportunity.

*I went on a course about starting to teach A2 which was a fantastic experience, a real confidence boost and very inspirational. It was given by [X], the chief examiner for the exam board that we use, he was an excellent speaker.*

(Female, 39-43, GTP, secondary, history, Wave 5 ejournal)

*[The CPD presenter] gave out a lot of handouts to us as well which were very useful ... Towards the end of the term when the students were going away on their study leave, I actually photocopied some of the notes which I'd got from the meeting for the students, it was very useful.* (Female, 39-43, GTP, secondary, history, Wave 5 ejournal)

#### **7.6.4 The specific foci of CPD activities**

Fourth year teacher survey respondents who had received CPD over the course of the 'current' school year (2007-2008) were also asked about the specific nature of the CPD that they undertaken. In particular, they were asked whether or not they had received CPD relating to a number of issues which both previous waves of the *BaT* study and other research had suggested were important to recently qualified teachers' experience of teaching and development as teachers. On these questions:

- fifty-seven per cent had received '*CPD on behaviour management*';
- fifty-four per cent had received '*CPD relating to your career development*';
- fifty-three per cent had received '*CPD involving critical reflection on professional practice*';
- a relatively low 17 per cent had received '*CPD on time and workload management*'; and
- sixteen per cent reported receiving CPD on '*none of these*' topics.

There were significant differences between the proportions of teachers from **primary** and **secondary** schools who reported undertaking certain types of CPD. Notably:

- sixty-six per cent of secondary teachers, compared to 47 per cent of primary teachers, reported undertaking '*CPD on behaviour management*'; and
- fewer secondary respondents (11%) than primary respondents (20%) reported undertaking '*none of these*' categories of CPD.

Third and fourth year survey participants who had taught in the 'current year' (2006-2007 and 2007-2008 respectively) were also asked whether or not they had been involved in specific collaborative professional development activities over the course of the year. Only a very small minority (1% of third year teachers, and 2% of fourth year teachers) reported not being involved in any of the listed collaborative activities. The most frequently reported activities were:

- '*sharing of teaching resources*' (mentioned by 94% of third year, and exactly the same percentage of fourth year, teachers );
- '*joint CPD, INSET, or staff exchanges with colleagues from other departments/key stages/year groups*' (94%, and 80% respectively);
- '*joint CPD, INSET, or staff exchanges with colleagues from other schools*' (73%, and 61% respectively); and
- '*team teaching*' (60%, and 59% respectively).

All third and fourth year teachers planning to teach at the beginning of 'next term' (i.e. 2007-2008 and 2008-2009 respectively) were also asked what areas of additional training or professional development they felt they would benefit from. The most common (unprompted) survey responses across both years were:

- '*staff supervision/management skills*' (given by 25% of third year, and 24% of fourth year, teachers respectively);
- '*knowledge about my teaching subject(s)*' (16% and 10% respectively);
- '*knowledge of other teaching subjects*' (12%, 8%); and,
- '*knowledge / understanding of the National curriculum*' (9%, 14%).

We close this chapter by providing some brief insights, gained via the analyses of 'case study' (interview and ejournal) data, into the characteristics of third and fourth year teachers and (first) into whether - and the extent to which - the participants saw themselves as teachers and identified with teachers.

## 7.7 Teacher identity and characteristics of third and fourth year teachers

### 7.7.1 Teacher Identity

In the Wave 6 case study interviews, participants were asked, 'How big a part of you is being a teacher?' The question was aimed at generating insights into teachers' self perceptions of their identity and specifically the extent to which they considered themselves to be teachers. Forty-four of the 49 interviewees in Wave 6 gave substantive responses to this question and there was a good deal of variation in the way teachers chose to both interpret and respond to the question.

Nine case study participants in Wave 6 interpreted the question in terms of workload and work-life balance. The following are illustrative of this perspective:

*Goodness me, quite a big part of me, I would say about 75 per cent of my life is taken up by teaching. (Female, 30-34, Flexible PGCE, primary, Wave 6)*

*I think it does dominate your life when you first come into teaching, it overtakes your life with all the preparation and planning and worry in the first couple of years of teaching. It doesn't dominate my life anymore.... I think that side has an impact on your home life and what you can do and restricts you and kind of hangs over you a little bit. (Female, 30-34, PGCE, primary, Wave 6)*

In contrast, eight participants spoke of being a teacher in terms of vocation and as a way of life.

*A very big part I'd say. Its something I've always wanted to do, it's always been a big part of me. (Male, 40-44, GTP, secondary, Wave 6)*

*I think being a teacher comes before anything else [laughs], definitely. What is it they say, you live to work or work to live; I do the one that you shouldn't be doing! (Female, 30-34, BEd, primary, Wave 6)*

Related to this, eight participants seemed in their respective interviews to suggest that their sense of self was based fundamentally on being a teacher. In other words, these teachers indicated that they could not separate their personal identity from their professional identity – being a teacher was such an intrinsic part of them.

*I don't know, I think I've always been a teacher from being really little, and I've got a little brother and he was always taught by me, sitting at desks and forced to write and stuff. (Female, 30-34, BA QTS, primary, Wave 6)*

*I am a teacher. I almost find it patronising when I got my teaching degree and was told 'now you're a teacher'. I am a teacher ... it means that its in you, that's its inside you, its part of who you are, its what you do and you can't help it... My parents are teachers, I fought against it, that's why I've done quite a few other things previously with the main objective of not becoming a teacher and then eventually I just realised that what I did I was teaching anyway, bar tender, working in a shop, I ended up teaching people. I am a teacher. (Male, 30-34, PGCE, secondary, Wave 6)*

A particularly interesting example of this attitude was shown by a teacher for whom the fourth year in teaching had been particularly disillusioning. In the interview at the end of this school year, the interviewee implies that the attitude in which personal identity is subsumed into teaching identity might have been encouraged or perhaps even required by his school.

*I think it's the kind of job where [in] year one, two and three I was a teacher inside of school and outside of school. This year just coming to an end I was so disillusioned for me, [I] didn't enjoy my job inside of school, [but] outside of school [I was] a completely normal person, which you can't be in the way that my last school wanted you to be. They wanted you to be a teacher in and out of school and I was happy to do that for three years but when you become disillusioned you think 'what's the point?'*  
(Male, 24-28, SCITT, secondary, Wave 6)

Seven participants indicated that, in their opinion, being a teacher had in fact affected their personality and/or behaviour:

*I'm very picky now with everybody else... It makes you want to lead because you're used to working in front of groups, you're confident, it makes you more of a planner; you plan everything!* (Male, 24-28, BA QTS, secondary, Wave 6)

*I think that to be a teacher, which I am, involves some remodelling of my personality and some reassessment of the way I am, really because of the effect my personality can have on the kids if I'm not careful, if I let my natural style flow.*  
(Male, 50 or over, GTP, secondary, Wave 6)

*I think it's a different job to having a [different] job because you're conscious that even when you're not in school you are still a teacher. I'm conscious that if I just walk down to my local supermarket I may bump into pupils and parents so I make sure I'm not in my daggiest clothes... When I first started I was in a beer garden, it was in the summer and I'd got my family with me and I actually smoked at that time and I was stood in the corner and had a cigarette, and when I got back to school one of the kids said 'I saw you in the pub, I saw you with that cigarette' and I just said 'well as far as I know it's not illegal' but I stopped smoking after that.* (Female, 50 or over, SCITT, secondary, Wave 6)

A number of participants (12) seemed to interpret the 'teacher' as external to them and relating to others' expectations of what teachers should be like (stereotypes). Some suggested that, unlike the teachers referred to in the previous paragraph, they were trying to ensure that being a teacher did not change their personality, while others indicated that, regardless of whether or not they behaved *like* a teacher, they did not identify themselves as or *with* teachers:

*I wouldn't like to be described as [X] the teacher ... I don't like the idea of being identified by my job. I think that would be regardless of what my job was because it's actually, at the end of the day, it's what you do not who you are.*  
(Female, 24-28, PGCE primary, Wave 6)

Finally, for some teachers, the identity of being a teacher seems to be more extraneous and therefore separable from the individual identity of the person. Eleven of those interviewed fell into this category, of those for whom 'teacher' appeared to be only one among a number of roles or identities that they adopted. This seemed to be particularly the case for teachers who were also mothers:

*I suppose [I am] half and half, teacher and mum. Sometimes they seem to cross over a bit. (Female, 50 or over, PGCE, secondary, Wave 6)*

*It's a job, that's what I see it as; it's not a calling as some people think. That's fine, everybody's different but [to me] it's a job, it pays the bills, it's good holidays. I love working with kids but it's a job at the end of the day. (Male, 24-28, BA QTS, primary, Wave 6)*

Further insights into the characteristics of our case study teachers are reported in Section 7.7.2 below.

### **7.7.2 Characteristics of third and fourth year teachers**

Following a holistic analysis of their Wave 5 and 6 interview transcripts, each participant was classified, where there was sufficient evidence to make such a judgment, into a variant of each one of six different 'teacher type' categories. Initial versions of the categories were developed following an inductive or grounded analysis of the transcripts, and these were then revised following inter-coder reliability exercises at both Wave 5 and Wave 6. The six categories, together with definitions of the different 'teacher types', are given below in Box 7.1, and the results of the coding are summarised in Table 7.6.<sup>102</sup> (Note that refinement of the categories between the two waves makes comparisons between waves possible only for some of the teacher types.)

It is apparent from Table 7.6 that the majority of teachers in both their third and fourth years since completing their ITT:

- expressed aspirations for career advancement, with only a minority wishing to remain as classroom teachers;
- demonstrated a positive attitude towards change in their professional lives;
- thought and / or acted as team players; and
- displayed a pragmatic attitude in relation to their work.

The balance between those who are more inclined to refer to the intrinsic rewards of teaching and those who spoke more about the financial and other extrinsic rewards was closer, and it should be noted that in each wave, a large number of teachers were unclassifiable in this category mostly because they referred to both types of reward. Finally, Wave 6 data suggest that, by the time of their fourth year of teaching, over half of the teachers in our case study sample displayed a proactive approach to their CPD, while approximately one in five indicated that they had a more reactive approach towards opportunities for their own continuing professional development.

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<sup>102</sup> The inter-coder reliability exercise produced 80 per cent agreement over the assignment of sample participants to the 'teacher types' categories at Wave 5, and 84 per cent agreement at Wave 6. For both Wave 5 and Wave 6 coding, the final assignment of each of the sample participants to a particular category was undertaken following discussion between the different coders, after which one of the members of the research team coded the remaining transcripts.

Frequency changes between waves should be treated with some circumspection since, for example, these could have been influenced by attrition from the sample and/or by slightly differing emphases in interview scripts at each wave. It is, however, interesting to note the increased proportion of respondents who were classified as showing idealist viewpoints and tendencies between their third and fourth years since completing their ITT.

## Box 7.1: Teacher type - definitions

### Teacher career type

**Classroom teacher** - career ambitions as expressed during the interview (or in the ejournal communications) are mainly to be a classroom teacher without substantial additional leadership / administrative non-teaching responsibilities for the foreseeable future.

**Other / additional aspirations within teaching.** Career aspirations (either immediate or future) expressed at interview are mainly other than (or in addition to) being a classroom teacher, and can include working as a teacher abroad, working outside the mainstream teaching profession or in a role of responsibility within a school.

**Other / additional aspirations outside teaching.** Career aspirations (either immediate or future) expressed at interview are mainly other than to work in education. The participant may or may not suggest a wish to leave teaching in the near future.

### Teacher change type

**Negative attitude to change.** Comments in interview suggest that participant appears content to repeat previous, accepted practice or does not anticipate or wish to see change at a school or professional level.

**Positive personal attitude to change.** Participant expresses wishes or intentions to change their practice and evidence of carrying out that change in connection with their own practice.

**Change agent.** Participant's comments suggest they have effected or sought to effect change in the practice of others.

### Solo or team player

**Solo.** Comments in interview show a tendency to express a view of their practice without substantial reference to other adults. May show evidence of lack of teamwork and/or preference for working alone.

**Team player.** Comments in interview tend to stress co-operation, sharing of practice, or of resources and the giving and receiving of support either on an individual or group basis.

### Intrinsic /extrinsic rewards

**Intrinsic.** Comments in interview suggest that for the participant, intrinsic rewards (e.g. good relationships, taking pleasure in seeing pupils achieve) associated with teaching are of greater personal significance than extrinsic rewards (e.g. financial, favourable holidays).

**Extrinsic.** Comments in interview suggest that for the participant the extrinsic rewards associated with teaching are of greater personal significance than intrinsic rewards. Participants may have a prominent tendency to comment on pay and promotion issues, workload and work-life issues.

### Idealism / pragmatism

**Idealism.** Comments in interview suggest that the participant's work as a teacher is informed by beliefs about what constitutes 'good teaching'. Participants may speak about doing what they believe to be right whatever others may be doing.

**Pragmatism.** Comments in interview suggest the participant's work as a teacher is *not* informed by beliefs about what constitutes 'good teaching'. There is evidence that the participant may be more inclined to make choices as a teacher conditioned for them by 'what seems to work' rather than what they perceive to be 'right'.

### Proactive / reactive professional learning

**Proactive.** Comments in interview suggest evidence of the participant initiating and directing their professional learning.

**Reactive.** Comments in interview suggest participant allows the agenda of their professional development to be set by others.

**Table 7.6: Teacher type categorisations at Waves 5 and 6**

	<b>Wave 5</b> (56 <small>103</small> )	<b>Wave 6</b> (49 <small>103</small> )
<b>Career type</b>		
Classroom teacher	7	8
Other aspirations within teaching	31	31
Other aspirations outside teaching		8
<b>Change type</b>		
Negative attitude	3	3
Positive attitude	30	22
Change agent		12
<b>Solo or team player</b>		
Solo	5	5
Team player	45	35
<b>Intrinsic/extrinsic rewards</b>		
Intrinsic	11	19
Extrinsic	16	16
<b>Idealism/pragmatism</b>		
Idealism	6	15
Pragmatism	33	21
<b>Proactive/reactive CPD</b>		
Proactive	N/A	26
Reactive	N/A	10

## 7.8 Conclusion

In this chapter we have reported findings on a number of aspects of third and fourth year teachers' experiences of teaching, support and continuing professional development. We return to some of these issues in the next chapter, Chapter 8, where on a number of important questions, such as beginner teachers' enjoyment of teaching and their perceived effectiveness, we examine the extent to which their experiences and perceptions have changed over time, examining the entire period from the beginning of participants' ITT to the end of their fourth year in post.

<sup>103</sup> Not all participants could be categorised into each type; hence the totals for all types are not equal to the number of participants. Some of the Wave 5 categories (notably under 'Career type' and 'Change type') were refined at Wave 6, while 'CPD type' only emerged from the Wave 6 analysis.

## 8 Change in beginner teachers' experiences: a longitudinal comparison

### Key Findings

- In each year between their first and fourth year of teaching, a minimum of 92% of survey respondents 'strongly agreed' or 'tended to agree' with the statement '*I enjoy working as a teacher*', though the overall agreement levels of those who remained in teaching throughout this period showed a small but statistically significant decrease.
  - Those respondents working in primary schools, as a group, consistently rated their enjoyment of teaching slightly more highly than those working in secondary schools.
- Survey respondents' overall ratings of their effectiveness were consistently high and showed a small but significant increase between the second and fourth years of teaching.
- '*Colleagues at school/college*' were consistently mentioned (without prompting) by the highest proportions of survey respondents, between the second and fourth year after completing their ITT, as a factor in helping them in their development as teachers.
  - The percentage of respondents mentioning '*additional training*' as a factor helping their development as a teacher more than doubled between the end of the second and third years of teaching (from 10% to 23%).
- Beginner teachers' ratings of their relationships with teacher colleagues showed a slight increase between their first and second years after completing their ITT, followed by a slight decline in the third and fourth years of teaching.
- Beginner teachers' overall ratings of the support they received declined between the first and fourth years of teaching.
  - At each Wave of the telephone survey, older teachers consistently tended to rate the support they felt they received less highly than their younger colleagues.
- The proportion of respondents mentioning a '*lack of support from colleagues*' as a hindrance to their development as teachers increased from 18% in their second year of teaching to 22% in their third and fourth years.
  - Whilst '*workload*' remained the second most frequently mentioned hindrance, the proportion of respondents citing this decreased between the second and fourth years in post (from 15% to 11%).
- There was a significant decline in the reported number of additional hours worked over the course of the first four years of teaching. By the fourth year of teaching survey respondents reported working an average of approximately 15 extra hours per week.
- Increasing and significant numbers of beginner teachers were advancing beyond classroom teacher positions to take on additional roles and responsibilities within their schools. For example:
  - the proportion of primary teachers who had become subject co-ordinators increased from under a fifth (18%) in their first year of teaching to over four-fifths in their fourth year; and
  - the proportion of secondary school teachers who had become heads of department increased from 4% in their first year to around a quarter in their fourth.

## 8.1 Introduction

This chapter reports on the extent to which change occurred in relation to key aspects of beginner teachers' perceptions and experiences between their ITT and the end of their fourth year in teaching. The issues addressed are those which earlier phases of the *Becoming a Teacher* research, together with other studies<sup>104</sup>, tell us are important features of the experiences of early career phase teachers. We thus present findings on:

- beginner teachers' ratings of their enjoyment of teaching (Section 8.2);
- their perceptions of their effectiveness as teachers (8.3);
- factors that have helped and hindered their professional development (8.4);
- their ratings of the support they were given (8.5);
- their ratings of the quality of their work-based relationships (8.6);
- the number of additional hours beginner teachers devoted to teaching outside of the normal teaching week (8.7);
- the progress of their career development (8.8); and
- the experiences of participants who worked as supply teachers (8.9).

In addition to reporting the extent to which change over time occurred at an aggregate level (across all participants) we also identify whether, and the extent to which, variation occurred, over time, between the reported perceptions and experiences of beginner teachers who had followed different ITT routes and who differed in other ways (e.g. by the phase they were teaching in, or by their age, gender and ethnicity).

The findings presented in this chapter are based predominantly on the analyses of responses to telephone survey questions that were repeated at different 'waves' of the data generation period.<sup>105</sup> The main analytic method employed was that of repeated measure analysis using General Linear Models (GLM). This is a form of analysis of variance appropriate when there are multiple (i.e. repeated) measures on each subject (participant). The sample of respondents used for these analyses was made up of all teachers who remained in the *BaT* study and who were still teaching four years on from the completion of their ITT (approximately 1,400 teachers).<sup>106</sup>

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<sup>104</sup> A review of previous studies in this area is provided in Ashby *et al.* (2008).

<sup>105</sup> It should be noted that not all questions were included in the survey at each phase of the project. The precise period covered is made clear at the beginning of each separate section.

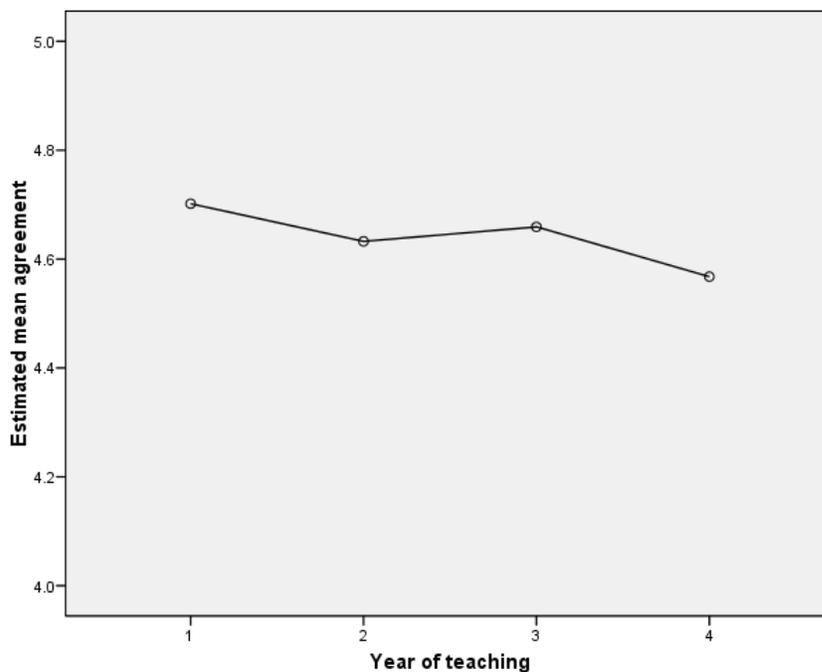
<sup>106</sup> The exact number of respondents in each separate analysis is stated in the relevant section below. Further details regarding the methods of data analysis employed in this chapter (and other chapters) are provided in Chapter 2 (Research Design). Since the findings presented in this chapter are not presented in any of our previous/interim *Becoming a Teacher* reports or in the technical reports (Homer *et al.*, 2009a and 2009b) which accompany this final report, more details of the statistical analyses are provided in this chapter than have been provided in previous chapters.

## 8.2 Beginner teachers' ratings of their enjoyment of teaching

In each of the first four years following completion of initial teacher training (i.e. Waves 3-6 of the research), respondents who were teaching, or had taught during the relevant school year, were asked to indicate the extent to which they agreed with the statement that *'I enjoy working as a teacher'*. Responses were on a five point scale from 1='strongly disagree' through to 5='strongly agree'. In all four years that this question was asked, the vast majority of teachers either 'agreed' or 'strongly agreed' that they enjoyed teaching. For example, 92 per cent of respondents in Wave 6 either 'tended to agree' or 'strongly agreed' that they enjoyed working as teachers. Nevertheless, analysis modelling the variation in these responses (n=1,388), shows a statistically significant (if small) change over time. That is:

- the overall degree of agreement with the statement *'I enjoy working as a teacher'* showed a small but significant decrease over the course of the first to fourth years of teaching (within-subjects effect,  $F(3,4161)=13.62$ ,  $p<0.001$ ), effect size 1%).<sup>107</sup> This change is shown graphically in Figure 8.1. In percentage terms, this change is largely explained by the decrease in the proportion of teachers who 'strongly agreed' that they enjoyed working as a teacher from 78 per cent at the end of the first year of teaching to 68 per cent by the end of their fourth year in post.

Figure 8.1: Mean degree of agreement of enjoying working as a teacher



<sup>107</sup> The effect sizes quoted here and elsewhere in this chapter are partial eta-squared values as produced by SPSS.

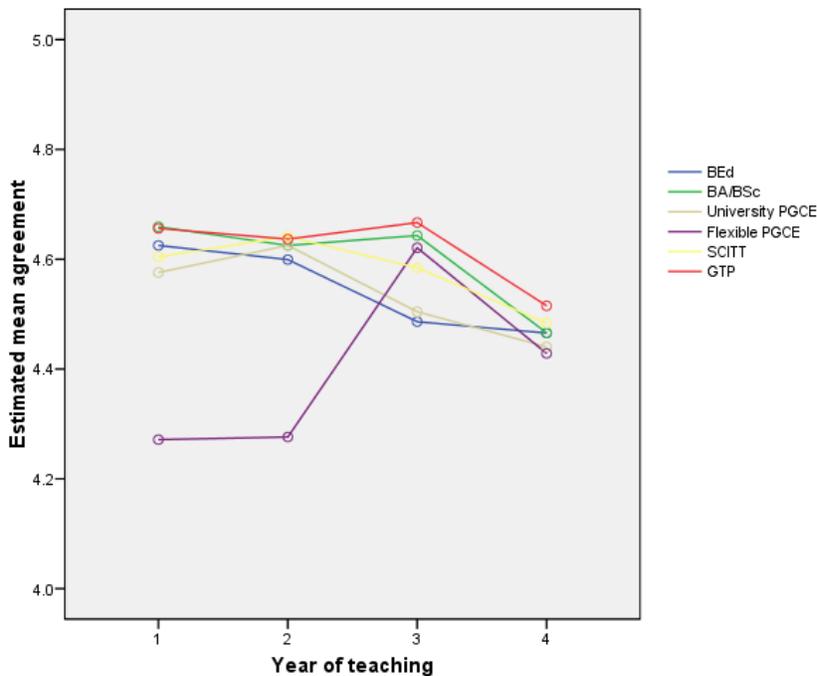
Several variables, which we hypothesised were potential predictors of variation in respondents' reported enjoyment of teaching over time, were added to the model to seek to establish whether or not this was the case. These variables were: the initial teacher training route that respondents had followed; the phase (primary or secondary) that respondents were working in; and respondents' age, gender and ethnicity.<sup>108</sup>

With regard to the initial teacher training route, it was found that:

- the **ITT route** that respondents had followed was found to play a significant role in the variation in respondents' ratings of enjoyment of teaching over time (within-subjects effect,  $F(15,3723)=1.84$ ,  $p=0.025$ , effect size less than 1%; between-subjects effect,  $F(5,1241)=2.23$ ,  $p=0.049$ , effect size 1%).

Figure 8.2 shows how the degree of agreement with the statement about enjoying teaching changed differentially over time for those who had followed different ITT routes. It appears that there was an overall narrowing of the 'route' difference over time. In particular, those respondents who had followed Flexible PGCE programmes, who in Wave 3 (at the end of their first year of teaching) were less likely than those who followed other ITT routes to give higher ratings of their enjoyment of teaching, tended to come into line with their colleagues who had followed other routes over time.

**Figure 8.2: Mean degree of agreement of enjoying working as a teacher (by ITT route)**

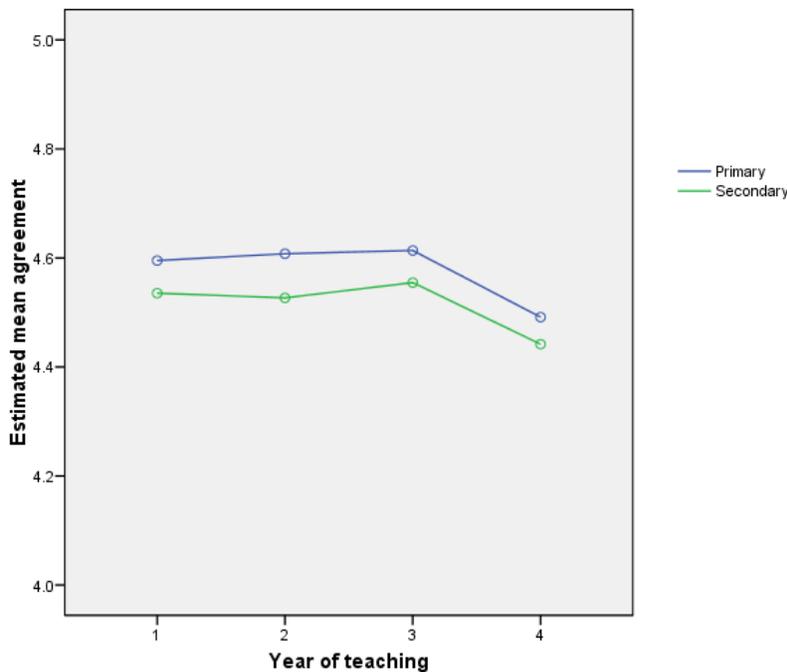


<sup>108</sup> In all of the substantial repeated analysis/GLM models reported in this chapter, a 'baseline' analysis of the responses is reported first (employing no predictors), and this is then followed by a more complex analysis that involves adding to the model the same 'standard' set of variables – ITT route, phase, age, gender and ethnicity.

Other statistically significant effects were observed, with beginner teachers' ratings of their enjoyment of teaching varying according to the **phase** they were working in, their **ethnicity** and their **age**. Hence:

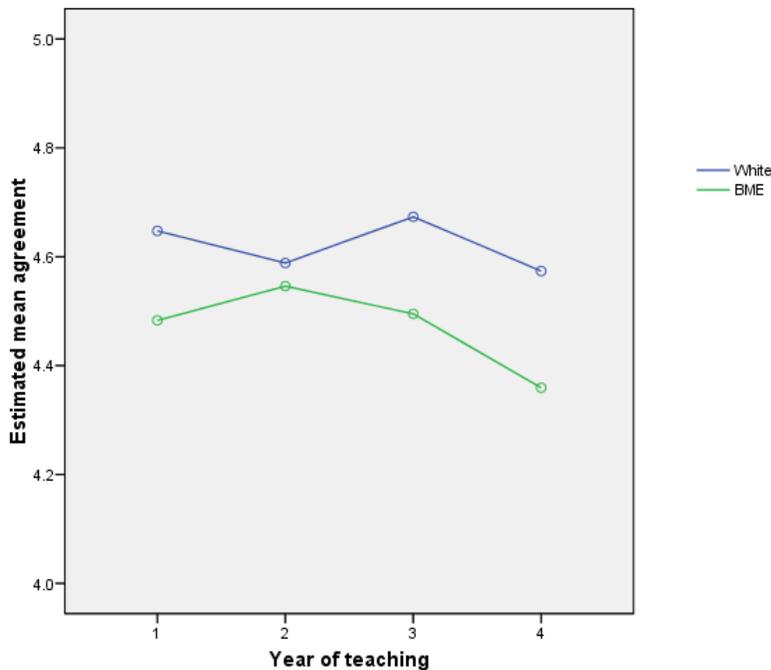
- those respondents teaching in **primary** schools consistently rated their enjoyment of teaching slightly more highly than their **secondary** colleagues (between-subjects effect,  $F(1,1241)=3.67$ ,  $p=0.056$ , effect size less than 1%), as shown in Figure 8.3;
- **black and ethnic minority** (BME) teachers consistently rated their enjoyment of teaching less highly than their **(white) majority ethnic group** colleagues (between-subjects effect,  $F(1,1241)=5.69$ ,  $p=0.017$ , effect size less than 1%), as shown in Figure 8.4; and
- **older** respondents tended to rate their enjoyment of teaching less highly than **younger** colleagues throughout the four year period (between-subjects effect,  $F(1,1241)=3.91$ ,  $p=0.048$ , effect size less than 1%).<sup>109</sup>

**Figure 8.3: Mean degree of agreement of enjoying working as a teacher (by phase)**



<sup>109</sup> Unfortunately, using GLM methods it is not possible graphically (or otherwise) to easily illustrate the effect of a covariate such as age for a model involving other explanatory variables.

**Figure 8.4: Mean degree of agreement of enjoying working as a teacher (by ethnicity)**



Having reported findings on change in beginner teachers' enjoyment of teaching, we now discuss the changes in beginner teachers' perceptions of their effectiveness as teachers.

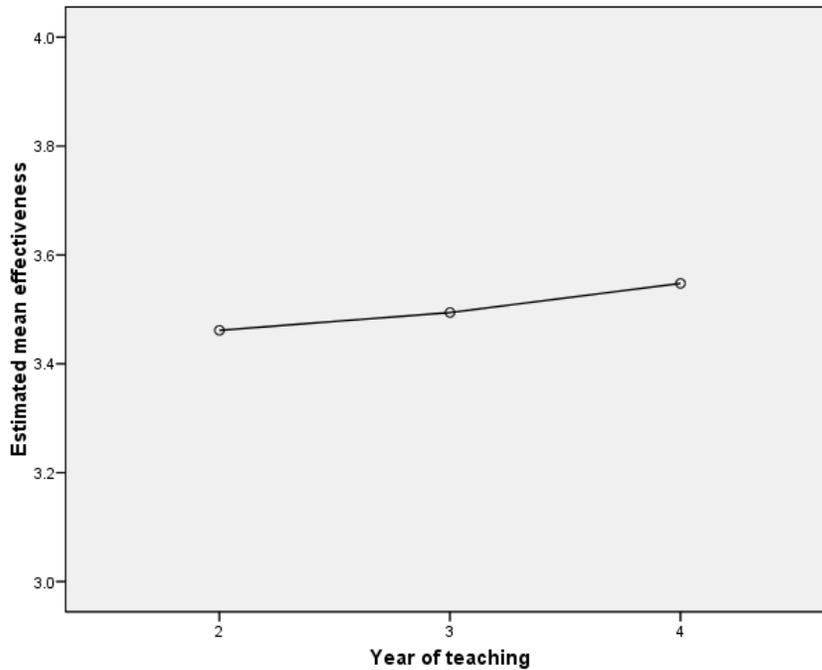
### 8.3 Beginner teachers' ratings of their effectiveness as teachers

Over the course of Waves 4 to 6 of the *BaT* study (i.e. between beginner teachers' second and fourth years of teaching after completing ITT), all respondents who were teaching or had taught during the relevant school year were asked to rate their own effectiveness as teachers on a four point scale from 1= '*not at all effective*' through to 4= '*very effective*'. Across the three years that this question was asked, the vast majority of teachers considered themselves either '*fairly effective*' or '*very effective*'. For example, in Wave 4, 100 per cent<sup>110</sup> and in Wave 6, 99 per cent of respondents regarded themselves as either '*very*' or '*fairly*' effective teachers. Nevertheless, analysis modelling the variation in these responses (n=1,380), found that there was a statistically significant change over time. That is:

- overall ratings of **effectiveness** showed a small but significant increase between the second and fourth years of teaching, as shown in Figure 8.5 (within-subjects effect,  $F(2,2758)=17.86$ ,  $p<0.001$ ), effect size 1%). This change can largely be explained by an increase in the proportion of respondents rating themselves as '*very effective*', from 46 per cent in Wave 4 to 55 per cent at Wave 6.

<sup>110</sup> The exact figure (to one decimal place) was 99.8 per cent. There were 3 teachers out of 1,397 who at Wave 4 rated themselves as '*not at all effective*' (none rated themselves '*not very effective*').

**Figure 8.5: Mean ratings of effectiveness as a teacher**



These findings are supported by the analysis of a Wave 5 survey question which asked respondents (who were completing their third year in teaching) to state whether they felt they were more or less effective than they were one year earlier. The aggregate responses are shown in Table 8.1, which shows that:

- twenty-nine per cent of respondents felt that at the end of their third year of teaching they were '*a lot more effective*' as teachers than they had been at the end of their second year;
- the majority of respondents (56%) felt that they were '*a bit more effective*' in their third year than in their second year of teaching; while
- a small proportion (2%) thought that their effectiveness as a teacher had declined over this period.

**Table 8.1: How would you rate your effectiveness as a teacher compared to this time last year?**

	Frequencies	Valid per cent (%)
A lot more effective	465	29
A bit more effective	888	55
As effective	209	13
A bit less effective	27	2
A lot less effective	5	(0)
Not working as a teacher this time last year	4	(0)
Don't know	3	(0)
<b>Total</b>	<b>1601</b>	

Includes all who were working as a teacher or those who intended to work as a teacher in the future (having done so in the academic year 2006-2007 - i.e. from the Wave 5 survey, carried out towards the end of third year of teaching). Percentages do not add up to 100 due to rounding.

When the standard predictors (ITT route, phase, age, gender and ethnicity) were added to the GLM model discussed above, in order to test whether they were playing a role in the variation of ratings of effectiveness over time, only respondents' **age** was found to be (borderline) significant:

- there was evidence that older teachers tended to rate themselves a little less favourably in terms of their effectiveness in the early stage of their career but that by the fourth year in teaching they were rating themselves as highly, if not more highly, than their younger colleagues (within-subjects effect,  $F(2,2466)=2.70$ ,  $p=0.068$ , effect size less than 1%).

Having discussed change in beginner teachers' perceptions of their effectiveness, we now examine the extent to which key considerations which were said to help or hinder their development as teachers may also have been subject to change.

## 8.4 Factors helping and hindering teacher participants' development

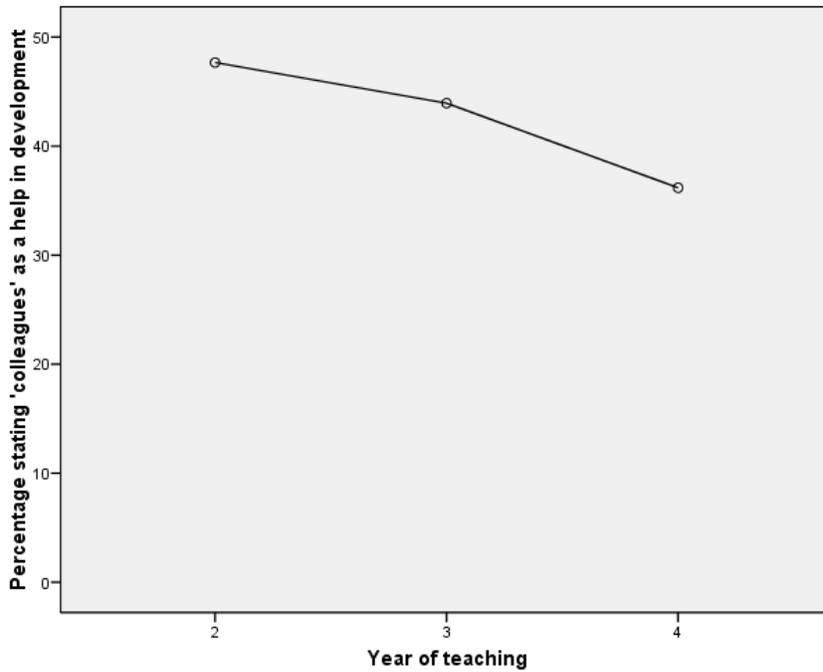
### 8.4.1 Factors helping teachers' development

Survey respondents in their second, third and fourth years of teaching were asked what had helped them in their development as a teacher during the course of the year ( $n=1,393$ ).<sup>111</sup> The factor consistently mentioned most frequently across all three periods was '*colleagues at school / college*', though Figure 8.6 shows that the percentage of respondents giving this (unprompted) response declined a little over the course of the period in question (from 48% to 36%).<sup>112</sup>

<sup>111</sup> As the responses to this and similar questions are dichotomous (Yes/No), it is not appropriate to carry out a GLM repeated measure analysis. It is only possible to report descriptive results here.

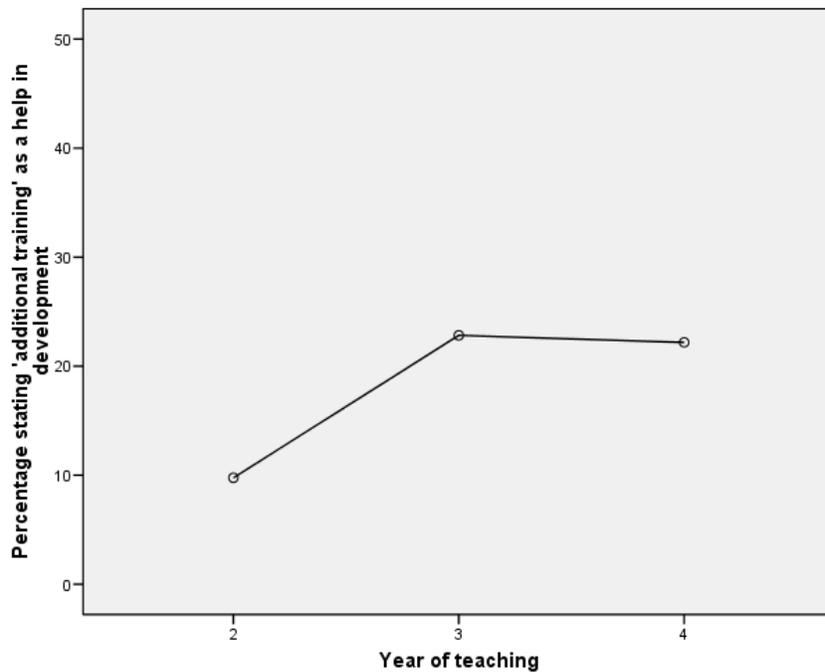
<sup>112</sup> It is important to be clear that this decline does not necessarily reflect an actual decline in support for professional development received from colleagues. It might be that such support has indeed been maintained but was not uppermost in the minds of respondents when the (open-ended response) question was asked. This comment applies to all the analyses in this section.

**Figure 8.6: Percentage stating 'colleagues' as helping respondents' development as teachers**



Another frequently occurring response to the question 'what, if anything, has helped you in your development as a teacher?' was '*additional training*', and Figure 8.7 shows that the percentage of respondents giving this (unprompted) answer more than doubled (from 10% to 23%) between the end of the second and third years of teaching, but subsequently flattened out.

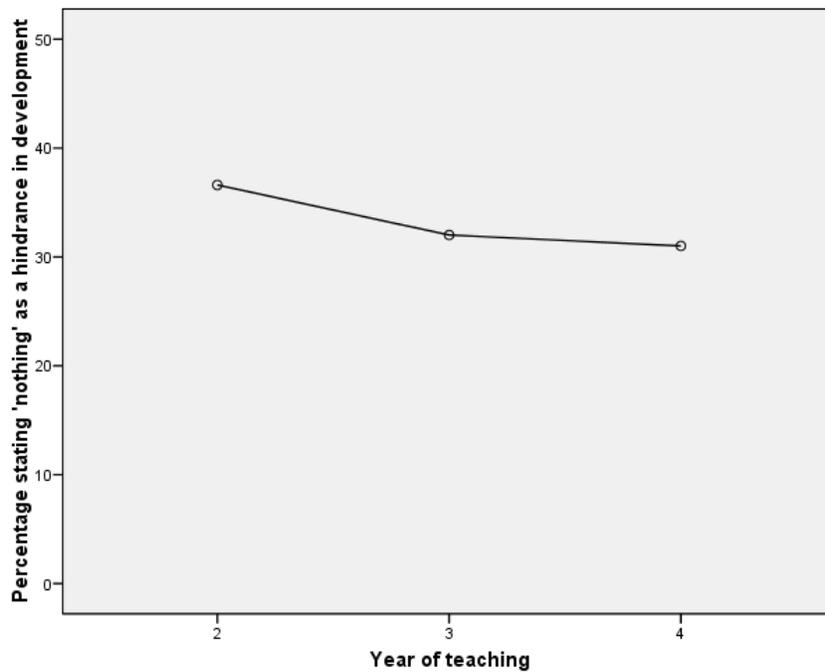
**Figure 8.7: Percentage stating 'additional training' as helping respondents' development as teachers**



#### **8.4.2 Factors hindering teacher participants' development**

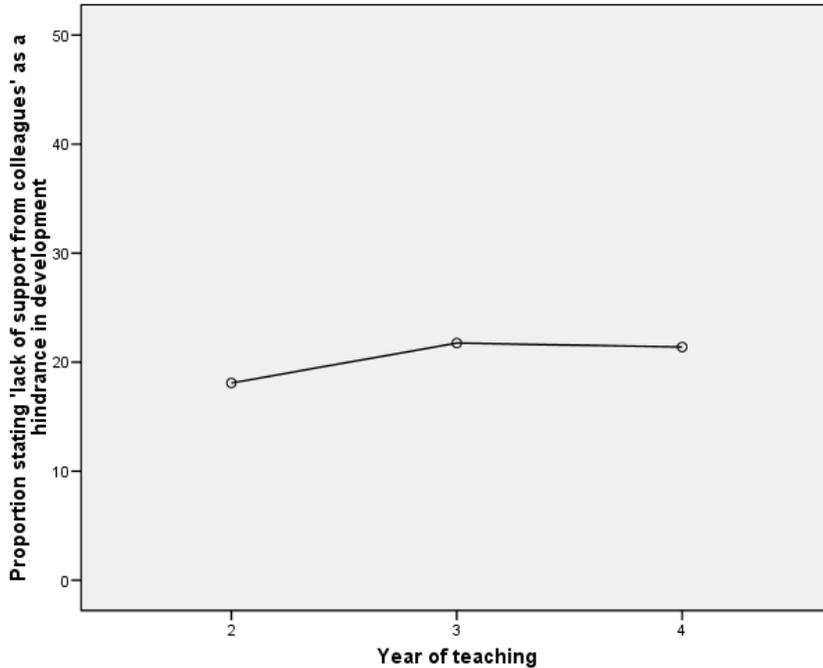
As well as being asked about factors that helped their development, survey respondents were also asked (at the end of their second, third and fourth years of teaching) what had hindered them in their development as a teacher over the course of the particular year (n=1,393). The most commonly given response to this question was '*nothing*', though Figure 8.8 indicates that the percentage who gave this response declined from 37 to 31 per cent over the course of the period in question.

