



**SPICe**

The Information Centre

## SPICe Briefing

# Teacher Numbers

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This briefing summarises trends in teacher numbers, probationer employment and related policy regarding intake targets for student teachers.



The Scottish Parliament  
Pàrlamaid na h-Alba

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## EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

- The number of teachers in primary, secondary and special schools fell from 52,452 in 2007 to 49,923 in 2010 – a drop of 4.8%<sup>1</sup>. Over the same period the number of pupils dropped by 2.8% (Scottish Government, 2010a, 2010b).
- The proportion of new teachers not employed in teaching in Scotland in the October following their probationary year rose from 5.3% to 27% between October 2005 and 2010 (GTCS, 2010a).
- The Scottish Government initially had a policy to maintain teacher numbers in the face of falling schools rolls in order to support its policy on reducing class sizes. However, as teacher numbers dropped, the policy became one of matching the supply of student teachers to the demand expressed by local authorities. The Scottish Government cut teacher training places and the Cabinet Secretary was of the view that the previous administration's target of 53,000 had led to problems of over-supply (Scottish Parliament ELLC Committee, 2010a).
- Teacher training targets were reduced from 3,857 places for 2009/10 to 2,307 places in 2010/11 and this lower level will be maintained for 2011/12 (ELLC 1 December).
- The Teacher Employment Working Group reported in late 2008 (Paola, 2008). While it found that the workforce planning system at a national level was fit for purpose, it made 12 recommendations. These included:
  - Improve the links between local and national teacher workforce planning
  - Encourage use of recent probationers for supply work
  - Review winding down arrangements for teachers nearing retirement
- Similarly, the Donaldson Review (2011) on teacher training recommended that the accuracy of the workforce planning model should be improved through universities and local authorities providing their latest projections on an annual basis.
- In 2010, two local authorities took up a Government offer of increased borrowing consent to fund early retirement packages and teacher recruitment (Scottish Government 2010c).
- As part of the negotiations on the 2011/12 budget between COSLA and the Scottish Government, it was proposed in November 2010 that councils would endeavour to reduce teacher unemployment and they would provide enough jobs for their 2011 probationers. In addition, proposals were put forward for changes to working conditions. The Government also announced a separate review of the McCrone agreement which will report by June 2011 (Swinney, 2010).

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<sup>1</sup> This does not include pre-school or centrally employed teachers.

## **GOVERNMENT POLICY**

The previous administration had a policy to increase teacher numbers from 50,500 in 2001 to 53,000 by 2007 (Scottish Executive 2004a). The additional teachers were to be targeted on: "reducing class sizes to a maximum of 20 in S1 and S2 for Maths and English, 25 in P1 and increasing the number of specialists working across the boundary between secondary and primary" (Scottish Labour and Scottish Liberal Democrats, 2003). It was also intended to provide the extra teachers required to enable the reduction in teachers' class contact time to 22.5 hours a week. This policy was supported by a ringfenced fund in the National Priorities Action Fund.

The SNP manifesto in 2007 said:

"We will maintain teacher numbers in the face of falling school rolls to cut class sizes and place greater emphasis on teacher recruitment for the early years, languages and science."

Shortly after the 2007 election, teacher workforce planning estimated that the commitments on class sizes would require an additional 3,300 FTE teachers (3,500 headcount). Providing these teachers would require over 4,000 extra students to enter initial teacher education (Scottish Government, 2008a). As a result, student teacher intake numbers increased and funding was provided to local authorities to employ more teachers. The Government provided £50.3m through the National Priorities Action Fund in 2007/08 for progress towards the teacher numbers target (Scottish Parliament, 2008a), and a further £9m was allocated over two years to employ an extra 300 teachers (Scottish Parliament, 2007a). After 2007-08 all money for teacher recruitment was provided through the general local government settlement and was not ringfenced for specific policies. The settlement was, however, provided within the framework of the concordat commitments including ones to make progress in reducing class sizes.

Following Local Authorities' decisions not to increase their teacher recruitment, training intake targets were drastically cut back. In evidence to the ELLC Committee in October 2010, Michael Russell said: "I do not have a policy on employing an arbitrary number of teachers." (Scottish Parliament ELLC Committee 2010b col 4060). In November 2010, the Scottish Government and COSLA agreed to reduce teacher unemployment and provide enough jobs for the 1,800 teachers due to complete their probationary year in June 2011 (Swinney, J, 2010).

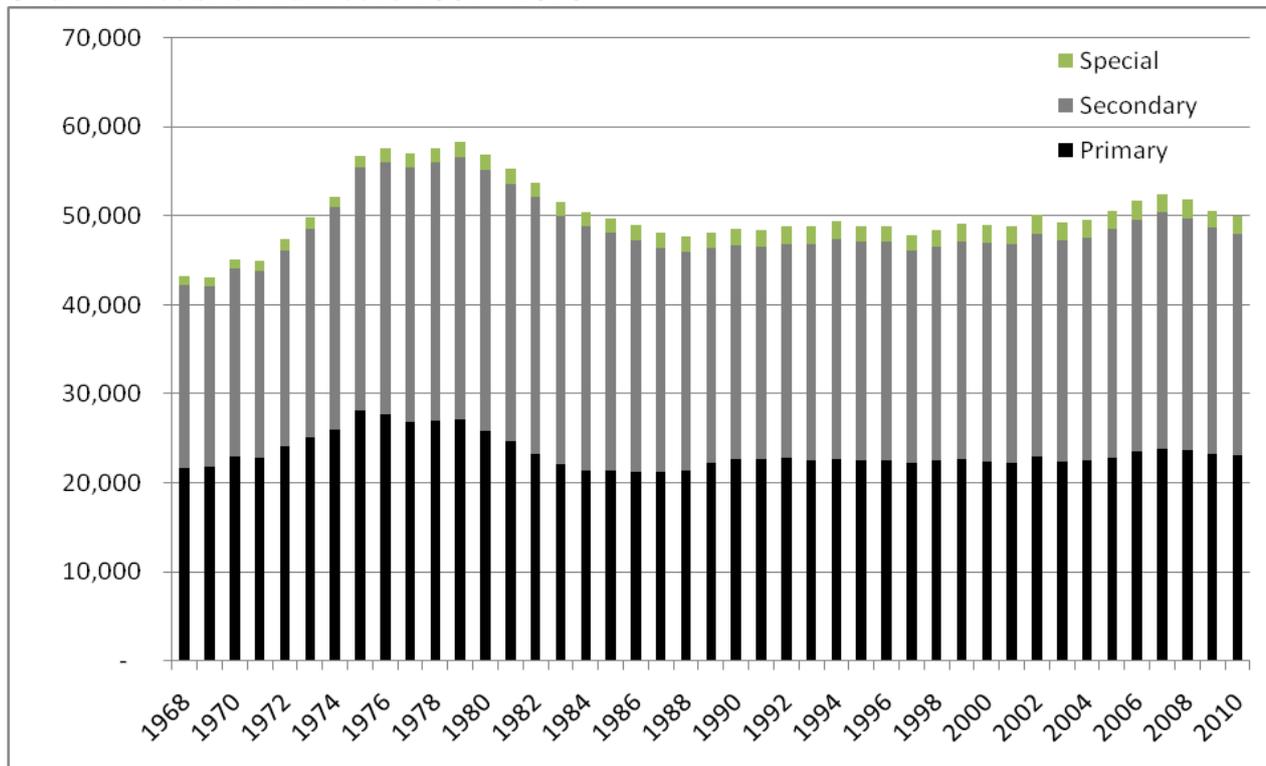
## **TRENDS IN TEACHER NUMBERS**

There are several measures of teacher numbers and employment including the annual teacher census, quarterly public sector employment statistics and teacher vacancies. There is also claimant count information by occupation. There have also been surveys of probationer employment by the General Teaching Council Scotland and Times Educational Supplement. The trend across all these measures is a reduction in teacher numbers over the past few years.

