House of Commons

Committee of Public Accounts

Retaining and developing the teaching workforce

Seventeenth Report of Session 2017–19

Report, together with formal minutes relating to the report

Ordered by the House of Commons to be printed 24 January 2018

HC 460
Published on 31 January 2018
by authority of the House of Commons

The Committee of Public Accounts

The Committee of Public Accounts is appointed by the House of Commons to examine "the accounts showing the appropriation of the sums granted by Parliament to meet the public expenditure, and of such other accounts laid before Parliament as the committee may think fit" (Standing Order No. 148).

Current membership

Meg Hillier MP (*Labour (Co-op), Hackney South and Shoreditch*) (Chair)

Bim Afolami MP (*Conservative, Hitchin and Harpenden*)

Heidi Allen MP (*Conservative, South Cambridgeshire*)

Sir Geoffrey Clifton-Brown MP (*Conservative, The Cotswolds*)

Martyn Day MP (*Scottish National Party, Linlithgow and East Falkirk*)

Chris Evans MP (*Labour (Co-op), Islwyn*)

Caroline Flint MP (*Labour, Don Valley*)

Luke Graham MP (*Conservative, Ochil and South Perthshire*)

Andrew Jones MP (*Conservative, Harrogate and Knaresborough*)

Gillian Keegan MP (*Conservative, Chichester*)

Shabana Mahmood MP (*Labour, Birmingham, Ladywood*)

Nigel Mills MP (*Conservative, Amber Valley*)

Layla Moran MP (*Liberal Democrat, Oxford West and Abingdon*)

Stephen Morgan MP (*Labour, Portsmouth South*)

Bridget Phillipson MP (*Labour, Houghton and Sunderland South*)

Gareth Snell MP (*Labour (Co-op), Stoke-on-Trent Central*)

Powers

Powers of the Committee of Public Accounts are set out in House of Commons Standing Orders, principally in SO No. 148. These are available on the Internet via www.parliament.uk.

Publication

Committee reports are published on the Committee's website and in print by Order of the House.

Evidence relating to this report is published on the inquiry publications page of the Committee's website.

Committee staff

The current staff of the Committee are Richard Cooke (Clerk), Dominic Stockbridge (Second Clerk), Hannah Wentworth (Chair Support), Ruby Radley (Senior Committee Assistant), Kutumya Kibedi (Committee Assistant), and Tim Bowden (Media Officer).

Contacts

All correspondence should be addressed to the Clerk of the Committee of Public Accounts, House of Commons, London SW1A 0AA. The telephone number for general enquiries is 020 7219 6593; the Committee's email address is pubaccom@parliament.uk

Contents

Summary

A variety of factors have contributed to the growing sense of crisis for schools in England struggling to retain and develop their teachers. Particularly worrying is that the number of secondary school teachers has been falling since 2010 and more teachers have been leaving the profession for reasons other than retirement since 2012. Many teachers have cited heavy workloads as a reason for their departure. At the same time pupil numbers are rising and the Department for Education (the Department) expects schools to make significant savings from using their staff more efficiently. The Department should have been able to foresee this situation and take action to address it.

By its own admission, the Department has given insufficient priority to teacher retention and development. It has got the balance wrong between training new teachers and supporting the existing workforce, with spending on the former 15 times greater than on the latter. The Department has a disparate collection of small-scale interventions but these are inadequate to address the underlying issues. In addition, the quality of teaching and the level of teaching vacancies vary significantly across the country. However, the Department does not seem to understand the reasons for the variation or the different challenges that schools in different regions face.

The failure of the Department to get to grips with the number of teachers leaving puts additional pressure on schools faced with rising numbers of children needing a school place and the teachers to teach them.

Introduction

At November 2016 some 457,300 teachers worked in state-funded schools in England. During the preceding year , 43,830 teachers (10.1% of the workforce) joined the workforce, including 24,120 newly qualified teachers and 14,200 qualified teachers returning to the state-funded sector. Over the same period, 42,830 teachers (9.9% of the workforce) left the workforce, including 7,760 who retired and 34,910 who left for reasons other than retirement. The school-age population has been growing, increasing the need for teachers. The number of pupils of primary and nursery age in state-funded schools increased by 598,000 (14.6%) in the six years to January 2017, and this larger number is now moving into secondary education. After a reduction between 2011 and 2015, the number of pupils of secondary school age has since begun to increase and is forecast to rise by 540,000 (19.4%) between 2017 and 2025.

The Department for Education (the Department) is accountable for securing value for money from spending on education services. Schools spend around £21 billion a year on teaching staff, more than half of their total spending. The Department has a range of initiatives aimed at improving the quality of teachers, supporting the retention of teachers and ensuring that teachers are deployed where they are needed most. The Department spent £35.7 million on these activities in 2016–17.

Conclusions and recommendations

1. **The Department has failed to get a grip on teacher retention.** The teaching workforce increased by 15,500 (3.5%) from 441,800 in November 2010 to 457,300 in November 2016. However, this overall rise masks the fact that the number of teachers in secondary schools fell by 10,800 (4.9%) from 219,000 in 2010 to 208,200 in 2016. In primary schools the pupil-teacher ratio remained fairly constant between 2011 and 2016, but in secondary schools the ratio increased, from 14.9:1 to 15.6:1 over the same period, even though pupil numbers fell. The Department forecasts that secondary school pupil numbers will increase by 540,000 (19.4%) between 2017 and 2025, and that pupil-teacher ratios will continue to rise. The number of qualified teachers leaving for reasons other than retirement increased from 6% (25,260) of the qualified workforce in 2011 to 8.1% (34,910) in 2016. The Department does not understand why more teachers are leaving the profession, and does not have a coherent plan to tackle teacher retention and development. It has a range of relatively small-scale initiatives but has not communicated these adequately to schools. The Department says it will be streamlining its approach, and that it was developing a plan that it expected to be ready by the end of 2017–18. It also acknowledges that the balance of investment has not been right, with £555 million spent each year on training new teachers and just £36 million spent on programmes to retain and develop teachers.

   Recommendation: ***The Department should, by April 2018, set out and communicate a coherent plan for how it will support schools to retain and develop the teaching workforce. The plan should include what the Department is aiming to achieve and by when, the interventions it will use to achieve its aims, and how it will measure success (including the desired impact on the rate of teachers leaving the profession).***

2. **Workload is the main reason why teachers leave the profession but the Department has not set out what impact it is seeking to achieve from its interventions on this issue.** Workload is a significant barrier to teacher retention. The Department's own survey, published in February 2017, found that classroom teachers and 'middle leaders' worked 54.4 hours on average during the reference week. Head teachers are concerned about increasing workload which has a detrimental effect on the quality of teaching and teachers' wellbeing. They highlighted that increasing contact time so that teachers are teaching classes for a high proportion of the time, larger class sizes and the pace of change in assessment and the curriculum are the main factors which have increased workload. The tools published by the Department in 2015 to help schools reduce workload have had very limited impact; only half of schools have used the tools, of which a third reduced workload (by up to two hours per teacher per week). Alongside the results of its survey, in February 2017, the Department published an action plan to reduce unnecessary workload but it has not indicated the extent of change it expects to see as a result. We do not expect the Department to prescribe how many hours teachers should work but do expect it to understand and have a view on the relationship between workload and retention. We also expect the Department to be mindful of the impact on workload of decisions that schools have

necessarily had to take to make efficiency savings, such as increasing class sizes and contact time, and of its own decisions, such as regular curriculum and assessment changes.

Recommendation: ***The Department should work with others in the school sector to set out what is an acceptable level of teacher workload, monitor through its periodic surveys of teachers the impact of its actions to reduce unnecessary workload, and identify possible further interventions.***

3. **Schools are struggling to recruit teachers of the right quality, particularly in some subjects and some parts of the country.** During 2015–16 school leaders filled only around half of their vacant posts with qualified teachers with the experience and expertise required. Schools are struggling to recruit teachers in science, maths and modern foreign languages in particular, and these subjects are expected to be most affected by the UK leaving the European Union. The extent of teacher vacancies also varies across the country. In 2015 the North East had the lowest proportion of secondary schools reporting at least one vacancy (16.4%); the highest proportions were in outer London (30.4%), the South East (26.4%) and the East of England (25.3%). The Department stopped the National Teaching Service, which aimed to place teachers into underperforming schools that struggled with recruitment and retention, after the pilot matched only 24 teachers to schools in the North West. We are also concerned about the high cost for schools of recruitment. The Department plans to launch a pilot of a web-based national teacher vacancy service in spring 2018, to reduce the cost of recruitment and generate better data on vacancies. The Department also says it is working with the Crown Commercial Service to develop a framework contract for schools as a cheaper alternative to using recruitment agencies. There is a large pool of trained teachers (nearly 250,000) who are not currently teaching and could fill vacancies. Barriers to schools employing returning teachers include the challenge of timetabling when teachers work flexibly and schools' concerns that returners may lack up-to-date subject knowledge.

Recommendation: ***The Department should help schools more to recruit teachers of the right quality. In particular, it should:***

- ***set out its plans for the national vacancy service including the scope, timetable and budget;***
- ***report back to us by June 2018 on the results of the national vacancy service pilot;***
- ***write to us by June 2018 setting out the actions it has taken to control agency fees and the results achieved; and***
- ***work with the schools sector to share good practice in implementing flexible working to help attract former teachers to return to the profession.***

4. **We are concerned that the cost of living, in particular housing costs, is making it difficult to recruit and retain teachers in some parts of the country.** The National Audit Office's survey of school leaders found that, after workload, factors affecting the cost of living (for example house prices) are the second most significant barrier to teacher retention, with 42% of respondents reporting it as a barrier. The cost

of living in certain parts of the country makes it even more difficult to attract and retain teachers. Committee Members highlighted the high cost of housing in Oxfordshire and Cambridgshire as a barrier to retaining teachers locally. In 2015 the highest proportions of secondary schools reporting at least one vacancy were in outer London and the South East, where house prices are high. The Department has given schools flexibility to vary pay and allowances to help them recruit and retain teachers; but many are not using these flexibilities, which is not surprising given their financial pressures and efforts to find efficiencies. The Department says it is willing to talk to any schools with proposals to support teachers with housing, but it does not have any particular initiatives to address cost of living issues. Its pilot scheme, which involved offering teachers £10,000 as an incentive to move to the North West, had little take up. The Committee questioned whether the Department had considered relocation costs when it fixed the incentive payment at £10,000.