**Figure 8.8: Percentage stating 'nothing' as hindering teachers' development**



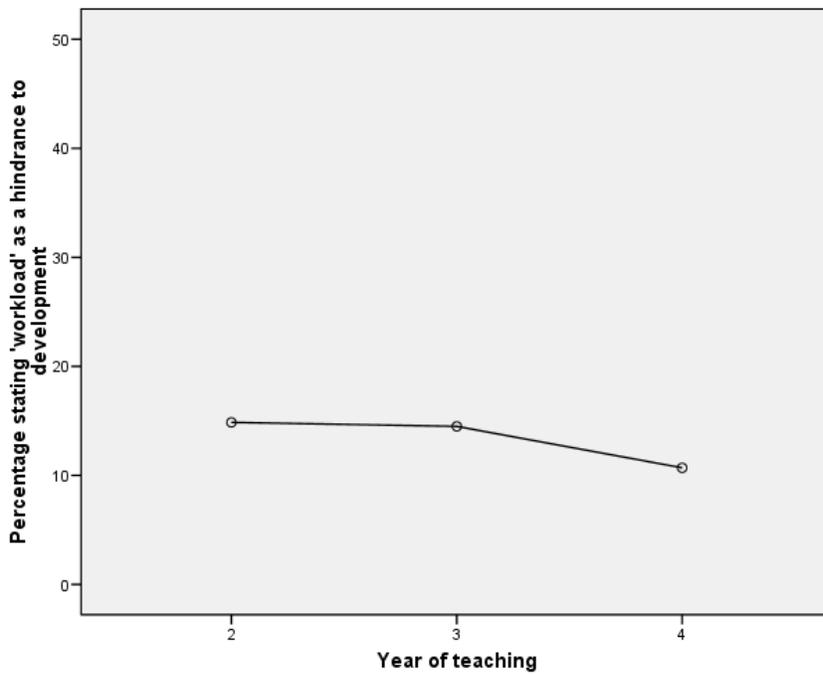
The next most commonly occurring response on this question of factors that hindered development was *'lack of support from colleagues'* which, as Figure 8.9 shows, increased by a small amount from 18 per cent at the end of the second year of teaching, to approximately 22 per cent in the two subsequent years. (This *is* consistent with the relatively large but decreasing proportion of teachers who cited support from colleagues as helping their development as teachers, and by additional findings presented in Section 8.8 below.)

**Figure 8.9: Percentage stating ‘lack of support from colleagues’ as hindering teachers’ development**

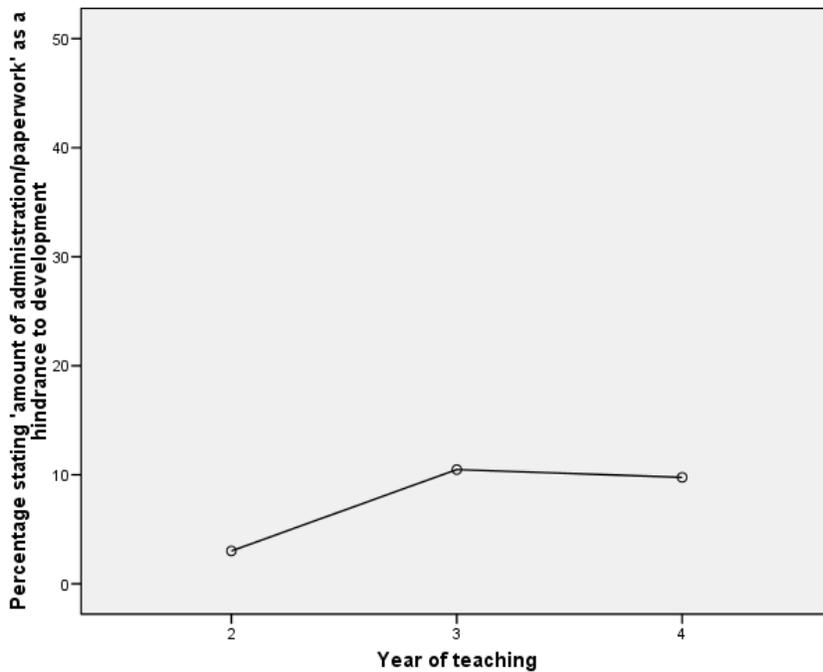


The second most mentioned specific ‘hindrance’ to beginner teachers’ development (across the Wave 4-6 surveys) was ‘workload’, though the proportion of respondents giving this (unprompted) response decreased from 15 per cent to 11 per cent between the second and fourth years of teaching, as shown in Figure 8.10 (and Section 8.9 below suggests that beginner teacher workload had eased significantly between their first and second year in post). That said, the proportion of respondents citing the ‘*amount of administration/paperwork*’ as a hindrance to their development increased from three per cent to ten per cent between teachers’ second and fourth years’ in post (see Figure 8.11).

**Figure 8.10: Percentage stating 'workload' as hindering teachers' development**



**Figure 8.11: Percentage stating 'amount of administration/paperwork' as hindering teachers' development**



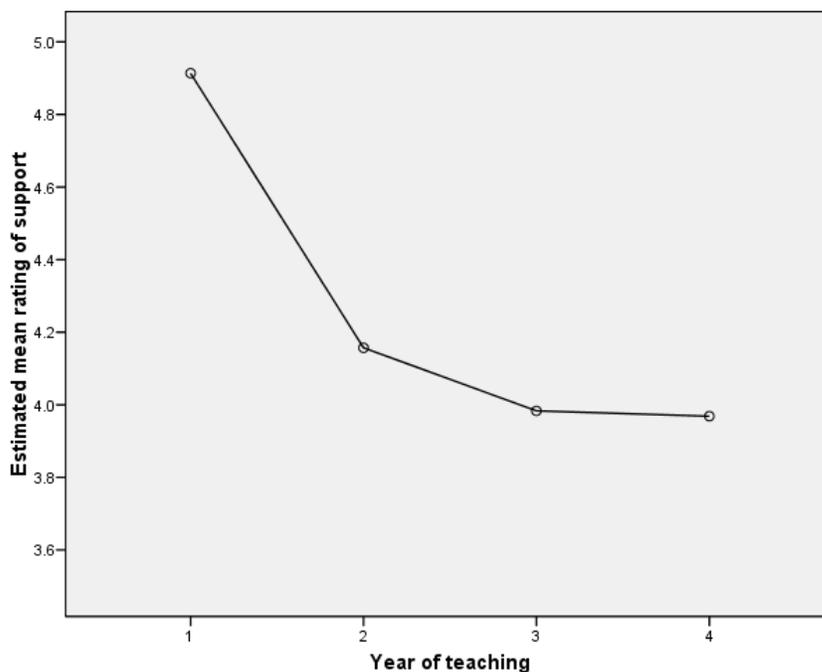
Having discussed changes in beginner teachers' enjoyment of teaching, their perceptions of their effectiveness and factors affecting their development as teachers, we now go on to discuss the extent to which change occurred in relation to four factors which have been shown in this or previous chapters to be associated with these issues, namely the support offered to beginner teachers (Section 8.5), the quality of their relationships with pupils and colleagues (8.6), the number of out-of-school hours worked (8.7), and additional responsibilities taken on or promotions achieved (8.8).

### 8.5 Beginner teachers' ratings of the support they were given

All respondents who were teaching or had taught during the relevant school year were asked, in each of their first year to fourth years of teaching, to rate the support they felt they had received during the year. The ratings were on a scale from 1='very poor' to 5='very good'. Again, the majority of teachers rated the support as either 'good' or 'very good'. For example, only 11 per cent of respondents in Wave 6 rated the support they received in their fourth year of teaching as 'poor' or 'very poor'. Once more, repeated measure analysis, modelling the variation in these responses ( $n=1,019$ ), showed statistically significant change over time.

- As illustrated in Figure 8.12, respondents' overall ratings of **support** received showed a large decline over the course of the first to fourth years of teaching (within-subjects effect,  $F(3,3054)=387.94$ ,  $p<0.001$ , effect size 28%).

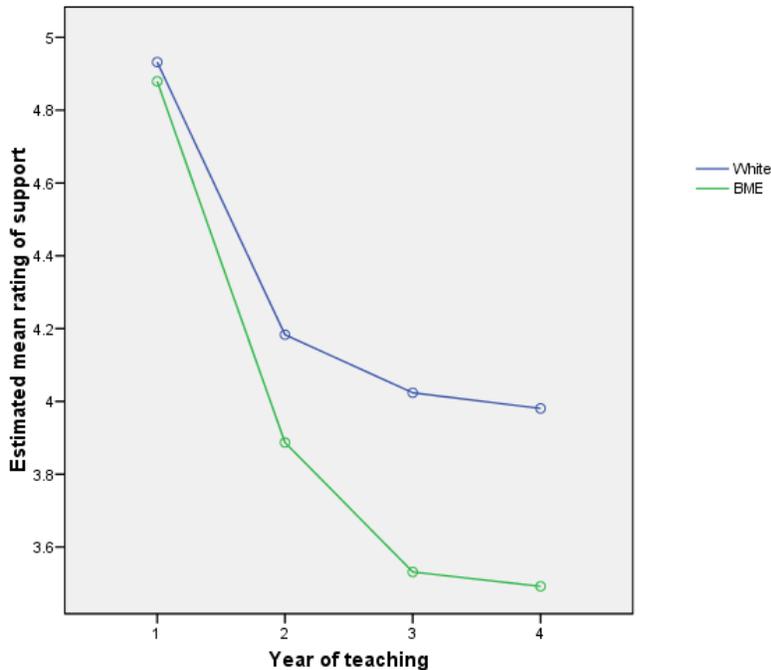
**Figure 8.12: Mean ratings of support participants received**



When the standard set of predictors was added to the model in order to test whether they were playing a role in the variation of ratings of support over time, the **ethnicity** of respondents was found to be significant in this regard (within-subjects effect,  $F(3,2706)=4.13$ ,  $p=0.006$ , effect size less than 1%; between-subjects effect,  $F(1,902)=17.10$ ,  $p<0.001$ , effect size 2%).

- As is clear from Figure 8.13, BME teachers, as a group, initially gave only slightly lower ratings of the support they received than teachers from the majority ethnic group, but over the course of their first four years in teaching their average ratings of support declined more markedly than those of their white colleagues.<sup>113</sup>

**Figure 8.13: Mean ratings of support participants received (by ethnicity)**



Significant variations in respondents' ratings of support received were also found according to their **age**:

- older teachers consistently tended to rate the support they felt they had received over their first four years of teaching less highly than their younger colleagues (between-subjects effect  $F(1,902)=4.75, p=0.030$ , effect size less than 1%).

## 8.6 Beginner teachers' ratings of their work-based relationships

Teachers who were in permanent or fixed-term posts were asked, in each of their first four years of teaching, to rate the quality of the relationships they felt they had with their pupils and with teacher colleagues in their schools. The ratings were on a scale from 1='very poor' to 5='very good' and the responses were generally very positive, with the majority of teachers rating these work-based relationships as either 'good' (4 on the scale) or 'very good' (5).

<sup>113</sup> It should be noted that the proportion of BME teachers in the sample is small (8%) and so the relatively small between-subjects effect size reported here (2%) tends to underestimate the influence of ethnicity in the overall variation in respondents' ratings of the support they received.

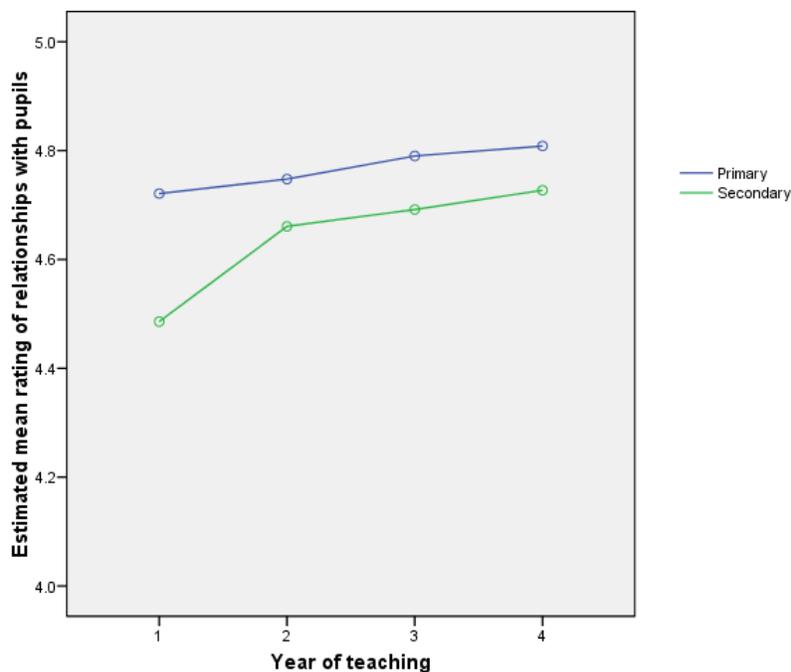
### 8.6.1 Relationships with pupils

A baseline repeated measure analysis, modelling the variation in teachers' ratings of relationships with their pupils ( $n=1,129$ ), found that, although beginner teachers' ratings of their **relationships with pupils** steadily increased over the course of their first four years in teaching, the increase was not statistically significant (within-subjects effect,  $F(3,3384)=1.927$ ,  $p=0.123$ ).

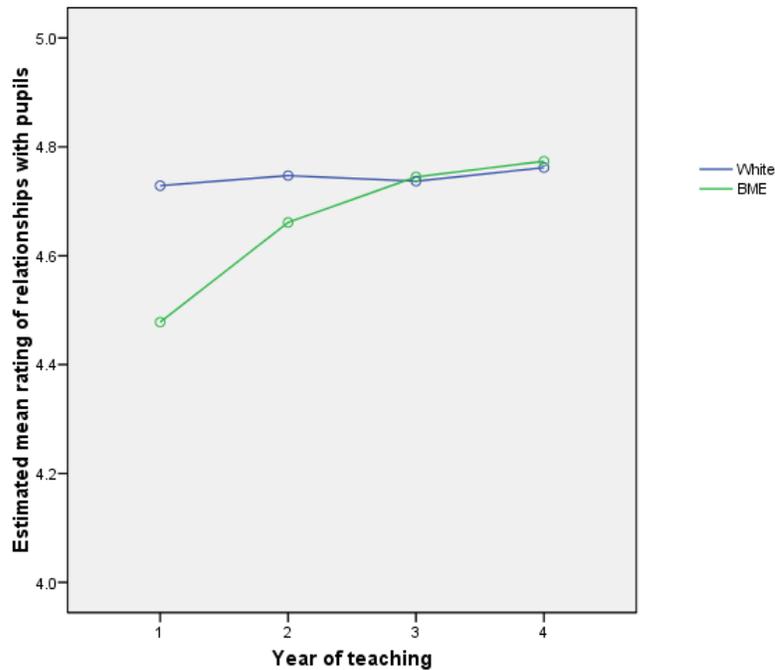
Nevertheless, when the standard set of predictors was added to the model in order to test whether or not they were playing any role in the variations of ratings of pupil relationships over time, the **phase** respondents were teaching in, their **ethnicity** and their **age** were all found to be significant in this regard. Hence:

- Figure 8.14 shows that teachers working in the **primary phase** consistently rated their relationships with their pupils more highly than did their **secondary** colleagues, although there is some evidence of a narrowing of the difference in the ratings over time (within-subjects effect,  $F(3,3024)=6.288$ ,  $p<0.001$ , effect size less than 1%; between-subjects effect,  $F(1,1008)=30.33$ ,  $p<0.001$ , effect size 3%);
- Figure 8.15 confirms that teachers from the **black and minority ethnic group** initially rated their relationships with their pupils lower than their colleagues from the **(white) majority ethnic group**, but that over time these differences disappeared (within-subjects effect,  $F(3,3024)=6.288$ ,  $p=0.005$ , effect size less than 1%); while
- **older** teachers tended to rate the relationships that they formed with their pupils less highly than their **younger** colleagues, though again these differences narrowed over time (within-subjects effect,  $F(3,3024)=2.94$ ,  $p=0.032$ , effect size less than 1%; between subjects effect,  $F(1,1008)=8.39$ ,  $p=0.004$ , effect size less than 1%).

**Figure 8.14: Mean ratings of relationships with pupils (by phase)**



**Figure 8.15: Mean ratings of ratings of relationships with pupils (by ethnicity)**

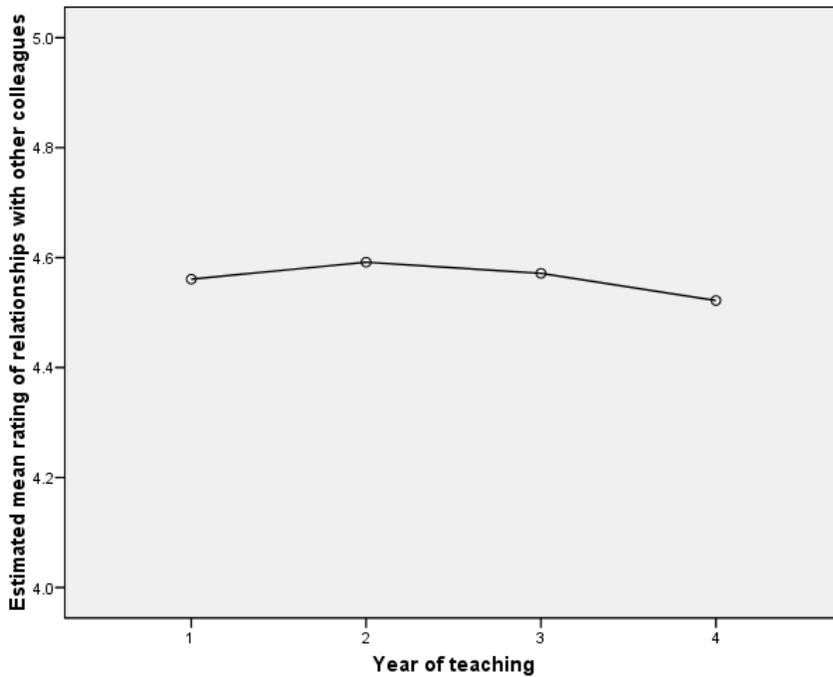


### 8.6.2 Relationships with teacher colleagues

Analysis of respondents' ratings of their **relationships with teaching colleagues** (n=1,134) found that there had been a small but statistically significant change over time (within-subjects effect,  $F(3,3399)=4.87$ ,  $p=0.002$ , effect size less than 1%). Notably:

- beginner teachers' ratings of their relationships with teacher colleagues showed a slight increase between their first and second years of teaching, followed by a small decline, as Figure 8.16 shows.

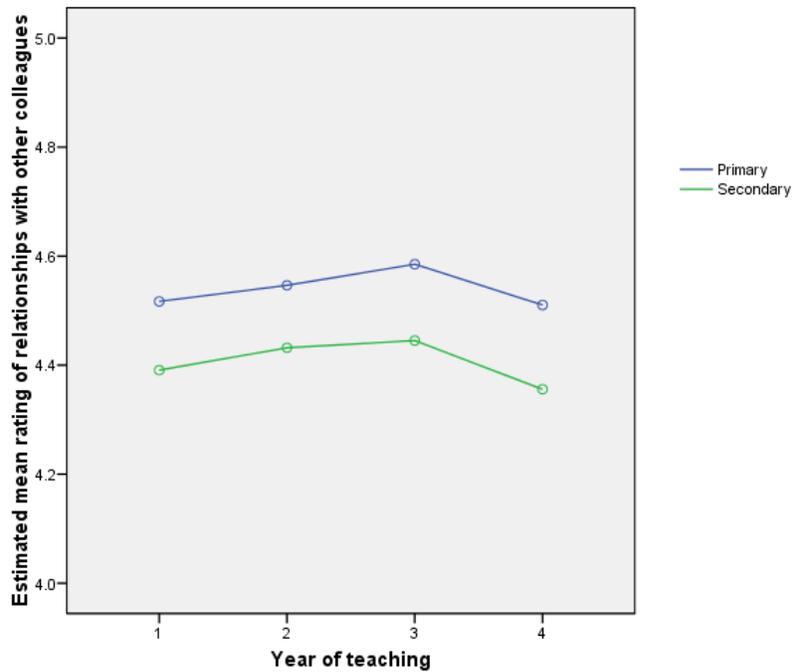
**Figure 8.16: Mean ratings of relationships with other teaching staff**



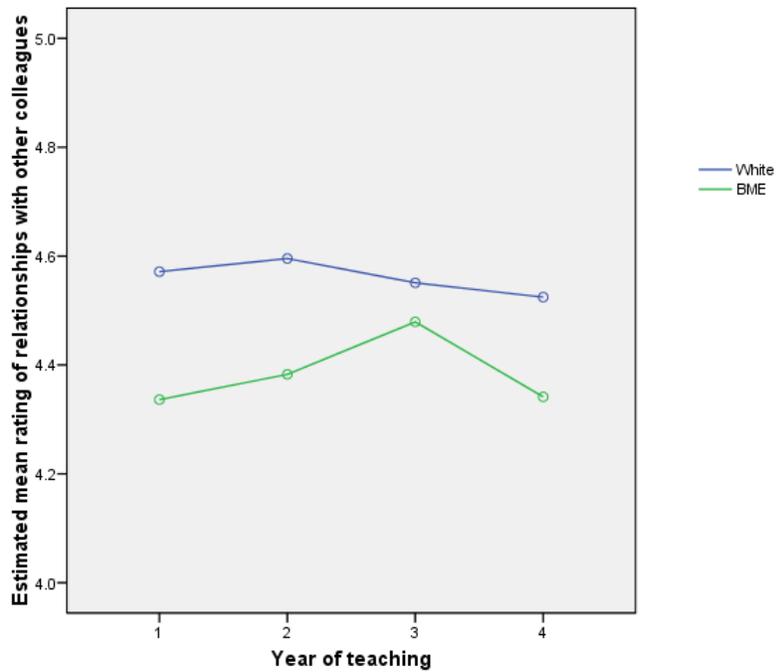
When the key predictors were added to the model in order to test whether or not they were playing any role in the how beginner teachers' ratings of their relationships with teaching colleagues was changing over time, it was found that the **phase** respondents were working in, their **ethnicity**, and their **age** were all significant in this regard. Specifically:

- teachers working in **primary** schools consistently rated their relationships with colleagues more highly than did their **secondary** colleagues (between-subjects effect,  $F(1,1019)=23.24$ ,  $p<0.001$ , effect size 2%), as illustrated in Figure 8.17;
- teachers from the **black and minority ethnic group** consistently rated their relationships with their colleagues less highly than did teachers from the **(white) majority ethnic group** (between-subjects effect,  $F(1,1019)=10.09$ ,  $p=0.002$ , effect size 1%), as Figure 8.18 shows; and
- **older** teachers tended to rate the relationships that they had with colleagues less highly than **younger** teachers (between subjects effect,  $F(1,1019)=5.42$ ,  $p=0.020$ , effect size less than 1%).

**Figure 8.17: Mean ratings of relationships with other teaching staff (by phase)**



**Figure 8.18: Mean ratings of relationships with other colleagues (by ethnicity)**

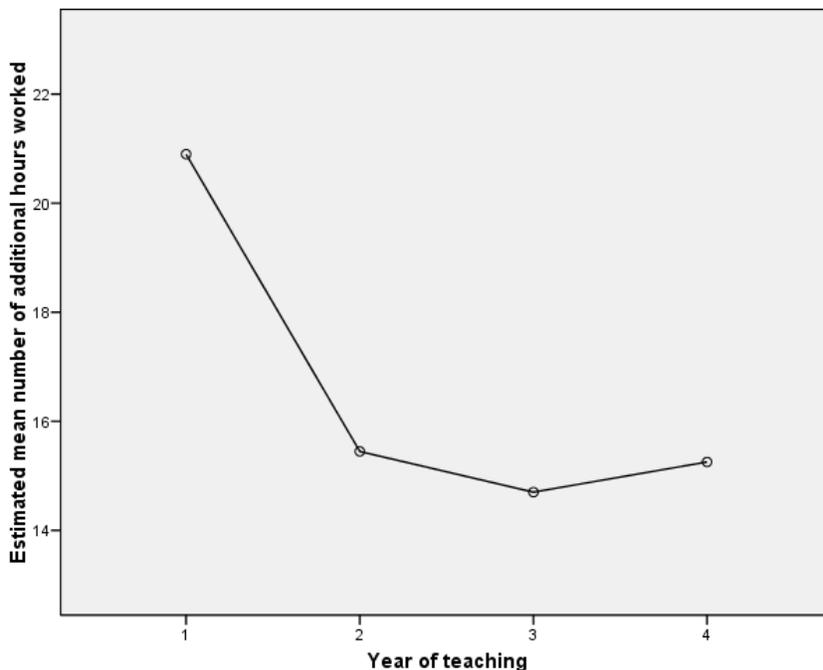


## 8.7 The number of additional hours worked by beginner teachers

In each of the first four years of teaching, respondents who were 'currently' teaching were asked how many hours per week they usually worked *in addition* to their normal timetabled school week. Analysis of these responses (n=1,267) found a statistically significant change over time. Specifically:

- there was a significant decline in the **number of additional hours worked**, of an average of approximately five hours per week, over the course of the four years, as shown in Figure 8.19. There was a levelling out in this decline towards the third and fourth years of teaching to around 15 additional hours per week (within-subjects effect,  $F(3,3798)=180.93$ ,  $p<0.001$ , effect size 13%).

**Figure 8.19: Mean number of additional hours worked per week**

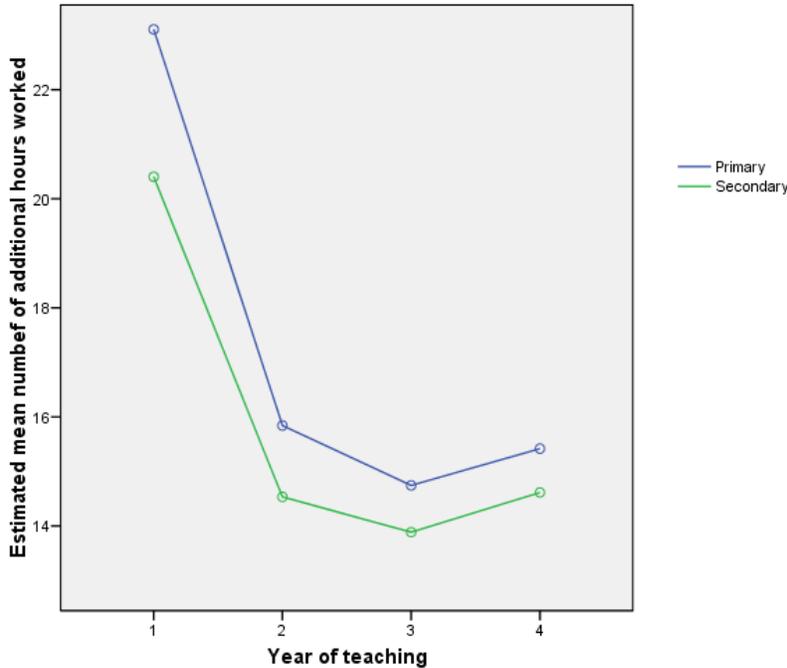


When the standard set of variables was added to the model in order to test whether they were playing any significant role, the **phase** that respondents were working in, and their **age** were found to be important 'predictors' of the number of additional hours worked.

- Figure 8.20 demonstrates that teachers working in **primary** schools reported working more additional hours than their **secondary** colleagues (within-subjects effect,  $F(1.889,2138.18)=2.93$ ,  $p=0.057$ , effect size less than 1%; between-subjects effect,  $F(1,1132)=10.69$ ,  $p=0.001$ , effect size 1%). However, over the period there was a narrowing of the average difference between the number of additional hours worked per week by primary and secondary phase teachers, from approximately 2.7 hours during the first year of teaching to 0.8 hours during the fourth year of teaching.

- **Older** respondents reported working more additional hours per week on average than their **younger** colleagues (within-subjects effect,  $F(3,3396)=4.06$ ,  $p=0.007$ , effect size less than 1%; between-subjects effect,  $F(1,1132)=9.68$ ,  $p=0.002$ , effect size less than 1%), though this age-related difference declined as time progressed.

**Figure 8.20: Mean number of additional hours worked per week (by phase)**



## 8.8 The career development of beginner teachers

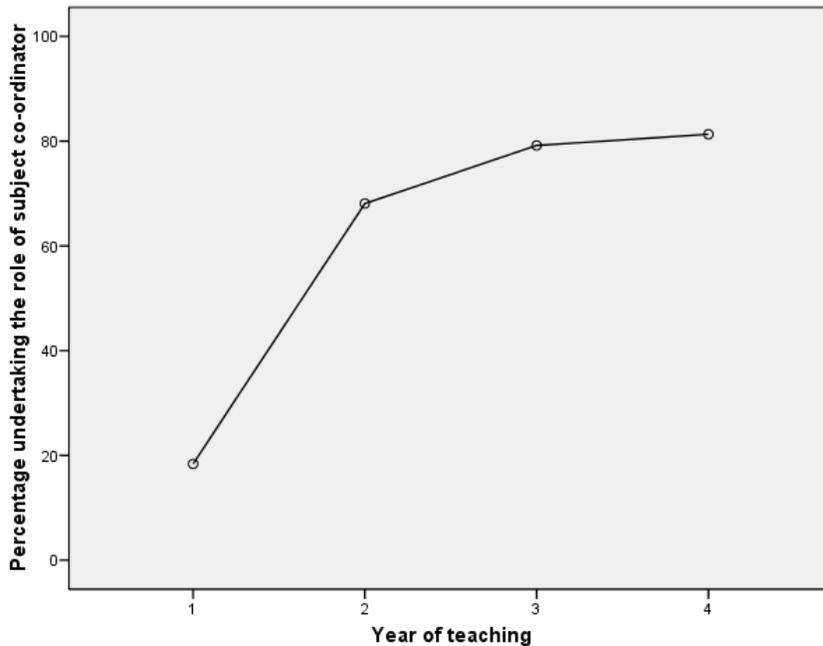
All respondents ‘currently’ teaching, or who had taught in the ‘current’ academic year, were asked in the annual telephone survey to state, at the end of each of their first four years of teaching, whether or not they held the positions of subject coordinator or head of department. This allows for a measure of career progression over this time to be gauged.<sup>114</sup> As the nature of these roles tends to vary between primary and secondary schools, beginner teachers from the two phases were treated separately in the analysis reported below ( $n=658$ , and  $n=613$ , respectively), which shows that increasing and significant numbers of beginner teachers were advancing beyond classroom teacher positions to take on these roles and their accompanying responsibilities.

<sup>114</sup> Again, the nature of the data does not allow for sophisticated statistical methods to be employed here.

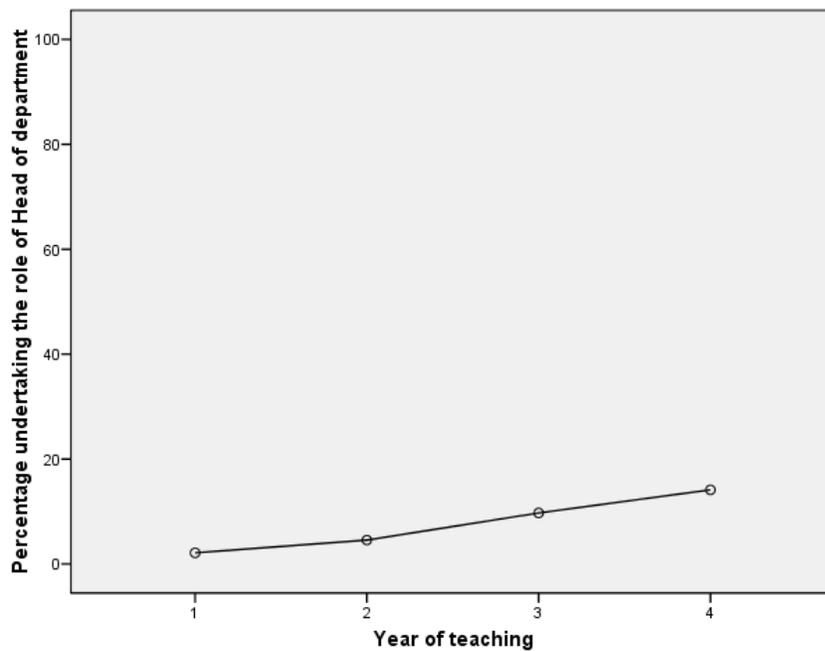
### 8.8.1 Primary teachers' career development

- As can be seen in Figure 8.21, the percentage of primary school teachers taking on the role of subject co-ordinator showed a large increase from 18 per cent in the first year of teaching to 81 per cent by the fourth year of teaching; while
- the percentage of primary teachers who took on the role of Head of Department showed a steady increase, from only two per cent in the first year of teaching to 14 per cent by the end of the fourth year of teaching (see Figure 8.22).

**Figure 8.21: Percentage undertaking the role of subject co-ordinator (primary)**



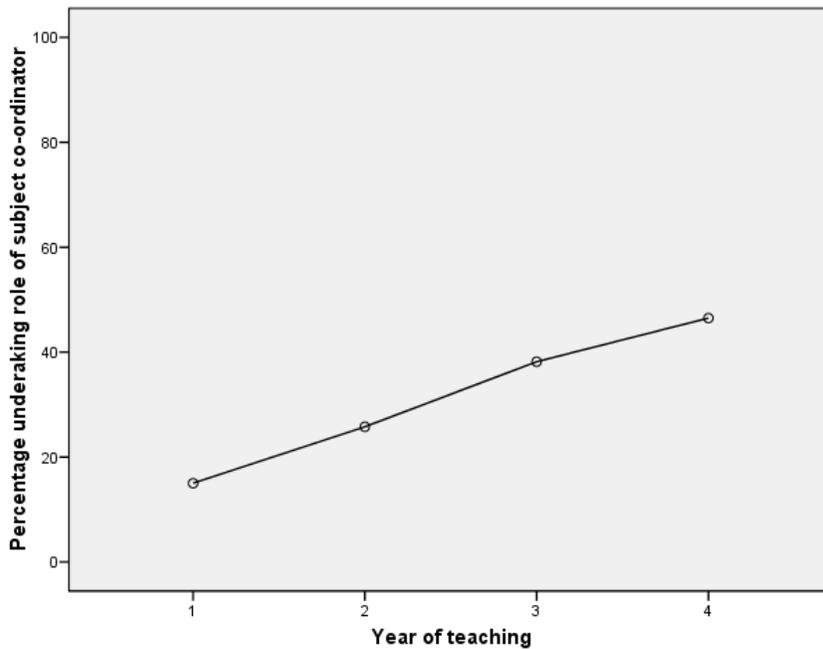
**Figure 8.22: Percentage undertaking the role of Head of Department (primary)**



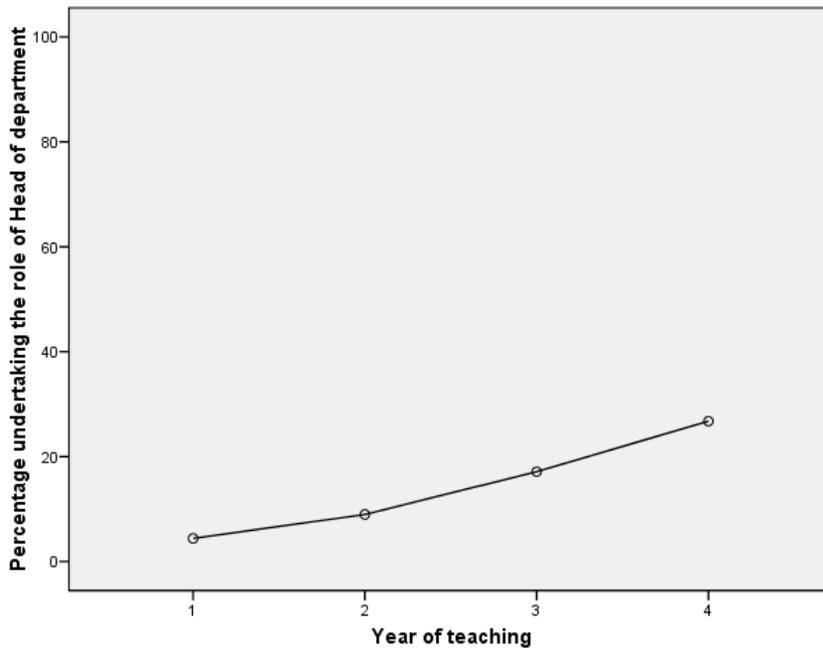
### **8.8.2 Secondary teachers' career development**

- Figure 8.23 shows that the percentage of secondary teachers who took on the role of subject co-ordinator also showed a marked increase, from 15 per cent in the first year of teaching to 46 per cent by the fourth year of teaching; and
- the percentage of secondary teachers taking on the role of head of department also increased steadily over the period, from four per cent in the first year of teaching to 27 per cent in the fourth year of teaching (Figure 8.24).

**Figure 8.23: Percentage undertaking the role of subject co-ordinator (secondary)**



**Figure 8.24: Percentage undertaking the role of Head of department (secondary)**



While many beginner teachers were establishing themselves in relatively secure teaching posts and taking on additional positions of responsibility, we saw in Chapters 5-7 that in each of the first four post-ITT years, a minority of newly and recently qualified teachers had worked as supply teachers. It is to this issue that we now turn in the final section of this chapter.

## 8.9 Supply teaching

This section begins by drawing on the analysis of survey data to report findings on the changing proportions of beginning teachers working as supply teachers over the course of the study.<sup>115</sup> It goes on to report findings of our analyses of case study data relating to: (i) the reasons why some beginner teachers work as supply teachers; and (ii) their experiences and perceptions of working in supply.

### 8.9.1 The proportion of beginner teachers working as supply teachers

In each of the four annual telephone surveys that were carried out after our participants had completed their ITT, they were asked to state their 'current' employment status, and one response category was that of working as a '*supply teacher*'. By combining these particular responses over the four surveys, it was found that amongst the sample of respondents who remained in teaching throughout the first four years since completing ITT (n=1,402):

- eighty-nine per cent of respondents had never worked as a supply teacher over the course of the first four years of teaching;
- seven per cent had worked as a supply teacher during one of the four years;
- three per cent had worked in supply during two of the four years;
- one per cent had worked in supply during three of the four years; and
- only 3 teachers (0.1%) had worked in supply during all four years surveyed.

Longitudinal analysis, illustrated in Figure 8.25, shows that the overall percentage of the sample (n=1,187) who had worked in supply at some stage during the relevant year declined from six per cent (during the first year of teaching) to three per cent (during the fourth year of teaching).<sup>116</sup> However, the aggregate figures mask some interesting detail.

- Firstly, Figure 8.26 shows that initially there was a large variation in the percentage of teachers from different **ITT routes** who were working as supply teachers. For example, amongst those teachers who had followed a BEd programme, as many as 17 per cent worked as supply teachers at some time during their first year of teaching, compared to only five per cent of those from GRTP programmes and six per cent of teachers who had followed the BA/BSc route.<sup>117</sup> However, by the fourth year of teaching these differences

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<sup>115</sup> As in earlier cases, the nature of the data does not make the reporting of levels of significance appropriate here. However, GLM methods were employed to obtain the percentages given and to offer indications as to which explanatory variables (i.e. teacher characteristics) might be considered as 'significant' in explaining variation in the responses.

<sup>116</sup> The proportion across all respondents, including those who left teaching and/or were lost to the *BaT* survey over the first four years of teaching, was the same or very similar. For example, at the end of the first year of teaching post-completion of ITT, seven per cent of all survey respondents described their 'current' employment status at that time as 'supply teaching', and by the end of the fourth year of teaching the corresponding figure had fallen to three per cent.

<sup>117</sup> This finding is likely to be explained, at least in part, by the finding reported in Chapter 5 that a significantly higher proportion of NQTs from the BEd route reported that they experienced difficulties in finding a first teaching post.

had narrowed, at least to the extent that the BEd cohort had come into line with those beginner teachers who had followed different ITT routes.