Chart 1 shows teacher numbers since 1968. The number of teachers increased in the 1970s to reach a peak of 58,262 in 1979. During the 1980s they declined to less than

50,000. More recently, there was an increase from 47,761 in 1997 to 52,446 in 2007 before declining to 49,923 in 2010.

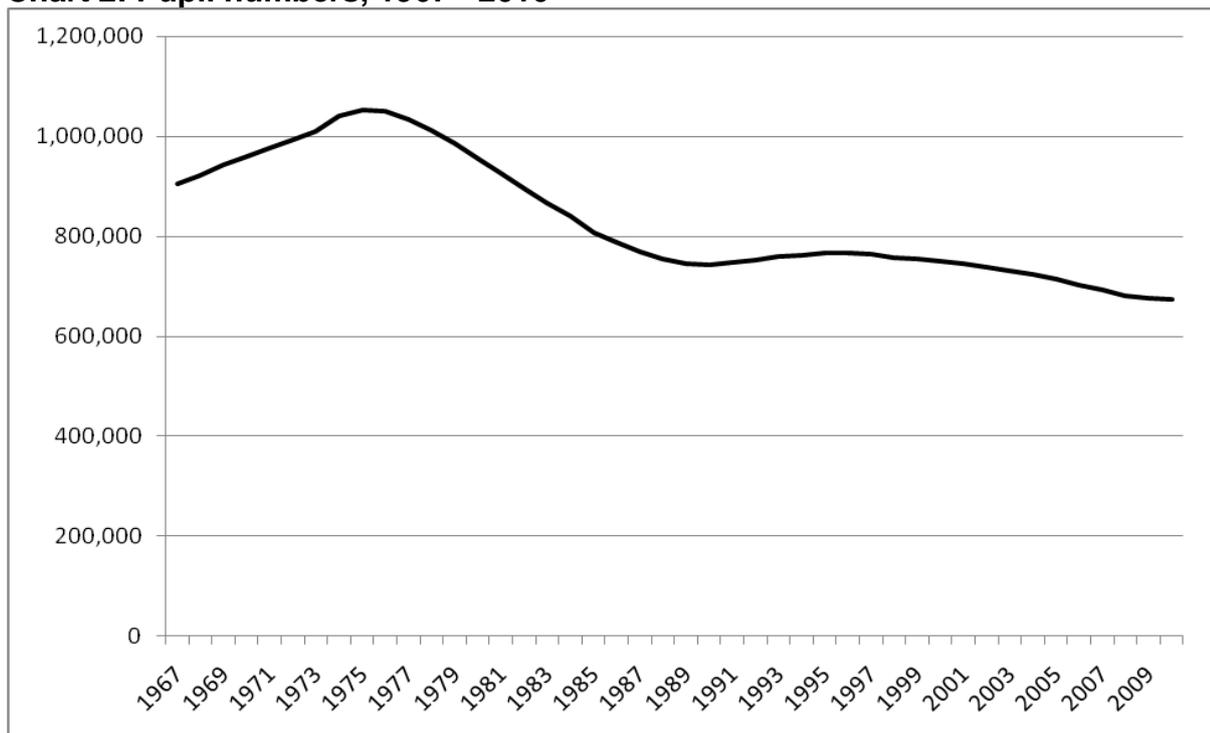
**Chart 1: Teacher numbers 1967 - 2010**



Source: Scottish Government 2010a, 2010b). Does not include centrally employed or pre-school teachers.

The trend in the number of teachers has generally reflected changes in pupil numbers (charts 2 and 3). However, teacher numbers increased between 2003 and 2007 despite a fall in pupil numbers over this period.

**Chart 2: Pupil numbers, 1967 - 2010**

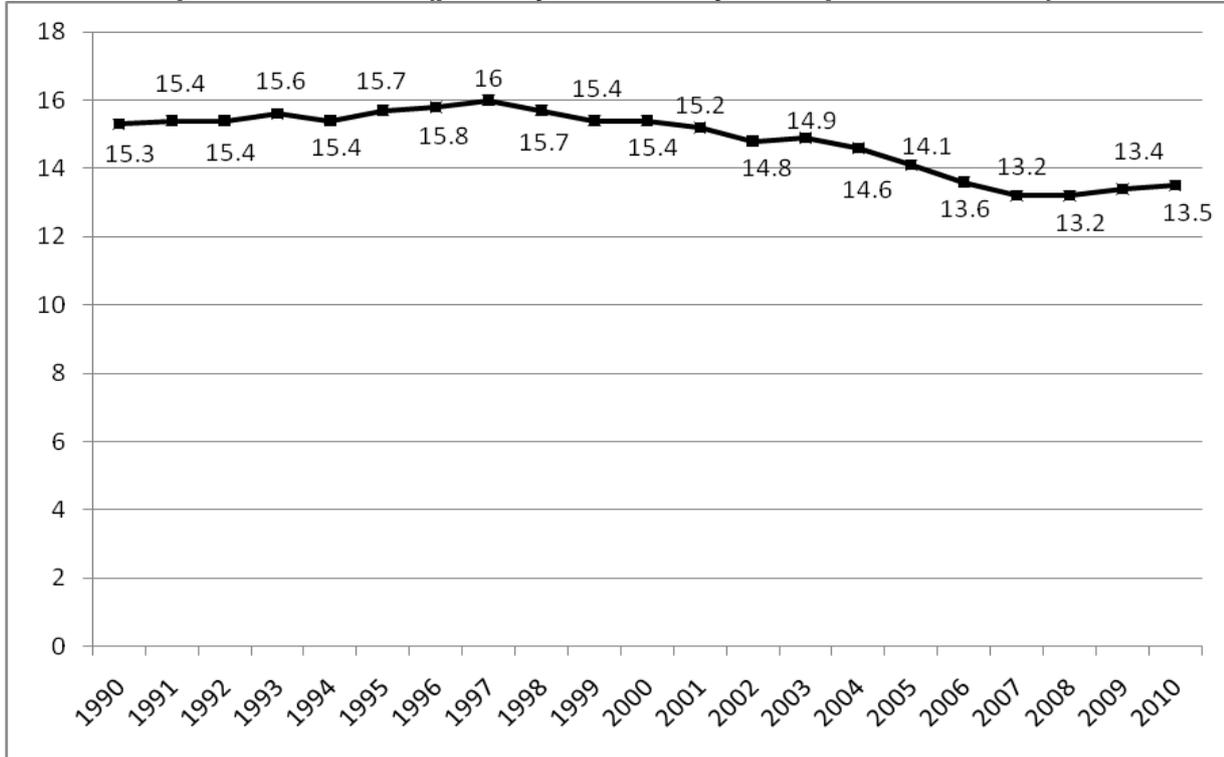


Source: Scottish Government 2010a, 2010b

## PUPIL TEACHER RATIOS

The pupil teacher ratio reduced from a high point of 16 in the late 1990's to 13.2 in 2007. It has since risen slightly. Pupil teacher ratios over the last 20 years are set out in the chart below.