Recommendation: ***The Department should set out how it will take account of the housing requirements for teachers, particularly in high-cost areas, in order to support recruitment and retention. It should take a more strategic role, particularly as this is an issue that goes across Whitehall, when considering initiatives to support teachers to ensure that funding for these has a real impact.***

5. **The Department could not explain why the quality of teaching varies so much across the country, and what action it would take to improve quality in the Midlands and the North of England in particular.** More pupils are now in schools where Ofsted has rated the quality of teaching, learning and assessment as outstanding or good: 90% of primary school pupils and 82% of secondary school pupils in 2016. However, in five of the nine English regions, all in the Midlands or the North of England, more than 20% of pupils were in secondary schools rated as requires improvement or inadequate for teaching, learning and assessment. Across England 88,000 pupils were in schools where teaching, learning and assessment was rated as inadequate. The proportion of pupils in secondary schools rated as inadequate for teacher, learning and assessment increased with the deprivation of an area. We pressed the Department on why there are such regional differences in teaching quality and what it is doing to address them, but it could not provide any satisfactory explanation.

   Recommendation: ***The Department should conduct more work to understand why there are regional differences in teaching quality (for example by engaging more with school leaders in those regions where quality could be most improved) and, in light of its findings, set out how it proposes to improve the quality of teaching in the Midlands and the North of England specifically.***

6. **Teachers are not getting enough good quality continuing professional development throughout their career, which has implications for teacher retention and quality and ultimately for pupil outcomes.** Continuing professional development (CPD) is essential for the workforce to keep up to date with current practices and meet expected standards. The Department does not collect data, but research by the Educational Policy Institute found that on average teachers in England spent only four days a year on CPD in 2013 compared with an average of 10.5 days across the 36 countries covered by the analysis. Head teachers stressed to us how vital it is for teachers to undertake good quality CPD at all stages of their career

not just in the first few years. They highlighted time and cost as the main barriers to teachers undertaking CPD, in line with the findings of the National Audit Office's survey of school leaders. The Department acknowledges that more needs to be done to increase the amount and quality of CPD that teachers undertake.

Recommendation: ***The Department should write to us by April 2018 setting out its plans for improving the quality of CPD available to teachers, its expectations for how much CPD teachers should undertake and how improvements in CPD will be paid for.***

7. **The Department has not made clear what it means by its aim of improving social mobility through its 12 opportunity areas and how it will measure progress.** The Department has created 12 'opportunity areas' that will receive extra funding and other support with the aim of improving social mobility and ensuring that children in these parts of the country have opportunities to reach their potential. The programme is at an early stage with the opportunity areas currently developing local plans. We recognise that improving social mobility is a long-term goal, that the Department has commissioned a process evaluation to report by summer 2018, and that it plans a further study to examine the impact of the opportunity areas. However, the Department has not defined measures of success for the programme, and says that it is relying on local areas to define their own priorities. The Department did not explain how the opportunity areas fit with other government programmes focusing on particular geographical areas, such as the Northern Powerhouse.

Recommendation: ***The Department should write to us by April 2018 to explain in more detail its aims for the opportunity areas over both the short term and long term.***

1 Teacher recruitment and retention

1. On the basis of a report by the Comptroller and Auditor General, we took evidence from the Department for Education (the Department) about retaining and developing the teaching workforce.[1] We also took evidence from two headteachers (the first from Thistley Hough Academy, Stoke-on-Trent, and the second from Roundwood Park School, Harpenden), from the Chartered College of Teaching (the new professional body for teachers), and from the National Association of Schoolmasters Union of Women Teachers (NASUWT).

2. At November 2016 some 457,300 teachers worked in the state-funded sector in England, mainly in primary and secondary schools. In the year to November 2016, 43,830 teachers (10.1% of the workforce) joined the teaching workforce, including 24,120 newly qualified teachers and 14,200 qualified teachers returning to the state-funded sector. In the same period 42,830 teachers (9.9% of the workforce) left the workforce.[2]

3. The Department is accountable for securing value for money from spending on education services. It distributes funding to schools using formulae set by local authorities. Schools spend around £21 billion a year on teaching staff, more than half of their total spending.[3] As employers, schools play a crucial role in retaining and developing teachers. The Department has a range of initiatives aimed at improving the quality of teachers, supporting the retention of teachers and ensuring that teachers are deployed where they are needed most. The Department spent £35.7 million on these activities in 2016–17 and plans to increase spending to around £70 million on average each year between 2017–18 and 2019–20.[4]

Teacher retention

4. The teaching workforce increased by 15,500 (3.5%) from 441,800 in November 2010 to 457,300 in November 2016. However, this overall rise masks the fact that the number of teachers in secondary schools fell by 10,800 (4.9%) from 219,000 in 2010 to 208,200 in 2016.[5] The Department told us that class sizes had remained constant, with the same pupil-teacher ratio as 10 or 20 years ago, because pupil and teacher numbers had kept in step with each other.[6] The number of pupils of primary and nursery age in state-funded schools increased by 598,000 (14.6%) in the six years to January 2017, and this larger number is now moving into secondary education. After a reduction between 2011 and 2015, the number of pupils of secondary school age has since begun to increase. The National Audit Office report noted that in primary schools the pupil-teacher ratio has remained fairly constant since 2011, with 20.6 pupils to every teacher in 2016; however, in secondary schools the ratio increased from 14.9 pupils per teacher in 2011 to 15.6 pupils per teacher in 2016 even though pupil numbers fell. The Department forecasts that secondary school pupil numbers will increase by 540,000 (19.4%) between 2017 and 2025, and that pupil-teacher ratios will continue to rise.[7]

1 Report by the Comptroller and Auditor General, Retaining and developing the teaching workforce, Session 2017–19, HC 307, 12 September 2017
2 C&AG's Report, Figure 1
3 C&AG's Report, para 3
4 C&AG's Report, para 13
5 C&AG's Report, para 1.2
6 Qq 71, 73, 169
7 C&AG's Report, para's 1.2–1.3

5. The number of qualified teachers leaving for reasons other than retirement increased by 2.1 percentage points from 6.0% (25,260) of the qualified workforce in 2011 to 8.1% (34,910) in 2016.[8] The NASUWT told us that around two-thirds of teachers whom they surveyed last year reported that they were seriously considering leaving the teaching profession and had seriously considered doing so in the last 12 months.[9] Evidence from the National Education Union reported results from a March 2016 survey that 61% of secondary teachers and 48% of primary teachers were considering leaving the profession within the next two years.[10]

6. The Department does not know enough about why more teachers are leaving before retirement.[11] It told us that it has a better understanding than it previously did of why teachers leave the profession, including from research by the National Foundation for Educational Research and from discussions with school leaders. The Department considers that workload is one of the factors, along with access to good opportunities for progression and support for professional development.[12]

7. There are two phases in their career when teachers are most likely to leave: in the first three years after qualifying and as they approach retirement.[13] The Wellcome Trust told us, in written evidence, that its research had found that science teachers were more likely to leave the profession than non-science teachers, and that this was particularly true for newly qualified teachers.[14] The Department said that it did not understand the differences in the reasons why teachers leave at different points in their career. However, in its workload analysis, the Department had found that teachers at an earlier stage in their careers tended to work longer.[15]

8. One of the headteachers told us that unreasonable levels of workload, and the impact this had on teachers' ability to do their jobs well, was the main reason for teachers leaving.[16] NASUWT said that the main reasons for teachers leaving were pay, workload and the management or employer practices of schools.[17] Written evidence from the National Association of Head Teachers noted that a survey of its members had found that the top two reasons for leaving prematurely were workload (mentioned by 84% of respondents) and achieving a better work-life balance (83% of respondents).[18] And written evidence from the National Education Union reported that the main reason why teachers consider leaving the profession was workload (cited by 90% of secondary teachers and 93% of primary teachers), with other reasons including the pace of curriculum change and rising class sizes.[19]

9. The Department has a range of small initiatives to retain and develop teachers but has limited evidence as to whether they are making a difference.[20] It noted that some initiatives had been more effective than others and some had failed; the 'return to

8 C&AG's Report, para 2.6
9 Q 1
10 National Education Union (RTW0005), p. 4
11 C&AG's Report, paras 2.5, 2.7
12 Q 68
13 C&AG's Report, para 2.5
14 Wellcome Trust (RTW0006)
15 Q 69
16 Q 2; Alan Henshall (RTW0003)
17 Q 1
18 National Association of Head Teachers (RTW0004), para 4
19 National Education Union (RTW0005), p. 4
20 C&AG's Report, paras 13–14

teaching' pilot was an example of an initiative which had not worked as well as planned.[21] The headteachers told us that they engaged successfully with teaching schools which lead alliances of schools offering training and support to each other. They had heard about the Chartered College of Teaching but were not aware of, or did not know in detail about, other initiatives listed in the National Audit Office report.[22] The Department said that it had been trying to do too many small scale things. It told us that it saw an opportunity to take a more streamlined, more strategic approach, and it was developing a plan to be ready by the end of 2017–18.[23]