- Secondly, there appears to be an ongoing difference between the proportions of primary and secondary teachers who were working as supply teachers. Whilst it is clear, from Figure 8.27, that for both **phases** the percentages of respondents working in supply over the first four years of teaching has declined, it is also apparent that the proportion of primary teachers working in supply is consistently higher than that of teachers working in secondary schools.
- Finally, respondents' **age** appears to be a small, but important factor in determining the overall likelihood of working as a supply teacher. A greater percentage of older respondents were working as supply teachers over the period compared to their younger colleagues. For example, during the fourth year of teaching the mean age of respondents who were working as supply teachers was 38, compared to a mean age of 34 for those not working in supply ( $t=2.40$ ,  $df=42.76$ ,  $p=0.021$ , equal variances not assumed). However, at earlier phases of the project, age differences between these two groups were less marked.

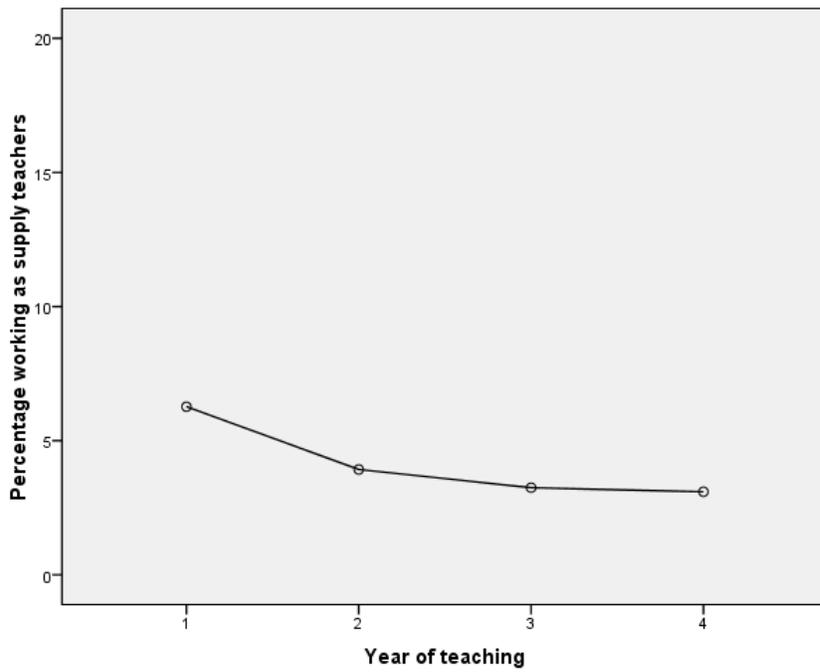
There were no significant gender differences regarding the proportion of teachers working in supply over the course of the four years in question, and the estimated percentages of male and female respondents working as supply teachers was roughly the same at approximately eight per cent during the first year of teaching and two per cent during the fourth year of teaching.<sup>118</sup> Neither were there any significant differences, on this issue, between black and ethnic minority (BME) and majority ethnic group respondents.<sup>119</sup>

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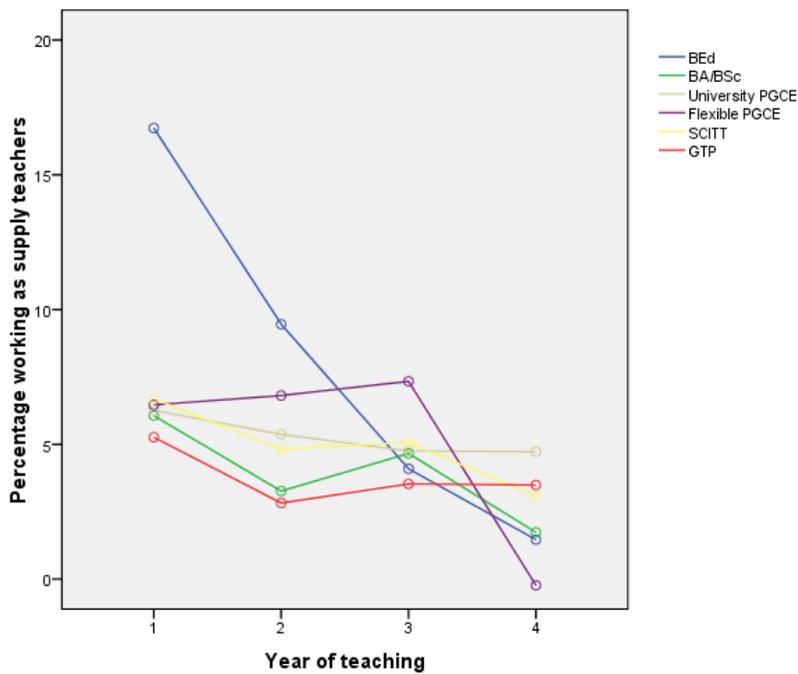
<sup>118</sup> Note that these are *estimated* mean percentages, calculated through the GLM modelling (including all the explanatory variables - ITT route, phase, age, gender and ethnicity), and based on the assumption that all variables have been controlled for.

<sup>119</sup> It should be noted that, as a consequence of the methods of analysis employed, the effect of any variable found to be statistically 'significant' is independent of any other variable in the model. Hence, for example, any overall gender effects may be largely subsumed in the significant phase differences observed.

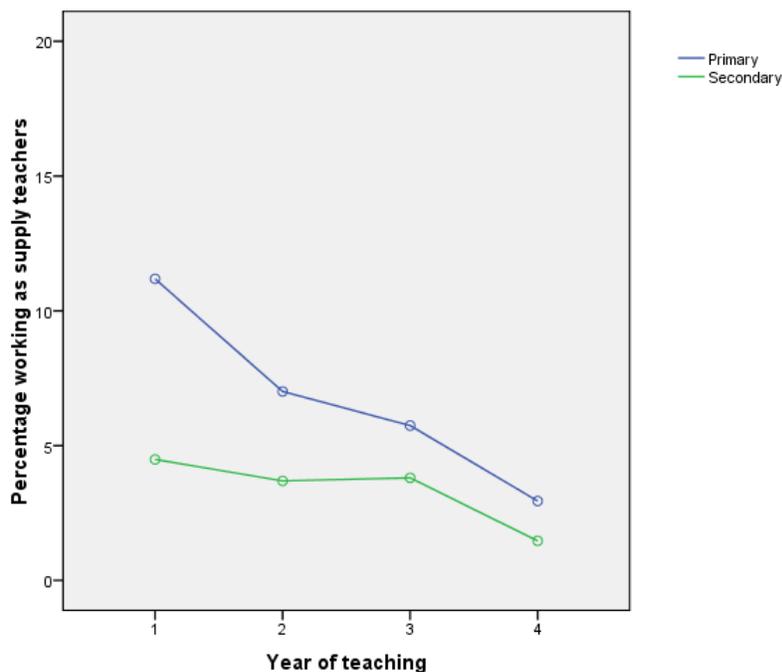
**Figure 8.25: Percentage describing employment status as 'supply teaching'**



**Figure 8.26: Percentage describing employment status as 'supply teaching' (by ITT route)**



**Figure 8.27: Percentage describing employment status as ‘supply teaching’ (by phase)**



### 8.9.2 The experience of working as a supply teacher

Table 8.2 shows the number of case study participants who had worked as supply teachers at some time over the course of the relevant school-year.<sup>120</sup>

**Table 8.2: The number of case study participants who had worked as supply teachers over the year**

	Phase (waves) of project			
	3	4	5	6
	NQT year	Second year	Third year	Fourth year
<b>Number of case study participants</b>	11	5	4	7

<sup>120</sup> The most striking fact about the case study participants who had worked as supply teachers at some time over the course of the project was that they were all female. As noted in Section 8.9.1 (above) however, no (independent) gender differences between the proportions working as supply teachers were apparent in the survey sample. The majority of the case study supply teachers were working in primary schools.

During Wave 3 of the project (the first year of teaching after initial teacher training), all 11 case study participants indicated that working as a supply teacher was not their first choice and that they would have preferred to have secured a fixed-term or permanent post. As one NQT stated:

*I really always wanted to work in one school.* (Female, 25-29, RTP, primary, Wave 3)

However, it was also clear that some NQTs tended to work as supply teachers in the same small group of schools, rather than having to move to new schools repeatedly.

*In the schools I worked at people liked the way I teach and they would always call me back, so really in a way I worked in only three or four schools because they always called me back.* (Female, 25-29, RTP primary, Wave 3)

By the end of their first year of teaching all but one of these 11 NQTs stated that they had found permanent or fixed-term teaching posts for the following term (i.e. for the beginning of their second year of teaching).

In subsequent phases of the research, working as a supply teacher was often described by interviewees as being a conscious choice that they had made, for a variety of reasons discussed below.

#### *Positive aspects of working as a supply teacher*

All 11 NQTs who were working as supply teachers stated that it offered them a wide range of teaching experience compared to working in a single school, which could be advantageous to their development. As one NQT put it:

*This supply experience gave me a huge advantage because I worked from nursery all the way up to Year 6, in every single age...* (Female, 25-29, RTP, primary, Wave 3)

Some of the beginner teachers who worked as supply teachers between their second and fourth years in teaching also indicated a belief that working as a supply teacher could be helpful to their professional development, particularly in terms of improving their confidence, developing skills in behaviour management, and enabling them to compare how different schools operate:

*I think that got me ready for teaching and not being scared of what class I'm going to go into because in supply I'd been in so many different classrooms, so many different age groups that it kind of toughened me up a little bit.*  
(Female, 28-32, Flexible PGCE, primary, Wave 4)

*[D]ifferent schools have different strategies for behaviour policies and teaching and learning so it's nice to see how they do it in different in schools.*  
(Female, 24-28, SCITT, primary, Wave 5)

A number of NQTs also mentioned that working as a supply teacher gave them a choice as to when they worked, and gave them the opportunity to judge whether or not they would like to take a more permanent job at a particular school they had taught in, should a suitable post arise:

*It made me realise which schools I want to go and work in and which schools I really don't want to go and work in.* (Female, 25-29, Flexible PGCE, primary, Wave 3)

In addition, some participants spoke (across Waves 4 to 6) about working in supply as a way of accommodating maternity and subsequent child care issues, and others spoke about becoming a supply teacher as a convenient option associated with relocation either within the UK or abroad. Finally, a number of beginner teachers who had experienced supply teaching stated that it was less burdensome than teaching in a permanent or fixed-term post, that it involved 'less paperwork' and offered a better work / life balance:

*I just went to work every day. No extra work whatsoever... everything is just planted in front of you. I had my bank of lessons and activities but you don't have to think about them...*  
(Female, 30-34, BEd, primary, Wave 3)

*I do think the workload is completely different, you don't have to do reports, you don't have to do assessments, you don't have to do targeted teaching, you don't have to organise assemblies; all these things do make a big impact.*  
(Female, 25-29, SCITT, primary, Wave 6)

### *Negative experiences of working as a supply teacher*

The most common negative features of working as a supply teacher were reported as the absence of meaningful relationships with pupils and/or the lack of a sense of ownership of the class (collectively reported seven times between Waves 3 to 6):

*[S]upply, it is a whole different ball game. It is not like you are in a class and, you know, making a relationship with children.* (Female, 24-28, SCITT, primary, Wave 5)

*[A]s a supply [teacher] you don't really have your own class and you are unsure of your relationship with children; or children look at you differently as a supply [teacher] than as a teacher who's going to be there tomorrow.* (Female, 28-32, RTP, primary, Wave 4)

Other reported negative aspects of working in supply included: the financial insecurity and general uncertainty it brings; the relative lack of access to more formalised professional development opportunities and sources of support; and (in the immediate post-ITT period) difficulties associated with working towards and completing the NQT Induction programme, which we briefly illustrated for one beginner teacher in Chapter 5. In addition, some newly and recently qualified teachers suggested that they might fail to consolidate or even lose some of their skills as a result of a lack of engagement with long term planning and assessment:

*It's great because most people leave lessons already planned, and that's been a help, but I worry that I may lose those sort of skills because I just cobble something together in the classroom if you know what things they do.* (Female, 25-29, PGCE, primary, Wave 3)

## **8.10 Conclusion**

In this chapter we have reported findings on the extent to which change occurred in relation to a number of important aspects of beginner teachers' perceptions and experiences between their ITT and the end of their fourth year in teaching, and we have briefly examined the experiences of those who have worked as supply teachers. In the next chapter (9) we turn our attention to what factors encourage beginner teachers to remain in the profession, and what considerations cause some to want to leave.

## 9 Retention and attrition amongst beginner teachers

### Key Findings

- One in twenty (5%) of Wave 2 survey respondents reported that they had withdrawn from their ITT programme during the final (or only) year of their ITT. An additional 2% indicated that they had deferred completion of their course during the same time period.
  - Secondary GRTP trainees were less likely to report having withdrawn from their ITT than those following other routes (3% compared, for example, to 13% of those following secondary Flexible PGCE programmes).
  - Survey respondents who had previously (in Wave 1) indicated that they had been 'strongly attracted' to teaching by the idea of '*working with children or young people*' were less likely to withdraw from ITT than those who had not stated this. Those who had stated (at Wave 1) that they were 'strongly attracted' by the '*salary*' or the '*financial incentives attached to ITT*' were more likely than those who had not stated this to withdraw.
- The main reasons given by those who withdrew from their ITT related to workload (22% of 135 survey respondents), a change of mind about teaching as a career (19%) and a perceived lack of support (15%).
- A minority of beginner teachers (62 respondents, 2%) stated that they did not anticipate taking up a teaching post on completion of their ITT, although three-quarters (47) of these anticipated taking up a teaching post at some point in the future.
- Between a half and a third of beginner teachers who reported at each Wave after completing their ITT (Waves 3-6) that they were not working as a teacher or looking for a teaching post the following term indicated that they anticipated returning to the profession at some point in the future (54-31%, Waves 3-6).
  - The most common reasons these participants gave to explain why they were not presently teaching were '*family reasons/commitments*' and '*couldn't find a job*'.
- For those who did not plan to return to the profession, the reasons given by the highest proportions of leavers related to pupil discipline and workload.
  - In addition, beginner teacher attrition was statistically associated with low ratings of their enjoyment of teaching and low ratings of the support given in or by their schools.
- The vast majority (84%) of fourth year teachers who planned to be in teaching the following term planned to still be in teaching in 5 years' time.
  - Factors associated with retention included whether or not beginner teachers strongly agreed that they enjoyed teaching and whether or not they had received additional training.
  - The most frequently mentioned motivations for remaining in the profession were '*helping young children to learn*' (84%) and '*working with children or young people*' (76%).

## 9.1. Introduction

This chapter presents findings relating to issues of beginner teacher retention and attrition. We begin, in Section 9.2, by saying something about the numbers and characteristics of those research participants in our survey sample who left teaching during or at the end of their ITT programme or the subsequent four years. We go on, in Section 9.3, to examine: (a) the reasons given by those participants who had taken the decision to leave the profession or to not look for or take up a teaching post in the short term; and (b) the outcomes of additional analyses which sought to identify aspects of beginner teachers' experience which were statistically associated with attrition. Finally, in Section 9.4 we discuss the longer (or medium-) term plans and career aspirations of third and fourth year teachers, examine what motivates some (most) beginner teachers to remain in the profession, and consider third and fourth year teachers' reflections on their decisions to become teachers.

The findings presented in this chapter are based chiefly on the analyses of survey data generated across Waves 1-6 of the *BaT* research. They also draw selectively on data generated via: (i) interviews and email correspondence ('ejournals') with beginner teachers (particularly but not exclusively those who made the decision to leave the profession); and (ii) interviews with ITT programme personnel associated with the (then) case study trainees.<sup>121</sup>

We should point out that the numbers or proportions of those participants in our survey sample who withdrew from ITT or who subsequently left teaching are unlikely to be representative of the national picture. The main reason for this is that a higher proportion of those who withdrew from ITT or left teaching than of those who completed their programmes and remained in teaching are likely to have been lost to the survey: for example, because their contact details were no longer accurate. The value of the findings presented in this chapter thus lay not so much in what they tell us about the relative *numbers* of beginner teachers who stay or go (which in any case can be addressed with some degree of reliability via official statistics), but rather in what they tell us about:

- the *characteristics* of those (in our sample) who left ITT or teaching;
- the *experiences* of those who left or stated the intention to leave the profession; and
- what *motivates* some beginner teachers to leave ITT or teaching and others to continue as teachers.

## 9.2 Who left or planned to leave?

In this section we report findings relating to the numbers and characteristics of those participants who left the profession, or were not presently looking for teaching work, during or at the end of each of the five years covered by the project - i.e. between the last or only year of participants' ITT and the end of a possible fourth year in post.

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<sup>121</sup> More holistic insights into the experiences of two case study leavers (Lauren and Peter) are provided in Chapter 10.

### 9.2.1 Who left during ITT?

At the time of the Wave 2 survey, five per cent of the (3,162) respondents reported that they had withdrawn from their ITT programme, with an additional two per cent indicating that they had deferred completion of their ITT programme (see Table 9.1).<sup>122</sup>

**Table 9.1 Have you completed, or are you about to complete, your Initial Teacher Training (ITT) course?**

	Survey strand Per cent (%)	No of cases (telephone survey)	Case Study Participants
Completers	94	2982	73
Withdrew	5	135	3
Deferred	2	45	3
<b>Total</b>		<b>3162</b>	<b>79</b>

Percentages may not sum to 100 due to rounding

Additional analysis revealed that those deciding to withdraw from or defer completion of their ITT were statistically differentiated by: the **ITT route** they were following;<sup>123</sup> the **phase** of education in which they were seeking to teach; their **subject specialism** (for secondary phase respondents); their **gender** (amongst primary phase trainees); and their **age**.<sup>124</sup> These findings are illustrated below:

- amongst secondary phase trainees, those following GRTP programmes were the least likely to withdraw from ITT (3%), compared with six per cent of those following SCITT programmes, eight per cent of those following university-administered PGCE courses and 13 per cent of Flexible PGCE trainees, who were the most likely to withdraw;<sup>125</sup>
- seven per cent of respondents training to teach in secondary schools compared with five per cent of those training to teach in primary schools withdrew from their ITT;
- fourteen per cent of those training to teach Modern Foreign Languages (MFL) reported withdrawing from their ITT, compared (for example) with five per cent of those training to teach arts subjects;

<sup>122</sup> This withdrawal percentage is lower than estimates of actual withdrawal across England for the period in question (Smithers and Robinson, 2006; Bielby *et al.*, 2007), and (as suggested in the Introduction to this chapter) is likely to be explained by a higher proportion of those who withdrew from their programmes than those who completed their programmes being lost to the survey.

<sup>123</sup> As the *Becoming a Teacher* project recruited trainees in their only or final year of ITT, data from those following undergraduate routes are in some respects not directly comparable to those from trainees following postgraduate programmes, since the (former) data do not provide information on trainees who withdrew or deferred prior to their final year. For this reason those following BEd and BA/BSc QTS routes were not included in this analysis.

<sup>124</sup> In what follows we focus on those respondents who withdrew from their ITT programmes (and subsequently from teaching). Additional findings regarding those who deferred completion of their ITT programmes, and further details of all findings (and methods of analysis) relating to retention on and attrition from ITT, are available in Hobson *et al.* (2006a).

<sup>125</sup> Amongst primary trainees, the picture is rather different, with SCITT trainees in our sample being the most likely (7%) and Flexible PGCE trainees the least likely to withdraw. However, the number of cases of withdrawal amongst primary trainees is small (32) and though regression analysis found ITT route to have an independent statistically significant effect on completion and withdrawal across the whole sample, separate chi-square analysis of primary phase respondents suggests that these route differences are not statistically significant.

- nine per cent of men compared with four per cent of women reported withdrawing from primary phase ITT programmes;<sup>126</sup> and
- trainees in the '35-44' (7%) and '45 or over' (13%) age groups were more likely to withdraw than those trainees who were under 35 years of age (5%).

Responses from the Wave 1 survey, in which participants had been asked if they **expected to be in teaching in five years' time** and to indicate **factors that had attracted them to embark upon an ITT programme**, were also found to be statistically associated with respondents' reported completion of or withdrawal from ITT. Notably:

- those who had reported (at Wave 1) that they did not expect to remain in the profession were more likely to withdraw from their ITT programmes than those who had reported that they expected to still be teaching in five years' time;
- those who had reported being 'strongly attracted' by '*financial incentives attached to teacher training*' and by the '*salary*' were also proportionally more likely to withdraw from their ITT than those who did not give these responses; whilst
- those who were 'strongly attracted' by the idea of '*working with children or young people*' were more likely to complete their training.

Interestingly regression analysis found that those who had worked in schools prior to undertaking their ITT were no more likely to complete their ITT (or no less likely to withdraw) than those who had no prior experience in schools. In addition, trainees' ethnicity was not statistically associated with their likelihood of completing or withdrawing from ITT; nor was whether they were undertaking their ITT on a part-time or full-time basis.

### 9.2.2 Non take-up of teaching posts at the end of ITT

A minority (62 respondents, 2%) of those who successfully completed their ITT programmes indicated in their responses to the Wave 2 survey that they would not be seeking to take up a teaching post in the immediate future, notably the start of the school year following their ITT. That said, three-quarters (47) of these participants stated that they did intend to take up a teaching post at some point in the future.

### 9.2.3 The end of teachers' first year and beyond

One hundred and six first year teachers (4%) reported in the Wave 3 survey that they were neither working as a teacher nor looking for a teaching post for the following term. Of these 106 teachers:

- fifty-four per cent said that they anticipated taking up a teaching post at some point in the future;
- thirty-eight per cent did not intend to return to teaching; and
- nine per cent did not know or did not answer the question.

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<sup>126</sup> Within the secondary phase, the percentages of those completing and withdrawing from their ITT programmes were the same for both genders, with seven per cent of both men and women reporting that they withdrew from their ITT

At Wave 4, forty-two second year teachers (2%) said that they were neither working as a teacher nor looking for a teaching post for the following term. Of these:

- thirty one per cent reported that they anticipated taking up a teaching post at some point in the future;
- sixty per cent did not intend to return to teaching; and
- ten per cent did not know.

At Wave 5, thirty-one third year teachers (2%) were neither working as a teacher nor looking for a teaching post for the following term. Of these:

- forty eight per cent of respondents anticipated returning to teaching at some point in the future;
- thirty nine per cent did not; and
- thirteen per cent did not know.

At Wave 6, forty-one fourth year teachers (3%) were neither working as a teacher nor looking for a teaching post for the following term. Of these:

- thirty two per cent of these respondents anticipated returning to teaching at some point in the future;
- fifty six per cent did not; and
- twelve per cent did not know.

The teachers in the Wave 6 survey who did intend to be teaching in the following term were asked about their future intentions to remain in the profession.

- Of those (1,375) fourth year teachers who planned to be teaching at the start of the following term, 95 per cent stated that they expected to be working in teaching in a year's time, while two per cent did not expect to be teaching in a year's time and three per cent stated that they did not know.
- Of those (1,303) fourth year teachers who planned to be teaching in a year's time, the vast majority also indicated that they planned to still be in teaching in five years time, with only 17 respondents (just over 1%) stating that they did not plan to be teaching, though one per cent planned to be teaching abroad and another one per cent did not know.

### 9.3 Why some beginner teachers left or planned to leave teaching

In this section we examine the factors influencing the decisions of those who withdrew from ITT, who were no longer teaching or who planned to leave the profession.

#### 9.3.1 Reasons for leaving during or at the end of ITT

The main reasons given by those (135) survey respondents who withdrew from their ITT programmes related to:

- workload (22%);
- a change of mind about teaching as a career (19%);
- a perceived lack of support (15%);
- their non-enjoyment of the school placement (12%) teaching (8%) or their training course (8%);
- family reasons/commitments (10%); and
- poor pupil behaviour (8%).

Those (three) case study participants who withdrew from their ITT programmes (as well as the three who deferred completion of their programmes) all cited workload as an issue, and indicated that they found lesson planning especially demanding. They also suggested that they had found teaching to be more challenging than they first thought:

*I was actually working harder than I would work in another profession.  
(Female, 45 or over, Flexible PGCE, secondary, science)*

#### *Views of ITT programme personnel*

When (46) ITT programme personnel associated with our case study beginner teachers were asked what in their experience were the main causes of student teacher withdrawal from ITT, the factors mentioned by the highest number of programme personnel were:

- that *student teachers' expectations of ITT, and of the teaching profession more generally, were not met by the reality;*
- *personal reasons;* sometimes connected with
- *financial difficulties;* and
- *'workload'.*

Some of these interviewees also suggested that trainees' decisions to withdraw were influenced by the variable quality of the school-based support available to them:

*I think school placements [have] a huge impact on retention... If you have a bad school experience and you're not that committed, well even if you are committed, it might put you off, so I think that's an issue. (Programme Leader, BEd)*

The ITT programme personnel also discussed a range of strategies aimed at improving retention within ITT, either current or potential. These included:

- the importance of looking at the interview stage for qualities such as 'commitment', 'wanting to be in the classroom', 'having realistic expectations' and 'enthusiasm';
- a requirement for prospective trainee teachers to gain prior experience in schools;
- the importance of making clear, at the interview stage, the expectations and demands of an ITT course;
- the importance of having support mechanisms in place for student teachers who encounter problems during their ITT; and
- having strategies in place to enable some student teachers who encounter difficulties to return to ITT at a later date.

#### *Reasons given by those leaving at the end of their ITT*

As noted in Section 9.2.2 above, 62 (2%) of those who completed ITT did not plan to seek a teaching post in the immediate future. The main reasons included:

- *family reasons / commitments* (16);
- *wanting to take a break before getting a teaching post* (12); and
- *workload* (5).

### **9.3.2 Why those who planned to return were not currently teaching**

In this section we report the main reasons for not currently teaching or looking for teaching work during the first four years following completion of ITT of those who *did* anticipate returning to the profession at some point in the future. The most common reasons for leaving given by those who *did* anticipate returning to teaching at some point in the future were:

- *family reasons / commitments* - ten (18%) of this groups of respondents gave this response at Wave 3, five (39%) at Wave 4, six (40%) at Wave 5, and five (39%) at Wave 6;
- *couldn't find a job* - 21 (37%) at Wave 3; two (15%) at Wave 4; one (7%) at Wave 5; and two (15%) at Wave 6.

Although the numbers of respondents are small, it is of interest to note that *school management styles* was mentioned by more third and fourth year teachers who anticipated a return to teaching in the future than those who left during their first two years of teaching.

### 9.3.3 Why those who did not plan to return decided to leave teaching

In this section we report the main reasons for leaving teaching given by those teachers who left the profession at some time during the first four years following completion of their ITT and who *did not* intend return to the profession at any point in the future. For these respondents the most common reasons they provided for leaving were:

- *pupil discipline* - ten (25%) at Wave 3, eight (32%) at Wave 4, two (17%) at Wave 5, six (26%) at Wave 6;
- *found I could not manage the workload* - seven (18%) at Wave 3, three (12%) at Wave 4, one (8%) at Wave 5, four (17%) at Wave 6; and
- *believed I would not be able to manage the workload* - three (8%) at Wave 3, four (16%) at Wave 4, one (8%) at Wave 5, four (17%) at Wave 6.<sup>127</sup>

The two case study interviewees who intended to leave teaching at the end of their first year both referred, in their interviews, to factors relating to behaviour management. One of these stated:

*I'd experienced teaching beforehand and experienced what the atmosphere in a classroom should be like. I couldn't accept what the atmosphere in the classroom was, and also my views of how I wanted to be a teacher, this wasn't what I wanted. I didn't want to be this cross, fierce-looking teacher that made the children cry. I wanted them to enjoy the lessons and I wanted to enjoy the lessons.* (Male, 42-46, SCITT, primary)

The most common issue for those (five) case study participants who left teaching during their third and fourth years was again the 'push' factor of *workload*, while three explained that their decisions to leave teaching were influenced by the attractions or 'pulls' of alternative opportunities. Of these, one teacher left teaching to travel; another started her own nursery and the third left teaching for work which he described as more rewarding financially:

*[T]hat's the big reason why I left teaching to go in and do the job that I've got now. In fact I've just recently had a pay rise and I'm now earning double what I was earning when I was teaching so its not like an insignificant change.* (Male, 39-43, BEd, Primary, Wave 5)

### 9.3.4 Reasons given by fourth year teachers who were not planning to be teaching in five years' time

As we reported in Section 9.2.3 above, the vast majority (97%) of fourth year teachers who planned to be teaching in one year's time (1,303) also anticipated remaining in the profession in five years time, whilst a minority (17 teachers, just over 1%) stated that they did not. When these 17 fourth year teachers were asked the reasons for this, the most common responses related to:

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<sup>127</sup> Further details of some of the survey findings presented in this chapter, relating to first, second, third and fourth year teachers who left or planned to leave teaching, can be found in Hobson *et al.* (2007), Tracey *et al.* (2008), Homer *et al.* (2009a) and Homer *et al.* (2009b) respectively. However, where the results of additional, retention-specific statistical analyses are not presented in those reports, the details are provided in this chapter.

- plans *'to move into another career unrelated to education'* (mentioned by 5 of the 17 respondents); and
- plans *'to be in a career with a better work-life balance'* (3 respondents).

### 9.3.5 Factors associated with beginner teacher attrition

In this section we report findings from a range of additional analyses of survey data which were carried out to establish if there were any statistically significant factors associated with those teachers who left the profession at some time during the first four years following the completion of their initial teacher training. The findings support some of those presented above by confirming that beginner teacher attrition was statistically associated with low ratings of the **enjoyment** of teaching and of the **support** given in or by their schools. That is:

- twenty-three per cent of those first year teachers who did not 'strongly agree' that they enjoyed working as a teacher had left teaching by the end of the fourth year after completion of ITT, compared with just six per cent of those who did agree with this statement (chi-square=94.92, df=1, p<0.001);<sup>128</sup> and
- thirteen per cent of those second year teachers who did not rate the support they received as 'very good' had left teaching by the end of the fourth year after completion of ITT, compared with five per cent of those who did rate the support received as 'very good' (chi-square=24.30, df=1, p<0.001).

It was also found, in support of other findings presented in Section 9.3.3 above, that those teachers who left teaching between their first and the end of their fourth year reported working more **additional weekly hours** (22.7 hours on average) in their first year of teaching than those who subsequently continued working as teachers (20.8 hours), though this difference was not statistically significant (independent sample t-test, t=1.40, df=1452, p=0.163).

Finally, the analysis also revealed that beginner teachers' decisions to leave the profession were related to low ratings of their **effectiveness** as teachers. Specifically:

- six per cent of those second year teachers who did not rate themselves as *'very effective'* had left teaching by the end of the fourth year after completion of initial teacher training, compared to four per cent of those who did rate themselves as *'very effective'* (chi-square=4.36, df=1, p=0.037).<sup>129</sup>

## 9.4 The future plans of third and fourth year teachers

In the Wave 5 survey at the end of their third year in teaching, those respondents who planned to be teaching at the start of the following term (1,561 teachers) were also asked whether they intended to still be in teaching in two years' time. The overwhelming majority (94%) of these stated that they did expect to still be in the profession.

<sup>128</sup> The factors associated with beginner teachers' ratings of their enjoyment of teaching are reported in Chapter 6 (Section 6.3 and Chapter 7 (Section 7.3).

<sup>129</sup> The factors associated with beginner teachers' perceptions of their effectiveness are reported in Chapter 6 (Section 6.4) and (more thoroughly) in Chapter 7 (Section 7.4).

Similarly, as stated in Section 9.2.3, at the end of their fourth year of teaching, the majority (95%) of those 1,375 respondents who planned to be teaching at the start of the following term stated (in the Wave 6 survey) that they intended to still be in teaching in a year's time; and of those 1,303 respondents, 84 per cent indicated that they intended to be teaching in five years' time.<sup>130</sup>

#### **9.4.1 The career aspirations of third and fourth year teachers who intended to stay in teaching**

Those third and fourth year teacher respondents who stated that they intended to remain in teaching were asked about their career aspirations over the next five years. The majority of the respondents wished to continue as class teachers (62% of third year teachers, 65% of fourth year teachers). In addition:

- sixty-one per cent of third year teachers and 60 per cent of fourth year teachers also aspired to take on middle management responsibilities (for example, head of year or department);<sup>131</sup>
- just over a third of both third year and fourth year teachers expressed ambitions to become Advanced Skills Teachers (ASTs) or work towards achieving Excellent Teacher Status (34% and 35% respectively);
- thirteen per cent of third years teachers and 19 per cent of fourth year teachers aspired to seek promotion to a deputy head position; and
- three per cent of third and fourth year teachers indicated that they sought promotion to the position of head teacher.

Further analyses were carried out on these data from the Wave 5 survey and the following significant results were found with regard to the career aspirations of teachers in their third year of teaching:

- those who stated that they 'strongly enjoyed' teaching were more likely to aspire to middle management (65%) than those who did not state that they 'strongly enjoyed' teaching (51%);
- teachers who stated that they 'strongly enjoyed' teaching were also more likely to aspire to being ASTs (36%) than those who did not 'strongly enjoy' teaching (30%); and
- those who stated that they had a 'very good' relationship with their line manager were more likely to aspire to middle management (67%) than those who gave a lower rating of this relationship (59%).

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<sup>130</sup> Of the remainder, 11 per cent reported that they intended to be doing *something else* in five years' time, while the following responses were each given by no more than one per cent of the respondents: *another education related career, teaching abroad, not in teaching, and don't know.*

<sup>131</sup> It should be noted that, as reported in Chapter 7, many third and fourth year teachers had already taken on such responsibilities.

### 9.4.2 Factors associated with retention

Analysis was undertaken to examine the characteristics of the third year teachers who intended to still be in teaching in two years' time. Amongst the statistically significant results found were:

- firstly, 98 per cent of those teachers who had stated in the Wave 1 that they expected to be in **teaching in five years' time**, compared to 89 per cent who had not expected to still be in teaching in five years' time, said at the end of their third year that they still expected to be in teaching in two years' time (chi-square= 8.90, df=1, p=0.003);
- secondly, 99 per cent of teachers who reported that they 'strongly agreed' that they **enjoyed teaching** expected to be in teaching in two years' time, compared with 93 per cent of those who did not state this (chi-square=45.40, df=1, p<0.001);
- thirdly, amongst those who had received **additional training**, 98 per cent expected to still be working as a teacher in two years' time compared to 95 per cent of those who had not received any additional training (chi-square=7.81, df=1, p=0.005).

These trends continued when similar additional analysis for the data for the teachers in their fourth year was undertaken. For example, of those teachers who reported that they 'strongly agreed' that they enjoyed teaching, 99 per cent stated that they expected to still be in teaching in a year's time compared to 88% of those who did not 'strongly agree' that they enjoyed teaching (chi square= 62.99, df=2, p=0.003).

### 9.4.3 Fourth year teachers' stated motives for remaining in teaching

Survey participants who had taught in the fourth year (2007-2008) since completion of their ITT were asked a series of questions concerning their motivations for continuing to teach. It can be seen from the summary of the responses in Table 9.2 that the factors that were weighted as the most important by the set of respondents as a whole were as follows:

- '*helping young people to learn*' - 84 per cent of respondents weighted this factor 'a great deal' in motivating them to continue teaching; and
- '*working with children or young people*' - 76 per cent weighted this 'a great deal' in continuing to teach.

(Interestingly, these were the same most frequently mentioned factors that respondents stated in the Wave 1 had attracted them to teaching in the first place – see Chapter 3, Section 3.2).

The next most heavily weighted factors were: *job satisfaction* (66% weighting this 'a great deal'), *job security* (47%), the *opportunity to give something back to the community/ society* (46%), the *collegiality/teamwork aspects of teaching* (38%), *long holidays* (36%), and *fitting in with family or other commitments* (31%).

**Table 9.2: How much weight do you give to the following factors in motivating you to continue teaching?**

	Valid per cent (%)			
	A great deal	A Fair amount	A little	None at all
Helping young people to learn	84	15	1	1
Working with children or young people	76	21	2	[0]
Job satisfaction	66	30	4	[0]
Job security	47	38	10	5
Opportunity to give some-thing back to the community/ society	46	43	10	1
Collegiality/ teamwork aspects of teaching	38	45	14	3
Long Holidays	36	34	21	9
Fitting with family or other commitments	31	36	20	13
Opportunities for career development	28	47	19	6
Salary	17	53	23	8

Includes all who were teaching or had worked as a teacher at some point during the academic year 2007-2008, n=1393.

Percentages do not add up to 100 due to rounding.

These survey findings are supported by evidence from case study participants who planned to remain in the job. The considerations most frequently mentioned by third and fourth year teachers who discussed their reasons for remaining in teaching were:

- (i) feeling that they were making a difference, notably to children’s academic, social and / or emotional development (mentioned by 27 participants);

*I enjoy seeing them smiling and going 'I did it' or 'I can do it' that's great.* (Female, BEd, 25-29, primary, Wave 6)

*It's really rewarding to see the students achieving, I mean don't get me wrong I say that, to achieve a good grade but its not just about the grade, its just the achievement of seeing them learning something and achieving something, its not necessarily a good grade but you can see a change in them, that is very rewarding.*  
(Female, Flexible PGCE, 44-48, primary, Wave 5)

- (ii) the enjoyment of being with children and building relationships with individuals and groups of children (mentioned by 21 participants)

*The things I like most about this job are firstly the relationships with the children which is incredibly fulfilling...* (Female, GTP, 45-49, primary, Wave 6)

#### 9.4.4 Third and fourth year teachers' reflections on their decision to teach

Fifteen of the case study teachers in their third year described, in ejournal correspondence, their feelings about their decision to become a teacher. Five of these reflected wholly positive attitudes towards their chosen career and felt that they had made the right choice for them. For example:

*I still feel good about my decision to be teacher and feel 100% that it is the right career for me.* (Female, 24-28, BEd, primary, ejournal, February 2005)

Three of the case study teachers' reflections were more mixed. Whilst they still seemed to be pleased about their decision, their comments also acknowledge the pressures and realities of the job. For example, one participant described the highs and lows encountered on a daily basis:

*I had a fab[ulous] lesson with my Y[ear] 10 PSHE class last week which I came out of buzzing. There should be more of that but the N[atational] C[urriculum] and overbearing management can prevent it... Things with my boss are bad and depressing and frustrating but teaching itself seems fine, [I have a] good rapport with kids, [achieve] good results ... and I enjoy most days.*  
(Male, 44-48, GTP, secondary, ICT, ejournal, February 2005)

Two others were largely negative. One of these made frequent reference to the heavy 'workload' associated with teaching, amongst other things; and the other described how her work was having an impact on her health and, in an attempt to counter this, she was planning to change her working hours:

*Just recently I have questioned whether it is the right job for me. Stress levels have been very high and affected my health to the point [where] I was in hospital. I have decided to reassess things and will be reducing my hours for Sept[ember].*  
(Female, 24-28, GTP, primary, ejournal, February 2005)

During the Wave 6 interviews at the end of their fourth year of teaching, case study participants were asked to reflect on their decision to become a teacher. Of the 49 respondents, only three gave mostly negative responses. Two mentioned that they had not felt particularly well supported; one of whom had decided to resign from the school because of the 'lack of support' with a particularly difficult class. The third said that she hadn't really anticipated what the realities of the job would be:

*Truthfully, I would say if I knew what it was all about I wouldn't have entered it, I think you really do have to have a rhino hide.* (Female, 49 or over, SCITT, secondary, ICT)

Nine of the case study teachers gave more mixed responses as they reflected on whether teaching had been the right choice for them. One participant typified this perspective:

*I know I sound a bit luke-warm but teaching is not a long cold drink on a summer afternoon, it's a ride on a horse, or a sail in a boat and it's exciting and you can have brilliant moments but you can also have moments ... when you're wet and cold and it depends whether you're prepared to take the rough with the smooth.*  
(Male, 44-48, GTP, secondary, ICT)

The remaining thirty seven responses were more positive about their choice, with a minority suggesting unambiguous enthusiasm for the job:

*I think it was one of the best decisions I've made in life, I do love being a teacher, like I said before I'm passionate about what I do because I believe in what I do and I think you've got to believe that.* (Female, 24-28, SCITT, primary)

Finally, some case study beginner teachers offered advice to people considering or about to begin a career in teaching. One such piece of advice was to lay the foundations for future successful years in the profession by working hard during the ITT and NQT Induction periods:

*Put [in] as much work as you can during your training and first year. I worked really hard and now I think it's paid off!*  
(Male, 24-28, BA QTS, secondary, English, ejournal, May, 2007)

Another related to the importance of finding strategies to achieve a 'work-life balance'. One participant, for example, advised would-be teachers to:

*Make sure you have an abiding interest outside teaching and do your best to keep it up - better still, find a way to exploit it through teaching - trips/clubs etc.*  
(Female, 44-49, GTP, secondary, MFL, ejournal, May, 2007)

## 9.5 Conclusion

This chapter has provided an overview of who among *BaT* participants left, and who stayed within the profession, during the period between their last or only year of initial teacher training, and the end of their fourth year of teaching. Some of the reasons underpinning the choices of these beginner teachers have been reported, as have their medium-term career-plans, with a particular focus on whether those who are currently teaching are planning to stay or leave in the future. We have also reported and discussed what has motivated those who decided to stay, and the views and experiences of those who have left the profession. In the next chapter we provide further insight into the decisions and experiences of beginning teachers by presenting a selection of our case study participants' stories.