**Chart 3: Pupil teacher ratio (primary, secondary and special schools) 1990 - 2010**

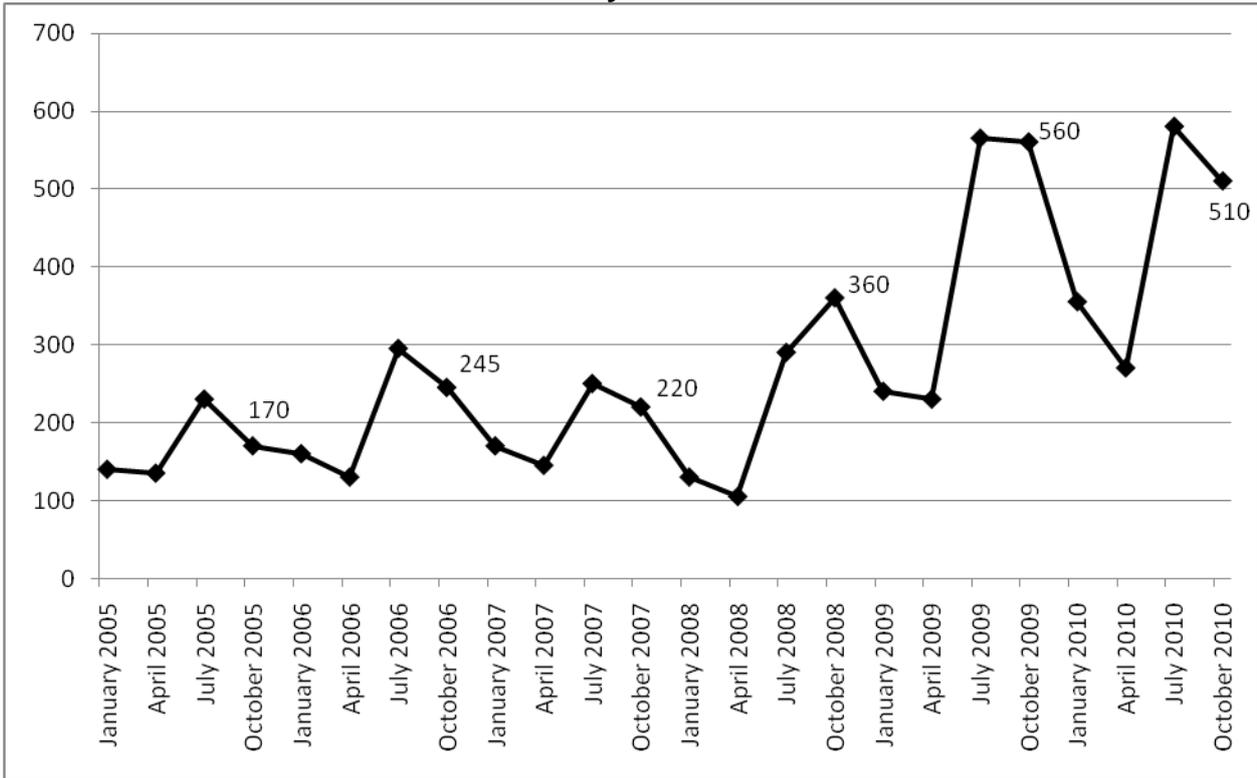


Scottish Government, 2009a, 2010a, Scottish Executive, 2004.

## CLAIMANT COUNT

There has been an upward trend in the number of teachers claiming Job Seekers Allowance, although figures for October 2010 are lower than the figures for October 2009 (510 compared with 560). This is still considerably more than the 170 claimants in October 2005. The chart below shows claimant counts from January 2005 to October 2010. There is considerable seasonal fluctuation which reflects the pattern of the school year. The October figures are highlighted for the purpose of comparison across years.

**Chart 4: Teacher claimant count January 2005 to October 2010.**

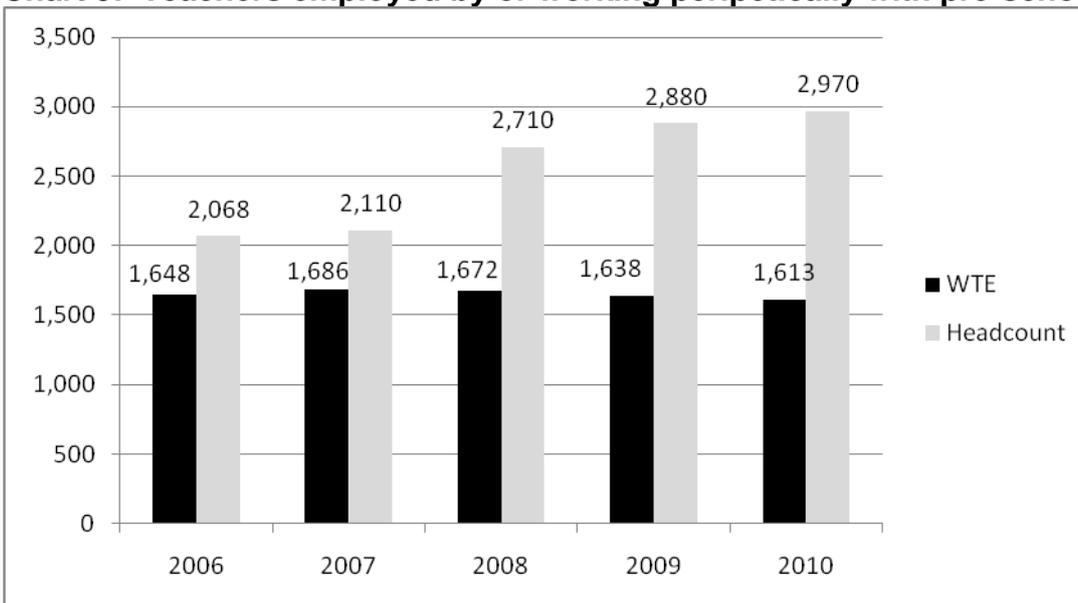


Source: NOMIS

## PRE-SCHOOL TEACHER EMPLOYMENT

While the headcount of teachers working in pre-school has increased, the full time equivalent count has decreased, suggesting more part time working. In September 2010, 62% of pre-school teachers worked part time compared with 15% of primary teachers (table 2.3, Scottish Government 2010a).

**Chart 5: Teachers employed by or working peripetically with pre-school, 2006 – 10**



Source: Scottish Government 2009b table 23, 2010d table 27

The Scottish Government had a manifesto commitment to provide access to a teacher for every child in pre-school education. Table 1 shows that more children do have access to a teacher in 2010 than in 2008. However as WTE teacher hours have not increased (chart 5), this appears to have been achieved by re-distribution of existing hours across pre-school centres rather than deployment of more teacher hours in total.