10. The Department agreed with us that the balance of investment had not been right with around £555 million spent each year on training new teachers and just £36 million spent on programmes to retain and develop the existing teaching workforce. It said that more support was clearly needed for schools on retention. It also told us that it was carrying out a detailed evaluation of bursaries for new teachers, as requested by the previous Committee, and would report the results in summer 2018.[24]

Teacher workload

11. One of the headteachers explained that increased workload was caused by rising class sizes, the pace of change in assessment and curriculum, and extra work as a result of the financial savings which schools were having to make.[25] The headteachers told us that contact time is too high; teachers are having to teach more hours, leaving less time during normal working hours for other tasks such as planning and marking.[26] They said that increasing workload reduced the quality of what teachers could do which in turn adversely affected their job satisfaction, work-life balance and wellbeing.[27]

12. The Department published guidance on its website to help schools reduce workload in 2015. It told us that only half of schools had used the tools; of those, 32% had reduced workload (by up to two hours per teacher per week).[28] The National Education Union reported that, in a March 2016 survey, 75% of primary teachers and 74% of secondary teachers said their workload had increased since the Government's response to the workload challenge in February 2015.[29]

13. The Department's survey, published in February 2017, found that classroom teachers and 'middle leaders' reported that they worked 54.4 hours on average during the reference week. Alongside the survey results, the Department published an action plan to reduce unnecessary workload.[30] We asked the Department if it had a target in mind for reducing teacher workload. It told us that it did not want to tell teachers how many hours to work, as this was a matter for each headteacher to decide, but it did want to help teachers to minimise the amount of unproductive work.[31]

21 Qq 71, 132
22 Qq 7, 8; C&AG's Report, para's 3.14–3.15, Figure 17
23 Qq 132–134
24 Q 67; Committee of Public Accounts, Training new teachers, Third Report of Session 2016–17, HC 73, 10 June 2016
25 Q 2
26 Qq 38–40; Alan Henshall (RTW0003)
27 Qq 2–3; Alan Henshall (RTW0003)
28 Q 70; C&AG's Report, para 2.13
29 National Education Union (RTW0005), page 4
30 C&AG's Report, para 2.13
31 Qq 80–82

Recruiting teachers of the right quality

14. During 2015–16 school leaders filled only around half of their vacant posts with qualified teachers with the experience and expertise required.[32] The Department highlighted that schools were struggling particularly to recruit teachers in science, maths and modern foreign languages. It told us that it was making 5,000 training places available in the next year in maths, physics and modern foreign languages to give teachers who currently taught other subjects the skills to teach those subjects as well. The Department also said that it was introducing a pilot for new teachers studying science or modern foreign languages, under which it would forgive them the cost of their student loans in the first 10 years of their career. It had also introduced a new bursary that gave trainee maths teachers £20,000 up front, and two early career payments of £5,000 after their third year in the profession and after their fifth year, provided that they kept teaching maths.[33]

15. The Department has identified the supply of teachers of modern foreign languages, and maths and sciences subjects as likely to be particularly affected by the UK leaving the European Union.[34] It told us that about 3.5% of secondary school teachers are from elsewhere in the European Union. The Department said that its job was to make sure that the decision-makers were well informed about the extent to which the school system benefited from these teachers, and that it was liaising with those involved in the negotiations about the UK's exit from the European Union.[35]

16. We also asked the Department if it was addressing the visa rules for recruiting teachers from outside the European Union, which require teachers to have a minimum salary. The Department told us that it was making representations to the Migration Advisory Committee about the possibility of adding more subjects to the shortage occupation list and the salary which teachers must earn to qualify for a visa.[36]

17. The extent of teacher vacancies varies across England. In 2015 the North East had the lowest proportion of secondary schools reporting at least one vacancy (16.4%); the highest proportions were in outer London (30.4%), the South East (26.4%) and the East of England (25.3%).[37] The Department stopped the National Teaching Service, which aimed to place teachers into underperforming schools that struggled with recruitment and retention, after the pilot matched only 24 teachers to schools in the North West. The Department told us that the pilot had shown that £10,000 did not incentivise enough teachers to move. It also acknowledged that it had tried to implement the scheme too quickly.[38] The Committee questioned whether the Department had considered relocation costs when it fixed the incentive payment at £10,000.[39]

18. One of the headteachers and the NASUWT referred to the increasing cost of recruitment.[40] We have heard that it can cost up to £5,000 to advertise, and to recruit through an agency can cost in the region of £5,000 for a newly-qualified teacher, rising to between £8,000 and £9,000 for an experienced teacher. After the evidence session Tes

32 C&AG's Report, para 2.23 & Figure 10
33 Qq 104, 106
34 C&AG's Report, para 1.5
35 Q 105
36 Qq 143–147
37 C&AG's Report, para 2.26, Figure 12
38 Qq 111–113; C&AG's Report, para 2.30–2.32
39 Q 156
40 Qq 30, 34

wrote to us and stated that the average cost of advertising a secondary school vacancy with it is now under £1,000.[41] The Department told us that it planned to launch a pilot of a web-based national teacher vacancy service in spring 2018, with the aim of reducing the cost of recruitment and generating better data on vacancies. It would then develop the service in response to the market.[42] The Department also said that it was working with the Crown Commercial Service to develop a framework contract as a cheaper alternative to schools using recruitment agencies.[43]

19. There is a large pool of trained teachers, 243,900 aged under 60 at the end of 2015, who are not currently teaching and could fill vacancies. The number of teachers returning to state-funded schools increased by 1,100 to 14,200 between 2011 and 2016.[44] The headteachers told us that more support was needed for flexible working—barriers to schools employing returning teachers included additional cost and the challenge of timetabling when teachers worked flexibly.[45] The Department emphasised that it needed to target support at teachers who would not otherwise return to the profession, but acknowledged that it needed to do more to work with the sector to address concerns that schools had about taking back teachers who had been out of the classroom for a long time. The Department published guidance on flexible working in February 2017 and told us that it had held a summit with schools to share good practice, and that it would update its guidance in 2018.[46]

Cost of living

20. The National Audit Office's survey of school leaders found that, after workload, factors affecting the cost of living (for example house prices) were the second most significant barrier to teacher retention, with 42% of respondents reporting it as a barrier.[47] We heard that the cost of living in certain parts of the country made it difficult to attract and retain teachers.[48] Committee Members highlighted the high cost of housing in Oxfordshire and Cambridgshire as a barrier to retaining teachers locally.[49] The Department told us that it is aware of the challenge that schools face in keeping teachers who want to start a family in areas where house prices are rising.[50] It has given schools flexibility to vary pay and allowances to help them recruit and retain teachers, but many are not using these flexibilities. The Department confirmed that, on the whole, schools were cautious about using the flexibilities and tended to stay with the standards across the system.[51]

41 Q 148; Correspondence to the Committee from Tes, 5 December 2017
42 Qq 76, 84, 140, 150
43 Qq 148–149
44 C&AG's Report, para 2.18–2.19, Figure 8
45 Qq 4–7
46 Qq 71–72, 107–110; C&AG's Report, para 2.20
47 C&AG's Report, Figure 7
48 Qq 29–30; National Education Union (RTW0005), page 3
49 Q 96
50 Q 97
51 Qq 1, 83, 95; C&AG's Report, para 2.15

21. The previous Committee raised concerns about the lack of affordable housing in some parts of the country which was affecting the supply of NHS clinical staff.[52] We asked the Department if it had considered using land that it pays for to help provide affordable housing for teachers. It told us that it had had discussions with individual multi-academy trusts and local authorities about such initiatives and was willing to talk to any schools with proposals to support teachers with housing. However, it did not have any particular initiatives to address cost of living issues.[53]

52 Committee of Public Accounts, Managing the supply of NHS clinical staff in England, Fortieth Report of Session 2015–16, HC 731, 11 May 2016

53 Qq 96–103, 166–167

2 Teacher quality

Regional variations

22. In England more pupils are now in schools where Ofsted has rated the quality of teaching, learning and assessment as outstanding or good—90% of primary school pupils and 82% of secondary school pupils in 2016. However, in five of the nine English regions, all in the Midlands or the North, more than 20% of pupils were in secondary schools rated as requires improvement or inadequate in this respect. Across England 88,000 pupils were in schools where teaching, learning and assessment was rated as inadequate, and the proportion of pupils in secondary schools rated as inadequate increased with the deprivation of an area.[54] We pressed the Department for Education (the Department) on why there are such regional differences in teaching quality, the link with deprivation, and what it is doing to address the variation, but it could not provide any satisfactory explanation.[55]

23. The Department explained that its focus is on the 12 opportunity areas it has established. These areas will receive funding and other support with the aim of improving social mobility and ensuring that children in these parts of the country have opportunities to reach their potential. The Department said that it would use opportunity areas to provide more investment to areas of the country that needed teachers the most, and provide more support to schools which struggled to recruit because of their location and particular challenges.[56] It noted that the programme was at a very early stage—six of the opportunity areas had just published their delivery plans and the other six had not even reached that stage.[57]

24. We asked the Department how it would evaluate the opportunity areas programme. It said that the Education Endowment Foundation would evaluate the success or otherwise of the outputs from opportunity areas, and the extent to which they could demonstrate cause and effect. The Department was relying on local areas to define their own priorities which would be used to measure success. It said it would hope to see some practical improvements within a couple of years but by definition social mobility was a generational challenge.[58] In written evidence provided after the session, the Department explained that it had commissioned a 'process evaluation' for the first year of the opportunity areas programme, to be published by summer 2018, and that it expected to appoint an organisation in early 2018 to undertake a study to assess the programme's impact.[59]