## 10 Ten beginner teachers' stories

### Key Findings

- The ten stories presented in this chapter reveal the diversity of individuals' early career paths and the complex interplay of factors underlying beginner teachers' experiences of becoming a teacher. In addition, and despite this diversity, these stories reveal some common themes and influences.
- Teacher colleagues were frequently mentioned as an important source of support in school for those beginner teachers whose stories are presented. Where they were perceived to be supportive, colleagues provided beginner teachers with reassurance and a sense of acceptance (and socialisation) into the profession, and acted as a (largely informal) source of information and advice. Senior colleagues and the head teacher, in particular, also played an important role in the provision of support, especially in helping beginner teachers feel recognised and valued.
- Promotion and other incentives were also seen as important to most participants represented in the stories, mainly for reasons of recognition and career development. For some second career teachers, promotion also represented a step towards regaining the status and income they had achieved prior to entering the teaching profession. However, such additional responsibilities in the early stages of their careers could also bring with them additional pressures and workload.
- Workload levels, the time-consuming nature of administration and paperwork, and perceived 'curriculum overload' were common concerns of the case study teachers represented in these stories, and of others.
  - An important differentiating factor was, however, the way in which individual beginning teachers dealt with this workload, with those who consciously took measures to maintain an appropriate work-life balance appearing to be the most contented with their current position.
- Pupil behaviour was mentioned in many of the beginner teachers' stories. In general, time and experience reduced the intensity of the challenges, relating to pupil behaviour, experienced by the case study participants featured in these stories. However, a need for (or the lack of) additional support in the classroom for those children with more complex difficulties remained an issue for some.
- The availability of early professional development (EPD) was an important issue to many beginning teachers, and the stories reveal wide variation in access to and the perceived utility of EPD, with some participants receiving individualised EPD and support, and others reporting restricted access to or being unclear about their Induction entitlements and /or EPD opportunities. A number of beginner teachers reported a falling away of support in the second year of teaching.
- Related to this last point, the stories also raise the issue of continuity (or, for some, the lack of it) between ITT, Induction and the subsequent early years in teaching. While for some the transition between student teacher, NQT and early career phase teacher was relatively smooth, some beginning teachers felt discontinuity particularly keenly between ITT and Induction, and others between the end of Induction and their second year in teaching.
- Regardless of whether their experiences in the first few years of teaching were largely positive or more negative, for the teachers featured in the stories the primary rewards of teaching related to their relationships with pupils and, in particular, to the satisfaction of seeing their pupils' achieve.

## 10.1 Introduction

This chapter presents the stories of individuals who set out to become teachers, told partly in their own words. The term 'story' implies both a teller and an audience, both of which affect the nature of the text. In other words, what we present here are personal re-interpretations of biographical data based on the accounts of our beginner teacher participants, themselves influenced by their interactions with ourselves.

The data were generated from:

- (i) face-to-face interviews which took place over a period of six years, from the beginning (or, for those following three or four year programmes, the beginning of the final year) of their ITT (in the Autumn of 2003), through to the summer of the fourth year in post (in 2008) for those who were still teaching at this point in time;
- (ii) email correspondence, which took place between the start of our participants' first year in teaching (post-ITT) and the end of their fourth year.

These stories are not intended to be representative of the *Becoming a Teacher (BaT)* study, or of beginner teachers nationally, in terms of such wider demographics as age, gender or ITT route. Rather they are selected to present the range of positive and negative experiences recounted by our case study participants, and to illustrate key issues that have emerged from the wider *BaT* research. Accordingly, each story includes a focus on one or more of a number of specific issues which this study has found to be central to the experience of beginning teachers. Such issues are addressed more explicitly in the final section of the chapter, which identifies commonalities and points of departure across the different stories presented.

The central characters in these stories include three beginner teachers who enjoyed mostly positive experiences of ITT and their first four years in the profession ('Mark', 'Ruth' and 'Christina'), three whose experiences were more mixed ('Craig', 'Jack' and 'Amy') and two whose early years in teaching were largely unhappy ('Simon' and 'Elizabeth'). Two of those mentioned above ('Jack' and 'Elizabeth') appeared in our previous ('Wave 2') report (Tracey *et al.*, 2008) as examples of 'easy' and 'difficult' beginnings. Their stories feature again here (updated since the end of their second year in post) as part of the overall spectrum of experience. The final two stories concern a trainee who withdrew from ITT ('Lauren') and a second-career teacher who left the profession during his third year ('Peter').

The participants' stories are presented here with their consent, and with some details changed in order to preserve their anonymity.

## 10.2 Mark's story: in it for the long-haul - a lifestyle decision

We begin with the story of Mark, who turned to teaching in his early thirties because his work had ceased to satisfy him and the travel it involved took him away from his young family. Though attracted by the potential benefits offered to him by the profession, he was also aware of its reputed disadvantages, and prepared for training by carefully researching the most appropriate ITT route and discussing with his wife the potential effects on their home life. In his welcoming GTP primary school Mark felt able to make a real contribution from the start. He moved almost seamlessly into a permanent post, and with appropriate support developed his own style and made use of experience from his previous career. Throughout, Mark's energy and flair for innovation were always accompanied by a realistic approach to what is possible.

### 10.2.1 Mark's motivations and initial choices

In his first interview Mark summarised clearly the process and motivations that had led him to undertake a teacher preparation course. His initial stimulus had been *'disillusion with my previous job'*; a search for alternatives had led him to the teaching website, *'and it grew from there, really'*. He wanted an occupation that was intellectually challenging, but also one that was *'contributing rather than just making profits'*; in addition, and especially because he had young children, *'family/work-life balance was a big issue and really that was more important than money'*. However, Mark was well aware that in teaching, *'you don't just come home at three o'clock'*: as he explained, *'I've grown up around teachers, you know, arguments about Keith Joseph over the Christmas dinner table with aunts and uncles'*. The result of this was that he felt that he had a realistic view of *'the downsides ...times when there are long hours and the pay's maybe not fantastic'*. He had also taken care to discuss the possible effects on his home life: *'It's not something I could go into without making totally sure that my wife was prepared for it'*.

Mark had initially considered applying for the (then) Fast Track ITT route, but soon decided that the additional pressure and the need to move between schools in the first few years would be incompatible with his young family's needs. Initially he had not seriously considered the GTP route (he categorised it as *'not such high profile'*), but he came to see it as *'much better for a career changer like myself in that you get a small income to tide yourself through the year, which I thought I could realistically subsidise for a year'*. In addition, he was attracted by the idea of being in a work environment from the start, with the opportunity of drawing on the experience of those around him as he had done in his previous employment: *'When you're young you don't always [listen to others], you think you know best, and now I'm like, anyone who can tell me how to do something worthwhile, I'll take it'*.

### 10.2.2 Mark's experiences of ITT

Mark was lucky in finding a placement in a primary school near enough to his home to obviate the need to uproot his family, and from the start was welcomed by his new colleagues:

*I think because I'm not fresh out of college and have done other things there is a bit of respect and an interest in what you've done ... They do already treat me as someone who can be ... part of the school life and be part of what's going on and that's an active part rather than an observer which is good. That's how it should be.*

Mark's first career had left him aware of skills that he could utilise in teaching, and from the start he was excited by the prospect of making a contribution to his placement school as well as learning through interaction with his new colleagues:

*In this school there's just so much experience you can draw on ...just the variety of inputs you can get ...and you bring in a lot having had some previous work experiences as well, so I feel I can contribute already to the school even though I'm at an early stage ... I'm not a sort of spare part getting in the way.*

In Mark's view one advantage of the GTP route for those coming to teaching as a second career was that *'it's the sort of thing where you drive your own learning'*, though with support readily available. However, while he felt confident in his ability to extend his subject knowledge where necessary, he hoped and expected that the course would provide him with:

*the teaching skills that you need, the classroom skills, all the things of actually delivering the curriculum ... Accessing teaching skills is not something ... you can go away and read the book and find out about, you need help ... I can't go and read a book and find out how to sort out classroom management or difficult children.*

In the event Mark regretted that (as he saw it) the university element focused chiefly on subject knowledge and the core curriculum. He would have liked it to include more on issues such as behaviour management, perhaps in the form of *'three or four days just dotted through'*, and possibly including some discussion-based sessions. But in general, he saw his GTP training as *'great'*.

Mark had offered to spend some time helping out in his placement school before the GTP course officially started: *'I'd done a few things like sports day, which was a really good thing to get involved in ... and a good way to meet lots of people and get involved and actually do something useful ... because they need spare hands at times like that'*. As a result by September he already felt he knew everybody, and found it easy to start by *'taking registers and doing playtime duties and doing assemblies'* before progressing to working with small groups. Mark valued this initial period of *'just doing anything that can get you started and get you known and seen in the role'* as *'just the best way to get in'*, partly because it offered him a relatively sheltered encounter with the complicated logistics of modern school life. He also saw the maturity and general usefulness of GTP trainees as a demonstrable asset to the programme's placement schools: *'The school can clearly see from this sort of programme [that] there are huge benefits from having a GTP trainee there, they're getting some value for money ... As a trainee you get the benefits of that'*.

Mark's school appeared to be aware of some of these benefits, as well before the year ended he had been offered a permanent post. He expected his transition from GTP trainee to NQT *'to really roll in - it shouldn't be noticed'*, largely because in his view both children and colleagues already saw him as a teacher. During the past year he had been considering constantly how he could use his pre-existing skills and knowledge, and had identified a related area in which the curriculum was developing, and in which he hoped *'to have a role ... bringing it in, building it and setting it up ... so I'll be able to really contribute to the school I'm in'*. While he felt that *'the big change [would] be the responsibility'* of having his own class, autonomy was something for which he felt prepared, and indeed eager.

### **10.2.3 Mark's first year in teaching**

Mark felt able to take on what he referred to as additional *'bits and bobs'* during his first year in teaching (following his successful completion of ITT), because the school offered a very supportive environment, with *'lots of people to go and ask if I'm stuck with anything'*. Soon, in addition to his duties as a class teacher, Mark volunteered to introduce informal activities related to the new subject area. He subsequently spent much of the year *'generally sort of ... consolidating'*, until the summer term brought the need to focus on reports. This (report writing) was the only time that Mark had ever questioned his decision to become a teacher: *'Because of the pure amount of work that's involved and how much it takes over your life ... you live and breathe, you just do nothing else other than work for about three or four weeks. That's not good'*.

In terms of formal Induction provision, Mark appreciated the flexibility built into his local authority's programme since it enabled him to tailor the training it provided to his own needs. While he could see that others (and particularly younger NQTs) might benefit from individual support and the opportunity to discuss issues of concern, *'I really don't need to go outside the school for that'*. He was lucky in that he had day-to-day contact with his mentor, who was the same as for his GTP year - *'we just tend to be talking all the time'* - and after the GTP programme he found Induction observations and assessments *'a breeze'*, explaining that *'doing that [the GTP] I was being constantly watched and you get used to somebody in the classroom which is good because it doesn't freak you out'*.

While he had used his Career Entry and Development Profile (CEDP) to plan his development targets for the year, Mark found that *'it gets to the point where it's all in my head anyway'*, and so *'the usefulness of it tails away'*. This was in keeping with his view of how the GTP operated:

*The type of course it is, you start from nothing and you build up to full-time teaching...and you've just gradually stepped up through the gears. That's the beauty of the course and why it works particularly ... where you've worked before because you can just keep stepping up the gears and you can set the pace a little bit yourself.*

By the end of his NQT year Mark felt himself stepping up a gear again, *'wanting to get involved and ...take responsibility for things. I can feel that need coming in now, I can't hold back for much longer, as it were. I do want to take on more'*. He had been appointed coordinator for the new curriculum area for the coming year, building on the informal work he had done already and supporting colleagues to introduce the subject. He was also due to be leading two major school trips, and in general drawing on what he saw as his strengths: *'not just binning ... skills'* [but] *'using what I've got from what I've done previously'*, a prospect which gave him intense satisfaction.

Looking back on the year, Mark could see that he had learnt to think on his feet and become far more flexible in his approach, constantly alive to the question:

*How can I just adapt the plan and change to make this lesson work? Like on a Friday afternoon there's a thunderstorm outside and you've got absolutely no hope of getting them to listen so don't tear yourself into pieces ...because you need to change direction ... That's definitely a big change professionally.*

Personally he thought he had not changed, except for one thing: *'I'm in a job that I'm enjoying so I'm happier'*.

#### **10.2.4 Mark's second year in teaching and beyond**

Mark found his second year of teaching harder than the first, partly because of the additional responsibilities he had so enthusiastically undertaken, and partly because fluctuations in the school population meant that his class was much larger than the previous year, and included a dominant group of boisterous boys and one child with behavioural disabilities. The overall result was that *'my work-life balance pretty much went down the tube'*.

However, the school trips he led were a great success and eventually *'all those things resolved themselves and the work that I needed to do paid off as it does'*. Mark's input on the new curriculum area also seemed to be going well, which had been very satisfying; he had been buoyed up by a sense of his own progression and the feeling that after his NQT year *'it's kind of*

*nice to ... feel you can spread your wings a little bit*. His biggest source of support continued to come from informal contact with his colleagues: *'That of course makes your life easier when people are on your side and nice to be around. I like being in the staffroom, it's a nice place to be as well as the professional support'*.

Mark's experiences in the autumn term had underlined for him the importance of *'getting it right from the start with your class, starting off on the right way and setting the rules'*. Additional pressures at home had meant that *'I honestly don't come in with the energy for it some days'*, and he admitted that:

*If I'm honest ... I don't think I've been as effective as last year, I feel that I could've done a lot more with these children but I think that's not through the want of trying... I think the only thing I have to take on is to make sure I get up to speed next year.*

On the plus side, though, Mark felt that he had been able to establish *'a good rapport with the children'*, which he saw as key to being an effective teacher:

*a relaxed atmosphere in the classroom ... doesn't mean that they're doing what they like, relaxed means they're doing what you want them to do but they don't feel stressed about it ... because if they're relaxed they'll learn, if they're not they won't.*

He was becoming increasingly aware of the need to pace himself:

*If you're not going to go under, I think you have to live in the real world ... sometimes you've got to say stop and ... prioritise ... In some ways it's probably quite good that maybe in the future I won't do things that I would've done in the past because I think it makes you really think about when something is important.*

Looking back on his GTP and NQT provision, Mark now saw a far greater need for it to include advice on practical skills - *'planning lessons and units of work and things like that'* - to provide more support for beginning teachers in coping with the ongoing challenge of workload. Another concern that he saw as affecting all teachers *'in terms of hindering and holding back'* their work, was *'the amount of stuff that keeps getting added in'*, when *'the curriculum is already full to brimming'*: *'I think that's what's causing a lot of stress for teachers, lowering the quality of what you're doing because you're just trying to cram everything in ... box ticked, done that subject, covered that area, done ancient Greece'*.

Overall Mark experienced his third year of teaching as a period of stabilisation. He was still conscious of support from a range of sources: helpful colleagues, a new focus in the school on peer observation, and a proactive approach from his line manager that linked performance management observations to recommendations for courses or other opportunities:

*I think sometimes performance management can be "right, this is what you need to do, this is what you did wrong, here are a few pointers, off you go", and of course that is a part of it ...but...by actually giving us some solutions as well ... I think it works really well. I've been really pleased with it this year, definitely.*

The one major change for Mark was taking on a new and younger year group, *'quite a big learning curve'* but one that had clearly stimulated his thinking about the need to be *'constantly on the lookout for words that you've used, language that you need to explain'*. He had also become aware of the importance to younger children of lesson structure: *'You've got to think about what you are doing, you've got to know what you are doing all the time and be prepared in advance and be thinking not about what you are doing but about how you are going to do it'*.

Mark continued to manage the additional activities he was already involved in, and was now leading a network of local schools, including his own, in developing the new subject area. He was also using his interest in a personal hobby to support a colleague who had set up a club for the children – *'it is more time but it is so rewarding'* – and had found some aspects of this a satisfying new outlet for his management skills. Playing to his strengths in this way, Mark was increasingly conscious of developing his own teaching style, something he found essential:

*I'm not pro-revolution, but I think you have to do things in your own style and be yourself absolutely. If you're not yourself I don't think you would be a good teacher and that's what's great with the kids, they will get different characters ... The teacher who is a bit of a comic ... or the other one who is really organised or whatever ... Hopefully children can draw from these different experiences.*

Mark summarised his fourth year of teaching as *'Good'*. His class teaching had been satisfying and he had been working together with his own and other head teachers on developing the local subject network, which was thriving. He had also learned that in the following year his ongoing work in this area would be receiving financial recognition: as Mark reported with evident satisfaction, the head teacher had told him *'What you're doing is good and that will carry on. I think that needs to be matched now'*.

By the end of his fourth year in teaching, Mark could say with confidence that he felt himself an effective teacher, and described with satisfaction the impact he had made on the school. He was managing his workload in a more balanced way, and spoke enthusiastically of what he saw as the rewards of teaching:

*Seeing the children grow and change ... starting to come together and really flourish ... some children who were very quiet and weren't making much of a contribution but who've come out of themselves and are much more confident ... their knowledge, what they've learnt as well, obviously that's crucial ... I enjoy the working environment ... doing things outside of the classroom, working with colleagues.*

Reviewing the past five years, he could say that *'I think it was the right decision, definitely'*.

### **10.3 Ruth's story: passionate about working with children**

Like Mark, Ruth had carefully researched her training route, and her four-year BA QTS enabled her to build on her BTEC in nursery nursing through a focus on early years teaching. It also laid firm foundations for her continued learning, especially by enabling her to understand and value the relationship between 'theory' and 'practice'. During her NQT year Ruth felt well supported in her professional development by her mentor and her own choice of courses, but even more important in her view was the support and praise she received from colleagues. At this stage Ruth still felt very young and found it hard to deal with parents, but as she matured and became more confident, the open and proactive environment of her school encouraged her to introduce new activities. As in Mark's case, these were at whole-school level; like Mark, too, Ruth laid

stress on striving to preserve a healthy work-life balance. In this context Ruth's ambitions to travel for a time can be seen as a form of sabbatical; her commitment to the education of young children seems lifelong.

### 10.3.1 Ruth's motivations and initial choices

Rather than 'A' levels Ruth took a BTEC diploma in nursery nursing. She subsequently considered a range of careers that involved dealing with people, but as some had a statutory age threshold, she decided to start with teaching and possibly move later, perhaps into social work. Both school and BTEC placement experiences had taught her *'where my heart was really'*, so she chose to focus on early years studies, and applied for a four year BAQTS at a university whose stringent entrance requirements she saw as denoting a high quality course.

Ruth was under no illusions about the nature of the career she would eventually undertake:

*The workload's massive, the pressure, the money – obviously you can only progress so far and then you have to move sideways to go further, salary-wise ... I knew it wasn't going to be the easy option, but all of the drawbacks seem to pale into insignificance really compared with the benefits... of having your own class, of having that sort of responsibility and the job satisfaction.*

Right from when she was young people had told Ruth she ought to teach, and although she attributed this partly to being 'bossy', she also felt she had some of the necessary attributes: patience, the ability to work in a team, approachability, but above all *'I care about getting good results for my children ... if you don't have that, that's not being fair to the children, and you're not being fair to yourself really'*.

### 10.3.2 Ruth's experiences of ITT

Before her course began Ruth had seen her future work as a caring role that involved accepting responsibility and *'managing the children and their little hives of activity'*, together with other adults. During her course, though, she came to *'understand the importance of planning and assessing ... you don't ... realise all of that because it sort of goes on behind the scenes'*. While as she had expected the course initially took the approach *'here's a good idea, you can use this'*, later the emphasis moved to *'developing your own philosophies': 'I kind of thought you'd be taught how to teach everything. But you're not, you're taught basic ideas and the general ways of doing things and then you're set free to have a go yourself'*.

By the end of her training Ruth considered that her course had given her a good grounding and she felt *'quite confident about going in'*, not least because *'the early years tutors are really quite passionate about early years'*, which had *'rubbed off on us all'*. In some respects, she thought that the trainees on her course were better equipped than others at the same institution: *'our group is the only group in the whole year ... that does a module on special needs ... and on working in multi-disciplinary teams'*. And Ruth was grateful that she had come to understand and appreciate the value of university-based work on 'theory':

*For example ... I was reading journals that were written by some professor on what is meant by social inclusion ... and it's not necessarily "this is what you do when you have got a child like this in your class" ...but ... you have got the opportunity to have your own opinions on it because you study it from a wide range of sources ... and I think that's important ... and then you can apply it practically in your school.*

There were some areas, though, in which Ruth felt her ITT course could have been more helpful still. For example, she would have appreciated further guidance in relation to the teaching of reading, and more appropriately timed job-search advice. Ruth also wished there had been more school-based experience to give a context to her university studies: *'They can go through the different documents with you in university, but in school you see an individual education plan being used with a real child, you can see what their needs are'*. She also felt that *'you are only prepared for what you have had experience of so far'*, and all but one of her placement schools had offered a relatively sheltered environment.

The teaching placements that Ruth did experience she found both *'horrendously scary'* and exhilarating; and they confirmed in her a wish to *'go younger and focus more on good early years practice ... that's the thing that's ... really got my attention while I've been here ... the theories of play and the importance of how children learn'*. Ruth was thus delighted to secure a post as a reception class teacher and she looked forward to *'planning my own class and being able to set my classroom up how I want it'*. Though she had little idea in any detail of what support she was likely to receive (*'we've never really had any input on that, this is what you should expect and this is what you should get'*), she hoped that this would include provision for a critical friend to observe her teaching occasionally and check that the children were meeting their objectives - *'I wouldn't like it, but it's important'*. She would also welcome the opportunity, perhaps at the October half term, to share experiences with other newly qualified teachers. During her course she had found it *'one of the most useful things ...to hear what goes on in other schools and what other people have done'*.

Though she found it *'quite depressing to think that the total of my debt will equate to about my first year's wage'*, while *'the PGCE students get paid for doing it'*, Ruth was still highly motivated: *'What makes a good teacher is to be passionate about working with children'*.

### **10.3.3 Ruth's first year in teaching**

From the start Ruth was conscious of the need to maintain a good work-life balance, and although she found her first year hard she also thoroughly enjoyed it. However, it did bring unanticipated difficulties: she had not expected to feel *'as emotionally responsible ... when something happens in the lives of one of the children... You're ... the person the parent comes to.'* Not being a mother herself made her feel more powerless to help, and *'very young'*. Another challenge was the added responsibility of working in parallel with two teachers who were job-share partners: *'because I'm the one there all week a lot of things fall to me to pass on'*. This she found an additional burden and source of stress, because in her view *'they should be working like one person and they're not'*. Ruth had known that because of the nature of nursery education she would probably be managing several adults from the start, *'and I didn't think it would be difficult, but it's really difficult to manage a big team'*. She now felt that *'on teaching practice ...you're sort of playing at it really and they pretend, they're saying "what would you like me to do?" but they know exactly what they're doing'*. However, she considered she had had a good relationship with her most experienced Learning Support Assistant (LSA), who had proved very supportive, and was looking forward to the following year when she would feel more in control and could more confidently introduce changes.

The year had brought its rewards, too: positive feedback from parents, and more importantly, her own awareness of how the children had progressed, as when one small boy whose target had been to write his own name *'had done a picture and brought it up to show me and he'd written his name by himself without anyone asking him to do it and it was just ...Wow!'*

Throughout the year Ruth had felt well supported in her professional development, both by being allowed to make her own choice from courses available for NQTs, and by other activities arranged by the school for the reception teachers. Her Induction tutor maintained regular informal contact as well as carrying out the statutory observations, but Ruth felt that the most valuable support had come from her colleagues, *'telling you when they think you've done something well and giving you suggestions and ideas and sharing resources'*, and from *'what you learn the most from ... watching how somebody else would tackle the same thing'*.

Ruth herself had been consciously proactive in creating her own development opportunities by undertaking *'things that I wouldn't necessarily be expected to do'*, such as banding and labelling books for a new reading scheme to ensure that she understood how it worked. She admitted that her CEDP was *'gathering dust on a shelf'* (*'I didn't find it useful when I left university and I don't find it useful now'*), but she felt that had she wanted more support for her professional development *'there'd be somebody there, definitely'*.

During her Induction year Ruth had changed some of her ideas about priorities in teaching: she now felt that flexibility was more important than thorough planning, especially when dealing with children whose upbringing had been disrupted, who were immature or had poor behaviour. She looked forward eagerly to the coming year when she would have more authority in dealing with difficult parents who blamed the teacher for their child's challenging behaviour, *'because next year obviously if someone said "Well I think it's you" I would confidently think "Well I know it's not!" whereas all this year I was thinking ... maybe it is'*. Overall, in fact, *'I can't wait'*.

#### **10.3.4 Ruth's second year of teaching and beyond**

During Ruth's second year of teaching she could see the focus of what she was doing beginning to shift from *'just your own class'* toward a more whole-school view. This came about both through her increasing involvement in after-school clubs, and also from her new roles as coordinator for two curriculum areas, and as teacher responsible for transition between year groups. In addition, at this school *'nearly all the decisions really are made at whole school level'*. This was not merely tokenistic: *'the management team are really good at taking things on board'*, and even as an NQT Ruth felt her suggestions were taken seriously.

Ruth was now growing in confidence (*'it's been nice to have a bit more of a clue what I'm doing this year'*) and enjoying the freedom to innovate. Still working in Reception, but now alongside a colleague who was far more senior but had less experience with this key stage, Ruth enjoyed being consulted as the expert and having a major input into planning. The school was beginning to get LEA recognition for good practice in Year 1, and she was looking forward to moving to this year group in the following September to continue the work, making this *'a bit of an area for excellence ... hopefully'*. She had also enjoyed organising fund raising and parents' events, including craft workshops with the children, *'giving our parents expertise in things they could do at home'*, though she freely admitted that *'I wouldn't have attempted something as big as that'* (there were 50 children) without an experienced colleague at her side: *'she's been there to back me up but also to extend me ... and make me think of things that maybe I wouldn't have done'*.

Many of Ruth's comments suggest that this proactive developmental support was central to the culture of the school: *'There hasn't been anything particularly that I wanted to do, that I've asked if I can do and I've been told I can't ... lots of things in professional development meetings I've said I've quite fancied and ... my head is very good at making sure you get the opportunity to either help ... or to do it'*. Unsurprisingly perhaps, she had very positive feelings about her performance management review: *'in our school it's all very honest'*.

Ruth's shift to a wider focus applied also to her thoughts on teaching and learning. Whereas the previous year she had been focused on the reception objectives, under the influence of her experienced colleague she began to take a more comprehensive view of the children as learners, *'thinking about how they're progressing and what their next step will be even if it isn't with me'*. She had changed her approach to behaviour management, *'not just dealing with incidents'* but spending more time *'trying to ... educate the children about being better people'*. Above all, she had worked hard to ensure that *'my children now coming out of reception are independent learners ... they've got responsibility for their own learning'*.

Ruth's in-school relationships appear generally to have been very positive. She frequently referred to colleagues as friends, and made a point of spending her lunch time socialising in the staff room. She saw her relationships with the children as *'really good'*, while with parents *'I'd like to think they are'*, though she was aware that *'when you teach Reception, it takes parents quite a long time to trust you'*. This was something she had needed to work on: she described how *'last year ... there'd be a couple of parents ... the child would get paint on their cuff and they'd come in with all guns blazing'*, but now after her conscious attempt to build positive relationships they both regularly came into class for a chat.

While she remained strongly motivated and committed to teaching, Ruth admitted that she had days when *'like everybody, I hope like everybody, I hope it's not just me ... I think "Gosh, that was rubbish", what I was doing'*. At the same time she tried to retain a balanced perspective on what was possible:

*I always make sure that what I plan ... is thorough and [I] try and make it interesting and exciting ... and look at things from different approaches ... but at the same time ... I do have quite a realistic approach to it because it is a job at the end of the day and I think you could go mad and ... have your classroom always looking fantastic and all your resources laminated ... and you're working till ten o'clock at night.*

As she saw it, being an effective teacher included having a *'sensible approach to what you do'*, and consciously making time for leisure: *'going in fresh-faced and relaxed with the kids and enthusiastic because you have gone out for a glass of wine or you have gone for gym'*.

Her occasional lapses of morale notwithstanding, Ruth was confident that she was a more effective teacher than the previous year, partly because she had learned from her mistakes but more because she now had an *'understanding of the reception year ... from start to finish'*, and had *'looked at it much more as a whole process'*. While in the spring she had experienced what she described as *'a bit of a blip ... where I just felt exhausted and really ... didn't have the patience for them ... being a moody cow'*, she now thought *'I'm all right. I'm not brilliant but I'll do'*. While harbouring dreams to *'go to teach in Australia or New Zealand'* in a few years' time, at present Ruth was full of plans for her new class and *'really excited about next year'* because *'I really love the school that I work in'*.

With the change in her year group, Ruth found her third year of teaching was one that tested but also consolidated her skills. She had a different group of assistants to manage, a high proportion of boys (many of them boisterous) and *'some quite challenging children'*. Looking back, her verdict overall was that it had been *'quite a tough year, really ... behaviour-wise, but a really good year, I've liked working in Year One'*. As ever, she had always felt able to ask for help: *'it's a very open door policy sort of school ... some schools are like, you know, people shut the door and pretend everything's perfect when actually there could be a whole host of things that they're struggling with'*.

Ruth had attended some interesting courses (and run one for parents on children's reading), but her main source of professional development continued to be colleagues who passed on skills and techniques they had been trained in: *'I've learned from working with them and ... it's been brilliant. So that's another thing that's been good this year, taking the elements of those things and putting them into practice'*. The head teacher too continued to encourage and extend her, not only by asking Ruth to take on two whole-school initiatives in the coming year, but also by pointing out links to future career possibilities:

*If I did see a job for an [area specified] coordinator in two years and went for it, it wouldn't really benefit this school at all but she's really aware ... because [some of] her staff have been here since their NQT like me ... that she's sort of got a responsibility to make sure that she sends us out [fully developed].*

Ruth herself had begun to think that rather than progressing through the management route, *'in a few years I might like to go out of classroom teaching and do something to do with ... training'* though she thought she was not yet ready for this. Meanwhile, though feeling *'more stressed out than I used to be'*, mainly as a result of her increased responsibilities and the accompanying increase in her workload, she continued to *'love my job'*.

Ruth's fourth year of teaching was *'good but hard'*: for the first time she was managing the complex logistics of a mixed-age class (comprising Reception and Year 1), and was also mentoring a student teacher and supporting another colleague experiencing problems, which she found to be *'draining on time and also quite emotionally draining'*. One of the whole-school initiatives she was responsible for had gained an 'outstanding' from Ofsted, and another had led on to the introduction of a new activity in school and *'a really nice piece of action research'*, which Ruth had found very rewarding.

All these activities had increased Ruth's workload further: *'more people phoning you for things ... my pigeon hole is a lot fuller of things you need to respond to and courses you need to go on and audits you need to do and resources you need to find'*. Fortunately, though, she had grown much better this year at coping, so that *'by being organised, even though you've got more to do you've got more time'*. She was due to take over as Early Years Coordinator in September, but knew she would be well supported, since *'our senior management team are constantly aware of developing people who want to be middle managers'*.

Ruth was determined, however, that *'Next year will definitely be my last year at this school. I love it but I want to do something different so I'm going to ... get a TLR year under my belt and then I want to go and teach abroad or do something'*. Friends and acquaintances were launching out to see the world, *'and I think if I don't do it, I'm in danger of not [ever] doing it.'* However, Ruth was firmly convinced that though she might not always stay in teaching, *'I will always stay in education'*. Looking back to the days of her training, she commented that *'I was probably a bit idealistic about what I thought teaching was ... probably everyone when they first start are in danger of being a bit "I'm a teacher", like you're Mother Theresa ... now I think it's a job'*. Her motivation, though, was unchanged: *'I love working with young children'*.

## 10.4 Christina's story: steady progress

Christina had long been interested in education when she finally entered initial teacher training in her late thirties. Her early attempts in the voluntary field and later as a classroom assistant had built up her confidence, but while her experience was valued, her lack of an honours degree made it hard for her to gain a place in ITT. Eventually she was accepted for a GTP, and welcomed wholeheartedly by her placement primary school. Christina's decision to enter ITT had the full and active support of her family, but even so she found the year exhausting. As an NQT at the same school she was well supported by her mentor and head teacher and encouraged to pace herself, which proved to be good preparation for working with a challenging class the following year. Christina was subsequently supported in her personal ambition to introduce language teaching, at first informally, then later (with the encouragement of colleagues) across the school and beyond. Her approach was characterised by her increasing confidence, and a strong emphasis on the pupils' enjoyment - the key, in her view, to successful teaching.

### 10.4.1 Christina's motivations and initial choices

Christina (Chris) was in her late thirties when her family returned from Brussels where her husband's work had been based. Her youngest son needed encouragement to start school in what was to him an unfamiliar environment, so Chris went in regularly to support him; from this she progressed to taking a parents' course on the literacy hour, and then to a training course for classroom assistants. At this point her son's teacher told her of a vacancy at the school for an assistant, and Chris took her first steps on a career in education.

Chris saw education as '*a very open thing*': while in Belgium she had run an extension course for housebound women and worked with secondary age children in connection with her church: for her this was all part of a single continuum. After a 'taster course' Chris had set her sights on becoming a teacher: she was particularly keen '*to encourage children in language learning*', especially since she herself was fluent in French, but the '*niche*' she was aiming for was primary education. However, she soon discovered that securing a training place might not be straightforward, since the science qualification she held was a general, not an honours degree:

*Everyone kept on saying "In principle you've got the background of experience which should count for something but there's this gap in the degree". No-one could quite tell me what I should be doing.*

Chris made various unsuccessful attempts, first to be accepted for a PGCE, then for a GTP course that proved to be heavily oversubscribed; she even considered studying for a foundation degree. Finally she was interviewed a second year running for the GTP ('*definitely the best route for me*'), and this time was successful.

### 10.4.2 Christina's experiences of ITT

Chris was delighted that her prior experience had at last received recognition, and even more pleased to discover that this applied also to the school to which she was allocated: '*Straight away I was accepted as a ... full member of the teaching staff*'. She soon discovered that the school had other advantages too, in that it had recently received Training School status. Chris had deliberately chosen not to request placement at the school where she had worked: she had '*already gone from ... being a parent to a member of staff*', and had doubts about the wisdom of yet another change '*to be a member of the teaching staff*'. She also doubted whether the school

would be able to *'give me the support I would need'*. Although reaching her placement school by public transport was *'exciting. It's a bus and a train ... to get there'*, the effort was well worth it: *'my tutors know what they're doing ... so I'm really given a programme ... as close to a college programme as you'll get in a school setting'*. In addition, the school's training status brought it funding for supply cover and for in-house training, so that Chris *'had set times with co-ordinators, set times to meet certain people or do certain things'*, in contrast as she saw it to other trainees, for whom it seemed to be a case of *'we'll fit you in here or we'll fit you in there'*.

In spite of Chris's forethought, though, she was still uncertain what to expect of the course itself. *'I had no idea and that's what we [the trainees on the course] all said. We all came in with all sorts of mixed expectations'*. Chris, though, saw herself as lucky: although for her *'the most daunting thing'* had been entering the staff room for the first time, she found that *'no-one seemed to give you the impression of "No, I've got too much to do, I've not got time to speak to you". They're all very approachable.'* This had helped her to settle down very rapidly. She was supported by a consciousness of her own maturity and life experience, and felt very comfortable asking for help, telling herself *'they're an adult, I'm an adult, I need some resources or I need some support on an issue, I'll go and ask someone'*.

Having already experienced *'the preparation, planning, the resource side of things'* through her work as a classroom assistant, Chris was particularly anxious that her training should prepare her for *'the paperwork side'* as well. In addition, and (according to her) in common with other trainees, she felt that *'[we] could have done with taught sessions on classroom management ... straight away at the beginning'* before they had had time to make mistakes, and also with more guidance on how to assemble evidence for their portfolios. However, she could see that with such a condensed course *'it's just logistically very difficult to fit [it all] in'*. Chris frequently made reference to the views of fellow trainees when discussing her course; indeed, she saw sharing experiences with others as a valuable part of teacher preparation, not only at the training institution but in the placement school as well: *'I think it's ... important ... to pool ideas and get support from others so ideally I think you should always have at least two trainees in the school so that they've got the mutual support'*.

In terms of her own needs, Chris could not envisage that *'you'll ever get to a point when you don't feel you'll need training. There will always be areas of weakness'*. For her at present, these were *'my handwriting and my art work. I was challenged to draw a dinosaur the other week'*. While in general she hoped that in a primary school she would mostly be able to *'keep a step ahead'* of her class, she laughingly added *'Maybe not in art'*.

From the first Chris's interviews reflected this realistic approach, together with a feeling of quiet confidence. One reason for this was probably that she had been fully prepared for the year to be a demanding and potentially exhausting experience, as indeed it was. In an early e-journal she wrote *'tiredness and lack of time to relax and socialise is the main problem at present. I seem to spend most of my waking time in school or preparing, thinking or worrying about school, lessons, pupils! I couldn't say that I have a healthy work-life balance at present'*. But Chris had made arrangements accordingly, with *'massive restructuring at home as far as housework and delegations'* were concerned, and with the rest of the family taking turns at the cooking for six nights a week: in addition, *'Christmas this year will be organised by my husband'*. Chris had seen enough of teaching already to know that *'it's not a 9-5 job, it's a job that definitely entails more work than that and it's just something you have to take on board'*; she did not anticipate achieving a more reasonable work-life balance until after her Induction year.

As she reached the end of her course Chris could say *'I have definitely developed in confidence and I feel I can do it'*. She still felt that *'the whole aspect of being based in school has been very good'*, and pitied those in HEI-administered courses who (as she saw it) had missed out on *'being included in the full life of the school'*. She had been invited to stay on at the school for her NQT year, and described this as *'a fantastic opportunity'*, particularly since here she felt she could rely on getting whatever support she needed. While she was daunted by the prospect of having to keep up with the workload, especially the marking, Chris was now looking forward to *'being able to stretch a bit more and run the class in the way that I feel most comfortable ... and establish my own style'*. During her course she had become increasingly interested in different modes of learning, and was keen that her teaching should reflect this. For Chris a good teacher was one who *'will take on new techniques, new ideas, new approaches and feel really strongly about the children'*. Above all, though, s/he must be *'someone who enjoys being there because they [the children] can tell straightaway ... If you don't enjoy it then you shouldn't be doing it'*.

### 10.4.3 Christina's first year in teaching

At the end of her NQT year Chris still felt strongly that entering teacher training was *'definitely the right decision for me, and the right time'*, and that *'the GTP is the way to train'*. She also continued to feel that she had been exceptionally fortunate: knowing the school already meant that in this first year *'I know exactly who to ask, when there are problems or when I'm looking for ... resources'* so that *'although it's officially my first year of teaching it almost feels like a second year as far as familiarity with the school is concerned'*. In addition, her mentor continued to offer a high level of support, from ensuring that Chris received her NQT time entitlement to giving her throat medicine when she lost her voice. The LA too played its part by providing a wide-ranging NQT Induction programme that included a long weekend away with both serious and fun activities: *'lots of useful handouts, lots of useful information'* and a valuable opportunity to network with fellow trainees from the GTP year.

Another plus for Chris was that she had been given what she described as *'a lovely class'*, which had helped to boost her sense of efficacy: *'I feel that the children enjoy coming to school ... they never seem to want to go home at the end of the day'*. In addition, by the end of the year, though *'I still feel that I am spending a lot of time at weekends [in preparation], I think I should hopefully be able to see that becoming more manageable and less ... all-consuming'*. This was in part because Chris had been encouraged to pace herself, both by her mentor who had advised her to set herself specific and achievable targets, and by the head teacher whose stated attitude to observation was that *'she gets enough of an impression when she comes in ... and spot visits'*, rather than *'sitting through a prepared lesson'*. This approach had built up Chris's confidence so that though during her first term as an NQT *'I felt at times frustrated that I couldn't go all out the way that I wanted to because I just didn't have the time'*, she now accepted that *'you've just got to learn to do your best'*.

Even so, there were times this year when Chris felt frustrated by the competing demands of the paperwork needed for her portfolio, which *'wasn't as user-friendly as I had hoped it would be'*, and even more by what she saw as curriculum overload, resulting in a feeling that *'I haven't covered everything that I wanted to cover'*. She lamented that *'especially after a holiday, you would just like a few minutes to catch up with what's been going on in their lives ... these are seven year olds, give them a break'*. Overall, though, Chris could say *'I have been extremely fortunate this year'*, and was delighted that she had been invited to stay on for a further year at the same school.

#### 10.4.4 Christina's second year in teaching and beyond

In some ways, though, her second year as a fully-fledged teacher proved more difficult for Chris than her first because of some changes in her situation. What she had euphemistically described in advance as *'a class of characters'* proved to be *'extremely challenging'*: after last year's well-behaved group it was now a case of *'get me on a course quick, I haven't got enough strategy!'* In addition, where the previous year Chris and her mentor had taught parallel classes, she was now the 'senior partner' in the year group with an NQT as her colleague. At times this had felt *'quite a one way street'* with Chris carrying the bulk of the development work. In both cases, though, she managed to find a positive side to these challenges. She had benefited from trying out her full repertoire of taught classroom management strategies, and could feel that although *'I've got some who defy any strategy that can be given'*, at least the experience had been *'not as bad as some of the horror stories you hear'*. Although having the NQT as a partner had meant that she had taken on most of the lesson development work for their year group, it had also led to her developing an interest in becoming a mentor, especially after she had also given informal support to a student teacher.

On the positive side, Chris still felt *'highly motivated'*, enjoying her membership of a team in which *'we are all encouraged to give our opinion on things'*, and more aware than before of different currents of opinion in the staff room between those eager for change and those who placed great value on stability. Chris herself was on the side of change: *'I just feel that there's always a new challenge round the corner which you have to get your head round'*. She had been encouraged by colleagues to follow up her idea of introducing French to the school, initially through a lunchtime club, and could see how she would like to develop it further. In spite of these extra activities, though, Chris was able to feel that *'this year I've got a little bit more breathing space'*, even *'a little more free time at home'*, because *'the experience of the previous year benefits this year so I can build on things'*. In addition, she felt more confident in her mastery of some subjects and in her ability to bring about pupil learning. However, Chris did not want to become complacent: *'there's still so much that I need to take on board ... it's not the topics but the [subject-related] skills I need to look at now'*. She also continued to be very aware of *'areas that I know I'm weak on'*, for which she would have liked in-house training or a course. Unfortunately, though, and much to Chris's disappointment, for what appeared to be financial reasons *'we haven't been able to go on any courses'*, so that even a course that had been proposed for her failed to materialise.

Another source of regret for Chris had been her experience of working with a child with *'major behavioural problems'*, which had left her *'completely disillusioned'* with *'the way the social services and the support network works'*, and wishing she had had an assistant, even an untrained one, which she felt would have been *'much more worth the money'* than the advice she had had from professionals.

In spite of these concerns Chris was still enjoying teaching and looking forward to staying on at the school and developing her input on French, and perhaps also a mentor role, though for the latter she would welcome training. Although she could already see some improvement her work-life balance, she was also hoping that it would continue to change for the better, *'because it is very much work and my home life comes second just now'*.