In the guidance notes 'access to a teacher' was defined as, "the teacher being present in a pre-school education setting when the child is in attendance", and it was acknowledged that systems for providing access to teachers vary. Pre-school education centres were asked whether they received occasional or ad hoc support from any external GTCS registered teachers. This could be instead of, or in addition to, any teacher(s) providing pre-school education under a regular arrangement.

**Table 1: Access to a teacher in pre-school**

|      | Regular arrangement only | Regular arrangement and ad hoc support | Ad hoc support only | total        |
|------|--------------------------|--|---------------------|--------------|
| 2008 | 48.1%                    | 16.3%                                  | 1.8%                | <b>66.1%</b> |
| 2009 | 45.7%                    | 22.9%                                  | 1.4%                | <b>70.0%</b> |
| 2010 | 51.2%                    | 21.7%                                  | 0.9%                | <b>73.8%</b> |

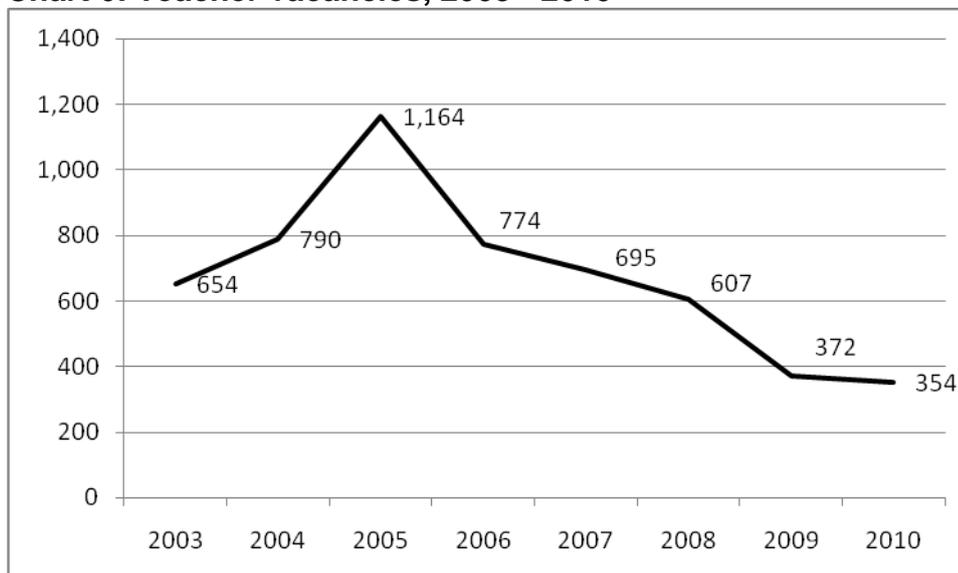
Sources: Scottish Government 2009b table 19, 2010d table 24 and 2008 table 24.

A further survey in September 2010 found that 74.4% of pre-school pupils had access to a teacher (table 6.2, 2010 statistics).

## TEACHER VACANCIES

Total teacher vacancies declined from 1,164 in 2005 to 354 in 2010.

**Chart 6: Teacher vacancies, 2003 - 2010**



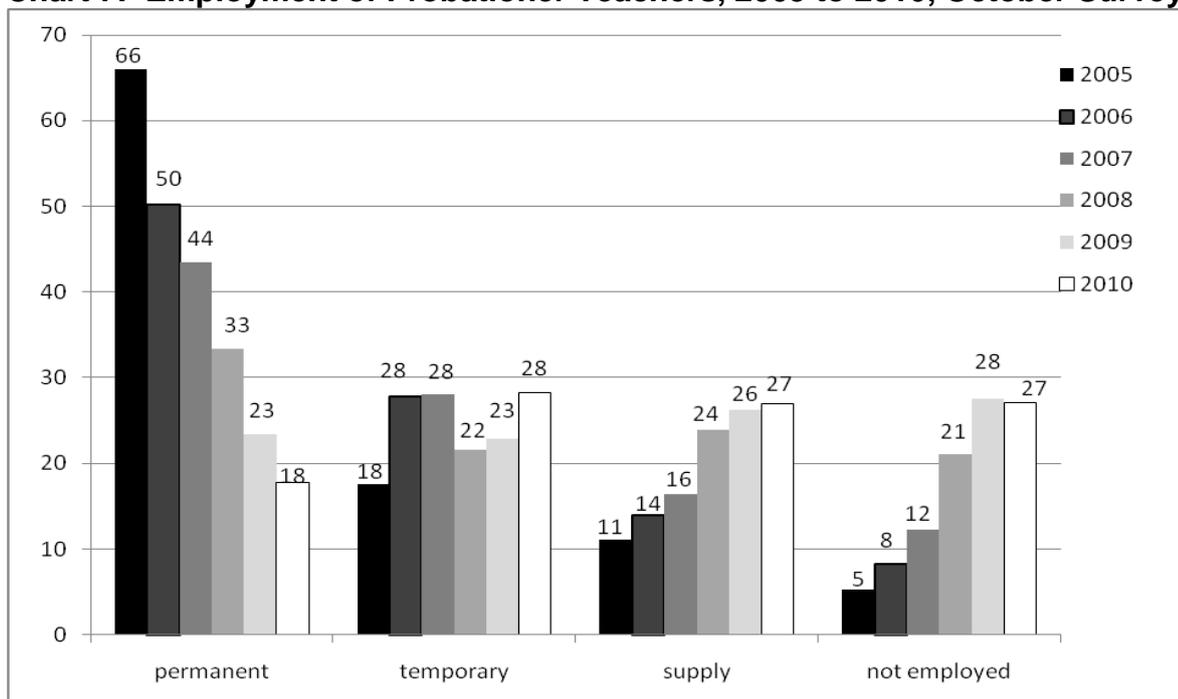
Source: Scottish Government 2010e.

## PROBATIONER EMPLOYMENT

The proportion of new teachers not employed in teaching in Scotland in the October following their probationary year rose from 5.3% to 27.5% between October 2005 and

October 2009. It has since fallen very slightly to 27.1%. Those in permanent teaching contracts decreased from 66% to 18% between October 2005 and 2010 (GTCS 2010b).