25. We also asked how the opportunity areas related to other government initiatives such as the Northern Powerhouse. The Department told us that it was seeking to join programmes up and had recently announced funding of £30 million to support schools that had particular retention problems, of which £10 million would support the Northern Powerhouse. Opportunity areas had access to school improvement funds and teaching leadership funds, as did other schools in challenging circumstances.[60]

54 C&AG's Report, para 3.8 and Figure 16
55 Qq 114–119, 123
56 Qq 114–116; C&AG's Report, para 1.8
57 Q 122
58 Qq 120–124
59 Department for Education (RTW0007)
60 Q 119

Continuing professional development

26. The witnesses stressed the importance of teachers undertaking good quality continuing professional development (CPD) at all stages of their career, not just in the first few years.[61] The Department does not collect data, but research by the Educational Policy Institute found that on average teachers in England spent only four days a year on CPD in 2013 compared with an average of 10.5 days across the 36 countries covered by the analysis.[62] The headteachers highlighted time and cost as the main barriers to teachers undertaking CPD. Teachers are teaching classes for such a high proportion of their time that little time was available to undertake CPD. In addition, schools could not necessarily afford the cost of cover for teachers who undertook CPD.[63]

27. The Department acknowledged that more needed to be done to increase the quantity and quality of CPD that teachers undertake. It told us that it had been working with headteachers, other experts and the Chartered College of Teaching about how to make improvements. It would consult soon on whether there should be a clearer framework for what CPD a new teacher might expect to do and when and how teachers might develop, and on how the quality assurance of CPD might be improved.[64] The Department also said that it would be investing, including in CPD, in schools with the greatest recruitment challenges. It could not tell us specifically how many schools would receive investment, but it would be "of the order of hundreds of schools".[65]

28. The Chartered College of Teaching highlighted the role it expected to play, as the professional body for teachers, in supporting access to learning and development. It was establishing 'chartered teacher status' which it intended would provide a pathway for young, talented teachers. The College noted that it was important for it to raise awareness of its work so that teachers would join it, and thereby help it to become financially independent of the Department.[66]

61 Qq 19–20, 32–33, 35; C&AG's Report, para 3.9
62 C&AG's Report, para 3.10
63 Qq 36–38, 41
64 Qq 60–62, 130–131
65 Qq 163–165
66 Qq 11, 33–35, 43

Formal minutes

Wednesday 24 January 2018

Members present:

Sir Geoffrey Clifton-Brown	Luke Graham
Chris Evans	Nigel Mills
Caroline Flint	Stephen Morgan

In the absence of the Chair, Sir Geoffrey Clifton-Brown was called to the chair.

Draft Report (*Retaining and developing the teaching workforce*), proposed by the Chair, brought up and read.

Ordered, That the draft Report be read a second time, paragraph by paragraph.

Paragraphs 1 to 28 read and agreed to.

Introduction agreed to.

Conclusions and recommendations agreed to.

Summary agreed to.

Resolved, That the Report be the Seventeenth of the Committee to the House.

Ordered, That the Chair make the Report to the House.

Ordered, That embargoed copies of the Report be made available, in accordance with the provisions of Standing Order No. 134.

[Adjourned till Monday 29 January 2018 at 3.30pm

Witnesses

The following witnesses gave evidence. Transcripts can be viewed on the inquiry publications page of the Committee's website.

Wednesday 15 November 2017	*Question number*
Professor Dame Alison Peacock, Chief Executive, Chartered College of Teaching, **Holly Hartley**, Principal, Thistley Hough Academy, **Alan Henshall**, Headteacher, Roundwood Park School and **Dr Patrick Roach**, Deputy General Secretary, National Association of Schoolmasters Union of Women Teachers	Q1–46
Jonathan Slater, Permanent Secretary, Department for Education, and Paul Kett, Director General for Education Standards, Department for Education	Q47–177

Published written evidence

The following written evidence was received and can be viewed on the inquiry publications page of the Committee's website.

RTW numbers are generated by the evidence processing system and so may not be complete.

1 Alan Henshall, Headteacher (RTW0003)

2 Department for Education (RTW0007)

3 NASUWT (RTW0001)

4 National Association of Headteachers (RTW0004)

5 National Education Union (RTW0005)

6 The Publishers Association (RTW0002)

7 Wellcome Trust (RTW0006)

Published correspondence

The following correspondence was also published as part of this inquiry:

1 Correspondence with TES

List of Reports from the Committee during the current session

All publications from the Committee are available on the publications page of the Committee's website. The reference number of the Government's response to each Report is printed in brackets after the HC printing number.

Session 2017–19

First Report	Tackling online VAT fraud and error	HC 312 (Cm 9549)
Second Report	Brexit and the future of Customs	HC 401
Third Report	Hinkley Point C	HC 393
Fourth Report	Clinical correspondence handling at NHS Shared Business Services	HC 396
Fifth Report	Managing the costs of clinical negligence in hospital trusts	HC 397
Sixth Report	The growing threat of online fraud	HC 399
Seventh Report	Brexit and the UK border	HC 558
Eighth Report	Mental health in prisons	HC 400
Ninth Report	Sheffield to Rotherham tram-trains	HC 453
Tenth Report	High Speed 2 Annual Report and Accounts	HC 454
Eleventh Report	Homeless households	HC 462
Twelfth Report	HMRC's Performance in 2016–17	HC 456
Thirteenth Report	NHS continuing healthcare funding	HC 455
Fourteenth Report	Delivering Carrier Strike	HC 394
Fifteenth Report	Offender-monitoring tags	HC 458
Sixteenth Report	Government borrowing and the Whole of Government Accounts	HC 463
First Special Report	Chair of the Public Accounts Committee's Second Annual Report	HC 347

HOUSE OF COMMONS

Public Accounts Committee

Oral evidence: Retaining and Developing the Teaching Workforce, HC 460

Wednesday 15 November 2017

Ordered by the House of Commons to be published on 15 November 2017.

Watch the meeting

Members present: Meg Hillier (Chair); Bim Afolami; Heidi Allen; Geoffrey Clifton-Brown; Caroline Flint; Gillian Keegan; Nigel Mills; Layla Moran; Bridget Phillipson; Gareth Snell.

Sir Amyas Morse, Comptroller and Auditor General, Adrian Jenner, Director of Parliamentary Relations, National Audit Office, Laura Brackwell, Director, NAO and Marius Gallaher, Alternate Treasury Officer of Accounts, HM Treasury, were in attendance.

Questions 1-177

Witnesses

I: Professor Dame Alison Peacock, Chief Executive, Chartered College of Teaching, Holly Hartley, Principal, Thistley Hough Academy, Alan Henshall, Headteacher, Roundwood Park School and Dr Patrick Roach, Deputy General Secretary, NASUWT.

II: Jonathan Slater, Permanent Secretary, Department for Education, and Paul Kett, Director General for Education Standards, Department for Education.

Written evidence from witnesses:

– [Add names of witnesses and hyperlink to submissions]

Examination of witnesses

Witnesses: Professor Dame Alison Peacock, Holly Hartley, Alan Henshall and Dr Patrick Roach.

Chair: Welcome. We are here today to look at the NAO's Report on retaining and developing the teaching workforce.

We have looked at teacher training in the past and it is an issue that very much interests the Committee. Having enough high-quality teachers is clearly crucial to the success of our school system and the education of our children. We know that the overall teaching workforce has grown, but so have pupil numbers, and that the number of secondary school teachers has fallen. We are also very alert to the regional variation, which we have come up against before in this Committee. We will therefore be asking a number of questions of the Department.

First, though, we are delighted to have a pre-panel of witnesses who are at the coalface, so to speak, and who deal with these issues day in, day out. I will introduce them from my left to right: Professor Dame Alison Peacock, who is chief executive of the Chartered College of Teaching, Holly Hartley, who is the principal of Thistley Hough Academy in Stoke-on-Trent—yes, you guessed, we had to check the pronunciation.

Holly Hartley: I was going to say.

Chair: Don't worry, we have local knowledge. We couldn't start until he was here to tell us.

We also have Alan Henshall, headteacher of Roundwood Park School in Harpenden, and Dr Patrick Roach, who is deputy general secretary of the NASUWT, which for those who do not know is the National Association of Schoolmasters Union of Women Teachers. A very warm welcome to you all.

Our hashtag for today, for anyone following on Twitter is #teachers. I ask Layla Moran to kick off.

Q1 **Layla Moran:** This Report, I am sure, made sad reading for a lot of you—and a lot of us. More and more people are leaving the profession. Starting with Dr Roach and moving down the panel, in your opinion, why is that?

Dr Roach: Why are more people leaving the profession? The Report confirms that, and it confirms the evidence that the NASUWT has been collecting systematically over the course of the last seven years on teacher morale, job satisfaction and so on. The state of the teaching profession does indicate that there is a real challenge, in relation to both teacher recruitment and retention. Around two thirds of teachers who we surveyed last year reported that they were seriously considering quitting the teaching profession and had seriously considered doing that in the last 12 months.

What are the causes of that? There are key challenges in relation to overall pay levels in the profession and whether they are competitive with pay elsewhere in the economy for graduate labour. There is the issue of teacher workload, which is at unsustainable levels. Despite the Government's efforts, teachers' workloads and hours remain stubbornly high.

It is not always down to Government practice or Government interventions, or indeed the failure thereof; there are also school-level management practices and employer practices. Greater freedoms and flexibilities have been given to schools, but whether schools have used those freedoms and flexibilities wisely, are doing the right thing as far as their workforce are concerned, and understand the challenges around retaining a workforce and developing that workforce over time is certainly called into question on the basis of the evidence available to us. For us, those would be the three main factors driving the retention challenge.

Q2 **Chair:** Okay. I say to you all that we are always interested in what you have to say, and some of you have put some evidence in to us, which is helpful, but if you agree with what Dr Roach has said you can just say that you agree without repeating it, and then we can get more out you.