Fortunately, by her next ('Wave 5') interview Chris was able to report that *'it's generally been a good year'*, and that after three years as a qualified teacher she still *'[got] a buzz from coming into school'*. In addition, her work-life balance had been better this year, thanks in part to her remaining with the same year group. She had also enjoyed a more balanced relationship with

her new parallel teacher: *'I've been able to work really well with my colleague; that has made the burden so much lighter. Even though I was still the senior member of the team... there's definitely been more of an exchange of ideas'*.

In addition to these developments, Chris had consolidated her language work, attending a course on introducing MFL and getting together with other primary schools in the area. Her efforts had been recognised by her appointment as MFL coordinator, and she had started to introduce related whole-school activities. At the end of her training year Chris had said of any possible whole-school involvement *'Having watched everybody else, I am starting to get worried. It is one thing to ... produce things in your own classroom, it is another thing to do it for the whole school'*. Now, after organising a big event with a focus on fun and celebration, she was able to report with great satisfaction that *'that was a real big success ... that made me feel really good that I was doing something, not even just for my class but for the whole school, bringing a different element into school, that was good'*.

Chris felt that through her whole-school activities *'my position in the team has been strengthened'*, especially since the head had given her unstinting support: *'as soon as I asked if I could do [the event] it was "yes", there was never a question of a no'*. As a result her confidence had received a further boost. Another new area of success for Chris was her appointment as mentor to a student teacher. While training still seemed to be *'actively discouraged'* in the school as a whole, Chris had at last received the mentor training she had hoped for since had she informally mentored a student teacher, felt *'able to give her a few points along the way'*, and found her own practice enriched by the experience.

Chris herself had been observed formally as part of her performance management, and valued the feedback she received: *'I think it's important to know that you were in line with the school and that we've got things that are progressing, and that they are seeing that we're all on track'*. In addition, though, she was conscious that her growing experience was enabling her to make a better assessment of her own work through a more informed use of test results: *'I'm seeing it all, putting it ... into position, and thinking, yeah ... they are actually on track and there's a few who I can tell have made progress'*. Speaking of how one child in particular *'was just going up in leaps and bounds'*, she commented with pleasure that *'you think, I'm obviously not doing it completely wrong ... that's nice'*.

In her final interview Chris described her fourth year in teaching as *'really interesting'*. A change in the school's senior management had led to *'a lot of new things to take on board'*, both in terms of restructuring and because *'everyone was given a voice'* in discussing the proposed changes. Chris felt that this year she had received all the support she needed, and (although funding for external courses was clearly still *'a big issue'* within the school) all the opportunities for professional development that she felt most necessary. She was increasingly taking on a role that involved her in LA-wide activities, and in addition her identity as *'the language lady'* was now recognised by children throughout the school: *'I do get a little bit of "bonjour" or whatever'*. She reported happily that *'languages generally is something that lights them all up which is great ... I think it's something that's quite novel and quite different and also to do with the way we deliver it, the children do enjoy it'*.

The buoyant tone of this statement is characteristic of our final interview with Chris. However, she also warned of her fears that, for herself and others, *'some of the creativity will go from schools if teachers get even more overloaded'* with paperwork, *'track this, track that, target this, target that'*. Even at present, and with the continuing support of her husband and children, she confessed that *'I do very often on Friday feel quite whacked out'*. Nevertheless, she was

constantly energised by *'the buzz of being with children and seeing when they're thoroughly enjoying a lesson that you're teaching, when you can have a laugh with them'*. Teaching for Chris was now a *'huge'* part of her life, but her original view of an effective teacher was unchanged: *'it's about having children coming in and enjoying school ... at the end of the day if the children are not enjoying school you've gone wrong'*. For her the rewards of teaching were *'the individual successes, when ... you see them blossom'*, as when *'there was one little girl who didn't like maths and loves maths now'*.

Chris could confidently say that *'I definitely see myself ... working in teaching for the foreseeable future'*; she was less certain exactly what she would be doing. She had little interest in progressing along a management route, but much more in continuing her work on *'building up ... the MFL connections'* within the LA and abroad, and developing primary-secondary links through *'networking people within the community'*. Looking back, she could see that people and relationships had played a crucial part in her development as a teacher - *'I think people are always the most important influences on you'* - but also how even negative experiences had contributed to her development. Asked how she felt now about her decision to train as a teacher, she could still say firmly *'I think it was the right one'*.

In contrast to the relatively smooth progress of the beginning teachers whose stories feature above, the two accounts that follow (of contrasting but strongly committed teachers) display extremes of satisfaction and disappointment. In both cases a change of school offered the chance of a fresh start, but (initially, at least) with very different results.

## **10.5 Craig's story: the value of teamwork**

Craig was initially deterred from entering ITT by a heavy burden of student debt, and it was not until his mid thirties that he began his SCITT course, focusing on the primary phase. Craig enjoyed his ITT, appreciating the practical experience of the lecturers and the emphasis on access to career-long learning. He was also struck by the diversity of schools he encountered and the importance of teamwork. Craig secured a place to teach Year 6 at a school he had encountered during training, and determined to do his best to fit in and work in partnership with colleagues. For some time he was happy there, learning from other teachers and discovering a natural ability to deal with behaviour issues, which intensified his strong sense of commitment to the children. Gradually as Craig was asked to take on a range of management-related tasks he reached a point where he felt he was at risk of letting down his year group colleague or, more importantly, his class, and decided to change schools. Initially the move appeared a complete disaster. Craig found himself in an apparently dysfunctional school under ineffective leadership, with a culture that saw no benefit in the teamwork he so valued. His initial reaction was to focus entirely on his class, until the advent of a new head teacher brought change, and the hope of more change to come.

### **10.5.1 Craig's motivations and initial choices**

Craig, who belonged to *'a family of teachers'*, had long dreamed of entering the profession himself, but he was in his mid thirties before he finally applied for an ITT course. He had left college with considerable debts, decided to clear them before training, and *'fell into'* a job; but then *'one year ... turned into nearly ten'*. Gradually, Craig realised that the only enjoyable aspect of his well paid job was training others, and his thoughts turned again to teaching: *'I thought if I don't do it now - because I'm getting old - it will never happen'*. By now he had saved enough to keep up mortgage payments, and his wife had accepted the move because she knew he was unhappy at work, but this was still a major decision to take. Craig was well aware of negative

media comments on schools and complaints from his friends about *'the overload of try this and try that'*, but he reasoned to himself that *'it can't be that bad, otherwise they'd stop doing it'*. Nevertheless, he experienced a nagging *'fear of it being a bad choice and [of thinking] "why didn't I stay where I was?"'* Teacher friends assured him that he was well suited to the profession, but in order to avoid *'coming along with rose-tinted spectacles'*, Craig resigned from his job and devoted several months to working as a volunteer with young people. Right from the start, and although *'it was very scary on those first few ... volunteer days'*, Craig found that *'I didn't feel out of place ... it felt very natural to be there. That's what really made me think I could do it'*. In the course of confronting his fears Craig also realised that for him the primary phase would be *'the place to be'*. His next step was to explore a range of courses and local providers, and he soon decided to try for a SCITT course, since he felt this would answer his perceived needs to *'spend more time in classrooms'*, but become used to them through *'a gradual process'*. He also wanted *'a course that wasn't too large'*, so that participants and teacher educator-academics could know each other as individuals. Craig was successful in gaining a place on the course of his choice, and finally, ten months after leaving work, embarked on his training.

### 10.5.2 Craig's experiences of ITT

From the start, Craig saw his choice of ITT route and provider as *'certainly the best course for me'*. He particularly valued his encounters with *'hands-on people that were teaching'*, and his exposure to a *'groundwork of different teaching styles and ... teacher strategies'* on which to base his own practice. He attributed the resulting breadth of course content to *'being with lecturers that ... have tried all these things'*, and who did not see their trainees merely as *'empty vases being filled up with information'*.

While he most enjoyed the *'hands-on'*, classroom-based aspects of the course, he also appreciated the links that were drawn by lecturers between these and *'the theory side'* such as *'learning strategies'*. Craig already realised that *'I'm going to have to put an awful lot in still next year to carry on that learning curve'*, but in any case he saw teaching as *'one of those professions [where] you must carry on learning all the time'*, in order to *'keep changing and keep everything fresh'*. As part of this *'learning'*, Craig had got into the habit of reflecting: *'that was a bad day, why was it a bad day? Or that was a good day, what made it a good day?'; 'this worked really well, can I use it again in a different context?'*

One of the things that the SCITT course had brought home to him most powerfully was that *'every teacher is different ... they've all got their different styles'*; he was also struck by *'the diversity of the schools'*. This variety was especially valuable because he had had *'great support from everyone that I've talked to'*. From the start Craig's approach had been *'trying to pick out good bits of each opportunity'* so that he would not be set in a mould, and would begin his NQT year prepared for *'fitting in with that school's ethos of how they do things'*. *'Fitting in'* was important to Craig. From the time he started his training, he wanted teaching to give him *'that kind of professional understanding that you worked as a team... because no teacher can work alone'*. He was also interested in *'bouncing ideas off people'*. Craig was lucky enough to be offered several jobs, but the school he chose (one of his placement schools) was *'the first one I went to where I felt almost naturally at home straight away. I felt very welcomed and very involved almost from the outset ... I just fitted in, I think'*.

Towards the end of his course Craig had felt *'almost ... like a supply teacher'*. He was now looking forward to having *'my [own] class.'* While daunted by the responsibility, as an NQT, of preparing his new charges for the Standard Assessment Tests (SATs), Craig was determined to keep a sense of proportion. His year partner was a very experienced teacher and would be available to give support, and as Craig told himself, *'if they felt I was completely incapable of doing it they wouldn't put me in Year 6 anyway'*. Though he saw *'having belief in myself'* as a potential challenge, he also took the philosophical view that *'I'm almost bound to make mistakes'* but also that *'at the end of the day we learn from those mistakes, as long as you take the positives'*. One such 'positive' for Craig had been his experience of struggling to convey a concept to a Year 1 child, and finally deciding to change his teaching strategy:

*suddenly that clicked and there was no problem and away he went and I thought, he's finally got it ... That's the one thing that will always stick in my memory ... the light up of the face.*

Such experiences help to explain why Craig now felt *'I should never have worked in industry for all that time ... now ... I'm in something that I really enjoy doing'*.

### 10.5.3 Craig's first year in teaching

A year later, the end of Craig's time as an NQT found him *'shattered but ... happy'*. He had had *'quite a successful year'*, with good SATs results, and was already looking forward to the coming autumn term. He was aware that his workload would increase once he was fully qualified, but so far his work-life balance had been better than he expected, partly because of his policy of coming in early and staying on after school in order to avoid as far as possible the need to take work home. In fact he had found the year *'an awful lot easier and an awful lot better'* than the previous one. Craig attributed this in part to his colleagues: *'I think the support in the school has helped ... there have been that many people around to help'*.

Craig was still delighted with his choice: *'To my mind it's a very friendly school'*. As a result of staff changes, Craig and his Year 6 partner were the only male teachers in the school, and the two (and increasingly Craig himself) took on the responsibility for dealing with behaviour issues. Craig found that *'I get children sent to me ... from nursery up ... we'll have a quick chat and I'll calm them down before they go back, and find out the reasons behind it'*. When asked earlier about his suitability for teaching Craig had described himself as *'very calm and patient'*, but some of his comments also suggest an empathy with his pupils born of compassion: one of his e-journal entries refers to a 'low' related to *'children with very difficult home lives who bring into the class a lot of baggage at a very young age'*, and *'parents who don't seem to care at all about their children'*.

By the end of his NQT year Craig realised that *'I seem to have slipped into the behaviour role'*. While finding the situation *'quite bizarre'*, he seemed happy to accept it: *'I suppose I've just gone in and just helped out as much as I can with whatever I've been asked to do. Never thought ... "Should I be doing this as an NQT?" I just got on with it'*. His first year partner's departure had been followed by a series of temporary staffing arrangements, so that Craig had had to adjust to some *'very, very different ways of working'*, but the eventual result of this had been that *'I've made my own little path now and I'm quite happy doing it my own way ... I've had ... different role models, that's been great from a professional development point of view ... much as it was a bit of a hassle to change, it's been great in that respect'*. While his only activity specifically for NQTs had been an Induction day run by the LA, Craig had participated in various training activities arranged by his school, and had used some of his statutory non-contact time to observe younger

classes, and especially to expand his own thinking on creative activities for Key Stage 2: *'sometimes I think the children still need it'*.

Beyond these specific activities, Craig had received *'support from everyone, really'*, including the TAs (*'they know the school, they know the children, it's good to have that kind of insight from them'*). He had also done his own *'bits of reading, bits of research'*, partly in order to reassure himself that he was *'doing a decent job'*, partly for new ideas: overall this had *'made me think that yeah, I am doing OK'* but also alerted him to new and more creative ways of working. He introduced more 'hands-on' learning, especially in science, and decided that his aim for the next Year 6 would be to *'get them to think a bit more'*: as he argued, *'In KS2 they've got to do it. If they don't try it they'll never remember it, even if they are writing it down, they won't be able to apply it'*.

With support all round and his own interests to stimulate him, Craig's Induction had been a virtually seamless experience, especially once his mentor had become his year partner. Before that change occurred they had occasionally discussed his CEDP; after it, *'we never got round to [it] and we never needed to'*. As a result, in Craig's view *'if ... you're happy with the school you're in and happy with what you're doing then maybe you don't need that folder'*, though he could see that in other circumstances it might serve as a useful fallback mechanism for those not receiving their entitlement. The main thing Craig thought he had learned from his Induction year was the importance of a holistic approach to his class's needs: *'you're not just teaching them the academic stuff, you've got to teach them ... social and life skills as well ... to round them as human beings, really'*. He was already planning to work on self-esteem with his new Year 6, linked closely to their work: *'They need a lot of building up I think. They're quite down in the dumps, they're going to need a good kick and a "you can do this". There's going to be a lot of work on that ... I really can't wait!'*

#### **10.5.4 Craig's second year in teaching and beyond**

In some ways Craig found his second year *'tough'*, both for personal reasons unconnected with the school, and because a change in senior management had, as he put it, failed to *'gel'*. This had resulted in additional workload for Craig and his colleagues, in terms of both teaching time and responsibilities, as they tried to *'keep things rolling'*. Craig himself had *'been asked to do more and more management things'*, and had *'had to do a lot more than I ever thought I would have to do this year'*. Because of the changes *'there has been no working together'*, and so his year group responsibilities had also been exceptionally heavy. (Later, he realised that this was due to a new colleague who *'came from a school where no one had worked together'* and so *'just couldn't'*.) Nonetheless, Craig was *'really glad I stayed in the same school'*, and with the same year group, which gave him the chance to *'consolidate'* those strategies that had been successful, and *'work on the things that didn't work ... so well and ... change things around'*. He was happy with the SATs results his class achieved, and had been encouraged by seeing *'how other people come together to help you'*. Looking back he could see how *'working with experienced staff members has been invaluable over the past few months'*. In particular, he had learned a great deal from colleagues with a subject specialism who came in to help with his class: *'it's a subject they love, and to see them teaching that, it gives you more confidence to say ... I could ...pick that bit out and use that in my teaching'*.

Craig himself had been asked to take on a coordinator's role after a colleague left, and had valued the course he attended in preparation: *'Some excellent examples of good practice which I started using straight away. Gone down a storm!'* he e-mailed enthusiastically. In general, though, his increased workload had left him too busy to think about additional training: *'when you are teaching full-time it's very very difficult to ... turn around and say "Oh, wouldn't it be great if I could do this?" Because you solely concentrate on what you are doing and ... getting through the day'*. Overall Craig felt that he had *'a good relationship with the head'*, who had been *'very supportive'*; however, he was aware that the promised provision of support for two major training objectives identified in his performance review had not materialised.

Partly because of the increased pressure, Craig was now *'finding it very hard to switch off'*, especially during the period when the class was working towards SATs: *'by the time I get home in the evening, I am good for nothing'*. He wondered whether this was *'a Year 6 thing'*, and related it to his empathy with the children, who were also *'shattered'* after SATs:

*you take a lot more home with you and you bring a lot more in because it is a very personal job. And you have got to give some aspect of yourself over to the class as well. They can't see you as an automaton at the front who just kind of teaches, you have to be a person as well.*

Looking back on his time in industry, he reflected that there *'you would have just gone in; you would have done your job and gone'*, and realised how much he had changed. Craig was determined that the following year he would *'force myself to do things'* at weekends and during the holidays, *'and not be a hermit or a cabbage'*.

It was fortunate that Craig managed to keep this resolution, as at times during his third year his workload was *'enormous'*. His most positive experience had been having a permanent year partner for the first time, and finding that they made a good team: *'we work well with the children in different areas ... we have brought different strengths into it'*. At the same time, though, Craig had been asked to take on some performance management responsibilities, as well as acting as a phase leader (with hindsight, he thought he had been *'asked to do too much too soon'*). The *'job spec'* he was given was *'the woolliest I've ever seen in my life ... basically any roles and responsibilities that I was deemed to be ... useful for'*, including attendance at senior management meetings: *'everything as well as the day-to-day job'*. When the demands on his time grew to a point where *'I just didn't think I was being fair to my year partner and I didn't think I was being fair to my class'*, Craig resigned from the post in order to concentrate on his teaching. Even in this area he was becoming frustrated, because he was not only denied any training he requested, but was not even allowed free time to visit other schools to observe interesting practice: *'I asked if I could get over just for a morning and it was basically a flat no'*. His attempts to arrange group training for the subject he coordinated had met with a similar response, with the result that *'I just feel as though I've been blocked every time and ... OK, well if that's going to be the way then [it's] time to find another school and move on'*.

Even after this decision Craig's job satisfaction remained *'big'*, and at times he almost questioned his resignation. *'It is a great school, great bunch of people who ... work here. And the kids are great as well'*. But though the school he was moving to had far lower results, it was in the process of making major changes supported by a generous budget, and had a number of new staff due to come into post. Craig was now *'a bit more confident with my abilities in Year 6'* and fancied a challenge, though his longer-term ambitions were unclear. His experience with *'that phase job'* had convinced him that a management route was not for him: *'I just want to be in the classroom ... enjoying being with the children, teaching the children and try[ing] to get as*

*much out of them [as I can]*. At one stage he had *'wanted to be a head or a deputy, but then I think they don't spend time with the children'*: for Craig, *'that's not really teaching'*. Classroom teaching was still the focus of his ambitions, and the source of his rewards: *'even on the very worst days, I never ... think I don't want to do this any more'*.

Craig's motivation was certainly tested in his fourth year after qualifying. His verdict on his first term at his new school was *'horrendous'*, though things improved in January and again after Easter when a new head teacher came into post. The major problem for Craig was that *'it was hard to go from a school where everyone works together in the same direction to ... a school where ... everyone works in different directions'*. Though he *'tried very very hard the first few months'* to introduce changes and promote more teamwork, he repeatedly encountered the phrase *'this is how we have always done it'*, which made him want to abandon his vaunted calm and *'just bang my head against a brick wall'*. Once again his eventual reaction was to think *'Right, I'm just going to concentrate on the class'*.

However, changes during the year brought in *'some fresh staff who are willing to work together'*, and gave Craig hope that things could and would change. He teamed up with a colleague to pool their skills on a regular basis by engaging in joint planning, and the advent of the new head teacher led to further improvements. In contrast to the *'pretty disheartening'* regime of her weak and indecisive predecessor, *'[e]veryone is much more positive ... people feel that if there is a decision to be made it will be made'*. In Craig's view she had *'released the budget'*: the result was more staff training, including some on different teaching approaches. In addition, *'[she] came in with a huge list of books'*, and was actively encouraging the staff to read widely. Craig described enthusiastically how *'September is going to be very interesting because the idea is we go ahead in a different way but it is a much more research-based curriculum'* with an emphasis on active learning. He was also pursuing his own lines of enquiry once more, sharing ideas with a network of training contacts and teachers from local schools, and participating in an internet forum for Year 6 teachers, still aware of a need to be *'constantly learning all the time'*.

This school had a high proportion of children with SEN, and many who exhibited challenging behaviour. One effect of this was that Craig *'spent a lot of time ... doing PSHE ... to try and get them to work together and realise they are individuals but in a group'*. He was aware that he was fortunate in that *'I don't see a lot of the same behaviour issues as other teachers because I am a bloke'*, and his very bulk acted as a deterrent to violence (Craig was not tall, but as he put it, *'I didn't get to this size without liking my food'*). He argued strongly that the school needed more male staff to serve as role models, especially since *'we are having to be more and more ... not just teachers but having to teach life skills for some of them as well'*. Throughout his teaching career to date, he had never thought of behaviour as separate from achievement: his philosophy was to work in small and feasible steps, to say to a child not *'you can't do it'*, but *'you can do it. And you can succeed ... and look how good it makes you feel'*. This was *'that positive building up'* that he felt so many of the children needed, *'particularly in this area'*, because while *'some get a lot of positive encouragement at home ... a lot don't'*. The success of his approach was a major factor in Craig's satisfaction, his belief that *'no matter how horrendous and crazy this job might be at times, it is so much better than anything else'*.

## 10.6 Jack's story: a flying start, two years on

Like Craig, Jack had nursed a long-term ambition to be a teacher, and trained through the SCITT route. As the teacher of a centrally important subject in a specialist secondary school, he experienced great initial success. This was so striking that an account of his experiences featured in an earlier *BaT* report as an example of a 'flying start'. Unhappily for Jack, though, the lasting effects of a family tragedy and a conflict between the requirements of his school and his Fast Track status led to almost unmanageable stress. As a result, during his fourth year in teaching he finally changed schools, and initially at least there were signs that this move had reinvigorated his teaching, and rekindled the strong commitment to his pupils that was central to his vocation.

### 10.6.1 The story so far

Jack began his School-Centred Initial Teacher Training (SCITT) in his early twenties, having '*always wanted to be a teacher from a really early age*', and so having carefully researched and prepared for his initial teacher training. His strong intrinsic motivations, however, did not save him from experiencing an 'emotional roller-coaster', and he talked of his early experiences of ITT as being like '*peaks and troughs throughout*'. For Jack, the 'peaks' related mainly to the excitement of finally engaging with his chosen profession, and to the satisfaction gained from seeing pupil achievement. In contrast, he found that poor pupil behaviour '*wears you down emotionally*', although the resultant doubts about his career choice were eventually dispelled by the realisation that he was '*making a difference*'. The other main factor identified by Jack as having contributed to the 'troughs' was the heavy workload involved in the '*long ... arduous journey*' of his training, which had had a '*massive impact*' both '*physically and mentally*'. By the end of his ITT, Jack had come to the view that although '*people say teaching shouldn't be your life ... it is really*'. As regards his longer term career plans, he aspired to become an AST.

Jack was '*the first person on the course to get a job*', having looked for a post '*quite early on*' because he had had '*a clear view*' of what he wanted: a specialist school where his subject was an essential feature. He was looking forward greatly to his new role: '*I am just really excited, really excited ... I ... lie awake [at] night just thinking about my first lessons and my tutor group how am I going to get to know them*'. Jack's career got off to a flying start. By the end of his first year, he had not only completed his Induction successfully, but also taken over as acting head of department at the end of his first term, a promotion that was subsequently confirmed. Jack went on to gain an 'excellent' appraisal from Ofsted inspection, while his department was the only one in the school to gain a similar commendation. During the year Jack also led extra-curricular projects that won public acclaim, and was nominated by the school for the fast track programme.

Jack found his school as supportive as he had hoped, describing senior management as '*a joy to work for*', and the school's support for professional development as '*fantastic*'. Jack had received all his NQT entitlements including regular mentoring, observations, and a reduced timetable; he also enjoyed external training, and a personalised development programme built around his CEDP. He felt there had been '*definite continuity between teacher training and my NQT year*'. Understandably, Jack saw his first year's experiences as very positive, and attributed this largely to the recognition he had received, and to '*being so highly thought of in this school*'. He became '*physically and mentally exhausted*', but accepted this as '*just part of the job*'. Yet Jack did have concerns about some aspects of the profession, especially the rapid succession of new government initiatives, the salary and the status of teachers, and 'school politics'.

Jack's second year represented quieter, steady, but still rapid, progress. He reported running in-school INSET events, and initiating a departmental staff development scheme; and he was involved in, indeed was sought out for, increasing amounts of outreach work. Almost all those pupils taking GCSEs in his subject had obtained good passes (in comparison with the school average of under half). These achievements Jack saw as *'all adding to my portfolio for AST application in the next few years!'* In addition, he was successful in his Fast Track application. In comparison to his first year, though, Jack was initially disappointed with the support he received. He argued that the transition from NQT to fully qualified teacher should enjoy a similar degree of support to the transition from trainee to NQT, and complained that he had received little in relation to his Head of Department role, and that opportunities for external training had been reduced. He looked forward to Fast Track training as *'the most exciting aspect of the scheme'*.

Jack's earlier frustrations regarding the profession continued to trouble him, and he became increasingly concerned about *'school politics'*. Possibly as a result of these difficulties, and because he *'was finding it stifling at times'*, Jack decided to move on, and by mid-year had accepted a job, to start in June, as Head of Department in a new [City] Academy. However, swayed by the apparent dismay of colleagues and pupils alike, he subsequently had doubts, which he discussed with the head teacher and deputies. At last *'the school's support was absolutely terrific'*. Despite a certain sadness that it had taken his resignation (which he eventually withdrew) to create conditions in which he felt supported again, Jack spoke once more in terms of being *'excited'* and was optimistic for the following year:

*And it's almost as if me leaving, pre-empted this ...'ok we want to do this with you ... where do you want to go with that', and I thought, 'well, now they are taking an interest'. And I thought, 'oh ...' is that what it takes?' But then I thought 'I am happy here ... due to the reasons I've mentioned, and things ... really bode well for next year and I'm really excited about next year'.*

### 10.6.2 Jack's third and fourth years in post

Jack's third year in post was again a successful year, culminating in an appointment as a county AST, which made him feel *'very lucky'* and *'very humble'* and provided a (re-confirmation that this was the career path for him: *'I don't want to be an Assistant Head, I want to be working with young people and changing them ... yeah so that's all worked out ... in September, I've got a fantastic position doing exactly what I wanted to do and no regrets'*. Yet it had been a *'quite a difficult'* year both personally and professionally. He suffered a family tragedy in the first term which left him understandably shaken and questioning his priorities: *'work isn't the be all and end all'*.

Jack's experience of Fast Track, about which he talked at length at the end of his third year, had been *'helpful'* in terms of what he had learnt about leadership, but had also been a source of frustration and difficulties. Although he believed that *'a lot of what Fast-track wants is unrealistic'*, he felt *'stuck in the middle'* when *'the school wanted one thing, Fast Track wanted another thing'*. Eventually communications between his school and his Fast Track mentor broke down, which proved to be a *'massive hindrance'*. His mentor felt the school had been failing to support Jack's progress on an accelerated leadership pathway, although in Jack's opinion the school had been *'trying to put things right'*. Fast Track required him to move on from his Head of Department role in the following year, but no other suitable in-house leadership positions were available. As a consequence, Jack was *'asked several times by Fast-track to leave'*. However, as Jack felt *'very happy here'* and *'[didn't] really want to leave'*, this had *'caused some friction'*. Increasingly Jack saw tensions between his own aspirations and those of Fast Track:

*... for me Fast Track isn't about greasing my way up the pole, it's not about fast promotion, it's about me getting into a position where I can impact on the young people and the young people have always been the centre of my practice, always have been, always will be... Fast Track is very much about you progressing, not about the young people and the school progressing.*

He concluded that although 'Fast Track sounds a fantastic opportunity in principle', in reality 'it causes more friction ... between schools and the teachers than it should'.

Jack had also been frustrated by the 'horrendous' workload and 'paper-pushing' demands of his role as Head of Department, and indicated that he was ready to move on from the role: 'it just does not interest me in the slightest doing a fourth year of doing sets and doing timetables and dealing with parents, it just doesn't interest me ... moving one bit of paper that SLT [Senior Leadership Team] give you to the other side of your desk and back'. As Jack acknowledged, his heavy and 'relentless' workload was still problematic. He found it difficult to maintain a reasonable work-life balance, and this had been exacerbated by the need to work in holidays to pay mortgage and student loans, which, together with the aftermath of the family tragedy, had left him 'exhausted ... absolutely drained'. Jack was 'frustrated' by the fact that, given his position and in comparison with friends with similar levels of education and responsibility, his level of pay was not sufficient to meet his needs, and found this 'de-motivating' and 'discouraging'. Jack once more mentioned government initiatives as a cause of his frustrations, and gave the example of rapid changes in Ofsted expectations. But the year had had been rewarding too. During this third year in post Jack had undertaken new challenges, including a new whole school responsibility and new and different types of outreach work, which had allowed him to work with different people and 'opened [his] eyes in terms of how the school works'. As for professional development, he judged a Fast Track training course as 'very beneficial', and had appreciated the opportunity for development that teaching a different type of course in school had afforded him as it had caused him to 're-evaluate my own teaching practice and modify it and so that's been really interesting'. He had also had regular meetings with his line manager and acknowledged that he 'probably [got] a lot more mentoring than most staff', though he had 'had to fight for that'. In general, he estimated that 'in terms of ... supporting my career, the school have been fantastic... they really have', and acknowledged that 'there are very few people I know that have been given the opportunities that I've been given by this school'.

Nonetheless once again, Jack applied for a different job in his third year 'because Fast-track basically said I need to'. On the one hand, Jack wanted to stay in the school, 'my heart's here', but on the other he needed 'a new avenue and it didn't even have to be AST, just give me a, moving out of Head of [Department]'. Jack went to just look around the new school following the suggestion of his colleague a day or two before the application deadline. He was pleasantly surprised and hurried to submit an application on which he requested that references not be taken up, as he had not discussed the possibility of moving with his Head. He reasoned that the new school could be a 'possibility' if 'things didn't work out'. However, a request for references was in fact sent, causing him some embarrassment. Jack reports the subsequent discussion as follows: the head teacher had said 'I thought we had it all worked out', and he had replied 'Well, we didn't really'. Despite some worries that he might have damaged relationships with his senior management team as a result of this, he felt they understood 'that me putting in my application for that job was nothing to do with my commitment to the school, because it genuinely wasn't'. It was the fact that I was told there was less chance for me not to be in this position [Head of Department] next year'. Perhaps in part as a result of this episode, Jack was to go into his fourth year with 'no regrets' still in the same school,

relieved of his position as Head of Department and with his new AST role. He found it *'fantastic'* that he had achieved his earlier ambition to become an AST but mused:

*Of course the big question is 'where do I go after that?' I mean, if I find the AST fulfilling and satisfying and there's still the professional development opportunities and still the challenge, I'll be happy doing that. As long as there's still the financial reward and something in it that I enjoy doing. Of course the future with the AST route is still very clouded. Who knows I might go back to being a grass roots teacher.*

Overall, Jack's third year in post left him feeling that job satisfaction was *'not great at the moment, but that's going to change hopefully in September'*, and *'still very committed'*. Unfortunately in Jack's fourth year, things took a rapid turn for the worse. He still suffered from the familiar frustrations, but in addition, his AST role had not brought him the satisfaction he had hoped for, and he had not been able to undertake the required Fast Track training for lack of funds. He had also had some severe interpersonal problems with the new Head of Department, and suffered what he perceived as *'borderline harassment in the work place'* and a sense of *'being in Big Brother'* and feeling *'almost victimised'*. Well before the end of the year Jack had relocated across country from a small rural town to a large city and a new job as Head of Year for year 7 in an 'all inclusive' inner-city school. In an ejournal message announcing the change, he described his new school as *'an amazing school'* with a *'very different culture'* from his old one, and as being in a catchment area with *'one of the highest levels of deprivation in the country'*. The final interview for the BaT project took place in this new school, and Jack's considerable loss of weight was testimony to the stress he had been under.

According to Jack, his former Head and other colleagues attributed many of his difficulties to his recovery process following the family tragedy he had suffered the previous year. Although initially in order to cope he had *'thrown himself into work'*, in his fourth year he took advice to seek counselling and phoned the LEA counselling services. However, as he was told he was on a 6 month waiting list he decided there was *'probably not a great deal of point me having it'*. All in all Jack felt he had *'exhausted [his] shelf life'* at his first school, and that in his fourth year, after three years of *'dedicating [his] life to the school'* he was *'undervalued'* and *'completely sidelined'*: *'a big shock considering I'd had three years of being the blue eyed boy who could do no wrong'*.

Looking back, Jack had come to the conclusion that he had been offered the AST role because *'they didn't want to lose me as a teacher'*. He described the role as *'undefined'*, and felt he had been poorly managed (with conflicting advice from the Head and his new line manager on how he used his time). He felt *'unstretched'*, with *'almost too much free time'*, and recognised that his *'professionalism did go slightly off the ball'*: *'I was just going in doing the job and walking out again, it was a horrible place to be in, I wasn't happy ... professionally, I wasn't in a good place last year'*. This he attributed to his lack of challenge. He also felt that he was *'stagnating'* and had *'stopped learning ... not because I didn't want to but because of the circumstances'*, and reasoned that *'as soon as a teacher stops learning you might as well quit'*. This, together with *'the amount of pressure [he had been] under for a whole host of reasons'* led him to *'look... at a career out of teaching'*, research other jobs and seriously consider retraining as a barrister: *'I'm sure you did ask me three or four years ago, how long do you intend staying in teaching and I would've said "Forever, I'm a teacher, that's what I'm born to do", but last year I thought I'd had enough of this'*.

However, 'friends and a fair number of colleagues' had told Jack that it would be a 'ridiculous loss' and that 'so many people aspire[d] to be [like him]' that he changed his mind, and decided to move schools instead. As Jack explained, 'teaching was and is my life and that's what I want back, I want my passion and drive with the spark back'. Management at his first school supported his move and allowed him to use outreach days to begin his Induction in the new school, and leave before the end of the year. Farewell messages from students helped him see that for some of them he had had a 'life changing impact':

*On that last day I thought okay this last year has been \*\*\*\*, excuse my language, but actually I'm here for the kids and this is the impact I've had so it hasn't been a waste of time ... in terms of what I was doing for these young people, ... it really made me go to this job on a high again thinking I can do this and I do have a positive impact.*

After four years in the profession Jack was 'still very positive' about his decision to become a teacher, 'just a little bit more disillusioned and jaded and cynical'. He explained that this was in part because 'at the beginning you're trained to be creative and to be innovative in the way you teach ... but once you're in the classroom that innovation is sucked out of you because you have to work with more constraints that the government puts upon you and the school puts on you'. He also attributed some of his cynicism to being around jaded and cynical teachers. He expanded: 'I've only been a teacher four years and I feel like I've been in the profession forever, I really do, I feel exhausted by it'. Although he felt more cynical and recognised that he had 'lost the sparkle a bit', he was hopeful that 'a change of school is going to get that back'.

There was some evidence that the move had been a good strategy. Two weeks into his new post, Jack remarked:

*I think sometimes maybe moving schools is a good thing because it does challenge you and really focus you and I feel very focused, I feel re-invigorated and reenergised completely, exhausted but reenergised.*

Jack spoke once more of things being 'very exciting', and commented that in two weeks he had 'probably had more influence than I had in the last year at the other school'. Despite having been advised that it would take a year to get used to teaching in classes with 30-40 per cent of children with behaviour problems, he felt he had had 'one or two lessons this week that I thought if Ofsted came in would say they were outstanding so I'm getting there'. From having 'lost track of the kids' earlier in the year, he seemed to be once again fully involved with pupils and their learning, and more concerned again with contextually relevant educational issues such as 'when does inclusion become exclusion for those young people who do need to be stretched', than with his own frustrations. Jack seemed to have reconnected with one of his fundamental motivations for teaching:

*seeing the kids grow, seeing them develop, making positive choices and just seeing how you can influence them in a positive way, enabling them to reach their potential, taking them from Year 7 to Year 11 is just beautiful ... you're so proud of every single one of them, beautiful.*

And Jack made the confident prediction: 'I'll be here for the next five years definitely'.

## 10.7 Amy's story: isolation and opportunity

Amy's story is a counterpoint to Craig's in the way it demonstrates the importance to beginning teachers of having supportive colleagues. She was in her late twenties when she embarked on a secondary PGCE, after a mixed working career that she had found shallow and unsatisfying. Amy's placement schools were very different from the one she had attended herself as a pupil, and unlike the GTP trainees in this group of case studies, she found her position in their staffrooms ambiguous and isolated. In spite of some challenging pupil behaviour, by the end of her course she felt quite well prepared to teach, but her experiences in her new school exemplify the negative impact that being denied encouragement and reassurance can have on beginning teachers. By Amy's second year she felt she was overlooked and stagnating, with no hope of gaining the promotion she desperately needed, if only to clear her debts. Only when she started applying to other schools did the situation change, and the following year found Amy promoted and enjoying a lively sense of partnership in a department reinvigorated under a new leader. It was at this promising stage that her teaching was interrupted by maternity leave, a break that appears to have brought her a new sense of detachment from teaching.

### 10.7.1 Amy's motivations and initial choices

Amy was initially deterred from teaching by the advice of family members working in the profession, so that when she finally decided to train as a secondary teacher she was in her late twenties. Her life since leaving school had been (in her own words) *'a bit of a hop around'*, with time out both before and after university and a change of subject partway through her degree course. Eventually, after three years in a sales-related job that she found narrow and unsatisfying, she decided that teaching offered her both better career prospects and *'a very independent role in your contact with children in the classroom'*, and would leave her with a *'whole fund of memories'*. The aspect of Amy's work that she had most enjoyed involved motivating others, and this side of teaching appealed to her. She now felt that she herself had been taught her specialist subject *'in a very dull manner ... you listen and then you write notes'*, and was eager to make it *'appeal at different levels'*; she was also attracted by the pastoral aspects of teaching. In addition, her partner had just finished a GTP course, and *'watching him do that and really enjoying it'* had been another factor in her motivation. Amy however chose to follow the PGCE route, because she thought this would give her a more gradual introduction to classroom teaching: *'I felt that I couldn't go into a secondary classroom having no experience of discipline, of classroom teaching, subject knowledge ...'* She could also see that the PGCE brought financial advantages: *'the GTP is so, like, unrewarded ... I will get my bursary and then I will get my loan ... and then you also get your opportunities to get your golden hello'*. Comparing her situation with her partner's, Amy felt that although at the time he had seen the GTP as more beneficial financially, he too might well have been better off following a PGCE. She wished there had been some kind of table available setting out clearly the different features and advantages of different training routes, *the places to look ... I think it is not blatantly obvious what is available to you'*.

### 10.7.2 Amy's experience of ITT

Amy readily admitted that some aspects of her course had come as a surprise: *'to be honest I don't think I'd researched it enough when I came'*. She had been unaware that there was a professional studies element, and *'as far as teaching practice was concerned, I didn't realise how quickly you started it'*. Her first placement school was far larger than the one she had attended as a pupil, and at first she found its sheer size overwhelming: *'it took about the first two weeks just to get used to the volume and the ... number of children coming at you'*. The realities

of 'classroom control issues' also came as a shock: *'you can't possibly realise how frustrating ... that will feel until you are actually there'*. In other ways, too, she found her initial encounter with teaching *'a big eye-opener'* that led her to reassess some of her initial assumptions. For example, since her subject was likely to involve talking about thoughts and feelings, she had looked forward to introducing a pastoral element into class discussion. However, as she explained later, *'I didn't realise how uninvolved you're encouraged to be ... because of so many legal constrictions ... the pastoral side is a little risky in some areas'*.

Overall, though, Amy's initial experience of placement left her optimistic, confident that she would improve with practice and aware that with some aspects of teaching *'you have to find your own techniques and it can take time'*. One big and very welcome discovery was that the way her chosen subject was now taught was *'a lot more interesting than I could have imagined ... that was a positive for me, realising how diverse it could [be]'*. Nevertheless, although the teachers were welcoming and helpful to trainees, Amy found the staff-room *'a strange environment to be in'*, partly because *'you are not involved in the social side of it ... it's almost like doing half a job'*. With the pupils, too, she was very conscious of what seemed to her to be her ambiguous position: *'I don't really know what the pupils think that we are ... whether we are teachers, whether we are trainees, whether we are just people coming in to watch and I think the teachers and us ourselves are confused as to what to call ourselves'*.

In the course of the year Amy's concerns changed and developed from *'just the fear of trying to keep the classroom in control'* to *'trying to expand on the subject content as well as to ... find an interesting way to get into the work each time and to try and vary the tasks that you're doing'*. The course had encouraged her to *'really really reflect'*, and by the summer she was often able to find a positive perspective on what had seemed at the time a pretty negative experience, as when she spoke of one difficult Year 9 group:

*They kind of wore me down ... they would be constantly, "We know about you miss ... you can't even be in here on your own"... I was ... quite despondent about it ... and then I read some of their work ... I was really impressed and that gave me a really good pep up that they do take in a lot more than you realise.*

By the end of her course Amy could say that she felt *'fairly well prepared'*, more confident in the following year about her subject knowledge, and *'quite excited about doing something where I've got my own procedures in place straightway'*. With that eagerness for independence, though, came an element of anxiety: *'the fear that you're not doing the same as everyone else and hoping that you're operating in the way that the school wants'*. Her anticipated workload remained a concern: since she was still spending a great deal of time on preparation she would have welcomed *'a pool at university of lesson plans and resources'*. This would have helped not only by reducing her workload but also, and more importantly in her view, by providing practical examples of *'strategy and how we plan our lessons'*, especially since in her second placement there had been little emphasis on the formal analysis of lesson structure, but *'more of a laid back chat'*. Overall, though, Amy summed up her ITT year by saying that she was happier now than she had been in her previous job: *'I think I do a lot more work ... but I think I've got a lot of joy out of it and a lot of interest from studying the subject again'*.

Though Amy found *'the whole ... job hunting experience not necessarily that great'* (partly because she felt that she was frequently called to interview only as makeweight for a favoured internal candidate), she eventually secured a position in a large school with a sixth form, both features that she had been looking for. This school seemed to Amy to be *'very much more structured'* than some she had encountered, a feature that, as she explained, was very

important to her: *'I think definitely for myself I need constant nudging and I think you need constant training and retraining ... the new school seems to be ... supportive of that – hopefully – but they all say the right things on interview day!'*

The following year was to show her just how right that final touch of premonition would be.