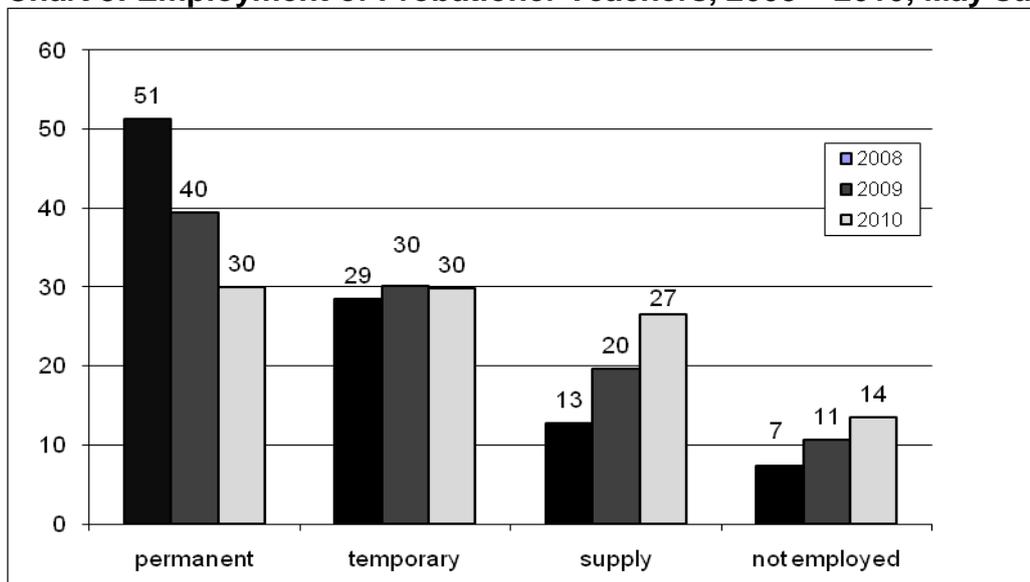
**Chart 7: Employment of Probationer Teachers, 2005 to 2010, October Survey**



*Follow up survey in April/May*

The proportion of new teachers not employed in teaching in Scotland in the April following their probationary year rose from 7.3% to 13.5% over the last three years. Those in permanent teaching posts decreased from 51.3% to 30% over the same period.

**Chart 8: Employment of Probationer Teachers, 2008 – 2010, May survey**

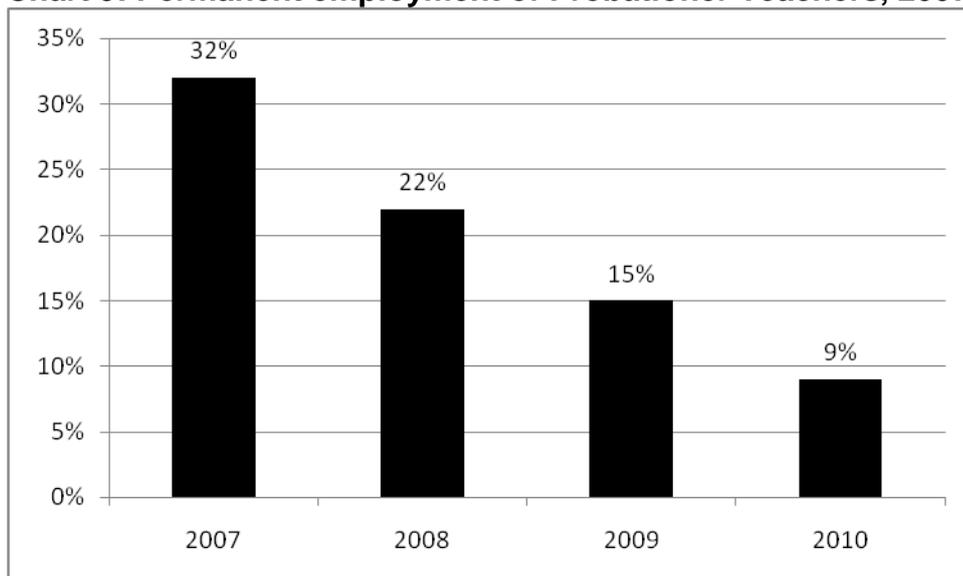


Source: GTCS 2009, 2010a, 2010b. October 2009 and May 2010 surveys relate to teachers who completed their induction year in June 2009.

## TESS Survey of Probationer Employment

The Times Educational Supplement Scotland (TESS) has been highlighting the difficulties that probationers have had finding jobs since the first cohort looked for work in August 2003. Although there was no comprehensive survey that year, the TESS reported that: “New teachers in Scotland are struggling to find permanent jobs following their induction year.” The annual TESS survey has found that the proportion of teachers with a permanent job secured in the authority they trained in fell from 32% in August 2007 to 9% in August 2010. However, it is important to note that teachers would not be expected to look for work only in the authority they trained in.

**Chart 9: Permanent employment of Probationer Teachers, 2007 – 2010, TESS survey**



Sources: TESS 203, 2007, 2008, 2009, 2010a

Looking at both the TESS and GTCS surveys, although many probationers get permanent jobs over the course of their first year in the job market, there is still a lower proportion getting permanent jobs than in previous years.

## REASONS FOR FALL IN TEACHER NUMBERS

Over the last few years, the Education, Lifelong Learning and Culture Committee has discussed both the unemployment of probationer teachers and the fall in the total number of teachers. In evidence to the Committee in December 2008, Fiona Hyslop noted that the induction scheme may have displaced rather than solved the problem of employment for new teachers:

“We have to remember where we were when the induction scheme, which is an excellent opportunity, was introduced. It was not post-probationers who could not get jobs; it was people coming out of teacher training institutions. We know the horror stories about the experience in the early 2000s. The induction scheme was introduced to try to address the problem, and it has done so, but, given the volume that we are talking about, we might just have displaced the problems that were faced by students coming out of initial teacher training to their second year.

There is an expectation that if someone has been given a guaranteed position for a year, it will continue, but in which other profession or area of life does the

Government guarantee someone a job? The issue is whether the Government should guarantee forever jobs for all teachers who are one, two or three years out of teacher training” (Scottish Parliament ELLC Committee 2008a col 1801)

In evidence to the Committee in June 2010, Michael Russell suggested that reasons for the drop in teacher numbers included both the financial crisis and the previous administration’s increase in training numbers:

“There are a number of reasons why teacher numbers have fallen. One is undoubtedly the unprecedented financial pressures on local authorities; we can go through, line by line, the reasons for that. Another reason—which is controversial, Mr Macintosh, and I do not expect you to agree with it—is that we could look back and say with hindsight that the number of teachers was in fact artificially increased over a period of time, and that the number was unsustainable” (Scottish Parliament ELLC Committee 2010a, col 3760).

On the release of teacher statistics in 2009, Councillor Isabel Hutton referred to the financial pressures facing councils.

“Councils are under constant pressure to deliver efficiency savings and best value and it would be economic suicide to maintain teacher numbers while experiencing falling school rolls, rising salaries, and record demands on children's services.” (BBC, 2009)

## GOVERNMENT RESPONSE

In response to the fall in demand for teachers from local authorities the Scottish Government has cut the numbers going into teaching training (see below) and established a web site to support unemployed teachers to maintain CPD. [CPD Step –in](#) is hosted by Learning and Teaching Scotland on GLOW and includes the following features:

- a discussion area with chat, forum and web meeting tools
- a place to share resources and links
- advice on PRD and examples of free, online CPD on Glow and beyond
- a place to express views
- a feed of teaching posts from [MyJobsScotland.com](#).

In March 2010, the Cabinet Secretary was asked whether it was still government policy to maintain teacher numbers at 53,000. He said:

What we have seen is an inevitable pressure on teacher numbers, given the pressure on resources. What we now have is progress on class sizes, and I am pleased with that. There has been a reduction in teacher numbers and, as I have indicated, I think that it would be very difficult for local authorities to reverse that. Of course, were they to choose to do so, everybody would be pleased (Scottish Parliament ELLC Committee 2010c, col 3303).