Alan Henshall: I would like to talk a bit about retention, if I may. I think that teachers have a very clear idea of what it is that they need to do to do a really good job. They are highly trained professionals. They are really committed to their work and they are in it for the right reasons.

What they find is that, when they are faced with ever so slight increases in their class sizes year on year and ever so slight increases in the amount of admin they have to do year on year, despite the fact that we take good pastoral care of our staff, with that image of what they need to do to do a really good job, they are gradually falling below their own high standards. They are doing that because they have more and more to do. They have more people in their classes and more things to take on, and because of that they are finding that life in the classroom is not quite giving them the job satisfaction that they want. They love the job and love working with young people, but what they do not love is feeling that they are not doing an adequate enough job because of that.

One of the things that could happen is less being expected of teachers if they are in that situation. But far from that—I agree with what Patrick Roach said—I do believe that over the last few years, we have had new key stage 3 assessment, new GCSEs and new A-levels, and because they have been introduced at a rate of change that is rapid and, in my opinion, very poorly managed, it means that the resources that are being produced by the exam boards and the publishers are not keeping up. They have had to make all these things afresh, and they do not have the past papers to work from either.

You have this double whammy of more people coming into your class, headteachers and school leaders trying to save money by imposing more on their teachers, and the workload increasing because of the pace of change being managed in a very poor way nationally, which we have no

choice but to follow given that we are a secondary school and we have to do those qualifications. Those are the key things for me about retaining teachers.

Q3 **Chair:** Thank you Mr Henshall, and thank you for your very clear written evidence. We have some other questions on that later.

Holly Hartley: I agree with what my colleagues have said, but I would like to give three examples that I have encountered over the last couple of weeks. I am the head of a school in very challenging circumstances, and I am now helping out a second school as well.

I am fiercely proud of everything that we do at our school. We have a very strong moral compass, and that is a collective expectation of every single member of staff; but there comes a point where the moral compass runs out, and that is when it gets really quite scary. In terms of staff wellbeing at the moment, I have probably got the greatest concern that I have ever had. In terms of people's health, I have never known it as bad as it is at the moment. We are doing a wide range of things in our school to support our staff. Despite that, we have recently had a number of things that have occurred.

To give you one example, we have a senior leader who has decided that she simply cannot cope anymore with the long hours that she has to work in order to be successful in her job, and she has decided that her young family are missing too much of her and that it is time for her to step out of the profession. We have a young teacher who is three years in and who, again, is an exceptional classroom practitioner—an exceptional teacher. She feels that at the moment the balance in the profession is off-kilter. She feels that the obsession with data has basically made her life too difficult and that she is not able to do what she really wants to do.

One of the things that has been incredibly successful at Thistley Hough is engaging with Teach First, but retention beyond the second year is really difficult. If I may give you some examples, we have had 13 Teach First staff over the last four academic years. Again, they have been absolutely fantastic. Of those 13, we have managed to retain only two, and that is because those two were from our geographical area. Of the ones we lost, four of them left teaching altogether, and the ones who decided to move on in their teaching careers ended up going to schools in perhaps less challenging circumstances.

Professor Dame Alison Peacock: I listen to all my colleagues and see all the tensions on the landscape reflected in the kinds of things that I hear from teachers and headteachers when I visit schools all over the country. The whole point of establishing the Chartered College of Teaching is to provide an authoritative voice on behalf of the profession about pedagogy.

We have heard colleagues describe that sense of moral compass sometimes being compromised. Decisions that we have to take in relation to workload, about whether we ask for flexible working conditions or about how we survive and thrive within the school are decisions that we want

the profession to be supported in making through looking at evidence of what works in classrooms, so that colleagues can say, "Actually, these things really have an impact and make a difference; however, there is not much evidence to say that we should carry on doing these other things." Otherwise, because we are so conscientious as a profession, we tend to pile even more on top. The rationale of the Chartered College is to hear the voice of the profession in relation to research, evidence, pedagogy and leadership to try to address some of these issues in a very positive, proactive way, building on the school-led system.

Q4 **Layla Moran:** Ms Hartley and Mr Henshall, how could the Department better help you to retain your teachers?

Alan Henshall: One thing that I have suggested is that you might be able to help us recruit and retain if you helped us with flexible working. Flexible working is quite an expensive business for schools. Employing two part-timers is a lot more expensive than employing one full-timer, because of the on-costs involved. But what I have found—and the Report states this—is that there are an awful lot of qualified teachers out there who are not practising. That in itself is a waste of public money, in that they were trained to teach. One of the things that they are often tempted back by is the idea of flexible working and part-time working. If we could be given resources to bring those people back in, that would be really good.

I have some excellent teachers at my school who are managing to maintain the job satisfaction that they require to stay in the job by working four days a week. That is not a good thing, because it means that on their fifth day—unpaid—they are trying to do the work to catch up. That is a major workload issue. But in terms of recruiting people back into the profession and retaining the people who are there, we could do more to help returners to the profession, many of whom would prefer to work part time, to dip their toes back into the water and come back into a school.

Q5 **Layla Moran:** Can you explain why it is more expensive?

Alan Henshall: Because you have pension and national insurance contributions by the employer. The on-costs, as they are called, in a school are much more expensive if you have two people sharing a job than if one person does it. It adds up to more money, basically. I have 92 teachers, I believe, and the full-time equivalent is 71. I am keeping my workforce staffed by a lot of part-timers. I really, really value them, and they are some of the best teachers in my school, but it is a very expensive model. The alternative is not to be staffed—or not to be staffed with highly qualified, excellent teachers.

Q6 **Layla Moran:** I have one final question. Is your timetable flexible enough to have flexible teachers in it, or is it the case that they are working five days at different times?

Alan Henshall: I am much more flexible. It is a nightmare for the person who timetables my school, but as the employer I am very flexible in that. I try to do as much as I can to do that. One or two lessons take place

outside the working day, as long as that suits the working patterns of the teachers concerned, but most of it is in the day. I try to be as flexible as I can, yes.

Holly Hartley: Again, I agree with a lot of what Alan has said. The best teachers are happy teachers, and if we can support teachers to have a better work-life balance, we will be far better off. I absolutely agree with greater flexible working arrangements. I think we are perhaps in a more complex situation in that budgetary restrictions at our school make it very difficult to timetable on a practical level. I would think there would be a number of secondary schools in the same boat, so to speak.

Q7 **Chair:** Sorry; make it difficult to timetable for part-timers?

Holly Hartley: Yes, with regards to flexible working. It is do-able, but it takes time. Again, it is a case of finding the other half, third or quarter on a practical level, which is very complex. For me, there has to be an acceptance that this is a long-hours profession. We talk about the notion of 1,265 as directed time; the reality is that, as the Report documents—even though it is not specifically talking about directed time—teachers work far greater hours than that. I think there needs to be national acceptance of that.

For me, as well, refresher training is absolutely critical. We have been successful in securing a member of staff returning to the profession, and that is something that we did individually on our own. I was not actually aware of the return to teaching pilot until I read the Report, so there is clearly a PR piece of work to be done there.

For me, teaching is a really highly respected profession, and I think there is more work we can do there. I actually came out of industry to go into teaching. When I think about the lurks and perks I had in industry compared to what I have in teaching, it is a very unbalanced playing field. If we invest more in staff wellbeing, particularly pertaining to health benefits, that would pay dividends that would be incredibly significant. For me, one of our greatest losses is our more mature professionals, who add so much to the profession, so much to the classroom and so much to the lives of young people who often need the stability of people with those kinds of life experiences.

Q8 **Bim Afolami:** I have a question on that for both of you. You mentioned that you were not aware of a particular initiative. What initiatives have you been aware of from the Department and central Government, or indeed local government? If you were aware of them, to what extent did they help?

Holly Hartley: I feel the need to turn to—

Chair: Yes, there is a list in the Report.

Holly Hartley: Yes, I was going to say the list in here. We engage with teaching schools, and we have found that incredibly successful in terms of getting practitioners into our school through a range of different routes. Again, that has been really successful.

We have done a range of things, such as teaching leaders and teaching fellows, that again have been subsidised by the Department, and those have also led to national professional qualifications at middle leader level and senior leader level. I am now doing one at executive leader level as well. We are obviously aware of the Chartered College of Teaching, but some of the others, I must admit, I have probably heard of, but with regards to detail—

Alan Henshall: I would definitely agree with that. Some of them are very good. We are part of a teaching school alliance in Harpenden and St Albans, and that is really good for us. We work together, we train our own teachers and we do school-based teacher training for that. I am the same: I am a practising headteacher and some of those things are new to me, and some are vague to me and I am not quite sure of the detail of them.

One of the reasons for that is that there are a huge amount of different routes into teaching now. I understand why that is happening—to try to attract people into the profession from different walks of life—and it is to be welcomed, but it is also very, very complicated. Doing something that would simplify that for headteachers, but also for people who are interested in becoming teachers, would be a really good move in order to help us all understand it and attract people in.

Just to finish, on my local teaching school alliance, the person who co-ordinates that says he spends on average 20 minutes a day on the phone to people, just explaining the route that we offer compared to the route that somebody else they contacted offers. If that was all in one simple place when people are considering whether to become teachers or not, that would really, really help as well. We aren't affected by Teach First. I think Teach First is an excellent thing, and I am glad that that keeps going as well.

Q9 **Heidi Allen:** You answered one of the questions I was going to ask about Teach First. Is it universal?

Alan Henshall: No. I am in a much more leafy lane than Holly. Therefore, it is not open to my school, but I would love it to be because we have got some fantastic students from our own school who are becoming graduates, and it would be great to have them back into the school as well. So I would welcome that being extended.