### **10.7.3 Amy's first year in teaching**

Having applied to a large school partly in the hope of learning from a range of experienced departmental colleagues, Amy was disappointed to find herself feeling *'not necessarily in the department'* at all, stranded far away from the faculty room in an annexe on the opposite side of the site. The time and distance involved in reaching the main building meant that she had little regular contact with other teachers of her subject, and so, as she saw it, *'[hadn't] really had any day-to-day professional development'* even in the informal sense. Although senior colleagues had been *'really supportive and really helpful'* when approached, and although she had received a great deal of sympathetic support from an experienced teacher in a nearby building, Amy still regretted that *'I haven't been in the environment of a faculty room where they could be just feeding to me all the time'*. She soon became aware that *'as far as what I do from day to day, no-one really knows'*; this was especially difficult for Amy since in business she had been used to *'being constantly reviewed and told what you were doing, good and bad'*. As a trainee she had foreseen that worrying about whether *'you're doing all the right things'* and *'going in line with what they do as a department'* would be a *'nerve-racking'* experience. Now she found that *'when I did something wrong I was getting into trouble, it was noticed ... So that was quite hard ... because no-one was seeing the positives because no-one was around day-to-day ... I found that quite depressing'*.

Issues relating to pupil behaviour were another problem in this isolated environment, with added distractions from an adjoining room and no senior staff around to support her in classroom management. By the end of the year Amy confessed that *'I am quite keen to find out what it's like teaching in the real school because I haven't taught any classes in there'*.

Although Amy could not think of anything actually missing from her Induction entitlement, it appeared to have failed to provide the support she needed: *'there's no sort of after-care, almost, outside those meetings [with her mentor]'*, and though she had been obliged to attend an LA training weekend for NQTs, she had not found it particularly helpful. During her PGCE year she had naively thought that *'if ... every term you've got to choose a course that you wanted to go on that would be great really'*. Now, because of financial restrictions, she was not allowed to go on a course she asked for, and another that she had actually been offered to prepare her for teaching a new A level subject *'hasn't kind of happened'*. When she encountered problems with a boy with learning and behavioural disabilities who was inappropriately (in her view) following the normal curriculum, *'people were just saying, "Oh, don't worry, that's what they are like ... you are doing the best you can"'*, but it was only *'through myself going and asking about it'* that he was eventually given an LSA and changed to an entry level course. Amy was unhappy that whenever she needed help or advice *'I have had to chase it but I don't know whether that's the norm, because that's the thing, as an NQT you don't really know any better, do you?'* She now thought that *'if they could set expectations at the end of your PGCE ... for what you should be receiving in your NQT year, that would be really helpful'*. She even suggested that NQTs needed the support of *'a proper external assessor to come in ... just to see what's going on ... because ... it's very difficult for NQTs to actually know what should be happening to them... They don't want to be seen as ... requesting things ... all the time, perhaps when they shouldn't be, they just don't know'*.

Amy received *'positive feedback'* from her first formal observation by the head teacher and this seemed in turn to lead to a more positive relationship with the department, though she still felt that *'I've just gone along, kind of flat-lined ... I don't think I've grown as a teacher which I feel a bit sad about'*. Her continuing anxiety about this was revealed in an e-journal entry: *'I feel that I am only developing from what I do and not really from being surrounded by the good practice of others'*. Because she had come to teaching later than many, Amy was particularly *'concerned about developing quite quickly'* to make up for lost time. She was not only *'desperate to ... get moving with my career'*, but also to increase her earnings, since both she and her partner were in debt; taking on external marking because she was *'desperate for the money'* just led to additional pressure. The lack of career prospects was more depressing because colleagues younger than Amy were already in middle management positions, and *'in a big school ... you don't really know who are ... the right people to talk to ... so it is difficult to find out how to make yourself known'*, especially when spending your days in a far-flung annexe. In addition, as Amy revealed in a later e-journal entry, she felt bitter about what she saw as the preferential treatment given to a fast track NQT in the same department: *'I feel that promotion and management opportunities will be largely aimed at him first. The amount of work that he has to do to meet the fast track requirement is not much more than a keen NQT would be doing anyway.'*

Amy decided that she had to take action to raise her profile, so although she felt she lacked the appropriate experience, she put herself forward for an in-school bursary for which she had to make a presentation to senior management. As expected she was unsuccessful, but again she received *'nice feedback'*, and *'at least they could see that I wanted to do things'*. She also volunteered for curricular enrichment work, *'an unpaid role but obviously you get noticed'*.

#### **10.7.4 Amy's second year of teaching and beyond**

At the beginning of her second year of teaching, though, Amy was still in the annexe, and still felt her career was going nowhere: *'I feel that I am always overlooked for progression and ... offered left-over roles that no one else wants'*, she wrote in an e-journal. She started applying to other schools in the hope of promotion, and this drew an immediate reaction from senior management: *'they're very complimentary and talk about ways of keeping me and offering me more money if I wait and all that kind of thing'*. Finally the situation was resolved when a departmental colleague handed in her notice, *'so it all kind of fell into place'* and Amy was appointed a key stage coordinator for the following year.

By the end of her second year Amy already felt *'professionally ... definitely more confident'*. She had been on two courses of her choice and initiated a range of subject-related activities throughout the school, as well as acting as gifted and talented coordinator. Her aims in all this were *'to get noticed in the school and to keep myself more busy... Although I love teaching itself, I've got to be doing other things in relation to the school as well, just to ... have variety for myself and feel I'm having some kind of progression'*.

Though still isolated from the department base, Amy had at last begun to benefit from small team planning sessions. After the appointment of a new head teacher the school was expecting more change in the coming year, about which Amy was *'quite enthusiastic ... hopefully it should open up new avenues'*. She felt far more effective than she had done during her first year, better at prioritising and *'a lot firmer in different ways'*; she was also trying to manage her marking better, so as to *'be able to inform my teaching a little bit more from that'*. Reflecting on her own experiences, she wished there were some form of career guidance for NQTs: *'it would be nice to*

*have that guidance from a senior member of staff, together with 'more support for career progression'.*

Amy's third year of teaching not only saw her established at last in the main building, but proved somewhat of a watershed, both for herself and for the school as a whole. She described the joint impact of the new and *'forward thinking'* head teacher and a dynamic new head of department as *'quite an exciting time ... very positive'*, and said that *'the feeling within our department is that everyone's working together'*. As a result of *'so much change this year'* she could report that *'everything, how I feel about the school has improved and my department's improved, my job has changed as well and my role within that'*.

Although she had been eager for promotion, Amy's still limited subject knowledge and relative inexperience had given her some prior concerns about taking over as key stage coordinator. In the event, though, she had found that *'it's not really considered at all'*: given the school's high turnover, even she was seen as *'an older member of staff'*. She spoke with delight of how *'I really love my new role, I feel I'm very much more part of the department, I feel that I'm instrumental in decision-making'*. Thanks to what she saw as the inclusive and *'very positive'* approach of the new head of department, she could report that *'we constantly have meetings ... talking about things formally and informally ... and the personal ... and professional relationship is very good ... I feel it's been a great year from that aspect'*.

Amy's new and frequent use of the word *'we'* when referring to her departmental colleagues reveals how much her attitude had changed. Although she admitted that *'it's exhausting because there is so much change ...and that sometimes causes resentment'*, she also added that *'We've tried to make it very positive this year and make it a more supportive unit'*.

For Amy personally, though, the biggest difference was that she now felt *'people aren't waiting for you to fail more than they want to support you to succeed'*. As well as *'our previous head of department not respecting me as an individual'*, Amy felt strongly that *'you can't personally and professionally develop if you're not around other teachers ... if you're not part of what's going on'*. Feeling well supported at last, she could see that previously *'I felt very ... frustrated and restricted and I didn't quite know exactly what I was doing wrong ... and I felt very trapped by that and quite upset'*. The recent changes had made her *'more confident professionally ... because I've had the support behind me so I know that whatever I choose to do will have that support of the rest of the department'*. In addition, *'what I am doing now is ... respected so it's totally different'*.

#### *Amy's fourth year in teaching*

Amy spent the first part of her fourth year after qualifying on maternity leave. During this time her school continued to experience rapid change, with new approaches to assessment, a radically new timetable, and a structural reorganisation in her own faculty. After her return she felt she was fully involved in decision making, both at whole-school level and *'quite strongly'* in her own department. Partly because of her situation, she had neither requested nor received any formal support during the year. However, she was now confident that the structures to provide it were in place if needed, and informal support had been readily available. Looking back, she commented that *'because of the way I started off as a teacher ... it made me quite independent because the support for discipline and things weren't there ... so I think I maybe don't ask for support as much as other people'*.

Amy's initial interest in the idea of motivating others was still an important factor in her teaching. In terms of her career development, too, she now felt that she wanted to move further towards '*managing people and [pupils] rather than the actual teaching side*'. However, she could see that with the way the school had been restructured '*perhaps there's nowhere for me to go*'; as a result, she began to feel the need to '*start looking for somewhere else*'. There were financial implications in this: while Amy valued the security of working as a teacher, after five years (including ITT) she had '*only just attained the salary that I had when I was in sales*'. Amy was afraid that '*here I will get overlooked until it's too late*', a comment suggesting that in spite of the changes for the better, some of her earlier frustrations had returned.

More widely, too, the tone of Amy's final interview conveys a new sense of separation from her work, even of disenchantment. This might perhaps be explained, at least in part, by the cessation during her maternity leave of the daily contact with colleagues that had seemed so important to her. However, some of her comments also suggest a declining sense of her own efficacy: asked about her concept of an effective teacher, she replied '*I think effective is giving them [pupils] the tools they need ... but I think an effective teacher is also inspiring ... I think I'm effective in letting them achieve but whether they're inspired, I don't know*'. Of teaching in general, she said '*It doesn't dominate my life any more ... I don't think I'm defined or restricted by being a teacher*'. Talking of how NQTs are '*so obsessed about children ... or specific things that happen at school*', she reflected that:

*You know [as an NQT] you go home and cry about it ... A couple of years in it doesn't phase you at all, you might be a bit frustrated in school but it doesn't matter to you any more. Not that you don't care but you've learnt to become a bit more hardened to it.*

The previous year she had seen teaching as '*doing something for the greater benefit*', and felt that '*when I walk away from teaching in twenty ... or thirty years' time*' she would have '*all these memories, positive and negative*'. Now, though Amy still talked about being '*largely pleased*' with her decision to become a teacher, and thought it unlikely that she would leave the profession in the foreseeable future, her closing comments in this final interview suggest a feeling that for her, something was missing:

*I think listening to what other people do as jobs, could I have done something a bit more? ... Teaching is very interesting but lots of other jobs seem to get a lot more reward for a lot less work, not just financially [but] in praise and recognition and things like that...*

## **10.8 Simon's story: a need for support**

Simon was already married and in his mid thirties when dissatisfaction with his current employment and an uncertain job market led him to reconsider a previous interest in secondary teaching. In the early stages his SCITT training went well; with his mentor's help he survived a difficult placement, and went on to teach at a school where he felt supported by constructive criticism, and where he subsequently obtained a job. Simon found his NQT year a disappointment: apart from prescriptive guidance, he received little Induction support, and felt too ignorant of his entitlement to ask for more help. In addition, any meetings with his mentor were more reactive than developmental. From his second year on even this support fell away sharply, and Simon became increasingly isolated. There was no staffroom where he could get to know colleagues, and the school's culture was one in which information did not flow freely. Even though he struggled at times with classroom management, Simon was still motivated to teach by the rewards of seeing breakthroughs in his pupils' learning, and decided to look for another post. However, he found he had left it too late, and was apparently caught in a trap where his failure

to gain promotion in his current school was blocking his chances of finding a post elsewhere. In spite of his continued commitment to his pupils, it looked as though Simon might eventually be driven to leave teaching.

### 10.8.1 Simon's motivations and initial choices

Simon's immediate motivation to apply for teacher training appears to have been dissatisfaction with his existing job. Not only was he '*completely bored of normal working life*' and unhappy with '*the cut-throat of it*', but he had been made redundant twice in ten years, and now '*the job situation was looking a bit rocky again*'; the final trigger point came when '*someone ticked me off*'. However, one reason Simon gave for his dissatisfaction was that he '*wanted to make a difference that wasn't just going in, clocking on, doing ... as little as you could get away with and then going home. I wanted to expand myself...*'

In contrast to his previous work, Simon expected teaching to offer him the freedom to explore ideas and respond to individual interests and needs: '*I'm sure there must be kids out there now that are mucking about ... just because there isn't a deep enough answer. If somebody shows an interest in something I've looked into and I can tell them about it, brilliant*'. While his previous work had been tiring, he was concerned about the '*pretty horrific*' hours that teaching and the attendant paperwork were said to involve; still, as he saw it, '*Doing a few more hours and getting something from it was quite a good pay-off really*', even though the change would involve a considerable drop in earnings. Simon's explanation of his choice of training provider, though, reflected other concerns, and perhaps initial doubts. He had discounted a conveniently-located inner-city course because '*I'd heard horror stories about those*', while a local GTP course, though financially attractive, looked '*too intensive*' and '*just far too frightening*'. SCITT, by contrast, offered an initial month of preparation that '*gave you that chance to see if you would be suitable for it before you went in*', and what he saw as the opportunity to withdraw at an early stage, before too much time out of work. More positively, while to Simon '*being talked at for seven hours a day isn't much fun*', the SCITT course promised to be '*more, not hands-on, more hands-on mentally; it makes you more open to it, rather than just dropping you in it*'. It would also offer an insight into '*the theory and the national curriculum ... and how it actually works*'.

### 10.8.2 Simon's experiences of ITT

In one way Simon found his early experiences of ITT intensely satisfying: '*I have got out of it already more than I did in ten years of industry*'. However, many of his initial expectations were turned on their heads.

*I knew a fair bit from my job and I saw it that if you've got the subject knowledge, the rest will follow. The course sort of said, "Yeah, you've got the subject knowledge; forget that for the time being, you need to know about teaching kids", that's the difference ... You turn it round and you think, perhaps you know bugger all about teaching.*

In addition, while accepting that '[nothing] *can quite prepare you for going into a class*', with hindsight Simon felt that the orderly and purposeful atmosphere he initially experienced in his SCITT 'base school' had offered '*a very blurred view of what schools are like*', and prepared trainees only to teach in similar conditions. Unfortunately he found his (subsequent) first placement '*a horrific experience*' for which he was '*completely unprepared*', with students who were unruly and even violent.

These experiences transformed Simon's conception of what an ITT course should provide. He now thought that the 'theory' on offer should instil *'not how to teach but what to expect when teaching'*; it should offer *'a reality check'* that prepared trainees to encounter *'the lowest common denominator'* rather than just *'the best case scenario'*. The initial insights that he had looked forward to had proved of no value, because *'when you go into a class of thirty Year 7's, your mind doesn't even think about ten minutes ahead, never mind two months ago'*. In addition, the treatment of topics such as learning styles and differentiation seemed to him too limited to be of any practical use: *'even though we know about it, how you implement it, nobody can...we knew what the word meant, but we didn't have a clue about how you did it'*.

With the support of his mentor Simon survived his first placement and even felt potentially enriched by it, though he also felt that whether he stayed in teaching would depend on the success of his second placement. The stress of his experiences to date had left him vulnerable to a series of infections, and the workload had begun to dominate his personal life: *'I just feel so guilty for having time not doing the work, which is ridiculous really because you do have a life and you feel guilty when you go to the park, it gives you this immense feeling of guilt'*.

Fortunately Simon's second placement experience was *'absolutely fine'*, leaving him feeling well prepared and better able to handle his classes, so that his teaching was no longer *'just fire-fighting'*. Although classroom management was still a concern, he had begun to seek out resources for himself, focusing on books that offered practical advice, *'not like this theory versus this'*, but *'if this is happening, try this and see if it helps'*. While the weekly observation notes from his first placement had felt negative and demotivating, *'like they were having a go and pointing the finger at you'*, he was far more comfortable with the *'gradual pushes'* and *'little steps of encouragement'* in this second school:

*The first placement was more "You're doing this wrong, improve on this", and I think this is the nature of the beast for the first one. This [second] one was more "That's fine but you can do this" ... You were half decent and they were trying to make you better.*

However, Simon did have some criticisms of the way his course had been structured. He still felt that the main professional studies element had been introduced too soon, leading to an overload of abstract knowledge unsupported by practical experience:

*It may have been better sticking us in the school earlier and doing professional studies every two weeks or something [because] ... you can read all the theory books you like but when it comes down to using it, it's gone. You're concentrating on what's happening.*

More specifically, he regretted the lack of preparation to deal with English as an additional language, or with special needs; and for him, the advice on job seeking had come too late.

After going through the normal interview procedures Simon secured a post at his second placement school, and while daunted by the prospect of the hours, was looking forward to *'being on my own and not having someone continually sitting there'*. However, he was concerned about the need to update his subject knowledge in line with the curriculum. His expectations of support were not particularly high; nor did he place much faith in his CEDP, *'probably the shallowest thing I've filled in on the entire course'*. Although his mentor had been a welcome resource during the past year, he now felt the need for a different kind of relationship:

*Not your mentor exactly, but some one you could go to in confidence to talk to rather than somebody who has a vested interest and knows everything about you, probably somebody else a little external to that. That would be nice... you couldn't say something to your boss but you would say it to someone else.*

Overall, though, Simon approached his first post in a positive frame of mind, and with a sense that his training year had changed him considerably.

### **10.8.3 Simon's first year in teaching**

Although his NQT year had been *'very tiring, very stressful'*, for most of the time Simon still felt *'absolutely fine'* about his decision to become a teacher, and had in fact rejected a promising opportunity to return to his former career in a training capacity. He summed up the year as follows:

*If you split the whole year into quarters, the first quarter I was terrified, the second quarter was, - "I think I'm getting used to this now", third quarter, "why the hell have I done this?" (when all the coursework was due), and this is the fourth quarter and I'm like, "okay, it's a kind of downward slope, just let me get to the end!"*

During the year his workload increased unexpectedly when a colleague left the school; he had also found that he was expected to take a tutorial group, and to teach several sessions on a subject allied to his own but in which he had no experience: *'I had a quick review every week to see what the hell we're doing this week'*. By the end of the year, though, he could see that things were improving: in particular, he was spending less time than before on planning lessons: *'I plan, put down the brief points on paper but know exactly what I'm going to do in my head ... I've more confidence in what I know and what I don't know'*.

While Simon continued to find classroom management stressful and challenging, it had been a considerable relief to learn that he was not alone in this: *'I was assuming at first that they're noisy for me, they must be like little angels for everybody else and they're not. They're right little bleeders'*. His greatest support, which he particularly valued for its *'honesty'*, had come from an experienced colleague in the same department who taught nearby:

*If I say, that was a crap lesson, where they're noisy or whatever, he'll say "It wasn't very good, do this" ... It's nice having it that way. I don't want someone who goes "It wasn't bad", just say it was crap, do it straight, which is fine. The others have been kind of like "Don't worry about that, see how it goes".*

While in common with all staff new to the school Simon had received induction on procedural matters, he reported little provision specifically intended for the newly qualified, apart from work on *'chunks'* of the CEDP, which he now regarded as *'a burden'*:

*You fill it in as you're kind of supposed to fill it in, but some of the time it doesn't come out as strictly genuine. It's putting the things that you want to be read by people ... it feels as if it's kind of judged or assessed.*

As a result he had treated it as a low priority: *'It was "can you do this", "well no I'm a little bit busy at the moment". Then after a while, they just stopped asking.'*

While his mentor still conducted periodic observations, other meetings with her were largely reactive, *'mainly when things come up that are problematic or I don't know what to do, that sort of thing'*. Simon was beginning to feel caught in a situation where *'It seems to be, this is what we want from you, and do it like this'*. While he was unhappy about receiving only prescriptive guidance to suit the school's agenda, he saw himself as too ignorant of other possibilities to request specific help to meet his needs: *'because I haven't been particularly exposed to it, I don't know what I'm missing ... nobody's ever said, this is what you could choose from, I've never seen that kind of structured list or anything'*.

Indeed, many of Simon's comments at this stage suggest that he had neither understood nor received his Induction entitlement. He urged the need for:

*a programme for all schools to follow ... have you had meetings, have you been observed, have you been assessed and it's not just for you to write what you want, [it's] for other people to say "I think he needs that kind of thing" ... a structured programme that is imposed.*

Left without the proactive support he craved, Simon became increasingly self-reliant. Asked what if anything had helped his development as a teacher, he replied *'Me, I think. Doing it off my own back really. Nothing specific. If I've got a problem I'll sort it'*. He saw himself as having become more assertive, and more demanding that pupils should hand in work on time: Ground down by a constant struggle with bad behaviour, he commented bitterly that *'those teaching adverts [aimed at promoting recruitment] are a pile of crap'*. Instead, he suggested, they should read

*Do you want to be sworn at? Do you want to be made fun of? Then be a teacher. Do you want to take all this stuff home? ... Do you want to have real mega-stress when it's exam period and portfolio period? ... Do you want to be paranoid when a visitor comes in? ... Are they spying on me?*

On the plus side, Simon felt he was coping better with his workload; he was looking forward to completing his NQT Induction period, and intended to stay in teaching, though probably to change schools in the relatively near future. In terms of support in the coming year, he said, his greatest need was for [being left in] *'Peace'*.

#### **10.8.4 Simon's second year of teaching and beyond**

Simon had welcomed his second year of teaching as bringing him freedom from monitoring, without fully realising that this might cut him off further from potential sources of support: *'Now you are a qualified teacher the support that you would have got ordinarily pretty much drops away. Like a booster rocket on a shuttle that's the way it feels! It's just like there one day, gone...'* Left more alone, he felt increasingly beleaguered by *'the course work, and the marking, and oh, the hassle to get the course to be marked, all of that. All of the contacting parents about the naughty kids ...'* His tutor group was a particular source of stress, especially since he felt wholly unprepared for a pastoral role, and often kept in ignorance by senior colleagues of out-of-school factors influencing the behaviour of individual pupils.

These feelings were outweighed for much of the time by the intense satisfaction of achieving a breakthrough with pupils who *'think they are not clever'*, partly because Simon was now experimenting with a wider range of teaching approaches, *'things you wouldn't have risked on your first year...pushing them a bit far'*. While hesitant to describe himself as an effective

teacher (*'I have been told I am. I don't know how much I believe I am'*), he admitted that his teaching had become far more intuitive: *'the things I was struggling to fit in before I am just doing as a matter of course. Like you can tell three kids to stop swinging back on their chairs by just looking at them'*. He was looking forward to playing a wider role in his department in the following year, with more input into curriculum design, though this would bring with it some development needs. Beyond this he had no specific ambitions: *'I want to get confident with what I am doing and then think about it'*.

Nevertheless, Simon's isolation was an increasing source of strain. He had little contact with teachers outside his own department, partly because he lived in a different area from the main group who socialised together after school, but mainly because there was no staffroom in which to get to know people, and this (as he recognised) exacerbated his inherent reluctance to initiate interpersonal relationships:

*Not having a staffroom is bloody stupid, it just doesn't work ... you are just locked in your same old departments talking to the same old people ... you only meet other people at a meeting... that's the only time you get to mix really. I have to be kind of forced into it, if I have got the option to kind of shy away from it then I will. So in the staff room you go in there and you are kind of forced which I think would be better for me.*

As a result, there was no one Simon felt he could turn to to seek advice or even just *'let off steam'*. In terms of formal support, his Induction mentor had continued as his line manager, but was *'so pushed that if you ask to see her less than a week in advance you struggle'*. In any case, he found the advice offered unsatisfying and unhelpful, *'I am actually asking you for help and you are telling me what worked for you!'*, whereas Simon realised that what he needed was support in unpicking and analysing the root cause of a problem. An additional difficulty was the link between the potentially contradictory functions of support and assessment, which went right back to his training year: *'to your mentor or your line manager, you never want to mention any potential failings that you might have because you don't know what's going to go down in writing'*. Simon desperately felt the need for *'something else, like if you had something you could fill in, and maybe send to somebody else, another mentor from another school anonymous, something like that'*. As things were, he felt that the system enforced a pretence of competence, and he had no choice but to conform:

*I have got the acting down to a fine art I think, well most of the time anyway. So I am getting used to what they are saying about 'don't let it show' and all that kind of stuff. Don't let it show to anybody at all, let nobody know.*

Departmental changes at the start of Simon's third year of teaching meant that the greater involvement in planning he had anticipated failed to materialise. Instead, the new and more central organisation meant that *'if you're not in that close team you tend to get left out'* and *'don't really have much of a say'*. He also felt that being an outsider in departmental terms had affected the classes assigned to him, which he described as *'the dregs'*. Simon felt that he had become more effective, but also, because of the way the school operated, far more cynical. He now saw individual pupils as

*less of a person maybe, more of, 'you are going to get this damn grade' than anything ... It's probably not the nicest way to do it', [but] it gets them shifting an awful lot quicker than a gentle word in your shell-like, like you're wasting your time, you're not going to pass at this rate, get your backside into gear and get on with it...*

During this difficult year Simon's commitment, motivation and certainly job satisfaction had all *'decreased, absolutely plummeted'*, although he was *'still motivated for the kids'*. The way the school structure operated was impacting heavily on his family life, and he felt that his teaching was being repeatedly undermined by a senior manager who *'just popped in for something'* from time to time but seldom without interfering in his lesson or talking directly to the pupils. Simon decided to look for another post, but of the two jobs he applied for this year, he withdrew from one at interview and was rejected in favour of a *'cheaper'* NQT at the other. He now faced a fourth year of teaching in a school where he received little or no personal or professional support, and was known to be disaffected.

Simon could only describe his fourth year of teaching as *'horrible'*. A negative performance management experience and occasional barbed comments had led him to believe that his efforts to find an alternative post had made him persona non grata with the management, and that there was nothing he could do to retrieve the situation. *'You've got to treat people with respect haven't you and I don't think the management team treat me with respect'*. Inevitably this was impacting on his teaching: he could hear himself becoming *'very short ... with the kids ... overly sarcastic, awfully, dreadfully sarcastic'*; moreover he could sense his commitment gradually dwindling: *'I'm not as interested as I used to be in picking things up out of school time that I can use in my teaching ... the enjoyment has got less, particularly this year with what's gone on'*.

Nevertheless, although he felt that if it were not for his need to meet his financial commitments *'I could walk out this very second'*, Simon still did not regret his decision to become a teacher, and spoke with enthusiasm of the rewards of *'seeing some people come in with not a lot ... trying to build them up, trying to get them more skills and then making it really apparent to them what they know'*. He did not even regret his choice of school, but what he did regret was that *'I hadn't done a year here and then gone ... especially with no responsibilities which has been a big issue'*. Now he found himself in a seemingly impossible situation where *'I would be a very expensive class teacher ... I want the responsibility but because I haven't [had it] here I can't get a job with extra responsibility'*.

If Simon could eventually secure a suitable post he was determined to give teaching one more try; if not, he had reluctantly concluded that *'I can't stay here long-term ... I can see me just going back to [his former job] without a doubt'*.

### **10.9 Elizabeth's story: difficult beginnings, two years on**

Elizabeth's early experiences of ITT and teaching led to her story being chosen as an example of *'painful beginnings'* in our last research report. Married and with a family, she entered SCITT training in her late forties, in the hope of finding more stable employment than her former career had offered. Almost from the start she felt she received far less support than she needed, both on her course and later in her Induction year. For a time Elizabeth's situation appeared to improve, but she later became increasingly depressed by her workload and the continuing challenge of behaviour management. She received little support for CPD, and saw her previous experience of training adults as unregarded and unvalued in terms of her suitability for the promotion she craved. However, when she finally did gain promotion Elizabeth found the additional workload devastating, and felt she received no support from her departmental colleagues. After various unsuccessful attempts to change schools, she ended her fourth year in teaching still undecided whether to continue in the profession at all.

### 10.9.1 The story so far

Elizabeth began her School-centred Initial Teacher Training (SCITT) programme in her late forties, apparently fully aware of the reputed drawbacks of teaching as a career, including issues related to pupil behaviour on the one hand and workload and work-life balance on the other. In spite of her stated lack of *'false illusions'*, however, her experience of ITT and of her first year in teaching had been an unhappy one, largely as a result of these very issues. She described her ITT course as *'very hard'*, *'very stressful'* and *'exhausting'*, and spoke of being 'shocked' by the behaviour of some pupils. Again, discussing her experience of her first year in post, Elizabeth referred to the *'physically demanding'* and *'very tiring'* nature of the job, bemoaning the impact it was having on her personal and family life, and she also spoke of difficulties in dealing with the behaviour of some of the pupils she taught, including one *'Year 11 group from hell'*, whom she described as *'experts in humiliation'* who had brought her *'close to tears'* and on the verge of *'walking out of the school'* on a number of occasions.

Elizabeth's experience of ITT and (to a lesser extent) of her first year in teaching was exacerbated by what she perceived as a lack of appropriate support from her tutors and school-based colleagues. Her mentors in her two ITT placement schools appeared unable to find sufficient time to spend with her, and she felt that her subject tutor and one of her teacher-mentors had been overly critical of her teaching:

*They say you're supposed to give out four praises to every negative to your pupils but they didn't seem to do that to us, or certainly not to me anyway.*

This lack of positive reinforcement appears to have further undermined her confidence. During her Induction year Elizabeth expressed dismay at the perceived lack of consistent support from her Head of Department (HoD) and the absence of Learning Support Assistants (LSAs), who might have been able to help with her more problematic pupils. Nevertheless, she also spoke of how more positive relationships with other departmental colleagues and the support, in particular, of her Induction mentor, helped to *'keep her going'* in the face of frequent doubts about whether she should continue in the profession.

Elizabeth's second year in teaching was, in general, a more positive experience. Firstly, she encountered fewer problems with pupil behaviour, which she attributed to learning from her previous mistakes and being able to *'start afresh'* with a new cohort of pupils. Secondly, and partly as a result of this, she felt more confident in her ability as a teacher. Thirdly, she had developed more efficient strategies for managing her workload, aided by the fact that, having successfully completed her Induction, she no longer felt *'under the same kind of scrutiny'*. This enabled her, as Elizabeth put it, to *'cut corners'* by (for example) not *'religiously assessing and monitoring and marking everything that you get hold of because you don't know who is going to get hold of it'*.

In spite of these more positive aspects of her experience, Elizabeth found that the workload and pupil behaviour issues had not gone away completely, and she continued to express concern about these, as well as becoming increasingly frustrated and disillusioned, throughout her second year in post, about what she considered to be poor and unsatisfactory methods of communication employed by senior and middle managers in the school, which frequently left her with little time to plan and implement new initiatives. Elizabeth also bemoaned what she saw as a lack of support for her continuing professional development (CPD) and, in particular, a situation in which she was forced to *'initiate most opportunities for professional development'* herself. In addition, she was despondent about her opportunities for career progression within

the school, where she had been overlooked for promotion to a middle-management position and perceived that her previous work and leadership experience counted for little given her limited service as a teacher.

The upshot of all this was that while Elizabeth's experience of her second year of teaching was not as negative as that of her first year or her ITT, she nevertheless felt that she would not have remained in the teaching profession had leaving been a realistic option for her, stating that if she and her husband did not need the money then she '*would walk out tomorrow*'. In the circumstances, she decided to continue in teaching but to actively seek a post in a new school.

### **10.9.2 Elizabeth's third and fourth years in post**

Having been unsuccessful in her attempts to find a new post, Elizabeth spent the third and fourth years of her teaching career in the same school as her first and second. This proved to be a demanding period characterised by both highs and lows – periods of satisfaction and even elation on the one hand, and frustration and unhappiness on the other. On the plus side, Elizabeth felt positive about being invited to join a steering group for a whole school issue, she was told that the department's examination results (including those of her own pupils) were '*very good*', and she enjoyed good working relationships with some of her classes:

*I enjoy the older groups, I enjoy working with groups who I see more than once a week and you can actually get a relationship formed with them ... I've had some good fun with some of the kids, we've had a laugh at times...*

Furthermore, having been initially '*overlooked*' for the post, and after a lack of serious external interest in the national advertisement, towards the end of Elizabeth's third year as a teacher she was interviewed for and offered the position of head of department, which she was pleased to accept and (as we will see below) was looking forward to taking on.

Unfortunately, however, during both of these years the high points were overshadowed by the lows, and this was to culminate, in the summer term of her fourth year, in Elizabeth giving notice to resign. Whilst this decision was facilitated by the now more stable employment situation of her husband, Elizabeth had been driven to reach it by a combination of several factors. First, although, at least in her '*teaching classes*', she continued to experience fewer problems relating to pupil behaviour than during her ITT and Induction periods, the problem had not gone away completely. Hence, she wrote in an ejournal exchange, at the end of her fourth year, that '*[T]here have been times this year that I have dreaded going into tutor time as I faced ritual humiliation from them, and you feel so helpless when the class are laughing at you*'.

The second source of Elizabeth's unhappiness, which came up time and time again in her ejournals and in the interviews at the end of her third and fourth year, was the familiar issue of workload and work-life balance. Although, as we noted above, Elizabeth felt that there had been an improvement in this area in her second year of teaching, workload and work-life balance re-emerged as serious issues in her third and fourth years. For example, when asked in the autumn term of her third year whether anything frustrated her in any way in her work as a teacher, Elizabeth replied '*It still frustrates me that I haven't achieved a work life balance in this profession. Despite my best intentions I still find myself working a 10 hour day*'.

In a subsequent ejournal exchange, in the spring term of her third year, Elizabeth was asked 'How do you feel just now about your decision to become a teacher?' Her response read:

*[It was the] [w]orst decision I have ever made (and I have made a few). Workload is too much - classes too large, not enough time to plan, assess, write reports, mark homework, mark coursework and oh, yes, actually teach!*

Later that year Elizabeth was asked 'If you could give one piece of advice to someone considering becoming a teacher, what would it be?' Her advice was:

*Spend a year in a school working voluntarily or as a cover teacher or LSA, so you can see what it is really like. Then double the workload and stress!*

In the spring term of her fourth year in post, Elizabeth wrote, without any specific prompting:

*I want, and I need, a life. I don't feel that I have had one during the last 4 years – it has been a continual slog. Don't get me wrong, there are lots of things I have liked. I just feel very flat and tired at the moment and want to be happy and less stressed ... So far this year I have had to update the [self-evaluation form] SEF (twice), analyse Year 11 and Year 9 data from their first reports (last term) and write a report about it, set revision timetables for Year 11 both in school and after school, sort out department detentions, attend various meetings, organise times for an attitudinal survey to be carried out in the department for the lower years, plus mark mock exam papers in addition to the usual assessments, write reports for all years except year 9 and - let me think - oh yes, plan and teach my own classes! Too busy? Well I'm probably only doing 65 hours a week so I suppose I could do more.....*

Despite the serious misgivings Elizabeth expressed about her workload and the impact this was having on her personal and social life, in the interview held at the end of her third year (after she had secured the Head of Department position but before she had taken it up), she nevertheless described her motivation, commitment and job satisfaction as 'quite high' and said of her fourth year in post: 'I'm looking forward to the different challenges that are going to occur ... I think because I've been allowed to have more responsibility'.

In her final interview, at the end of her fourth year, Elizabeth also told of how she 'came with renewed enthusiasm for the job' and that the first term 'started off really good'. She went on to say, however, that:

*By Christmas I was particularly unhappy ... and that's when I kind of thought 'no, this is just not what I want, I don't want to feel like this, I don't want to come home and burst into tears, it was just silly.' {Interviewer: So that actually happened?} Oh yeah {How many times?} I would say a couple of times before Christmas and then two or three times since then. {You said 'I don't want to feel like this' ... can you describe how you felt?} I suppose its like, I don't know, belittled, just very miserable, very unhappy...*

So what was it that had caused Elizabeth to feel this way and proved to be the final straw that led to her decision to leave the school? There were a number of related issues. One was a downturn in her working relations with colleagues and school leaders, which ironically was exacerbated by her promotion to head of department, a department which included two relatively senior members of staff. Elizabeth felt that these colleagues were not merely unsupportive of her proposals to move the department forward but that they actively undermined her in departmental

meetings and in private conversations with other colleagues, which were fed back to her via third parties. Secondly, and partly because of this, Elizabeth's hopes about enjoying more responsibility and autonomy had not come to fruition - she felt that her ideas to make changes in the department were frequently 'over-ruled' and that in practice she had no real decision-making power. Both points are illustrated in the following excerpts, from an ejournal communication and Elizabeth's final interview transcript respectively:

*[L]ast week ... once again I was shot down in flames during a department meeting. One problem is that as a team we don't get time to discuss issues apart from at our meetings, and at the meeting are two [senior members of staff], so often I am over-ruled by one or other of them. I feel this undermines me, and I am not allowed to make any decisions. It really upset me again ... I really do not understand how they [SLT] expect you to run a department when they are always interfering.*

*...it seemed like whenever I raised something with the team I was knocked down in front of the team by one of them ... I don't know it just feels like a very sort of powerless feeling.*

The third issue was that Elizabeth felt that she was given no help or support for taking on the Head of Department role, either in general or for dealing with the specific problems that she encountered:

*I was trying to solve things and not succeeding very well and I felt at that time that I wasn't getting the support that I actually needed from my line manager. Nobody took me to one side and gave me some ideas of how I could've managed this fairly challenging team ... I sort of thought if I'm not doing it [managing the department] right surely they should speak to me on the quiet or have a meeting with me and say 'you're not putting it across properly, have you thought about doing it this way?' rather than just shooting me down in front of everybody because that's embarrassing and humiliating.*

It seemed to Elizabeth that the hoped-for promotion, instead of bringing recognition and opportunity, had served only to increase her workload:

*You're in like a sandwich, you've got people at the top pouring work onto you that you do unseen and unnoticed by anybody else except when you don't do it and then they cry out for it. Then you've got the people you're sort of managing who see you as kind of one of them as well, not realising again how much admin stuff you're doing.*

Not only did Elizabeth eventually decide to leave her present teaching post, but at several points in time during her third and fourth years she repeated the doubts expressed during her ITT and Induction, saying she was 'still not sure that I want to continue in teaching'. Nevertheless, given her feeling that 'at my age I am running out of time to retrain yet again', together with the possibility that 'the problem' might reside in the school in which she worked rather than in the profession, she applied for several teaching positions elsewhere, mostly as Head of Department, as well as a number of non-teaching posts. For some time now, Elizabeth's ideal had been some kind of consultancy or advisory position relating to her subject specialism, though she did not hold out much hope here on the grounds that such posts were rare and, if one did materialise, she might be perceived to have insufficient experience.

Unfortunately, though Elizabeth attended a number of interviews, by the end of her fourth year in post she had still not been able to secure a position in which she was genuinely interested. At the time of our final interview and last formal email contact, it was unclear whether she would still be working as a teacher in what would be the fifth year since she completed her ITT.

As Elizabeth put it:

*[N]ever say never! There are aspects of teaching that I do enjoy but there is an awful lot more to it than people actually give credit for and I think, if I could get into the right school [laughs] if there is a right school, it could be something that I could do quite happily for another 5 years but it is very difficult...*

Finally in this chapter we examine the experiences and motivations of two individuals who decided (at different stages and for very different reasons) that teaching was not for them: Lauren, an idealist whose brief experience of ITT convinced her that she was not suited to the profession, and Peter, a mature entrant experienced in working with children who found the path to speedy promotion less smooth than he anticipated.

## **10.10 Lauren's story: not cut out for teaching?**

### **10.10.1 Lauren's motivations and initial choices**

Lauren was in her mid to late twenties when she began her ITT. Although teaching had been her 'first choice' after graduating, a lack of funding opportunities and the purchase of her first house with her partner led to Lauren deciding to stand '*on my own feet*' and '*earn some money*', so she had gained employment within a law firm. Although her first position was temporary she worked her way up within the firm to the point where she was running a department. However Lauren found the hours excessive, and was unhappy about the pressure to limit her holiday entitlement to no more than two days at a time because '*if I wasn't there nobody would do my job*'. She also felt that should she decide to have children at some point in the future, the law firm was not a '*family-friendly business*'. Lauren therefore decided to revisit teaching, and looked into ways of training to teach secondary religious education (RE). She considered the Graduate Teacher Programme route but felt that she '*needed more assistance with actually training to teach, rather than on the job training*', so enrolled on a secondary PGCE course within commutable distance from her home.

Many of Lauren's friends were teachers and they supported her decision to change career. Lauren was very '*keyed up*' about starting the course and resigned from the law firm months before the start of the PGCE in order to allow her to spend some time observing in schools and do a subject enhancement course. She was looking forward to the '*more stable kind of life*' that she believed the PGCE would bring, and had a clear career path in mind. After completing her PGCE she planned to stay in the same school for her first two years, and then utilise the skills she had acquired in law to '*go up the management route*' and be more than '*a bog standard teacher*'. Having established herself, she might then after a few years have a family and take part-time employment or supply work for a while. Lauren wanted to teach RE because she felt '*the world would be a much better place if there was more understanding of different cultures and different religions*.' She was also looking forward to the opportunities teaching would give her to engage with children.

### **10.10.2 Lauren's experience of ITT**

Unfortunately Lauren found that the PGCE course did not provide her with the stability she had been looking for. She found the structure of the course with weeks split between university and the school placement '*quite unsettling*' and the whole experience was '*a lot harder than I actually expected it to be*'. Before embarking on her ITT, Lauren thought that the teachers within a school '*would be singing from the same hymn sheet*'. However in reality, she found this was '*not always the case*'. She also felt that her initial placement school, which she described as '*traditional*' with an emphasis on academic achievement, did not provide her with the kind of interaction with the pupils she had hoped for. Lauren felt that there was a distance between the teachers and the pupils and that the '*children don't need you*'. She also found that teaching RE did not live up to her expectations, because (as Lauren perceived it) the pupils in the school '*don't need RE because they feel quite safe and secure at home...they don't have any particular social problems*'.