And in October he said:

“I do not have a policy on employing an arbitrary number of teachers.” (Scottish Parliament ELLC Committee 2010 b, col 4060).

He predicted that, given the financial situation, further reductions in teacher numbers were likely, but recommended that local authorities replace retiring teachers with newly qualified teachers:

“We know that local authorities shed more than 2,000 teachers between 2007 and 2009, in a period when budgets were still growing. [...] we are moving into a period of falling local authority budgets [...] it does not take much to work out that it will be impossible to protect teacher numbers as we move forward. To avoid further shrinkage of our teacher workforce, we need local authorities to do what they can not to allow further drops in teacher numbers. [...] We need local authorities not to look on each retiring teacher as an opportunity to save money, but to recruit recently qualified teachers” (Scottish Parliament ELLC Committee 2010 b).

In November 2010 the Scottish Government and COSLA agreed to:

- ensure that there are enough vacancies as there are teachers completing their probationary year in June 2011
- to reduce teacher unemployment
- to provide an extra £15m in the local government settlement for teacher employment (Swinney 2010)

Following the publication of the 2010 teacher census, Michael Russell said: “with the position we have reached with COSLA, we have turned the corner and that next year teacher numbers will stabilise” (Scottish Parliament ELLC 2010d, col 4413). However, in a debate in January 2011 the Cabinet Secretary noted that returning teaching numbers to their 2007 levels was not realistic.

“Employing 3,000 teachers, which is roughly the number that local authorities have shed, would cost in the order of £120m. I challenge those who are so critical of the current position – which none of us wishes to be in – to point to where that funding will come from.” (Scottish Parliament 2011 col 32125)

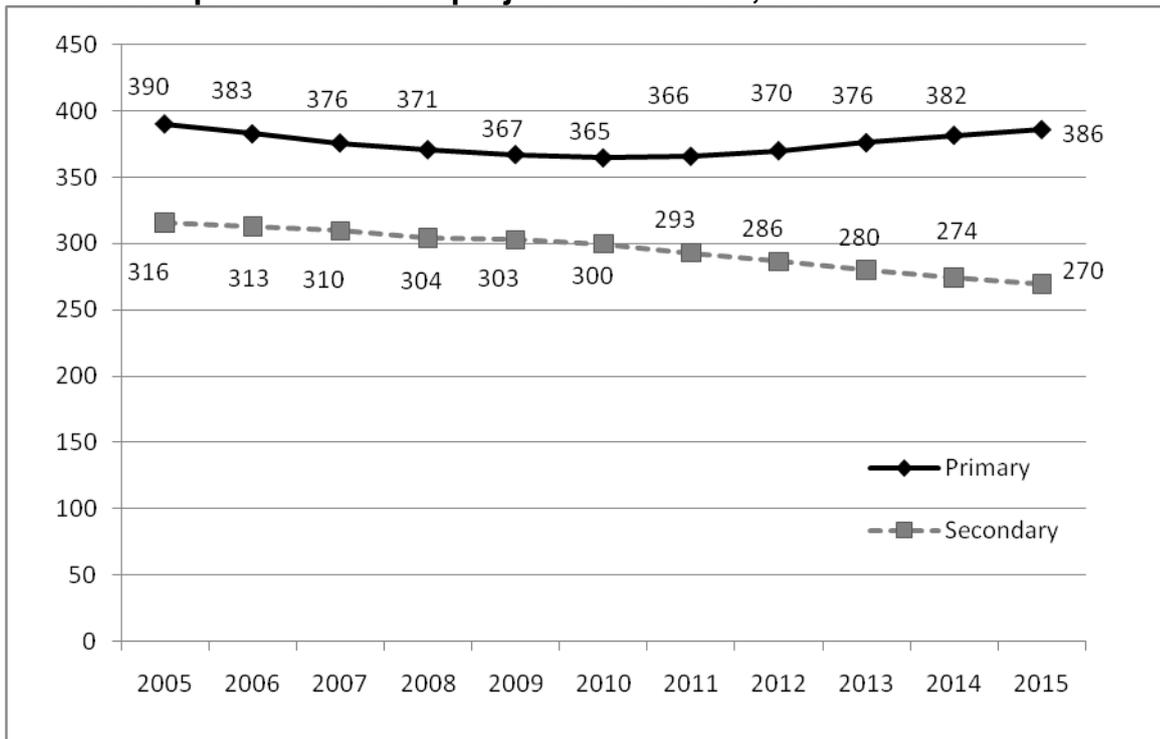
## **FACTORS AFFECTING DEMAND**

Two key trends that affect the demand for teachers are the expected number of pupils and the pattern of teachers leaving and returning to the profession. However, it is also affected by the cost of employing teachers and local authority budgets generally.

## **PUPIL PROJECTIONS**

While the number of secondary school pupils is predicted to continue to fall, the number of primary school pupils reached a low of 364,600 in 2010 and is projected to rise to 386,100 by 2015.

**Chart 10: Pupil numbers and projections 2005-15, 000's**

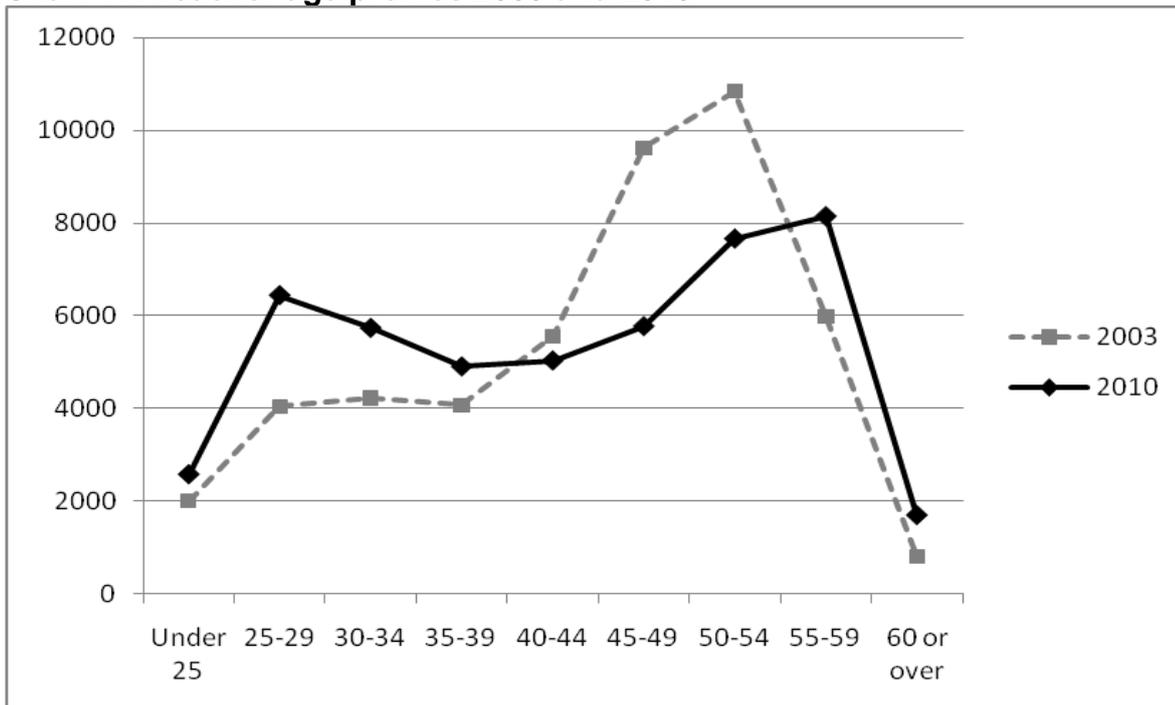


Source: Scottish Government 2009d table 9.3

## TEACHER AGE PROFILE AND RETIREMENT

Chart 11 shows that, compared with 2003, there are now around 3,000 more teachers aged over 55 but there are also over 5,000 more teachers aged under 40 and fewer teachers aged 40-54.