Q10 **Heidi Allen:** The observation I made when I looked at Teach First for my own area, which struggles to recruit teachers for a whole host of reasons, was that I was shocked by the philosophy of Teach First, which was, "We are creating leaders for the community. We don't care if they don't stay as teachers." I found that staggering, as it is a big use of public money. I am interested in your views on that.

Holly Hartley: It is a difficult one, because when you are recruiting the highest quality graduates, there has to be that kind of future career. One of the philosophies of Teach First—I have heard it said before—is about the leadership of the future, but schools need future leaders as well. One of the greatest sadnesses for me is that we invest so much time and

money in developing those staff, only to lose them. It is an amazing organisation and it achieves amazing things, and the impact that those staff have had in our school has been transformational. I cannot underscore that enough. The greatest sadness is that we then do not see them on to the next stage of their career, but it is also a factor that they leave the profession.

Q11 **Heidi Allen:** Is there something about the Teach First model that could be changed to help with that?

Holly Hartley: You made the point earlier about a fairly wide acceptance that they are not expected to stay as teachers; that is an accepted norm before they have even started. That is something that needs to change, because we need them to stay. It is about working with young people and transforming their lives; that takes time, and we need stability.

Professor Dame Alison Peacock: I am a trustee of Teach First, and one of the things they welcome is the fact that we are establishing chartered teacher status, which would be in one's third year of teaching and beyond. That notion of intellectual rigour is the kind of pathway that these young, talented teachers are looking for. Being able to provide recognition while staying in the classroom is fundamentally important. We do not want to have people leaving the classroom all the time to go off and be leaders straight away. We want them to stay. We hope that the chartered status will be one route that will entice more teachers to want to stay beyond their second year.

Q12 **Bridget Phillipson:** I will come on to the point about regional variation in just a moment. I want to ask Ms Hartley about the experience in Stoke of being part of the Department's opportunity area. What does that involve, and what have the benefits been?

Holly Hartley: To be honest, it is fairly early days at the moment. The project is just being set up, and a week on Monday is the launch for the school, which we have all been invited to. At the moment I cannot really comment, but if you invite me back in six months I will tell you.

Q13 **Bridget Phillipson:** On regional variation, what do the panel believe the causes of that variation might be? There is a lot in the Report about it. Dr Roach, do you have any comments?

Dr Roach: I am happy to comment on that. I hope the Committee have looked at our reflections on the question of supply routes in general as well, because that deserves greater attention. That is not because we agree that there is a confusion around the supply pathways into teaching; it is the underlying causes of drop-out from the profession that have to be properly examined and carefully addressed.

On the question of hotspots and "difficult to recruit" areas around the country, we have "difficult to recruit" areas geographically and by subject. It is pretty universal. We look at the evidence from Ofsted and others that have asked schools about their experiences of the challenges around recruitment. Across the board, around half of all schools report that they are finding it difficult to recruit. In more deprived areas, we know that that

is higher, with around 75% to 77% of schools serving pupils from deprived backgrounds facing those recruitment and retention challenges.

I come back to what I said at the beginning about the underlying causes. The underlying cause relates to the competitiveness of teaching as a graduate career option available to good graduates who aspire to have a career for life. The pay is not seen to be competitive or sufficiently rewarding; teaching is now in the 19th percent of lowest-paid graduate occupations out there. There is a challenge there to begin with. There is the challenge of workload and sustainability from day one. For a beginning teacher who perhaps is in their NQT year—

Chair: You have given evidence on this and you have talked about the work there before. It is particularly the regional variation that I think Ms Phillipson was—

Q14 **Bridget Phillipson:** I should perhaps have been clearer. I also meant in terms of the attainment gap regionally and whether you get a sense that the Government are taking action to address the issues around quality and attainment.

Dr Roach: We do not think the Government are taking the right actions in relation to quality and attainment, because if the Government were taking the right actions in relation to teacher quality, they would not have deregulated qualified teacher status in the first instance and they would not have created greater freedoms and flexibilities for schools to recruit unqualified staff to serve in classrooms. We have seen somewhere in the region of a 35% increase in unqualified staff working in classrooms.

In terms of addressing the key challenges within the system currently, the Government do not appear to us to be addressing the right things in the right way. Actually, taking action to bring downward pressure on workload and to increase pay overall, would make the profession as a whole more attractive to graduates. We have been here before. In the early 2000s we had a deep recruitment and retention crisis in the teaching profession. That required those forms of actions. The net result was that we cracked the recruitment and retention crisis and we made teaching the No. 1 career of choice for graduates in this country. The Government need to learn the lessons from that and apply them, rather than bury their head in the sand and pretend that somehow the crisis does not exist.

Professor Dame Alison Peacock: In terms of recruitment for membership of the Chartered College we are finding that there are certain areas—I have a heat map here. The north-west has far less recruits than other areas. I can send this to the Committee.

Chair: Please, if you could, that would be very helpful.

Professor Dame Alison Peacock: The evidence tells us that access to high quality professional learning is a way of retaining staff. There was a report published by the Wellcome Trust earlier this year. It had invested a lot of funds in supporting science, technology, engineering and maths teachers, and when it researched retention it found that those teachers

were much more likely to still be in the teaching profession having received that support. The Chartered College is accessible regardless of what your school is doing in terms of professional learning. You are able to join as an individual member. Again, that is trying to address the fact that there are regional variations and provide access regardless of that.

Q15 **Bridget Phillipson:** On the issue of quality, in addition to the issues around recruitment and retention on a regional basis, what more can be done and what are the drivers of that regional imbalance?

Professor Dame Alison Peacock: I think it is very interesting. As Holly says, it is very early days for the opportunity funds and we have the teaching and learning innovation fund as well, which is really focusing on areas of deprivation. This is an initiative that is explicitly—the Department for Education tells us—intending to address these issues. We want to learn from that early on, so if we start to see promising signs of things working, we will want to learn from that to see what we can do across the whole country. It is very important that we collaborate more and learn from each other in trying to address this issue that is so important.

Q16 **Bridget Phillipson:** But is some of this just reinventing the wheel? Surely some of what needs to happen to improve standards and support teachers is well understood. Is it not just a question of doing this everywhere as opposed to picking 13 areas without any discernible criteria?

Professor Dame Alison Peacock: Yes. Show me a school leader who does not want to raise standards in their school; show me a school leader who says, "I am not worried about attainment." Of course, it is universal. I think we have fantastic teachers and schools across the country. Clearly the social circumstances around some schools are such that it is more difficult and challenging—respectfully—to teach in Stoke than in Harpenden. I know that Alan would agree with that. The challenges are different, but they still exist wherever you are. Part of the attraction, ironically, of being a teacher is that the job almost feels impossible. There is a sense of constantly juggling things, but there is a tipping point.

On the comments of our colleagues on reward for the profession, I am a teacher and of course I would support those. We do need to reward education.

Q17 **Chair:** Do our two headteachers have a couple of main points that they want to add to what has been said about the regional variation?

Holly Hartley: I want to say a couple of things. Responding to one of Patrick's comments, I do believe that teaching is still an incredibly rewarding profession. Even though at the moment times are incredibly tough, we have worked incredibly hard at our school to make sure that our teachers get a real buzz at the end of every single day. That is about a sense of purpose and leadership. I would like to see the Department working with leaders. I find the title "teacher quality" somewhat concerning, because I do not think it is always about teacher quality. A lot of the time it is about role complexity. As Alison has already said, in some

schools there are so many things that need to be addressed in addition to the quality of teaching and learning. I feel sometimes there is a danger that, when one talks about context, people feel or say that you are making excuses. It is not about making excuses; it is about tackling the problems that really exist, and in some schools that is incredibly challenging. But good teachers work with that.

For me, stability and stability in policy are absolutely critical, because teachers need to be able to get on with the job that they do on a daily basis, and when we have a raft of change after change after change, that makes it harder for us. When you look at other systems, I think the one in Finland would be a good comparison. They have had far more stability in their policy over a number of years. For me, it would give teachers the chance to grow their roots and to learn the skill of their craft, without having to learn one thing and then quickly move on to the next thing.

Q18 **Chair:** Mr Henshall, is there anything you want to add after those comments?

Alan Henshall: No. I think it has all been expressed, thank you.

Chair: If all our witnesses—I say this to the Government witnesses in the room—could be so brief, it would be great. Caroline Flint, did you want to come in briefly, because we need to be aware of time?

Q19 **Caroline Flint:** Doncaster has an opportunity area as well, and I understand that it is about trying to improve social mobility. I heard you say before, Ms Hartley, that you are waiting to see, but is there anything within the opportunity area for you to tackle some of your recruitment and retention issues, from the ambition of that scheme?

Holly Hartley: Yes. For me, continuing professional development for teachers at all stages of their career is absolutely crucial and that is something that I would hope we get to see through our opportunity area. I would also—

Q20 **Chair:** Sorry. Did you say you hope to get to see, or you will see?

Holly Hartley: Well, we will get to see it, but one of the things I think we have to be quite forceful on is that it is for teachers at all stages of their career and not just for those within the first five years, so that we can retain people, where at the moment we are losing people.

Social mobility is a very complex matter that is not necessarily going to be addressed within a three-year window. I think that multi-agency working has got to be the key part of that. That is one of the things that I am really interested to see, as our opportunity area develops. Schools cannot work in silos, particularly when you are talking about social mobility cold spots. You need to be working with several other agencies in order to give these young people the support that they really need.

Q21 **Caroline Flint:** Going back to my colleague's point, everything you have just said I would not disagree with, but I just do not understand why that would be confined to a few areas and why that is not embedded in the

way we support our teaching profession, and our children and families.

Alan Henshall: We have a much lower deprivation factor, but one in 10 of my students is disadvantaged and the more it creeps up, the more the class sizes get bigger, the less able you are to get at the students who need more help in the classroom and extra support in their learning in the classroom. That really is harming social mobility in my school, definitely.