As her first term on the PGCE drew to an end Lauren reflected that the course had not provided her with the kind of training she had anticipated. She described '*the theory side*' as '*all very well*' but she struggled to see how it would translate into practice. In particular Lauren had expected the course to provide her with time management skills and help her understand the '*mindset of the children*' in the secondary age range but neither of these expectations had been met. Although the course and the school placement were '*fine in isolation*', Lauren felt that they failed to complement each other, or meet her '*needs*'. One problem was that unlike some of her peers on the PGCE course, Lauren's teaching timetable was not evenly spread throughout the week and she had found this particularly demanding during her initial placement. Furthermore, she had found it more difficult than she had foreseen to forge relationships with the pupils. To her mind, they saw her '*as a disembodied sort of person who is standing there trying to teach them something*' instead of the approachable teacher she had wanted to be. Lauren wondered whether one way of improving this might be by requesting support with strategies to help her to engage with low ability students. She believed that if she could '*meet children not in a classroom situation*' this might help her to break down some of the barriers, so hoped she might be able to set up some after school activities. Lauren had also tried to fit in with the traditional ethos of the school by '*wearing a suit that I used to wear in law*' and felt this might have further alienated her from the students so had plans to '*address*' this also.

As a result of these concerns, Lauren found the thought of being in school five days a week after the Christmas break was '*slightly scary*'. She was particularly apprehensive because her relationship with the school-based subject mentor had been problematic to the extent that she described it as having '*broken down*'. The only class he had observed her teach was a sixth form lesson in ethics, a subject about which she knew little; afterwards he had provided her with little constructive help beyond '*you need to read up on it*'. Lauren felt overwhelmed by all that she had to do and thought it was '*not possible to increase your own learning at the same time*'. This led to a severe lack of confidence which was made worse by her sense that she could not connect with the children. She requested help from her university tutor in the form of a '*crisis meeting...just before Christmas*'. This meeting was unsatisfactory for Lauren as her tutor told her to '*just figure it out, you are a bright lady*'. The same tutor had previously brushed aside Lauren's concerns about her timetable saying that she had been given it because she was in a '*nice*' school.

This lack of support from the university and from her school-based subject mentor, coupled with her own perception that she '*didn't have any affinity with children*', led to Lauren believing she did not have '*the sort of skills that you need*'. Her crisis of confidence culminated in a form of paralysis during the Christmas holiday when she tried to plan a lesson for Year 7. She spent

what seemed to her like hours looking at the paper in front of her but could not do it, *'and when it gets to that stage the only way to go really is to say that I am not cut out for this.'* Lauren therefore decided to leave the PGCE course before the start of the new term in January.

### **10.10.3 Lauren's reflections on her experience**

Six months after withdrawing from her ITT, Lauren reflected that aspects of both the university- and school-based elements of the course had been factors in her decision. Firstly she felt that the structure of the PGCE course was not suited to her needs. She was unhappy with splitting her time between university and the school. Secondly the course did not provide her with the skills she felt she needed particular help with, namely time management and an understanding of children. She did not like *'playing at being children'* and felt that many of the teaching approaches would not translate into reality in her *'traditional'* school placement.

The most unsatisfactory aspect of ITT for Lauren appears to have been the lack of support she received: she had wanted her school-based mentor to give her *'encouragement rather than sort of not helping'*, while in terms of the university, she *'would have liked my tutor to have actually listened to me'*. Lauren also found that the experience of training to teach had an impact on her personal and social life. She felt that by the end of her first term she had turned into a *'whinging teacher...a complete and utter bore'*. Teaching dominated her life; *'I talked about it until I couldn't talk about it anymore... and [withdrawing from ITT] was the only thing I could do for my own sanity'*.

Lauren did not return to her previous position in the law firm. At the time of our last contact she was utilising some of the skills she had acquired on the PGCE course to train adults *'in an office environment'*. The time that had elapsed since her decision to withdraw from ITT had allowed her to reflect on the experience in a *'more detached way'*. Lauren believed the course had increased her self-confidence, and found she was putting what she had learnt into practice in her new role, because she could now see *'the value'* of some of the things she had been taught. She described how much easier she found planning activities for adults rather than children. Her job was temporary, but she did not foresee a time when she would return to teaching. Ultimately Lauren believed that *'more than anything, perhaps it was that I wasn't cut out to be a classroom practitioner, 11-18, teaching RE rather than anything else'*.

## **10.11 Peter's story: road closed**

### **10.11.1 Peter's motivations and initial choices**

Peter's initial motivation for wanting to become a teacher came from his previous experience of working in residential children's homes; he described watching teachers at work and thinking *'I can do that'*. He was also influenced by financial considerations, as he had *'worked with teachers and to a degree saw them getting paid a lot more'*. Peter had left his work in children's homes because of the demands of his different shift patterns, and found a job as a sales rep. Although this was more rewarding financially, he found it less satisfying, and explained how he thought teaching might *'fire me up'*. He *'needed to do something with people'*, and believed that teaching offered a career that suited his own and his family's needs: *'the career progression possibilities, the hours that you work, how close to home you can work, the holidays that you get, with having children of my own, great, everything fitted'*.

For Peter, the point of education was *'producing adults that can survive in the real world... making it fun and enjoyable... being a positive role model within school'*. However, Peter was

aware of some of the potential drawbacks of teaching. He was worried about *'the red tape, the legislation and the crap that surrounds teaching'* and about the curriculum being *'very target driven'*, but also felt that teaching would be fulfilling: *'I wanted a job where I was giving not taking'*. He saw teaching as a long-term venture (*'I want a career not a job'*) but he also welcomed the opportunities offered by QTS because *'a teaching qualification ... opens a myriad of doors'*.

Peter decided to become a primary teacher, because he had no particular subject specialism and *'teaching at primary level you are a Jack of all trades'*. As he did not have a degree, he looked for BEd courses in his area, and for reasons of economy chose a three year course in an institution fifty miles from his home rather than a four year course at a more convenient location. He supplemented his student loan by a bonus earned in his previous job and by money made from a house sale: *'I ended up with a pot of money which is what has funded me ... to do the first 18 months'*. This financial commitment and the three years of study help to explain why Peter viewed his decision to enter the teaching profession as a permanent career change: *'I think realistically I will always be a teacher. I can't lose that now...I have probably got another twenty years to work, maybe a bit more and I realistically see myself as being within education, within teaching at some form at the end of that'*.

### 10.11.2 Peter's experiences of ITT

At the beginning of his ITT, Peter believed that *'this is a teacher training course, you start here, the course goes, bang, bang, bang, bang and here you go you are a teacher'*. He anticipated that the course would help him develop his knowledge of the full range of subjects demanded by the primary curriculum, and also provide him with practical guidance on teaching them. In the event, though, Peter found the approach inconsistent. In ICT and the core subjects he felt he had been given a good understanding of both the knowledge required and the best ways to teach the subject in the classroom. *'We were learning very practically what you can actually do, how you can arrange it, what goes wrong, what you should do to avoid it, what safety measures should you take, all those kinds of things'*. However in his opinion this was not the case across the board: *'The other subjects I don't feel any better equipped to teach than if I'd gone in before I'd started the course'*.

Peter's experience of studying for the BEd was mixed. He commented that the theoretical aspects didn't *'always cross over into practice'* and that the quality of the lectures had been uneven. As he progressed through the course he felt increasingly that what he termed the *'academic'* elements were irrelevant to him and to his motivations for doing a BEd: *'My whole point of doing a degree wasn't because I wanted a degree; it was because I wanted to become a teacher. If somebody had said "to be a teacher you need a HND"... then that is what I would have done'*.

Peter described the process of completing his assignments as an *'arduous journey'* and felt at times as though he was *'jumping through hoops'*. He failed to pass his dissertation, and at the end of his ITT course was weighing up the pros and cons of re-submitting. The dissertation would give him an honours rather than an ordinary degree, which he felt might be a useful qualification in the long term but saw as having no relevance to his ability to teach: *'I will look back at it and think lots of the time I have spent working on things for university which will not improve me as a teacher. They will prove that I can study at that level to get a degree.'*

In contrast, Peter thrived on the school-based elements of the course. Despite feeling that *'it was scary beforehand'*, once he was in school for his first placement *'it felt very natural to do'*,

and after his first few days he thought *'this is the right place to be now'*. Peter took advantage of the opportunities offered by the range of school placements across his three year course; he loved *'having a variety of experiences, being in different schools, just working with different teachers, and actually getting a real feeling about what being a teacher is like'*. He also used his school based placements to try and plug some of the gaps in his subject knowledge; *'geography was something that I felt ... wasn't ... very well taught to me and so in my final teaching practice I made sure that one of the things I did was a geography project'*.

Peter commented that he felt his time in schools allowed him to learn by both observing and doing, and explained pragmatically that *'being a student in school ... gives you the chance to get it wrong in a safe environment'*. He described making mistakes during his teaching placements and being able to reflect upon these and discuss them with the teachers. As a result, Peter felt that he was *'tutored very well in school... being taught to be a teacher by some people who knew how to do it very well'*. He received positive reports from all of his placements, *'where the schools have said, well if we had got a job you could have it'*. He also felt the time spent in schools had helped him have a greater understanding of his ideal career progression: he now envisaged working in a mainstream school for *'two to three years'*, before moving on to utilise his prior experience of working with children in residential care homes, perhaps in a special school with children with behavioural difficulties or physical needs. If possible, his first job would be in a junior school close to his current home.

During the final year of his BEd, Peter successfully obtained a position as a Year 4 teacher in a large primary school ten minutes from where he lived. He began working here full time during the summer term, balancing the demands of the university course with teaching, and taking three days off to attend university to work on his dissertation and to collect his results. By the end of that term he was looking forward to beginning his NQT year with no academic assignments to complete: *'Yes, now I am a teacher it is easy, just go out and work'*.

### **10.11.3 Peter's first year in teaching**

Although Peter had taken up employment during the final term of his ITT, he and the head teacher decided to defer the start of his formal Induction period until September, when three other NQTs were to join the school. Overall he was happy with the amount of support he had received during his Induction year. He attended one course run by the Local Authority, but felt that the most useful form of support he received came from within the school: *'I think I've learnt more by being immersed with people that I think are good practitioners ... than I would have done ... on more courses'*.

Peter enjoyed the autonomy of having his own class and enjoyed working closely with a colleague in the same year team. He felt that the head teacher in his role as Induction tutor had kept his distance, but had been there when needed: *'I suppose it is like teaching with a safety net, I just haven't landed in the net very often. I haven't had to turn round and say to [the head] how do I do so and so?' However, Peter was less convinced of the value of the prescribed entitlements of his NQT year: 'An NQT year is where you get offered a bit more support, well, do you know what? You should get that anyway, you shouldn't need to be identified as an NQT to get support to do the job that you need to do'. He felt that the CEDP was 'a complete joke... a waste of paper... another tick the box', and had not updated it since university. He also thought the Induction standards were not very useful: *'the bottom line is for [the head teacher] to tick the boxes but ... if he thinks you are good enough to do it he will almost go through it and tick the boxes because he knows that is what you can do'*.*

When reflecting on his NQT year, Peter said that at the start he had felt he was *'pretending to be the teacher that I wanted to be'*, and although it was *'more of an act in the beginning'* by the end of the year he had stopped pretending: *'It's now me'*. He was pleased with the decision he had taken to train, explaining that *'I feel comfortable that I have ended up being the person that I wanted to be as a teacher, and that's great'*. Peter also said that he believed that he had become *'a very effective teacher'* because of the support he had received from the school, and that if he had ended up in one of his placement schools this might not have been the case. When he thought back to his experience of ITT, though, he believed the school placements to have been the most useful aspects, since he felt that the university-delivered elements of the course could not prepare teachers to take full responsibility for a class and deal with the day to day *'mechanics of teaching'*. Although Peter saw much of what he described as the *'theory'* element as irrelevant, he did value some things from the university-based part of his training, such as when he had been shown how to make concepts relevant to pupils, *'not to understand the science, but how to get someone else to understand the science'*. He still used resources and ideas from his ITT when planning.

Whilst Peter felt that his NQT year had been *'very hectic'*, he had managed to find a work-life balance, and described how he had learnt from more experienced teachers to *'work smart rather than long'*. Because of his commitments to his own family and *'a life that exists outside the school'*, he had deliberately avoided getting *'immersed in school life and ...working all hours'*. At the end of his first year of teaching, Peter reflected that the profession was not as financially rewarding as his work as a sales rep had been (*'it's a job that you do as a vocation, you don't do it because the salary is realistic'*), and compared his NQT salary to that of a friend of who had recently taken a similar job to the one Peter had given up in order to train. The friend's basic salary was more than Peter's and he had a company car. However, Peter still felt he had made *'the right decision. It's just we don't get paid enough for what we do'*.

#### **10.11.4 Peter's second year in teaching and beyond**

At the end of his NQT year, Peter was assigned a change of year groups in order to help the school resolve a staffing issue. At first he was reluctant, as he wanted to consolidate what he had done during his NQT year and was looking forward to *'settling'*, having more time, and re-using some of the ideas and resources he had developed. However, despite his initial anxieties he found the year very rewarding; at the end of it he stated that there had been no lows at all. He had enjoyed working with his year team colleague who, although experienced, was new to the school, and had also been involved in some whole school innovations. He summed up his experiences as *'I've enjoyed this year...it's worked really well, I'm dead happy, it's great, I love it'*.

During his second year Peter became more and more involved with activities beyond his own classroom. However, he followed a pragmatic approach to taking on additional responsibilities, explaining that he wanted to protect the time he spent with his family. For example, he volunteered to be responsible for an ICT project where he could pick and choose the times, rather than act as a football coach whose time would be dictated by external fixtures, explaining he *'was a bit more cute with that'*. Some of these additional duties, such as introducing and subsequently managing a *'nurture group'* of vulnerable children, involved the management of other staff.

Peter described how, on reflection, he had come to value the theoretical aspects of his ITT course more highly as he gained classroom experience: *'you actually need to go and do it to work out how it all fits'*. He still valued his school placement experiences, too, since these had

afforded him opportunities to learn about *'what I needed to do or be as a teacher'*. However, he also commented that one aspect of teaching that his ITT had failed to prepare him for was the constantly evolving nature and demands of the job: *'it's like trying to have a tea party on the dodgems, not the dodgems, on the waltzer, spinning round; you're never in the same place'*.

Although the official mechanisms provided during his Induction year had ceased, Peter still felt adequately supported during his second year of teaching: *'being left to get on with it ...probably just suits me'*. He found he could still go to his former Induction mentor (the head teacher) for advice when he needed to, and enjoyed the support he received from his colleagues. His relationship with his year team colleague was *'really good because I have been able to take ideas from her but I've also been able to have my own ideas...because she didn't see me as the new teacher'*. Although he felt he was coping, Peter did think that there needed to be a *'system to acknowledge your skills as they develop'* beyond the NQT year. He assumed because nobody had said anything different to him that he was doing a good job, but there had been no opportunities this year for individual professional development, since all training had been undertaken by the whole school and addressed whole school issues.

Peter was still happy with his decision to become a teacher; *'I'm as motivated now as I was when I filled in the form to go to university'*. He was beginning to think more about his career progression: *'because of my age and partly because of the money that you get paid, I want to get to being a deputy head'*. Realising that for this to happen *'I do actually need to get skills in other areas [and] take on different responsibilities'*, Peter applied for the job of ICT co-ordinator, a position which would give some whole school responsibility, and also investigated courses that would lead to the NPQH (National Professional Qualification for Headship). After seeking advice from his head teacher about whether it would be better for him to gain experience at Key Stage 1 or with Year 6 if he wanted to be considered for deputy headship positions, he also asked to be moved to Year 6 at the start of the next academic year.

Peter explained that he felt confident about embarking upon this career path because:

*This last year has taught me that ...school and teaching will always be forever changing and because you have been in the job 10 years, 15 years ... or 2 years or whatever, none of that makes you a better teacher than somebody else. It perhaps makes you a more polished practitioner ... but it doesn't make you better and I think that gives me confidence ... you don't have to teach for 10 years before you become a deputy head.*

Peter was very much aware that his decision to teach had been a *'big choice'* but it was also a *'life choice'*. It had been a *'big financial commitment'* and he was *'still earning far less'* than he had done before he was teaching. His long term career aspirations were to be a head teacher in a small rather than larger school. This was a *'pragmatic'* choice, since he would be 40 the following year. *'I could spend ten years in a small school as head earning my £40k a year thank you very much, and I could get to that much quicker which would make a massive difference at home'*.

Peter later said of that stage, *'in terms of being committed to do it, yeah, I still was ... thirty faces sat on the carpet first thing in the morning, there was never a time I wasn't motivated to do it, I never didn't want to get out of bed in the morning...yeah I was dead happy'*. However, the following term was to be his last as a teacher.

Peter was due to begin his third year of teaching in the position he had planned for. He had successfully obtained the ICT co-ordinator's role and together with his former year team

colleague was part of a new Year 6 team. Unfortunately, though, he found that he would not be able to begin the NPQH for some time, because the next application date for his cluster of schools was not for another six months; this meant that it would take longer to reach the salary levels he hoped for. Peter did not actively look for a different job, but a family friend alerted him to a vacancy within the IT industry, teaching adults. The salary was very attractive. Peter applied during the summer holidays before the start of his third year, and handed in his notice at the October half-term. He later explained the reason as *'one over-riding thing ... about money and ... earning potential ... I have just recently had a pay rise and I'm now earning double what I was earning when I was teaching'*.

#### 10.11.5 Peter's reflections on his experience

Peter had felt able to manage his workload and the other demands of teaching, such as dealing with parents and maintaining effective professional relationships. He believed his age and experience were advantageous in these areas, explaining that he could *'see that being quite tough if you're much younger'*. When he reflected on his final term of teaching, he said *'I think I was an effective teacher, I do, I look back at it and think I enjoyed what I did and was enthusiastic about it'*.

Peter's reasons for leaving the profession were financially driven. He was frustrated by the pay structures which (as he saw it) involved *'being paid more because you've been there longer'*, a system he saw as inequitable. He also felt that his age and experience outside teaching should have been valued more highly, and that career progression was difficult for older new teachers with family commitments and ties to a geographical area, because *'unless you're prepared to move around the country it's ... quite difficult to see a route from being a teacher ... to a deputy head to a head ... that won't take you 10-15 years'*. Peter believed that was largely why older beginner teachers leave, and spoke of a colleague who had quit teaching for similar reasons.

Peter described his own decision to leave as not *'taking a huge risk'*. He believed that his teaching qualifications would always be useful, and that he was utilising some of the skills he had gained in his new role. He also felt that if he ever needed to he could return to teaching in the short-term or take on a supply job; but he did not foresee a time when he would apply for a permanent teaching position again.

#### 10.12 Common strands in beginner teachers' stories

The above accounts reveal the subjective responses of individuals to the **complex interplay** of many factors, told as far as possible in their own words. Though their stories exemplify a wide range of lived experience, their reactions to those experiences may at first sight seem almost as diverse. These concluding comments will attempt to tease out any common strands, both those that characterise the lived experiences of these beginning teachers and what was most important in these experiences. We also seek to identify any common factors that may underlie their commitment to remain in the profession or (in a few cases) prompt or confirm a decision to leave it.

The negative impact of **workload** was mentioned in some form by every one of our subjects: what differentiates them is how they deal with it. Those who appear the most contented/settled appear to place great stress on the need to *'pace yourself'*, and consciously take steps to maintain a good work-life balance. These may take the form of coming in early to restrict the amount of work taken home, ring-fencing time for leisure activities and meeting up with friends, or agreeing clear ground-rules with partner and family: but in each case the basis is a recognition that overwork can have a detrimental effect on performance. Those who (like Jack)

simply accept it as an essential part of the job, may pay later for their commitment in terms of debilitating stress and exhaustion. Two factors in particular are generally resented, especially because they are seen as beyond individual control: the reported ratcheting up of workload resulting from successive government initiatives and perceived curriculum overload, leading to a constant state of flux tellingly described by Peter as *'like trying to have a tea-party on the dodgems'*; and increasing frustration with one aspect of that workload, the additional administration and paperwork involved. Even the most (apparently) committed and contented interviewees identified 'reinventing the wheel' as a factor that might eventually drive them from the profession, not just because it left them exhausted but because of what it might do to their teaching. Mark warned of the risk of teachers *'lowering the quality of what you're doing because you're trying to cram everything in'*, while Christina feared that *'some of the creativity will go from schools if teachers get even more overloaded'*.

Another issue frequently mentioned was **pupil behaviour**: many though not all of our participants encountered a degree of challenge at first, but with time and experience most became more confident in their classroom management, though some still regretted it had not been addressed more explicitly during ITT. Of a different order, though, is the complex problem presented by a child with identified behavioural difficulties, perhaps under medication, placed in a large class with no additional support. Our teachers' concern for the child her/himself, and for the rest of the class whose education is disrupted, compounds the stress they feel themselves: the resulting sense of impotence can be very wearing. More generally, they report a feeling that *'I don't think anyone should be put in a situation of having to face ... violent children in the classroom'* (Christina again).

The greatest **support** for those experiencing challenging behaviour, however serious, appears to come from their colleagues. New teachers who think that *'they're noisy for me, they must be like little angels for everybody else'* (Simon) may find it reassuring to learn that this is not the case. Year partners or those teaching nearby are reportedly a valuable (and valued) source of suggestions, information, even just a sympathetic ear. Often, as in Amy's case, this relationship develops into a form of informal mentoring. The availability and location of the staff room or departmental base can be important in this respect (and in this case Amy was not so fortunate; nor Simon, whose school had no staffroom at all). For NQTs the opportunity to become socialised into the school community may depend on opportunities for informal contact with colleagues, but beyond this they serve an important purpose by *'telling you when you've done something well and giving you suggestions and ideas and sharing resources'* (Ruth, also Mark). Experiencing the support and appreciation of colleagues is one factor that differentiates the happy teachers from the unhappy, while in the absence of more formal validation of their work it may be the sole source of reassurance: *'am I doing a decent job? ... sometimes I think it's quite insular in school, it's difficult to get feedback'* (Craig). Without it, it seems that teaching can be a very lonely profession.

The ultimate responsibility for creating *'an environment of inclusion and support'* (Johnson, 2004: 159) lies with senior managers, as is particularly obvious when our participants report a change of school (Craig) or of key personnel in the management team (Amy, Christina). **Head teachers** in particular are also seen as controlling access to professional development opportunities. The ready availability of **EPD** is particularly important because many new teachers are eager to go on learning, especially those to whom the relevance of the 'theory' they largely dismissed during their training has since become clear (Simon, Peter). In some cases an

unsatisfied hunger for training exists from an early stage: while some could report *'definite continuity between my teacher training and my NQT year'* (Jack) supported by a constructive use of their CEDP and later of performance management (Mark), others appear not to have received their Induction entitlement, or even to have understood what this involved (Amy, Simon). By their second year, many report a general falling away of support, frequently attributed to a lack of funding, with external courses the main casualty. Their stories also reveal a wide variation in access to individual EPD: where some (Amy, Elizabeth) see all such opportunities as blocked, others (Ruth, Craig) respond creatively to a situation where they see any request within reason as willingly considered. One advantage of individual EPD is that it can assist teachers in developing their own style: and as Mark argues, *'I think ... you have to be yourself absolutely. If you're not yourself I don't think you would be a good teacher ... the kids ... draw from different teachers being themselves. The teacher who is a bit of a comic ... and the other one who is really organised ...'* For those like Simon who lack both this freedom and the necessary support, the only alternative is a disempowering need to conform.

Head teachers also feature in these narratives as gatekeepers to **promotion and other incentives**. While some, like Mark, are fortunate to receive, without asking it, financial recognition for good work, others (Amy, Elizabeth) feel overlooked and unheard. Sometimes it takes an apparently impending resignation to effect a change in the situation, but this is a strategy that can backfire, as Simon found to his cost. Issues related to income and promotion impact on these individuals in many different ways. **Older, second career teachers** may feel under pressure to achieve rapid personal advancement and the accompanying rise in **salary** so that they can regain the status and income they enjoyed before retraining. Others, conversely, resist any pressure to progress down a management route because, like Jack, they feel that *'I don't want to be an assistant head, I want to be working with young people and changing them'*. Whatever their personal ambitions in teaching, life is particularly difficult for those already encumbered by considerable student debt: Craig, who *'always wanted to be a teacher'* but felt like Lauren the need to defer his training for several years; Amy and Jack, forced to take on exhausting additional work in order to supplement their income. A different kind of dilemma faces those who have left it too long before moving from a school where they were failing to progress, and now, like Simon, find themselves in a salary trap: *'I'm too expensive to be a class teacher ... I want the responsibility but because I haven't [had any] here I can't get a job'*.

While Peter's reasons for leaving teaching were financially driven, he also thought that his previous experience should have been valued more highly. Elizabeth made a similar complaint, but it was feeling *'belittled'* by senior colleagues that exacerbated problems caused by her workload and made her reconsider her commitment to the profession. Amy too was beginning to think that *'other jobs seem to get a lot more reward for less work, not just financially [but] in praise and recognition'*. Comments such as theirs suggest that those who leave teaching are likely to do so for multiple reasons, and that workload alone may have less impact on retention than when other factors act as a catalyst for discontent.

Conversely, for most of those whose stories appear above, any trials and tribulations are more than offset by the satisfaction of seeing in the progress of their pupils that they have indeed *'made a difference'*: *'any job can be stressful and have long hours, but [it's] not every job you get rewards from'* (Craig). Even in his unhappy final interview Simon still spoke of the rewards of *'seeing some people come in with not a lot ... trying to build them up, trying to get them more skills and then making it really apparent to them what they know'*. The 'buzz' that these teachers derive from their pupils' sense of achievement is clearly communicated in their words: *'and he'd written his name by himself without anyone asking him ... Wow!'* More calmly, Jack, after a

painful and difficult year, voiced what might serve as a definitive summary of the **rewards of teaching**:

*seeing the kids grow, seeing them develop, making positive choices and just seeing how you can influence them in a positive way, enabling them to reach their potential.*

### **10.13 Conclusion**

In this chapter we have sought to provide holistic insights into the lived and felt experiences of ten people who set out on the journey to become teachers. The ten stories illustrate the range of positive and negative experiences recounted by the larger body of case study participants in the study, and they illustrate some of the issues and considerations which we have found to be central to the experience of beginning teachers. In the final chapter of this report we summarise some of the key findings from the research, identify some important connections between different findings, and suggest a number of implications of the *Becoming a Teacher* research for policy and practice.

# 11 Conclusions and implications

## 11.1 Introduction

The *Becoming a Teacher* research provides unique insights into the lived experiences of a large number of people who sought to become teachers via a range of different routes into the profession in England. It provides rich and detailed information relating to those who did not become teachers, those who became teachers but subsequently left the profession within four years of completing ITT, and those (the majority) who became and remained teachers for the duration of the study, many of whom intended to be teachers for some years to come. The findings have the potential to help teacher educators and policy-makers improve the experiences of future cohorts of student-, newly- and recently qualified teachers, with consequent benefits for schools, the educational system and society at large.

Like all research, however, the *BaT* study inevitably has a number of limitations. The main reasons that some findings might be treated with a degree of caution can be grouped into two general categories. The first category concerns the credibility of the findings which relates, in large measure, to both the validity of the data generated and the appropriateness of the selection and implementation of methods of data analysis. The second category concerns the typicality of the *BaT* research participants and thus the representativeness, generalisability and transferability of the findings. We consider each set of concerns in detail in Appendix III, while in the Postscript to the report (immediately after this chapter) we address the related issue of the impact on participants of their involvement in the *BaT* research.

We begin this concluding chapter by highlighting, in Section 11.2, some recurring themes and key influences on beginner teachers' experiences and on beginner teacher retention and attrition, and discuss the different ways in which beginning teachers need to be supported between ITT and the end of their fourth year in post.<sup>132</sup> Next, in Section 11.3, we address the main factors associated with variation in beginner teachers' experiences across the duration of the study. Finally, in Section 11.4, we summarise some key implications of the *BaT* findings for teacher educators, head teachers and policy-makers.

## 11.2 Key factors associated with beginner teachers' enjoyment of teaching, retention and perceived effectiveness

What the *Becoming a Teacher* data have consistently shown is that, whether beginner teachers were setting out on the process of navigating their initial teacher training, whether they were becoming relatively established members of their school's middle management teams, or whether they were somewhere in between these two points, the experience of becoming and being a teacher was invariably an intensely demanding and challenging one, which could be a source of great reward, satisfaction and enjoyment on the one hand, yet a source of frustration and unhappiness on the other. In the preceding chapters we have identified factors associated with the highs points and lows points typically experienced by beginning teachers, and in those chapters and in our interim reports (Hobson and Malderez, 2005; Hobson *et al.*, 2006a; Hobson *et al.*, 2007; Tracey *et al.*, 2008) we have made a number of suggestions for how beginner teachers might try to, and might be helped to, maximize their highs and minimize their lows. Yet we would add that the nature of school-teaching is such that experiencing both highs and lows,

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<sup>132</sup> We use the terms 'beginner' and 'beginning' teacher interchangeably to refer to student-, newly- and recently qualified teachers (up to the end of their fourth year in post).

sometimes even during the course of a single working day, is to a large extent part and parcel of the job. Becoming and being a teacher is inevitably both pleasure *and* pain, triumph *and* disaster.

For the majority of new entrants to the profession, this appears to be part of the appeal, the challenge or the 'buzz' of teaching. Thus, in spite of their experience of highs and lows, 92 per cent of those who continued to work as teachers up to four years after completing their ITT reported that they enjoyed it, with over two-thirds (68%) 'strongly agreeing' with the statement '*I enjoy working as a teacher*'. Such generally positive outlooks were likely to be related to generally positive evaluations of ITT and Induction, to beginning teachers' resilience in the face of the difficulties and disappointments they reported encountering, and (underlying and supporting this) to the intrinsic motives which appeared to have driven their aspirations to become teachers, namely working with children and young people, and promoting pupil learning and development.

For a minority of new entrants, however, including some who appeared to be less resilient and / or who reported more extrinsic reasons for undertaking ITT, the sequence of peaks and troughs, and the low points in particular, could be too much to bear, as some findings reported in Chapter 9 and some stories presented in Chapter 10 bear witness.

At the beginning of each of the main findings chapters (3-10) above, and in the Executive Summary at the start of this report, we elaborate on some of these points and provide selected additional 'key' findings relating to the focus of those chapters and to the *BaT* research as a whole. We do not repeat these findings again here. Rather, in the remainder of this section we highlight some of the recurring themes which have been found to be prominent across all chapters and all phases of the study. Specifically:

- we pick out three ideal features of the experience of those seeking to become and to establish themselves as teachers; and
- we identify the main factors which have been found to be associated with these three considerations.

First, then, we contend that, in an ideal world, as many beginning teachers as possible will:

- **enjoy** or gain professional satisfaction from their work as teachers;
- believe that they can be or are **effective** in their work as teachers; and (if they *do* enjoy teaching and *are* effective teachers)
- wish to **remain** in the profession.

The *Becoming a Teacher* research has generated a wealth of evidence relating to all three of these potential outcomes of the experiences of beginning teachers. As we have acknowledged, our data are not without their limitations, and in relation to these three issues our indicators of beginner teacher effectiveness are perhaps the least robust insofar as they rely on self-report data on participants' perceptions of their effectiveness.<sup>133</sup> Nevertheless we found strong evidence, across the five years of data generation and analysis undertaken for this study:

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<sup>133</sup> We should note, however, that previous research has found a strong correlation between teachers' own ratings of their effectiveness - or their self-efficacy - and other measures of teacher effectiveness, notably pupil performance data (Day *et al.*, 2006). We should also add that it was not within the aims and scope of this (*BaT*) study to generate additional data on beginner teacher effectiveness.

- firstly, that these three ‘outcomes’ were closely related, with perceived effectiveness proving to be the single most powerful predictor of beginner teachers’ enjoyment, while those teachers who reported higher levels of enjoyment of teaching and who rated their effectiveness more highly were more likely to remain in teaching;<sup>134</sup>
- secondly, that there were a number of common contributory factors associated with these three ‘outcomes’ (which we discuss below).

Three key mediating factors were found to be associated with beginner teacher enjoyment, retention/attrition and perceived effectiveness. That is, beginner teachers were more likely to ‘strongly enjoy’ teaching, to perceive themselves as ‘very effective’ and to complete their ITT and remain in teaching where:

- (1) they reported feeling ‘very well’ **supported** by (for example) mentors and other teacher colleagues;
- (2) they reported ‘very good’ relationships with **pupils** and did not regard the behaviour of the pupils they taught as problematic or unacceptable; and
- (3) they indicated that they had a manageable **workload** and a healthy or acceptable work-life balance.

A number of additional, contributory factors were also found to be associated with beginner teachers’ enjoyment and retention, and with their perceptions of their effectiveness, notably:

- (4) their participation in appropriate **training** (post-ITT) and the availability and use of further opportunities for continuing professional development;
- (5) **collegiality** and **teamwork**, including (for example) planning, sharing resources and team-teaching with colleagues;
- (6) having had positive **relationships** with their **head teacher**;
- (7) having **acted as a mentor** to student teachers and/or NQTs.<sup>135</sup>

While this latter finding applied only to teachers in their fourth years, it is a somewhat striking one, with survey respondents who reported that they had acted as mentors statistically more likely both to ‘strongly agree’ that they enjoyed teaching and to rate themselves as ‘very effective’ teachers. And while the direction of any causal links is difficult to detect, and it is likely that those fourth year teachers who were mentors were asked to take on this role because of others’ perceptions of their effectiveness and/or their enthusiasm (which may be linked to enjoyment), it is also likely that they derived subsequent benefits both from being asked to act and from actually acting as mentors, relating (for example) to the recognition and trust afforded by senior colleagues, to their participation in mentor training (where they received this), and to an additional impetus mentoring may have provided to critical reflection on their own practice. Evidence from previous research (e.g. Lopez-Real and Kwan, 2005; Simpson *et al.*, 2007)

<sup>134</sup> See (for example) Chapter 7 (Section 7.3) and Chapter 9 (Section 9.3.5). Relating to the first point, 80 per cent of those fourth year teachers who rated themselves as very effective ‘strongly agreed’ that they enjoyed teaching, compared to 53 per cent of those who did not rate themselves as very effective.

<sup>135</sup> All factors listed here were found, through the analysis of survey and/or case study data, to be strongly associated with at least two of the three (related) ‘outcomes’ listed above.

confirms that mentoring has a wide range of potential benefits for the professional and personal development of *mentors* as well as mentees.

In what follows we examine more closely beginner teachers' perceptions of the concept of support, bringing together findings presented in different chapters of this report to explore how student, newly and recently qualified teachers might best be 'supported' through the demanding experience of becoming a teacher. We begin by reaffirming its importance.

### 11.2.1 The importance of support

In the preceding chapters we have shown that the extent to which beginner teachers felt supported impacted upon their experiences in a variety of ways. For example:

- (i) beginning teachers who felt 'very well supported' in their job were more likely than those who did not feel as well supported to 'strongly agree' that they enjoyed teaching;
- (ii) 'insufficient support from school' was the second most common response to a question seeking the reasons participants gave for not completing their Induction in their first year following ITT;
- (iii) those who rated the support they received as 'very good' tended to successfully complete their Induction sooner than those who rated their support less highly;
- (iv) 'lack of support' was the most frequently stated specific response given by second, third and fourth year teachers (after 'nothing') to a question asking what, if anything, had hindered their development as teachers;
- (v) the second most mentioned specific reason given by those survey respondents who withdrew from their ITT programmes (after 'workload') related to a perceived lack of support, while 'more support from ITT provider' and 'more support from school mentor(s)' were the two most popular responses to the question 'What factors, if any, would have helped you to complete your training course?'; and
- (vi) those second, third and fourth year teachers who rated the support they received as 'very good' were more likely than those who did not to remain in teaching.<sup>136</sup>

### 11.2.2 Beginner teachers' support needs

Our findings suggest that beginner teachers associate support primarily with *people*. Hence, those who spoke or wrote in positive terms about the support they received referred, in this context, to ITT tutors, Induction tutors, peers (fellow trainees, NQTs and teaching colleagues respectively), heads of department, head teachers, and (most of all) mentors, who were found to be the single most important or potentially valuable source of support for the beginning teachers in the *BaT* study. It was found, for example, that:

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<sup>136</sup> The importance of support for both beginner and more experienced teachers is further evidenced in the findings of other research studies. For example, Day *et al.* (2006) identified a correlation between teachers' commitment and their perceptions of having supportive colleagues.

- NQTs' ratings of their relationship with their mentor were the biggest single predictor of their ratings of the support they received;
- those NQTs who gave higher ratings of their relationship with their Induction tutor/mentor were also more likely to report that they had been recommended to pass their Induction;
- those second, third and fourth year teachers who had (post-Induction) mentors were more likely than those who did not to give higher ratings of the support they received.

In addition, those beginner teachers who reported 'very good' relationships with their head teacher were also more likely to give higher ratings of the support they received (and of their enjoyment of teaching).

On the other hand, those beginner teachers who talked or wrote about experiencing a lack of support tended (also) to refer to one or more of the following issues:

- receiving an unhelpful introduction or induction to school;
- unwelcoming and / or unfriendly colleagues;
- tutors, mentors or line managers who were too critical of their teaching and/or other aspects of their work as teachers;
- no-one helping them to deal with problems of pupil behaviour or discipline;
- line managers or head teachers denying them access to additional training or opportunities for CPD;
- mentors who did not appear to be fully committed to the role, or who were disorganized, not sufficiently 'up to date' or generally unavailable.

Our findings suggest that amongst the most important support needs of beginning teachers is having people (mentors and others) who:

- (1) are 'there for them' - are accessible, willing and able to listen, and act as a sounding board;
- (2) treat them as a 'whole person';
- (3) have regard for their emotional and practical as well as professional needs, for example by providing encouragement, reassurance and 'positive strokes';
- (4) make them feel welcome and 'safe' within their schools, and provide them with important information about (for example) school policies and access to resources;
- (5) provide ideas relating to their teaching, and help them deal with specific problems, such as those relating to pupil behaviour and time and workload management;
- (6) empower them and give them confidence, e.g. through 'recognition', 'trust' and enabling them to be (or to feel) autonomous;

(7) facilitate access to additional training or opportunities for CPD, such as attendance on courses, observing colleagues' lessons and working as part of a team; and

(8) can guide them, for example in terms of their career development.

### *Targeting professional learning and development needs*

On the subject of opportunities for additional training and CPD (or, in this context, EPD), our research suggests, as does that of others (e.g. Moor *et al.*, 2005), that this will tend to be more effective where it is personalized and where beginner teachers have some autonomy with respect to the training and CPD opportunities in which they participate. That said, the *BaT* research found that many beginner teachers had a number of common development needs, most notably those relating to behaviour management and time and workload management.

In relation to beginner teachers' needs for support with pupil behaviour management, CPD opportunities were reported to have been widely available: for example, 57 per cent of fourth year teachers reported (in the Wave 6 survey) that they had undertaken CPD addressing this issue. However, the *BaT* research uncovered an apparent gap in training and CPD provision relating to the need for opportunities to develop effective strategies for time and workload management, with only 17 per cent of fourth year teachers reporting that they had undertaken CPD on this topic. This can be considered as an unfortunate limitation of provision in a context in which: (a) large numbers of beginner teachers report working many additional hours outside of the timetabled school day; and (b) their perceptions of their workload and work-life balance have a major influence on how they think about teaching.

### *Limitations of support*

In general beginning teachers tended to be mostly positive about the amount and quality of support they received. However, there were various indications that the quality of school-based aspects of teacher preparation and support was sometimes seriously compromised by a lack of resources, especially time for effective mentoring during ITT and Induction, and access to external training after that point, both of which may have been related to limitations of funding. We would stress that beginner teachers' support needs did not end (though they may have changed) on completion of Induction. It is pertinent to note that survey participants tended to rate the support they received in their second, third and fourth years less favourably than they had during their first year; and that their ratings of their enjoyment of teaching (with which we have found perceptions of support to be statistically associated) showed a small but statistically significant decline over the same period, in spite of the fact that their perceptions of their effectiveness and their ratings of their relationships with pupils (both of which are also associated with beginner teachers' enjoyment) were increasing over the same period.<sup>137</sup> If teachers' ratings of the support they receive and of their enjoyment of teaching were to continue to decline (beyond their fourth year in post), this could bode ill for their future commitment and retention.

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<sup>137</sup> It is also noteworthy that that many case study participants found a form of support in their contact with members of the *BaT* research team, which some said had provided a rare opportunity to reflect upon and discuss their work as a teacher (see Postscript).

The decline in participants' ratings of the support they received after their first year in post is perhaps understandable, given that during their first year the majority had benefited from the provision of Induction programmes and (in particular) the support of a school-based mentor, but no longer did so subsequent to this. In fact, a number of sources of evidence in our findings (and those of others, e.g. Moor *et al.*, 2005) suggest that the provision of (post-Induction) mentoring for recently qualified teachers is largely advantageous. For example, the minority of recently qualified teachers who reported that they *did* have a post-Induction mentor (in their second, third and/or fourth years of teaching) were not only significantly more likely to give a higher rating to the support they received than those who did not, but were also more likely to report that they 'strongly agreed' with the statement '*I enjoy teaching*'. While this suggests that formal mentoring might profitably be extended beyond the first year of teaching, research shows that as well as a range of potential benefits and rewards of mentoring there can be a number of associated costs. The key to maximising the former and minimising the latter lies in the realisation of a number of conditions for successful mentoring, including the effective selection and preparation of mentors (Hobson *et al.*, 2009b).

Current developments relating to the phased introduction of the Masters in Teaching and Learning (MTL) degree, to be undertaken (initially) by beginner teachers between their first and third years in post, have the potential to enhance and bring greater coherence to new teachers' early professional learning and development, and to provide continuity of support after Induction, not least through the mentoring support that may be provided by the MTL 'school-based coach'.<sup>138</sup> For the first (2009-10) cohort of MTL students / NQTs, teaching and learning will not start until the Summer term. We support this development and suggest that it should also apply to future cohorts of MTL students / NQTs, in order to avoid placing additional demands (and, potentially, additional sources of stress) on new teachers during their very challenging first year in post. Ideally, for us, beginner teachers' personalized MTL programmes would connect with - and begin in earnest following successful completion of - the NQT Induction period.