**Chart 11: Teacher age profiles 2003 and 2010**



Source: *Scottish Executive 2004, Scottish Government 2010f*

In December 2008, Fiona Hyslop said that increases in teacher training targets had been needed because substantial numbers of teachers were expected to retire:

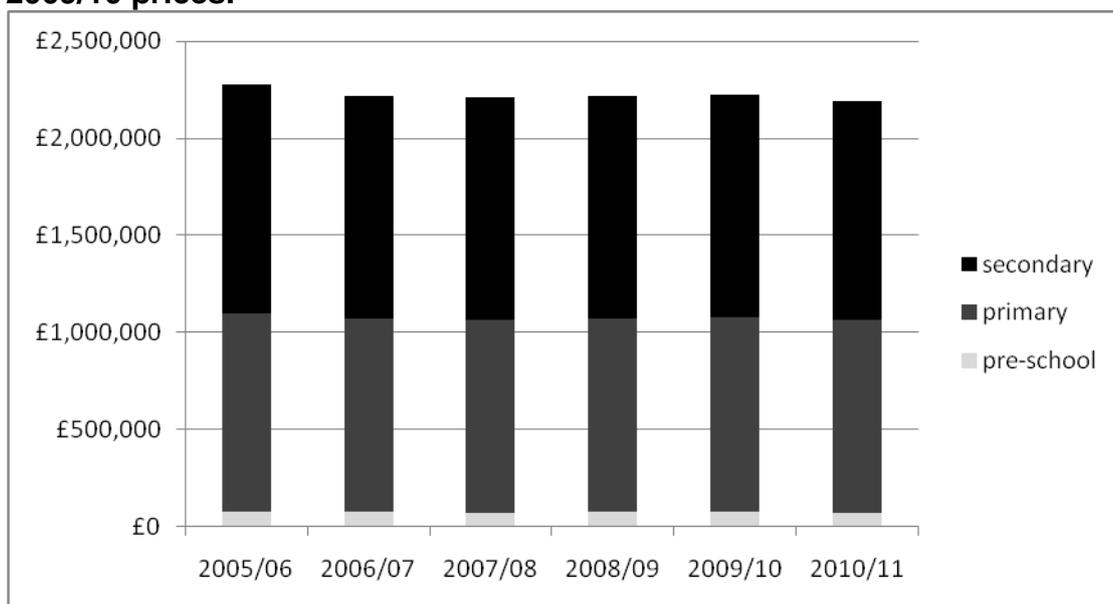
“The projection, then, was that 5,799 teachers would leave teaching between 2006 and 2007, but 5,622 actually left. [...] By and large, the projections of how many would retire hit the target that we needed. We have asked local authorities to provide us with the information that we need on the actual experience of retirement this year—and, indeed, in previous years—compared with their projections. Indeed, we have asked the Scottish Public Pensions Agency to do likewise.” (Scottish Parliament ELLC Committee 2008a col 1810)

Reflecting on this issue, the Teacher Employment Working Group recommended in its 2008 report that there should be a review of means of early release including teacher winding down arrangements (Paola, 2008). In 2009, the Government offered extra borrowing consent of £10m for local authorities to fund early retirement packages and teacher recruitment. This was intended to free up around 500 teaching posts (Scottish Government 2009c). Full details of the scheme were issued under [Finance Circular 7/2010. Borrowing consents](#) issued under this scheme were £301,000 in total and were offered to Falkirk and West Dunbartonshire councils (Scottish Government 2010c). The low uptake might reflect the concerns expressed by some local authorities that they were being asked to fund retirement from additional borrowing (Herald, 2010a).

## SPEND ON TEACHER EMPLOYMENT

In evidence to the committee in 2008 Fiona Hyslop stated: “Page 4 of the concordat identifies that there are sufficient resources in the local government settlement to maintain teacher numbers at 53,000.” (Scottish Parliament ELLC Committee 2008a col 1807). Estimated spend on teacher staff costs fell by 4% in real terms between 2005/06 and 2010/11 (chart 12 and table 2).

**Chart 12: Estimated teacher staff costs, 2005/06 to 2010/11. £000's. Real terms 2009/10 prices.**



Source: CIPFA budget estimates. Using [treasury deflator](#).

**Table 2: Estimated spend on teaching staff. £000's. Real terms 2009/10 prices.**

|         | <b>pre-school</b> | <b>primary</b> | <b>secondary</b> | <b>total</b> |
|---------|-------------------|----------------|------------------|--------------|
| 2005/06 | £76,524           | £1,023,098     | £1,177,168       | £2,276,789   |
| 2006/07 | £76,852           | £996,127       | £1,145,233       | £2,218,212   |
| 2007/08 | £73,299           | £991,312       | £1,143,327       | £2,207,938   |
| 2008/09 | £74,297           | £996,197       | £1,150,104       | £2,220,598   |
| 2009/10 | £74,118           | £1,006,208     | £1,143,908       | £2,224,234   |
| 2010/11 | £72,971           | £988,885       | £1,127,989       | £2,189,845   |

## **TEACHER PAY AND CONDITIONS**

A key cost pressure which can affect money available to recruit new teachers is the cost of salary increases. The teacher's pay agreement for 2008-11 included pay increases over three years of:

|          |       |
|----------|-------|
| 1.4.2008 | 2.25% |
| 1.4.2009 | 2.50% |
| 1.4.2010 | 2.40% |

In comparison, inflation was 4% in 2008/09 and -0.5% in 2009/10 ([RPI](#)). A classroom teacher at the mid-point of the scale (point 3) would have been earning £26,829 in December 2007 rising to £28,794 in April 2010 (SNCT).

In August 2010, the Herald reported that Glasgow Council had asked the government to look again at the McCrone agreement and ask all teachers to work an extra 30 minutes a day in the class room. Glasgow estimated that this would save £15m annually. (McCrone had set class contact time at 22.5 hours which required extra teachers to be employed over all) (Herald, 2010b). The Cabinet Secretary has said that he is opposed to increasing contact time for fully qualified teachers (Scottish Parliament ELLC Committee, 2010d col 4424).