Q22 **Caroline Flint:** But isn't it about making sure that, through continuing professional development and support, teachers, at whichever school they are working in, have the resources and the networks to be able to respond flexibly to whatever challenge they are facing? In one school, it could be underachievement because of class, in another school it could be English as a second language, or whatever it may be. It isn't one-size-fits-all. What you need is a comprehensive system of support, don't you?

Alan Henshall: Absolutely.

Caroline Flint: Not just area schemes.

Holly Hartley: May I just come in on that, because I think you have used a critical word there, which is "networks"? In Stoke-on-Trent, we are a unitary authority with 14 different secondary schools, and one of the things that we have is a really powerful network, and we collaborate across our city, with different heads working together. We have an organisation called SASCAL and that is exactly what we have done. Different schools have different issues that they work with, and we often pool our resources and share. That is about the integrity behind the profession. That model works in Stoke-on-Trent and it is something that could definitely work in other places.

Dr Roach: We would simply take a view that there needs to be a system-wide response to the challenges that we face in relation to recruitment and retention. If the Government is going to prioritise opportunity areas, as a union we will give that a fair wind, but all our areas have challenges, which are, in their own way, acute challenges for those schools and certainly for the children and young people who are currently in the system who don't have that guarantee of a quality teacher in front of them.

The stark fact of the matter is that, across the system, schools are actually spending less in terms of their share of resource, their share of income, on teachers today than they were in 2010. What the Government has to address is, strategically, how does it use its levers to get, for example, opportunity areas to do the right thing as far as recruitment and retention in the profession is concerned, to ensure that the outcomes for children and young people are as the Government desires them to be. That is a challenge the Government faces: how to use the levers at its disposal.

Chair: Thank you. I know we are going to come back to Professor Peacock on some of these issues, but Ms Keegan has a short question before I go back to Ms Moran.

Q23 **Gillian Keegan:** As someone who was educated in Knowsley, I share your pain in terms of the social deprivation. One thing I am struggling with is that job satisfaction is usually linked to results, and the results in terms of good or outstanding schools and social mobility are actually better than they have been. I know that they are not perfect, but they are better than they have ever been. Usually, that would give some sort of satisfaction. What is the disconnect between the results and the morale?

Alan Henshall: It is to do with the point that I made first: the difference between what teachers know to be the good job that they need to do, because they are trained to do it, and the amount they can do with the amount of people in their class and the amount of students that they are working with.

Q24 **Gillian Keegan:** So the confidence that they could do even better is what is creating this disconnect.

Alan Henshall: That is right. It is the knowledge that, "Give me the right resource, give me a bit more time to prepare my lessons, give me a slightly lower class size and give me some time to breathe, step back and do some professional development on the job, and we will be much more satisfied with the job that we are doing every day."

Q25 **Chair:** Briefly, Ms Hartley, because I do want Ms Moran to come back, but if you have something to add—

Holly Hartley: It is not just about exam results either. Teachers get results in a whole range of other ways. It might be getting students to go to university. It might be getting students to engage with schools.

Q26 **Gillian Keegan:** But they are related to exam results.

Holly Hartley: Yes they are, but for teachers who work in the most challenging schools it is not always about the exam results. There is so much more to it.

Caroline Flint: Yes, but it shouldn't be an excuse.

Q27 **Gillian Keegan:** Good or outstanding is about measuring the teaching quality, isn't it?

Alan Henshall: It is, but an Ofsted grade is not a measure of teacher wellbeing.

Gillian Keegan: No, no.

Alan Henshall: It is a measure of the standard of the school and the standard of the results they are getting.

Gillian Keegan: The children's outcome.

Alan Henshall: Yes, exactly. It is a lot better to work in a school that is graded good or outstanding, but frankly that is not what drives a teacher. What drives a teacher is being able to help a child as well as they can do.

Q28 **Layla Moran:** The headline of this Report that made the news was that 50% of posts are not being filled by people who are qualified to fill them. I wanted to ask the headteachers, Ms Hartley and Mr Henshall, whether that is something that you have experienced. Have you had to fill posts with people who you would not have had as your first choice?

Holly Hartley: I would not say that it is with people who we would not have had as our first choice. I would say that we are having to be more creative in the way that we source our staff. If I say to you that I have literally had to scour the world for a scientist—it is that difficult to source a scientist. In Stoke-on-Trent, we have a maths partnership that runs across the city that has been very helpful there, but there are certain subject areas and the introduction of the EBacc has made that more complex. It is getting harder and harder and harder.

The issue is also that this breeds a certain amount of competitiveness between schools, and that is schools over a relatively large area. So with the critical cut-off points in terms of resignation dates, you end up with a stampede. Teachers have to resign on October 31 and then they will leave at a certain time. Where you might fill in one place you create gaps elsewhere, and that is incredibly difficult.

Alan Henshall: Yes, I agree. I have a quick stat from my school. We have advertised 16 teacher jobs since May. Nine had no applicants at all, six had one applicant and one had two applicants. That is despite the fact—

Q29 **Layla Moran:** How did you deal with that?

Alan Henshall: We had to re-advertise, we had to go out and recruit and we had to put out feelers in our local network and things like that. We did finally manage to do it, but it is not easy to do. That is despite the school being graded outstanding and despite the fact that the teachers in the school acknowledge that it is a great place to work. The most important factor is that it is very expensive to live where we are. Although Harpenden is a lovely place to live, the teachers who I recruit cannot afford to live there.

Bim Afolami: I would like to say that, as MP for Hitchin and Harpenden, I agree—Harpenden is a wonderful place to live.

Alan Henshall: You did tell me to say that.

Q30 **Bim Afolami:** Critically, I know that the Chair is concerned that I ask a good question. In relation to living costs, how do you think you could be supported by the Department or by local government in dealing with that particular problem, which I know you will have acutely in Harpenden?

Alan Henshall: You may have detected from my accent that I am not originally from Harpenden; I am a Yorkshireman. I was enticed to go and teach in a fairly challenging school in Luton as a newly qualified teacher, because I had a rent allowance offered to me by Luton. I came down and had the rent paid for me for the first year. That enabled me to relocate and start work there and to teach in an area that was perhaps very difficult to recruit in, and it enabled the school to recruit me. Certain

things on relocation might help with the regional variability that we were talking about. That is one suggestion I would make.

Holly Hartley: The cost of recruitment now for schools is spiralling out of control. The Report talks of a national strategy for that, which I think would be an excellent idea. It is incredibly expensive, particularly when you have to recruit somebody fast and you might be drawn to using one of the private agencies.

Chair: We have certainly had some compelling evidence on that, which we will no doubt reflect when we publish our Report.

Q31 **Layla Moran:** How many of your teachers, Ms Hartley and Mr Henshall, are not teaching their primary subject? I should caveat that by saying that my background is as a physics teacher, but I always taught maths, and I think that's okay.

Alan Henshall: You are not interested in a job in Hertfordshire, are you?

Layla Moran: No, sorry. How many of those teachers are teaching subjects that are not even closely related to their subjects?

Holly Hartley: To give you an exact number, I would have to provide that later. We have used such things as SCITT courses, whereby you do a transfer from your subject specialism into another one. Once you get a good member of staff—a teacher who can teach—that has been a very effective way. We have tried to limit that as much as we possibly can, because students need the level of knowledge that a subject specialist has, but sometimes you are forced to make those decisions.

Q32 **Layla Moran:** Do you feel when it happens that the kids suffer?

Holly Hartley: With the right support, there is no need for the kids to suffer, but continuing professional development and things like SCITT are absolutely critical in that regard.

Alan Henshall: I agree that good subject knowledge does not make you a great teacher. Therefore, a great teacher who is learning that subject can do a really good job. The higher you go in a secondary school, the more it harms the students, because they always need to see over the horizon to the next event. When you are teaching GCSE, you need to understand what is required at A-level. When you are teaching A-level, you need to understand what is required at degree level, so I think it is something that does harm student chances the higher you go up the school.

Q33 **Layla Moran:** Professor Peacock, did you want to add something?

Professor Dame Alison Peacock: Sometimes you might have a teacher who is teaching a class and it is their subject, but if they have not had the access to high-quality CPD within their subject, they might not be as effective as they might otherwise be. So it is about that notion of being able to access learning regardless to enhance one's quality.

Q34 **Layla Moran:** Which brings us neatly on to the next line of questioning, which is about the initial qualification. Dr Roach, you mentioned the QTS

status not being needed by certain schools, and that has been harmful. Can you expand on that?

Dr Roach: Not by certain schools, but by any school. The deregulation of the requirement for schools to employ qualified teachers was slipped under the wire, shall we say, very early on in the period of the coalition Government. It is an issue. When we have spoken to young teachers—to newly qualified teachers—about their perception of the professional status and esteem that goes along with the job, they have said that one of the most harmful factors to that is professional deregulation; the reduction in the requirements placed on teachers to be qualified. Our ambition is that we move to a profession that is, frankly, a Masters-level profession. That is our aspiration and ambition as a union, but teachers are saying, "If our status is not secure, the rewards won't follow in relation to the job, and frankly, it might be better to seek a career elsewhere."

As I said earlier, we can see the statistics on what has happened as a consequence of the deregulation. We are seeing an increased number of unqualified staff. I do not just mean unqualified teachers; I mean unqualified staff in general, working in classrooms and being expected to undertake teaching. We have seen a greater reliance on teaching assistants and cover supervisors to replace teachers. We have seen the explosion of the work of supply agencies that, frankly, are making huge profits at the expense of the public purse. All those very real issues flow from the deregulation of teacher qualifications.

Chair: We will come back to that shortly.