### **11.3 Factors associated with variation in beginner teachers' experiences**

In the preceding chapters (3-10) of this report we have presented evidence of variation in beginner teachers' experiences (of ITT, Induction, early professional and career development, and retention and attrition) relating to a range of factors, including:

- (1) the ITT route that they followed;
- (2) their motives for undertaking ITT, and their preconceptions, expectations and concerns about ITT and teaching (which we refer to collectively as 'preconceptions');
- (3) their ethnicity;
- (4) their age;
- (5) their gender;
- (6) the phase of education in which they were becoming, or had become, teachers; and

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<sup>138</sup> Further information about the MTL can be found on the TDA website at: <http://www.tda.gov.uk/leaders/teachers/mtl.aspx>

- (7) the type of school in which they were employed (e.g. whether it was classed as being of high or low socio-economic disadvantage or whether it was perceived as being 'in difficulties' or 'high in the league tables').

In what follows we focus our discussion on the first four of these considerations, since variations relating to these were found to be the most pronounced or systematic, and/or to have the greatest longevity.

### 11.3.1 Variation relating to ITT route

In Chapters 4 and 5 of this report, and in the corresponding chapters of our interim reports (Hobson *et al.*, 2006a; Hobson *et al.*, 2007) we showed that, across a range of issues, the experiences of student and newly qualified teachers were statistically differentiated by the ITT route they had followed. First, in relation to a number of aspects of their experience, trainees who had followed employment-based and school-centred ITT (perhaps because of the relatively small cohorts which tend to be associated with such programmes and the concomitant opportunities for one-to-one and targeted support) tended to be more positive than those who had followed other ITT routes. Trainees who had taken university-administered PGCE and Flexible PGCE programmes often the *least* positive. For example, and in relation to two of the 'core themes' (relationships and relevance) characterising student teachers' experiences (Hobson *et al.*, 2008):

- those who had followed **GRTP programmes** were more likely than those who had followed other ITT routes to give higher ratings of their relationships with their mentors and other school-based colleagues;
- those who had followed **university-administered PGCE** programmes were the least likely to report 'very good' relationships either with mentors or other teachers;
- amongst both primary and secondary trainees, those who followed **Flexible PGCE** programmes were least likely to rate the support they received during their training as 'very good'; while
- student teachers who had followed **SCITT** programmes indicated that they were more satisfied than those who followed other ITT routes with the balance between the 'theoretical' and 'practical' elements of their courses, and were also more likely to report that the links between the theoretical and practical elements of their training were ('always' or 'usually') clear.

As might be expected, NQTs' experiences of their first year in post were less differentiated by the ITT route they had followed than their experience of ITT itself had been: for example, the ITT route that NQTs had followed had no significant effect on the time taken to pass Induction. Nevertheless, some aspects of their experience remained differentiated by ITT route. It was found, for example, that:

- a higher proportion of NQTs who had trained via the **Flexible PGCE** route than those who had followed all other routes reported that they were unemployed and looking for a teaching post;

- amongst primary phase NQTs, those who had followed **Flexible PGCE** programmes were less likely than those who had followed other ITT routes to give high ratings of their relationship with pupils; and
- a smaller proportion of primary and secondary phase **Flexible PGCE** respondents 'strongly agreed' with the statement '*I enjoy working as a teacher*'.

In our corresponding interim reports on Phases II and III of the *BaT* research (Hobson *et al.*, 2006a and Hobson *et al.*, 2007 respectively), we drew out a number of implications of these and other findings relating to ITT route differences. For example, we suggested that it may be fruitful to investigate further the causes of the generally less positive experiences reported by NQTs who had followed the Flexible PGCE route. We hypothesised that the key attraction of the Flexible route, which makes ITT accessible to some potential entrants who would not otherwise be able to train to be teachers, might also be the source of its major limitation. That is, the very flexibility of such programmes might mean that they are inevitably experienced as disjointed; while individual trainees following Flexible PGCE programmes tend to be less likely to be able to draw upon the support of a constant group of fellow trainees, which may help to explain why they were less likely than those following other ITT routes to rate the support they received during their ITT as 'good' or 'very good'.

However, although a small number of ITT route differences persisted in relation to teachers' experiences of their second, third and fourth years in teaching, in the majority of cases route differences narrowed over time and were 'washed out' (Zeichner and Tabachnick, 1981) by teachers' subsequent experiences of teaching. For example:

- while at the end of their first and second year of teaching those who followed Flexible PGCE programmes had been less likely to give higher ratings of their enjoyment of teaching (as noted above), they subsequently came into line with those colleagues who followed other ITT routes, as we showed in Chapter 8 (Section 8.2);
- while at the end of their first year of teaching, primary phase Flexible PGCE graduates tended to give lower ratings of their relationships with pupils (see Chapter 5, Section 5.6.1), by the end of their second year in post primary teachers' ratings of their relationships with pupils were no longer statistically differentiated by ITT route; and
- the initial large variation in the percentage of first and (to a lesser extent) second year teachers from different ITT routes who were working as supply teachers (where those who had followed BEd programmes were statistically most likely to have worked in supply) was again found to have dissipated over time, as we also saw in Chapter 8 (Section 8.9.1).

By the end of their fourth year in post, if not before this time, teachers' experiences of early career or professional development were no longer systematically differentiated by the ITT route they followed. This might lend support to the current provision of a variety of ITT routes, which is otherwise desirable to the extent that it has succeeded in attracting entrants to the teaching profession from a wider range of backgrounds. We should stress, however, that on the basis of our analyses of the *Becoming a Teacher* evidence base, and despite our finding that fourth year teachers who had followed **university-based PGCE** programmes were more likely than those who had followed other routes to rate themselves as 'very effective' teachers, we are not able to make any reliable claims about the relative capability or effectiveness of beginner teachers trained via different ITT routes. Further research might fruitfully be undertaken in this area.

### 11.3.2 Variation relating to beginner teachers' preconceptions

We saw in Chapters 4 and 5 that student teachers' experiences of and likelihood of completing ITT, and NQTs' experiences of their first year in teaching respectively, were differentiated in a number of respects by their original commitment to or **motives for undertaking ITT** and by their **preconceptions, expectations or concerns** about teaching and ITT. For example:

- those who had reported in the Wave 1 survey that before beginning ITT they had not expected to remain in the profession in five years' time, were more likely to withdraw from their ITT programmes than those who reported that they had expected to still be teaching in five years' time;
- those who indicated that they were strongly attracted to ITT and teaching by the idea of '*working with children or young people*' were more likely to complete their training than those who had not given this response; while those who reported being strongly attracted by '*financial incentives attached to teacher training*' and by the '*salary*' were more likely to withdraw;
- trainees who had reported in the Wave 1 survey a higher degree of confidence that their ITT would prepare them to be effective teachers were more likely to state at the end of their courses that their ITT route had in fact prepared them to be an effective teacher;
- respondents who reported (at Wave 1) that one of the reasons for their choice of ITT route was that the '*balance of in-school and out-of-school training had appealed to them*' were statistically more likely to report, at the end of their ITT, that the '*balance between the theoretical and practical elements*' had been 'about right'; and
- those who (in the Wave 1 survey) expressed concerns about their future enjoyment of teaching and ITT were more likely than those who had not done so to give lower ratings of their enjoyment of teaching at the end of their first year.

Analysis of data generated via interviews with (ex-) student teachers and ITT programme personnel also suggests that a major cause of student teacher withdrawal from ITT relates to entrants' unrealistic expectations of ITT and of the teaching profession more generally.

These findings, and others presented in our earlier reports on Phases I-III of the *BaT* research (Hobson and Malderez, 2005; Hobson *et al.*, 2006a; Hobson *et al.*, 2007), lend weight to those of previous studies which have found that student teachers' initial motivations for undertaking ITT, their prior commitment to teaching, and their beliefs and expectations about teaching and ITT can impact both on retention and attrition (Chambers and Roper, 2002; Kyriacou *et al.*, 2003; Priyadarshini and Robinson-Pant, 2003), and on their broader experiences of ITT and teaching (Wideen *et al.*, 1998; Korthagen *et al.*, 2001). This has a number of implications for the selection and preparation of student teachers. In particular, it is important:

- firstly, for gatekeepers to the teaching profession to make every effort to ensure that those who apply to and are accepted onto ITT programmes are as aware as possible of the demands of ITT and of teaching, are seeking to become teachers for sound reasons and are sufficiently committed to becoming a teacher;

- secondly, for teacher educators to assist their trainees to ‘surface and examine their initial beliefs and assumptions’ (Feiman-Nemser *et al.*, 1989: 1), and to challenge and attempt to modify those conceptions, held by student teachers, which may run counter to evidence-informed ideas of how learning to teach might best be facilitated (Fosnot, 1996; Edwards and Ogden, 1998).

In spite of their early importance to beginner teachers’ experiences and retention, however, as with ITT route, the effects of these ‘preconceptions’ variables were also largely ‘washed out’ with subsequent experience.

There are, however, two variables which have been found to produce systematic and persistent variation in the experiences of beginning teachers. These are the ethnicity and (particularly) the age of the beginner teacher participants. We consider each in turn.

### 11.3.3 Variation relating to beginner teachers’ ethnicity

We have found that on three major questions, survey respondents from black and minority ethnic (BME) groups were consistently differentiated statistically from their (white) majority ethnic group colleagues.

Firstly, we saw in Chapter 4 that student teachers from BME groups were statistically less likely than those from the majority ethnic group to report positive relationships with teachers in their placement schools, with 33 per cent of minority ethnic trainees rating such relationships as ‘very good’, compared with 43 per cent of those from the majority ethnic group; and we showed in Chapter 8 (Section 8.6.2) that these differences persisted throughout their first four years of teaching:

- amongst second year teachers, for example, 42 per cent of BME teachers rated their relationships with ‘*other teaching staff*’ as ‘very good’, compared with 61 per cent of their (white) majority ethnic group colleagues.

Secondly, and related to this first finding, we saw in Chapter 8 (8.5) that BME teachers, as a group, consistently (and increasingly) gave lower ratings of the support they received than their (white) majority ethnic group colleagues.

Thirdly, and partly in consequence of the findings presented above, we also showed in Chapter 8 (8.2) that BME teachers consistently rated their enjoyment of teaching less highly than their (white) majority ethnic group colleagues.

On the other hand, although in their first and second years of teaching black and minority ethnic (BME) teachers were less likely to rate their relationships with pupils as ‘very good’, this was no longer the case by their third and fourth years.

It is possible that some of these findings may be explained, at least in part, by the existence of perceived racism, which has been suggested by previous research studies. For example, in their study of minority ethnic trainees’ withdrawal from ITT, Basit *et al.* (2006) found that between a fifth and a quarter of participants (both those withdrawing from and those completing ITT) believed they were victims of deliberate racial harassment in their placement schools, with those held responsible including pupils, teachers, head teachers and fellow trainees; while around the same proportion considered themselves to be victims of unwitting racism, which resulted in them feeling isolated or excluded (cf. Roberts *et al.*, 2002). Related to this, Carrington and Tomlin

(2000) found, as Siraj-Blatchford (1993) had done some years earlier, that anxieties about encountering racism in schools had acted as a deterrent to entering the profession for some potential BME applicants to ITT.

Such findings, together with our own discussed above, may suggest a need for teacher educators, head teachers, mentors and others to be sensitive and responsive to the needs and perceptions of applicants to ITT, trainees and beginning teachers from BME groups. Indeed, Basit *et al.* (2006) argue strongly for the need to train '*ITT tutors and school mentors to increase their knowledge and sensitivity to issues of race*' (p.407), and we would suggest that particular attention to the specific support needs of new non-majority group entrants to the profession be continued into the early phases of their careers. This might be addressed by the provision of selected, same ethnic group mentors, and/or regular 'support groups', whether actual or virtual.

#### **11.3.4 Variation relating to beginner teachers' age**

Over the course of the *BaT* research the factor which perhaps accounted for the most widespread and systematic variation in beginner teachers' experiences is age. To some extent, reported differences between the experiences of relatively younger and more mature entrants to the teaching profession reflected those reported above between majority and minority ethnic group teachers. That is:

- more mature beginning teachers tended to rate the relationships that they had with teacher colleagues less highly than their younger colleagues;
- older teachers consistently tended to rate the support they felt they had received, during their ITT and through their first four years of teaching, less highly than their younger colleagues; and
- older respondents tended to rate their enjoyment of teaching less highly than younger colleagues.

In addition, however, younger participants also tended to be more positive than older ones about a number of other aspects of their experience. Notably:

- trainees in the '35-44' (7%) and '45 or over' (13%) age groups were more likely to withdraw from ITT than those who were under 35 years of age (5%);
- the proportion of NQTs who reported that they had been recommended to pass their Induction declined as their age increased - for example, 90 per cent of 22-26 year olds stated that they had been recommended to pass, compared with 70 per cent of those aged '47 or over'; and
- older teachers consistently rated the relationships they formed with their pupils less highly than their younger colleagues – although these differences narrowed over time, they remained statistically significant by teachers' fourth year in post, when 70 per cent of teachers aged 25-29 and 57 per cent of teachers aged '50 or over' rated their relationships with their pupils as 'very good'.

There is also some evidence, which we have reported in the preceding chapters of this report, that younger teachers were, in general, more likely to report having been given opportunities to review and plan their professional development, and more likely to have taken on additional responsibilities. For example:

- second year teachers who reported that they had used the appraisal system '*to review progress and development*' were, on average, two years younger than those who did not report using the appraisal system in this way;
- third year teachers who reported being involved in '*discussions about the goals and policies of your school/department*' were, on average, two years younger than those who did not; and
- third year primary school teachers who had assumed the role of subject co-ordinator were, on average, approximately one and a half years younger than those who had not.

There are a number of potential explanations for some of these findings. For example, it may be that, in general, younger teachers tend to be more energetic and/or more ambitious, and do not yet have the family responsibilities of older respondents, who may have turned to teaching in search of a better work-life balance.<sup>139</sup> Secondly, it may be that some established teachers and leaders assume, mistakenly, that this is the case, which can result in a form of latent ageism in which older teachers are, for example, over-looked for promotion. Thirdly, given that teachers and leaders are more used to working with beginning teachers with little or no prior work experience, they may be less able to cater for the development needs of more mature entrants, and less appreciative of their prior experiences and skills and their potential relevance in a school context, which we showed was a common complaint amongst some of the *BaT* case study participants. Fourthly, the resentment felt by more mature beginner teachers who perceive this to be the case, may cause or exacerbate existing problems relating to their relationships with fellow teachers or line managers. Fifth, given older beginner teachers' age and appearance, which are more likely to resemble their own, established teachers and mentors may mistakenly assume that they need less support. And sixth, older beginner teachers may actively encourage such a perception, possibly as a result of over-confidence based on the fact that they have prior working experience and/or on a lack of appreciation of how much they now need to learn in order to become a teacher.

Some possible implications of these findings also suggest themselves. For example, it would seem prudent to attempt to ensure that teacher educators associated with ITT programmes which accept more mature trainees are fully equipped to work with them, and that programmes of CPD for (for example) mentors and Induction tutors address this issue and facilitate subsequent attempts to uncover and be responsive to the needs of older entrants. In addition, again as for BME colleagues, it might be supportive of such new colleagues if mentors were selected for them who had also joined the profession after a previous career, and/or if virtual or face-to-face 'support groups' for career-changer entrants were established or encouraged.

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<sup>139</sup> That said, as we saw in Chapter 8 (Section 8.7), older survey respondents tended to report working more additional hours per week on average than their younger colleagues.

We nevertheless suggest, especially in a context in which more mature entrants are actively being encouraged to enter the profession, that these issues are explored more fully via additional research. Such research might usefully examine:

- the specific needs and aspirations of older and less traditional entrants;
- the potential existence of ageism in relation to established teachers' and leaders' attitudes towards older beginner teachers;
- existing 'good practice' in relation to the Induction and early professional development of mature entrants.

## 11.4 Summary implications

In this section we suggest a number of implications from the *BaT* research (further to those already noted in this chapter) for teacher educators, for head teachers and others providing access to opportunities for CPD, and for policy-makers.

### 11.4.1 Implications for teacher educators involved in ITT

The *BaT* findings suggest that ITT providers should:

- try to ensure that applicants who are accepted onto their programmes possess genuine, intrinsic motivations for wanting to become teachers;
- put a greater emphasis, in general, on the importance and development of interpersonal skills during ITT (see e.g. Oberski *et al.*, 1999);
- prepare trainees as fully as possible to be able to deal effectively with pupil behaviour and to manage a heavy teacher workload;
- be prepared, willing and able to help trainees deal with the emotional aspects of becoming and being a teacher, taking careful account of beginner teachers' emotional states and welfare (Eraut, 2004; McNally, 2006);
- continue work to strengthen 'partnerships' between schools and HEIs, in order to minimise the 'fragmentation' (especially between school-based and university-based course elements) that has been found to hinder effective ITT provision (Zeichner and Liston, 1987; Goodlad, 1990); and within this,
  - attempt to ensure that 'theoretical' elements are well-integrated into their programmes and that all 'partners' buy into and support their inclusion in the programme; and
  - provide opportunities for CPD for all those who support student teachers, in order to help them to develop both their understanding of student teacher learning and their repertoire of strategies for facilitating such learning;

- accept that ‘one size’ of ITT does not ‘fit all’ and (thus) that those responsible for the preparation (education, training and development) of student teachers need, as far as is practically possible, to be sensitive and responsive to the unique characteristics (e.g. relating to age, ethnicity, motivations, prior experience and conceptions) and needs (with respect to emotional states as well as learning) of the individual trainee;
- continue to consider their role in equipping trainees with the skills and attitudes to continue learning through their early career as teachers through, for example, ensuring that those graduating from their programmes have:
  - appropriate information about their needs and strengths to take into their first schools;
  - a clear understanding of how this information can be used to support their individual and on-going learning;
  - a clear view on what kind of support they will need and how they might want or need to look for such support from more than one person; and more generally,
  - appropriate noticing and reflection skills that will enable them to continue learning from their own and others’ experiences throughout their careers.

#### **11.4.2 Implications for school-based support for newly and recently qualified teachers**

*BaT* findings suggest that school-based mentors and other supporters of beginning teachers should:

- ensure that they are familiar with the kinds of preparation for teaching that the newly or recently qualified teachers experienced during ITT and (where appropriate) Induction;
- ensure that they pay particular attention to beginner teachers’ individual characteristics and needs;
- ensure that they take sufficient account of beginner teachers’ emotional states and welfare;
- provide beginner teachers with appropriate levels of autonomy and trust;
- help beginner teachers notice the positive impact of their work on particular children;
- support beginner teachers’ development of strategies for managing their workloads and pupil behaviour;
- support beginning teachers’ development of positive attitudes towards, and capacities for, learning from their own and others’ experiences (including ‘theories’); and
- support beginning teachers’ increasing integration into and participation in the school and wider professional communities.

### 11.4.3 Implications for head teachers and others providing access to opportunities for CPD

*BaT* findings support others in suggesting that head teachers and others who facilitate beginner teachers' access to formal opportunities for CPD should:

- attempt to foster and maintain a collegial whole school ethos in which beginner teachers feel supported and part of a team;
- have clear and effective school procedures to support beginner teachers in dealing with problematic pupil behaviour;
- carefully consider the allocation of mentor and Induction tutor roles, taking into account issues such as age, ethnicity, subject specialism and the availability of time, and whether, given the specific context, the needs of individual beginning teachers might be best facilitated by the allocation of a single mentor or by two or more colleagues who jointly undertake different aspects of the mentoring role ('dispersed mentoring');
- ensure that beginner teachers enjoy some autonomy over their choice of, and access to, formal CPD;
- ensure that there is provision to address the development needs not only of beginning teachers but also of those who support them, through access to appropriate programmes of mentor preparation and training;<sup>140</sup>
- ensure that beginner teachers and their mentors have sufficient time to work together (through, for example, attention to time allocations and timetabling); and that newly and recently qualified teachers receive reductions in their timetabled teaching commitments in accordance with Induction and PPA provision; and
- encourage those third and fourth year teachers who are considered to have the requisite qualities (Rippon and Martin, 2006; Hobson *et al.*, 2009b) to themselves become mentors to student and newly qualified teachers.

### 11.4.4 Implications for policy-makers

Finally, *BaT* research findings suggest that it would be prudent for policy-makers to:

- investigate further the reasons for the comparative early difficulties experienced by beginning teachers following or having followed certain ITT routes – most notably the Flexible PGCE (despite the reduction over time of significant differences between the experiences of beginner teachers who had undertaken different ITT routes);

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<sup>140</sup> While being a full member of the community into which the beginning teacher is being inducted is a *necessary* precondition for becoming a provider of support, it is not a *sufficient* condition. Those who support beginner teachers need to take into account the growing body of work relating to teacher learning and development (to which this project itself contributes), which can and should inform their practice. Coaching beginner teachers, scaffolding their reasoning, and offering them general support may well draw on some of the skills of classroom teaching which their prospective 'supporters' already possess; but it takes time to learn to use such skills in the context of supporting teachers, and to develop new strategies for their use.

- investigate further and address the underlying causes of the apparent non-provision, in some cases, of newly and recently qualified teachers' entitlements to reductions in their teaching workloads;
- continue to consider the content, format and use of the CEDP, and possible alternatives to this, as one means of facilitating continuity and complementarity between and across ITT, Induction and early professional development;
- continue to make support for the early professional development of teachers an important component of the work of a range of educational professionals - from head teachers, Induction tutors, mentors and other school-based colleagues, to those outside schools who provide courses and training for NQTs;
- ensure that provision is in place for appropriate forms of individually tailored support and CPD for beginner teachers beyond the first year of teaching; and
- ensure that there also exists appropriate CPD provision for those who support the early development of teachers, with particular emphasis on mentor (and school-based coach) development and, more generally, on the implications for responsive teacher education of the range of characteristics of beginning teachers (relating, for example, to issues of age, ethnicity and prior experience).

## Postscript: the impact of participants' involvement in the *Becoming a Teacher* research

Those 'case study' participants who took part in our final (Wave 6) face-to-face interviews were explicitly asked whether they felt their involvement in the research had had any impact on them, and if so, what this involved. We present below the main outcomes of the analysis of their responses.

The first point to make is that the vast majority of interviewees stated that their participation in the research *had* had an impact on them in one or more ways. Only two interviewees suggested that their participation had little or no effect on them, beyond the minimal issue of having to find time in their busy schedules to actually participate in the research (to take part in the annual face-to-face interview and engage in ejournal correspondence).

### Positive and negative aspects of participation

Of those who talked about the impact on them of their participation in the research, most suggested it had been a positive experience which they described variously as, for example, '*quite nice*' or '*very useful*'. Responses suggest that participants valued the opportunity to '*stop and think*', being '*given [the] time to reflect*' and to '*voice how things are going*'. A number indicated that they appreciated being able to contribute to a project that could have '*an influence on the future*' and were looking forward to seeing the '*report, the outcome of everything*'.

*It is a very good feeling to be part of this ... if somebody else can benefit from my experiences then great.* [Female, 47 or over, RTP, primary]

There is some evidence that remaining in the project had been at some cost to a small number of participants. For example, one interviewee said '*there were times when you emailed and I wasn't well and I thought "I don't want to know"*', suggesting that participation could have added to perceptions of workload or stress. On the whole, however, participants spoke positively about the personal impact of their participation in the project. In particular, they reported being prompted to '*think*', and being '*made to think in a different way*'.

### Opportunities for reflection

When discussing in more detail the impact of participating in the *BaT* research, most interviewees spoke of the opportunities it afforded for various kinds of *reflection* on different aspects of their work and lives. Some participants referred specifically to the questions they had been asked: '*if you didn't ask me those questions I wouldn't think about them*'. Some mentioned being made to think about, for example, '*my goals*', '*what I'm like as a teacher*', '*the way I do things and the way I portray myself as a teacher*', '*whether I've learned*' and described how the questions had '*made me look at me as a person and let me look at me as a teacher*'. Several participants said that the questions had acted as catalysts to action, '*it makes you think "I need to start making decisions"*', and others that the prospect of the researcher's visit, the knowledge that someone would want to hear about the year, had itself prompted reflection: '*it does make you reflect more when you know that you are coming*'.

Many of these participants indicated that they hadn't '*sat down and had* [these kinds of] *discussions with anybody else*' and that receiving ejournal prompts or being interviewed had been among very rare opportunities (or had been the only occasion) to reflect. In this context, one participant said '*it's like a bit of counseling every year... I think all teachers should do it*' and another proposed that regular periodic 'supervisions' (as occurs in the health or social services) should be made available for all teachers. Several suggested that they were sorry the project was ending - '*I'll be missing it actually*', that it had been a '*very valuable process*' and had '*made a difference*'.

Given the above, and reflecting on the limitations of the *Becoming a Teacher* research (see Appendix III), it would seem that the study did act as a kind of intervention which made a qualitative difference to the lived experiences of participants (at least of most case study participants), and that this differentiates *BaT* participants to some degree from beginner teachers in England at large.

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## Appendix I: An outline of the main ITT routes

### \* **Post-graduate Higher Education Institution (HEI)-administered programmes (PGCE; Flexible PGCE)**

These routes include both a HEI input and a period of training in schools. Those successfully completing the courses achieve an academic qualification (a Post-graduate Certificate in Education [PGCE]), in addition to Qualified Teacher Status (QTS). Programmes typically last for one academic year (full time), or five or more academic terms (Flexible route), and applicants must hold a relevant first degree (or equivalent).

### \* **Undergraduate HEI-administered programmes (BA/BSc QTS; BEd)**

BEd and BA / BSc QTS courses allow trainees to achieve both a Bachelors' degree – either in education or in a specific curriculum subject, and QTS. There are variations in the length of time required to complete BA/BSc QTS and BEd programmes. Traditionally these programmes last for three and four years respectively, though the length of programmes is becoming more variable, with institutions offering two-, three- and four-year programmes. Shorter two-year programmes appear to have been designed for entrants with professional qualifications equivalent to degree level study.

### \* **School-centred Initial Teacher Training programmes (SCITT)**

In SCITT programmes single schools or consortia of schools are responsible for the programme of initial teacher training. Depending on the specific programme provided, trainees may achieve solely QTS, or may also have the opportunity to gain an academic qualification, namely a PGCE. Programmes typically last for one academic year.

### \* **Employment-based programmes: Graduate Teacher Programme (GTP) and Registered Teacher Programme (RTP)**

In the GTP trainees take-up a salaried teaching post and (if successful) achieve QTS whilst in-post. Generally, employment-based routes offer QTS only, and typically last for one academic year. As with other postgraduate programmes, applicants to GTP programmes must hold a first degree in a relevant subject. By contrast, the RTP is open to those who do not yet hold a degree but have qualifications equivalent to the first two years of Bachelor's degree study. Typically, the RTP is a two-year programme during which trainees will be employed in a teaching post, whilst also completing a further year of degree-level study on a part time basis.

## Appendix II: Statistical analysis techniques

The main statistical techniques used for the analysis of the *Becoming a Teacher* survey data are explained below.

### Chi-square

Data have been analysed using the standard test of *Pearson's chi-square* to test for significant associations between different pairs of responses. In relation to the results of the chi-square analyses, three different values are normally reported: the value of the chi-square statistic, the number of degrees of freedom (denoted by 'df') and the probability or p-value. Taken together, the chi-square and df values determine the level of statistical significance (i.e. the p-value) and are conventionally stated in all quantitative research.

Some of the variables that arise from the survey are *ordinal* variables, i.e. they are measured on three-, four- or five-point rating scales. However, they also comprise '*don't know*' and (in some cases) '*can't generalise*' response categories which cannot be ordered and which were selected by a relatively small number of respondents. Retaining these two response categories in chi-square test calculations can result in the violation of a basic chi-square test assumption regarding the number of minimum expected counts (i.e. all expected counts should be greater than one and no more than 20% should be less than 5).<sup>141</sup> For this reason, these two categories were excluded from all chi-square test calculations which are presented in this report.

In some cases, due to the highly skewed distributions of the data and the relatively small numbers of respondents selecting low rating categories (such as '*poor*' or '*very poor*'), there sometimes remained a problem with the assumption of minimum expected counts (despite excluding the '*don't know*' and '*can't generalise*' categories). In such cases, rating categories with a low number of responses (e.g. '*very poor*', '*poor*' or '*neither good nor poor*') were collapsed, to create larger response groups (often of the form of, for example, '*Very good*' versus '*not Very good*'), and the chi-square test was then repeated using this new set of response categories.

### T-tests

The *t-test* is used to assess whether the mean values of the responses of two groups are statistically significantly different from each other. Whilst the variable of interest is generally required to be normally distributed and continuous in nature (like a person's age, for example), the large sample sizes available in our data and the well known robustness of the t-test imply that significant findings are likely to be reliable even if either or both of these assumptions are violated.

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<sup>141</sup> 'Expected counts' is the number of teachers from each sub-group of the explanatory variable (e.g. males and females in the case of 'gender') who would be expected to fall into each of the response categories of the outcome variable if there was no association between the two. The chi-square test assesses whether the differences between the expected and the observed (actual) counts are big enough to reflect an existing association in the research population and are not as a result of chance alone.

Two distinct types of t-test are used in this analysis: (i) the independent samples t-test, where two distinct sub-groups containing different respondents (for example, males and females) are compared; and (ii) the repeated measures (or paired) t-test where the same respondents are compared, notably in order to assess whether there have been changes in the pattern of responses over time (between different 'waves' of the survey).

For both types of t-test, we are interested in the t value, the degrees of freedom ('df') and the corresponding p-value, which indicates the likelihood of the means of the two groups being equal given the pattern of the data being analysed.

### **McNemar test**

The *McNemar test* has been used as a non-parametric method to compare successive 'wave' responses for significant changes in the proportions of dichotomous responses. Using this test, one can assess whether the proportion of respondents answering, for example, 'Yes' or 'No' to a particular question in the telephone survey has increased (or decreased) by a significant amount between two waves of the survey.

### **Spearman's correlation**

On occasion we wanted to directly measure the degree of association between two variables. For this purpose, we have used *Spearman's correlation* since we regarded this as the most appropriate of several available correlation coefficients for use with ordinal variables. We report the size of the correlation (always between -1 and 1: perfect negative and perfect positive correlation respectively), the sample size, and then the corresponding p-value, which indicates whether or not the two variables are indeed correlated.

### **Binary logistic regression analysis**

Whilst the chi-square test enables us to identify which explanatory variables (e.g. phase, route, gender, age or ethnicity) are statistically associated with teachers' responses on an outcome variable of interest, it does not allow us to test whether each of these explanatory variables has an independent effect on the responses (or whether the observed effect is rather, or partially, due to its association with another variable). *Regression analysis* allows us to identify which of the explanatory variables best predict teachers' responses on the outcome variable by entering all of them into a model simultaneously. Hence, in theory, if (for example) the effect of gender on an outcome variable is chiefly due to differences relating to educational phase (where a majority of primary teachers are female and a higher proportion of secondary school teachers are male), then educational phase will appear as a statistically significant predictor in the regression model, while gender will be shown as a non-significant factor. Where both gender *and* phase appear to be statistically significant in the regression model, this means that each of these two variables has an independent effect on beginner teachers' responses on the outcome variable.

In the regression models presented in this report, the variables ITT route, educational phase, age, gender and ethnicity were all included as standard 'predictors' and their effects on the 'outcome variable' (e.g. teachers' stated enjoyment of teaching) estimated. In addition, other variables were added to specific regression models where it was hypothesised that they might be related to or might 'predict' the outcome variable. For example, respondents' ratings of their relationships with pupils and of the support they received were included in the model on their stated enjoyment of teaching, the findings of which are reported in Chapter 7 (Section 7.3).

In formulating regression models, a backward method of entering the various explanatory variables has been applied. This means that all the explanatory variables (predictors) are simultaneously included in the model at a first step and then removed in turn, where they do not have a statistically significant effect on the outcome variable. The first predictor to be removed is the one with the least impact on how well the model predicts the outcome. The second is the next least influential variable and so on. Only statistically significant predictors are retained in the final model.

In binary logistic regression analysis, where the outcome variable takes one of two values (e.g. 0: satisfied and 1: dissatisfied), there are two main statistics of interest; the  $\exp(\beta)$ <sup>142</sup> and the *Nagelkerke R<sup>2</sup>*. The  $\exp(\beta)$  shows how much more or less likely it is for a certain sub-group of respondents (e.g. men) to give an answer of 1 (dissatisfied) compared with another group of teachers that has been defined as the reference group (in this example, women). The reference group is normally coded 0. Hence, if, in the above example, the  $\exp(\beta)$  equals 1.2, this means that the odds of a male teacher giving a response of 1 (dissatisfied) are 1.2 times greater than the corresponding odds for female teachers. Note that if the  $\exp(\beta)$  was less than 1, then the odds for male teachers (giving a response of 1 on the outcome variable) would be less than for female teachers. The  $\exp(\beta)$  is often referred to as the 'odds ratio'.

The *Nagelkerke R<sup>2</sup>* provides a measure of the extent to which all the predictor (explanatory) variables together explain the outcome variable and can take values from zero to one. A value of zero indicates that all the predictors together do not explain any of the variation in the outcome variable, whereas a value of one indicates that they perfectly explain or predict the outcome.

In addition to the *Nagelkerke R<sup>2</sup>*, there are two additional statistics that are useful for making an assessment of the efficacy of the statistical modelling that has taken place in logistic regression. The first of these is the *model chi-square* statistic which tests the null hypothesis that all non-constant coefficients in the model are zero. Hence a significant result here (i.e.  $p < 0.05$ ) indicates that, at least to some extent, the model is giving useful information.<sup>143</sup> The second is the *Goodness of fit* test which tests the null hypothesis that the model fits the data. A significant result here indicates that there is evidence that the model does not adequately describe the data.<sup>144</sup>

### **GLM repeated measures analysis**

The main method of analysis employed to examine change in beginner teachers' perceptions and experiences, and reported primarily in Chapter 8, is that of *repeated measure analysis using General Linear Models (GLM)*.<sup>145</sup> This technique allows groups of related dependent variables that represent different measurements of the same attribute to be analysed. In our data this is generally teacher responses to the same survey question over the course of several successive waves of data generation.<sup>146</sup>

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<sup>142</sup>  $\exp(\beta)$  stands for 'exponent of beta'.

<sup>143</sup> This test is analogous to the standard overall F-test used in ordinary least squares regression to test that not all of the coefficients in the model are zero.

<sup>144</sup> For a more detailed discussion of logistic regression techniques see Plewis (1997), Kaplan (2004) or Kinnear and Gray (2004).

<sup>145</sup> Chapter 4, Section 4.8 also includes the results of the application of this technique.

<sup>146</sup> For further explanation of GLM repeated measure techniques see Field (2005), Chapter 9.

Wherever GLM methods are employed, an initial baseline analysis is carried out using a model containing no predictor variables, in order to establish whether or not there are significant changes over time in the responses being analysed. This baseline work is then followed up in each case by a more complex repeated measures analysis where several key predictors were added to the model as independent variables. The independent variables employed included: ITT route followed, the phase of education (primary or secondary) respondents were qualified to teach, and respondents' age, gender and ethnicity.

There are two main types of statistically significant results in this type of analysis: within-subjects effects, and between-subjects effects. The former (within-subjects) is where significant change in the response over time is observed, on average, across all individuals (for example, teachers might collectively rate the relationships with their pupils more highly over time). The latter (between-subjects) occurs when there is a systematic difference in the response when comparing between two or more sub-groups in the sample (for example, primary teachers might rate their relationships with their pupils consistently more highly than secondary teachers).

It is possible for both between- and within-subject effects to be present simultaneously: for example, where teachers in general rate their relationships with pupils more highly over time, and where primary teachers rate these relationships more highly than their secondary colleagues but where the difference between the ratings of primary and secondary teachers is diminishing over time.<sup>147</sup>

It is important to note that our response data have, by their nature, a number of limitations in terms of meeting many of the usual assumptions required of complex parametric statistical analysis. For example, the data are often highly skewed and are generally ordinal in nature, usually on a four or five point scale. Partly because of these limitations, as well as for reasons of parsimony, the GLM model used in all analyses in this report is a relatively straightforward one that includes only the main effects, plus the interactions with the dependent (repeated measure) variable. Hence, the GLM-related findings should be treated as indicative only. In some cases, more complex models might produce statistically significant results that are somewhat different to those reported here. However, there is insufficient space to detail all the higher order results, and these are often difficult to conceptualise. There is also the likelihood that these more complex (factorial) models would be pushing the data beyond the limits of what might be considered reasonable in light of the limitations stated above. Instead, the general approach we have taken is to detail in each case the results of an analysis that is as simple as possible whilst, at the same time, providing meaningful insights into the data.

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<sup>147</sup> The example provided here is an actual *BaT* research finding, reported in Chapter 8 (Section 8.6.1).

## Appendix III: Limitations of the *Becoming a Teacher* research

As stated in Chapter 11, the *Becoming a Teacher* research, like all research, inevitably has a number of limitations, and these can be grouped into two main categories. The first category concerns the credibility of the findings, relating to the validity of the data generated on the one hand and the appropriateness of the selection and implementation of methods of data analysis on the other. The second concerns the typicality of the *BaT* research participants and thus the representativeness, generalisability and transferability of the findings. We consider each set of concerns in turn.

### Validity and credibility

We regard the expressed views of beginning teachers themselves to be central to any attempts to explain and understand their experiences of ITT, Induction, early career progression, retention and/or 'drop-out', and this is why we employed the methods we did. We nevertheless recognise the limitations of a research design based predominantly on beginner teachers' *accounts* (Dingwall, 1997) of their experiences.

First, there may have been reasons why such participants were not completely open or honest in their survey, interview and/or email responses, relating perhaps to the concept of social desirability, which suggests that research participants have a tendency, in their interactions with researchers, to seek to present themselves in a favourable light (Fisher, 1993). We attempted to counter this through, for example, the building (over time) of rapport and trust between researchers and research participants. Had resources allowed, the use of observational methods and / or the adoption of a more systematic approach to the generation of data from 'significant others' associated with our beginner teacher participants might have provided helpful additional or alternative perspectives. We were able to minimise this limitation to some extent by interviewing some of the teacher educators associated with case study beginner teachers' ITT and Induction programmes.

Secondly, some of the *BaT* data, particularly those gathered during 'Wave 1' in which the (then) student teacher participants were asked to state the views and positions they had held prior to undertaking their ITT, may also have lacked validity insofar as they were reliant on participants' ability to recall accurately those beliefs and positions, and insofar as their stated accounts may have been subject to *post hoc* rationalisation.<sup>148</sup>

The third issue relates to the longitudinal nature of a research project in which the research team and sponsors were committed to early and regular dissemination of interim findings, and to research participants' (consequent) access to dissemination material and members of the research team, and their exposure to the initial research instruments. This may have sensitised them to the research and (for example) led them to construe a more restricted notion of our research aims than was actually the case, causing them to omit from their accounts potentially illuminating findings or to over- or under-state certain aspects of their experiences. On the other hand, as suggested above, the development of relationships (and trust), over the duration of the *BaT* project, between members of the research team and research participants, may have encouraged participants to be more open and honest than they would otherwise have been, thus enhancing the validity of data and credibility of findings.

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<sup>148</sup> This limitation was inevitable given both the requirements of the *BaT* sponsors and the difficulty, in the light of Data Protection legislation, of gaining access to sufficient numbers of would-be teachers *prior* to them beginning their ITT.

Fourthly, and more generally, *all* stages of the research process from design through data generation and data analysis to reporting will inevitably have been influenced to some extent by our (the authors' and researchers') own prior experiences and perspectives, which may (for example) have resulted in our omitting potentially important questions or in overlooking potentially important data or 'findings'.

Finally, the credibility of some findings may also be questioned on the basis of limitations associated with the use of the specific methods of data analysis from which they were produced. Some such limitations are acknowledged in Chapter 2 (Section 2.5).

### Typicality

It is important to recognise that our presence as researchers, and participants' potential exposure to our research findings, may have influenced not merely what they told us about their experiences, as suggested above, but also the nature of those experiences, or how they reflected on their experience.<sup>149</sup> Thus, even if we assume that our data are valid (i.e. a truthful account or accurate representation of our participants' lived experiences), the possible presence of this phenomenon, known as reactivity, leads us to question whether those experiences are typical or representative of those of beginner teachers in the broader population (those whose experiences were not subject to investigation by the *BaT* research team).

There are other reasons too to be wary of generalising the *BaT* findings to the wider population. First, as explained in Chapter 2, our survey sample (though large) was not completely random, with ITT routes recruiting small numbers of student teachers purposefully over-sampled to facilitate viable statistical analysis by ITT route in the final wave of the study. Secondly, whilst for the questionnaire survey we sought to include all student teachers following the ITT route sampled in the chosen providers, not all trainees will have been present on the days on which the questionnaire was administered, and some of those who were present may have chosen not to complete it, which may be sources of further bias.

Thirdly, we cannot state with any certainty how typical (of the broader survey sample or of student teachers nationally) the experiences and accounts of the 'case study' participants were, given, for example, that the case study sample was partly self-selecting. And fourthly, though minimal compared with most studies of this nature, attrition from the survey and case study samples, over the lifetime of the project (see Chapter 2, Section 2.4), means that we cannot be sure how typical of all beginner teachers in England were those who remained in the study, or how typical of all those who did not complete their ITT or who subsequently left teaching were those *BaT* participants who 'dropped out' of ITT or teaching but were willing and able to tell us their reasons for doing so.

Nevertheless, notwithstanding these various limitations, our review of the literature (Ashby *et al.* 2009) suggests that the *BaT* survey sample is larger than – and at least as representative of beginning teachers throughout England as – most previous studies on this subject; while the case study sample offers a rare insight into the lived experiences of a diverse cohort of beginning teachers over a prolonged period of time.

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<sup>149</sup> The question of the impact of participation in the *BaT* research is explored further in the Postscript.

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