In November 2010, an agreement on the Local Authority budget (Swinney, J 2010) included:

- Freezing pay for two years (in common with other public sector workers)
- Increasing contact time for probationers
- Removing of salary conservation
- Paying all supply teachers on the lowers point of the main grade scale
- Changing the leave year to 40 days per annum for calculation of family leave entitlements
- Freezing entry to chartered teacher scheme

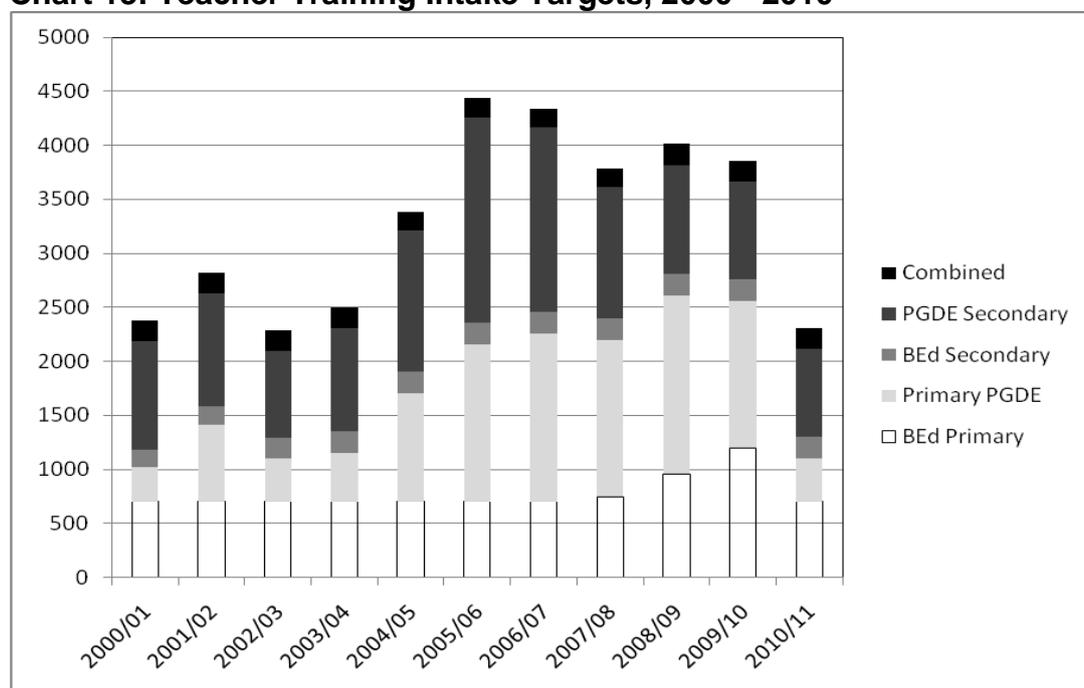
These will require negotiation through the Scottish Negotiating Committee for Teachers (due to conclude by the end of January 2011) and there will also be an independently chaired review of the McCrone agreement which will report to Ministers in June 2011.

## SETTING THE SUPPLY SIDE

### INTAKE TARGETS

Each year the Government undertakes a workforce planning exercise which looks at pupil projections and numbers of teachers leaving the profession in order to predict future demand for teachers. This is worked into advice to the Scottish Funding Council on the number of teacher training places needed. Decisions taken in December 2010 on ITE targets for the BEd, will affect those looking for teaching jobs in August 2016. Chart 13 and table 3 show that intake targets reached a peak in 2006/07 and in 2010/11 have fallen back to levels similar to 2002/03. The reduction this year is particularly noticeable in primary PGDE which reached a peak of 1,655 in 2008/09 but reduced to 405 in 2010/11.

**Chart 13: Teacher Training Intake Targets, 2000 - 2010**



**Table 3: Teacher Training Intake Targets, 2000 - 2010**

|         | BEd Primary | Primary PGDE | BEd Secondary | PGDE Secondary | Combined | Total        |
|---------|-------------|--------------|---------------|----------------|----------|--------------|
| 2000/01 | 701         | 316          | 167           | 1,000          | 192      | <b>2,376</b> |
| 2001/02 | 701         | 707          | 174           | 1,044          | 192      | <b>2,818</b> |
| 2002/03 | 700         | 404          | 190           | 805            | 192      | <b>2,291</b> |
| 2003/04 | 700         | 455          | 202           | 950            | 192      | <b>2,499</b> |
| 2004/05 | 700         | 1,005        | 202           | 1,305          | 175      | <b>3,387</b> |
| 2005/06 | 700         | 1,455        | 202           | 1,905          | 175      | <b>4,437</b> |
| 2006/07 | 700         | 1,555        | 202           | 1,710          | 175      | <b>4,342</b> |
| 2007/08 | 745         | 1,455        | 202           | 1,210          | 175      | <b>3,787</b> |
| 2008/09 | 957         | 1,655        | 202           | 1,005          | 195      | <b>4,014</b> |
| 2009/10 | 1,200       | 1,355        | 202           | 905            | 195      | <b>3,857</b> |
| 2010/11 | 700         | 405          | 202           | 805            | 195      | <b>2,307</b> |

Sources: Scottish Funding Council Circulars: 5/2010, 18/2009, 8/2008, 4/2007, 6/2006, HE/03/04, HE/06/03, HE/13/02, HE/15/01

In December 2008, Fiona Hyslop cautioned against cutting teacher training targets:

“I could make easy decisions now to ensure that we have as much employment as possible for probationers by cutting teacher training radically, but the danger would be that in four years' time we would have a teacher shortage, and any Administration that was in place would face a big challenge.” Scottish Parliament ELLC Committee 2008a, col 1801).

However, in February 2010 intake targets were reduced. Michael Russell said:

"By reducing student numbers we can create more jobs for those teachers already qualified. We are working with the Initial Teacher Education providers to ensure we maintain capacity in the system to meet Scotland's future teacher training needs" (BBC 2010b).

It is expected that the lower level will be maintained in for 2011/12 (Scottish Parliament ELLC Committee 2010d col 4413).

The Donaldson review on teacher training published in January 2011 reflected on the difficulty of predicting the demand for teachers and considered that workforce planning needed mechanisms to deal with the fluctuations in demand for teachers. It recommended that:

- The accuracy of the planning model should be improved by universities and local authorities providing their latest projections on an annual basis (recommendation 6).
- Students should be given better information about the teaching labour market, and the BEd should be replaced by degrees that combine teacher education with other subjects. This will give students more options in job choices (recommendation 7 & 11).
- Teachers employed in other occupations should retain a lower level of GTC membership with access to teaching employment information and CPD. (Recommendation 8).

## **PREFERENCE WAIVER PAYMENT**

Assuming that teachers are more likely to look for work in the local authority in which they spent their probationary year, the Preference Waiver Payment may help ensure that the supply of teachers is more evenly spread across the country. The Preference Waiver Payment offers an incentive for teachers to do their probationary year wherever there are gaps. The payment was increased from £6,000 to £8,000 from August 2009. In 2010, 410 probationers took up the Preference Waiver Payment (Scottish Government, personal communication, January 2011), compared with 481 in 2009, 427 in 2008 and 20 in 2004 (TES, 2010b)

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