Professor Dame Alison Peacock: Again, one thing that we are really keen to do is to raise the status of the profession as a whole. A lot of what we have been talking about comes back to that. I am incredibly proud to be a teacher. A lot of what we have been talking about comes back to that. I am incredibly proud to be a teacher. If we have a profession that people flock to or want to come to, we are more likely to have teachers who also seek qualification. We have started the chartered status, which will be really tough—it has an exam attached to it—and we have got 150 people on the course for the pilot in January. Teachers, some of them with PhDs, are saying, "We really want to do this because we like this notion of recognition."

Typically, school leaders are looking to recruit qualified staff because they want the best teacher for the job. Clearly, if there is a pressure and we have not got the status and the drive towards bringing people in, the issue around the qualified staff becomes something more prevalent.

Q35 **Layla Moran:** Professor Peacock, do you believe there should be an ongoing requirement for CPD that is met by all staff?

Professor Dame Alison Peacock: I think that to be a professional is to constantly seek to improve one's practice. This should be part of a natural extension of the school-led system, whereby one is proud to teach and proud to constantly update and improve. The kinds of opportunities that we seek to provide across the country at a very low cost exactly speak to

that. When I liaise with colleagues from other royal colleges representing other professions, the expectation that one constantly seeks to evidence the learning that has taken place and have that accredited—we are thinking three-yearly after the chartered status—is something that I think the profession has an appetite for, but they have to be able to have access to it. So it is about having the high-quality CPD available to them. Things like the teaching and learning innovation fund are seeking to start to do that, but there is a lot more that could be done.

Q36 **Layla Moran:** Ms Hartley and Mr Henshall, what are the barriers to your getting this professional development for your teachers?

Holly Hartley: Time and money.

Alan Henshall: Time more than money.

Q37 **Layla Moran:** Explain time.

Holly Hartley: Teacher contact time now is so high. The things we need to cover during directed time include a wide range of things. The money to be able to buy more time—

Q38 **Chair:** You mean cover for teachers going off—

Holly Hartley: Yes. Also, I feel at the moment that teacher contact time is too high. If you are a teacher, for example, and you are not an NQT, you could be teaching in our school something like 44 out of 48 periods, with planning, marking and everything else that needs to be done. It is incredibly difficult to factor in CPD.

Q39 **Layla Moran:** How much would you like to see it reduced by?

Holly Hartley: That is a very difficult question.

Layla Moran: Wish list.

Q40 **Chair:** We have the Permanent Secretary in the room. He is listening.

Holly Hartley: Absolute pie in the sky wish list. If teachers could have a 50% timetable where they have the rest for planning, preparation and doing the other things, that would be a dream.

Alan Henshall: I would love to wish that as well, but three or four hours a week would definitely make a huge difference to the quality of the assessment—

Q41 **Layla Moran:** More than they already have.

Alan Henshall: Yes. Again, it takes students out of the classroom for a day, but we try and create that time by having more inset days. That is one thing we can do as an academy. We add those in. It is not very popular because it reduces the amount of contact time you have a year, but sometimes you have to be brave and do that in order to make sure the teachers are getting the professional development of a high quality that they need to keep motivated and keep improving their practice.

Q42 **Layla Moran:** Final question to Professor Peacock. What more can the

Department do to support you in your endeavours?

Professor Dame Alison Peacock: This is a dream question.

Q43 **Chair:** Yes, the dream and then perhaps what you might think is realistic in the short term. The Permanent Secretary will probably not take the dream straight off.

Professor Dame Alison Peacock: What is really important about the Chartered College is that we need to be independent: financially independent. A greater awareness of the work that we are doing is fundamentally important so that teachers join us and it is their body. We are not an extension of the Department. We need to be seen as being independent. I would love to think that the work that we start to do gains traction across society, and that more businesses say they would like to invest in supporting the teachers. We produced a leaflet to ask, how can we help our teaching profession? Education is our future for the country, so it goes way beyond what the Department can do. It is about society supporting education and providing an opportunity for the teaching profession to be deservedly really highly regarded. It is about having access to the learning that is needed and about teachers having such access regardless of the school they are in. We were talking about these regional issues; if you are working in a school that maybe is under the cosh in terms of Ofsted and all kinds of pressures, but you know that you can join your professional body, you can access learning online, you can go to conferences on Saturday, should you wish to—you don't have to, but you could—then you have got a lot more agency building up within the profession on behalf of teachers. I think that is the important answer, really.

Chair: So independence and enough money to do that. A final quick question from Gareth Snell.

Q44 **Gareth Snell:** This is to Holly and Alan; you said fewer hours would be good. Would the same effect be experienced if, rather than fewer hours in the classroom, you had more teachers and smaller classes?

I wasn't expecting silence.

Holly Hartley: It is hard to say.

Alan Henshall: I would say high-quality teaching is the most important thing; it is more important than class size. I definitely would say that.

Q45 **Caroline Flint:** That is what people pay privately for.

Alan Henshall: Yes, but that is another debate. However, you can give more attention individually to someone and therefore your lesson becomes a lot better if your class size is small and you have had more time to prepare and more time to assess and work out what their individual needs are, so that you can plan the lesson going forward, so I would say yes, in answer to that question.

Q46 **Chair:** Holly, do you agree?

Holly Hartley: Yes, I do—quality of teaching, again.

Chair: Thank you very much indeed, all four of you, for your time. The transcripts for this session and the next will be up on the website uncorrected in the next couple of days. Our Report, with a fair wind, could be out before Christmas, but do not bank on that, because we have got a bit of a backlog building up. You are very welcome to stay; in fact our Moroccan visitors have gone so there are plenty of seats for the next session, when we are welcoming the Permanent Secretary and a colleague from the Department for Education. Thank you very much for travelling to visit us. Your input has been invaluable. It is always very valuable to hear from those of you working with and representing the front-line profession.

Examination of witnesses

Witnesses: Jonathan Slater and Paul Kett.

Q47 **Chair:** Welcome back to the Public Accounts Committee on Wednesday 15 November 2017, where we are examining the question of teacher training and recruitment. We have just heard from teachers and others at the frontline and we now welcome our main witnesses for today, Jonathan Slater, the Permanent Secretary at the Department for Education—welcome back to you, Mr Slater; and Paul Kett, who is the director general for education standards at the Department for Education. I think it may be your first visit to us, Mr Kett.

Paul Kett: It is, indeed.

Chair: A very warm welcome to you. Before we kick off with the main session, I want to ask Mr Slater a couple of questions. We note that there has been a change at the top of the Student Loans Company. I understand that Peter Lauener is taking it on as a temporary project. Is that right?

Jonathan Slater: That is absolutely right.

Q48 **Chair:** And how long is he going to be running the Student Loans Company for? Has he got an end to his time, or is it as long as he needs to be there for?

Jonathan Slater: The Student Loans Company needs to start the process for recruiting a permanent chief executive, and Peter will run the organisation in the meantime.

Q49 **Chair:** Until that point, okay; and, given that there have been some changes there, which we are not going to discuss today—but we do know that the National Audit Office will look at this—what are your priorities for the Student Loans Company, for Peter Lauener, now he is in that role?

Jonathan Slater: Peter's tasks are to make sure that the highest possible customer service is maintained for all of the customers of the organisation. Equally, the Student Loans Company has some important programmes of work to improve its effectiveness—getting more digital is the most obvious example—to provide a better service for customers than them simply getting their money on time. He has to do those first. As a very experienced chief executive, I hope he would be able to maintain that progress, albeit as an interim chief executive.

Q50 **Chair:** So it will not be at a standstill while he is there?

Jonathan Slater: No. The customers of the Student Loans Company need the best possible service from the company and it is his job, supported by me, to ensure that they get it.

Q51 **Chair:** Great. There are a lot of colleagues across the House concerned about some of the issues for their constituents in terms of the Student Loans Company. I am sure people will welcome that promise and let us hope it delivers.

You may have picked up that BBC "Panorama" and the BBC education correspondents have done some digging about student loans and some of the private colleges that were encouraged to expand places for higher education by the Government. Are you aware of the revelations in "Panorama" in particular?

Jonathan Slater: I am.

Q52 **Chair:** What are you going to do about them or as a result of them? To recap, for those who may not have picked it up, students were effectively buying places, qualifications and sometimes attendance at colleges, and in some cases being issued with bogus qualifications. Will you change your inspection regime?

Jonathan Slater: The NAO has recently finished a review of our efforts to improve in that area. A predecessor of mine had a fairly torrid time in front of the Committee a few years ago, and you were very clear about what the Department needed to do to get on top of the issue. I would not be at all surprised if we were having a meeting in due course to discuss what the NAO found.

Chair: We are.

Jonathan Slater: They did find a very significant improvement in performance in that respect.

Q53 **Chair:** You say that, but this is quite recent footage. These are actual things that have happened in recent months, particularly in London colleges where people were going in and buying qualifications and attendance.

Jonathan Slater: Which they absolutely should not do. When anybody sees any criminal offence, they should definitely contact the police. I would look to see the strongest possible action taken. It is very distressing for us all to see public money being misused in that way. From the point of view of the regime that we have in place to minimise the number of such events, we will probably never get to the position where that is zero. The good news is that it was 4% and it is now down to 0.5%. That is the NAO's advice. It looks to me like the arrangements that we have been putting in place are taking us in the right direction, but we need to ensure that as few as possible of those criminal events take place.

Q54 **Chair:** Clearly, when it is criminal, we expect the police to take action, but you are here as the Permanent Secretary of the Department responsible.

We have seen, for instance, that the college in Greenwich that was featured in the programme had expanded from 650 students about five or six years ago to 6,500. That rate of expansion was partly because of Government policy, which is not an issue for us to question, but do you think that your Department and the predecessor Department responsible had the measures in place to ensure that, with that rapid expansion, there were the safeguards in place to limit or minimise this type of fraud? As you say, people always try it on, but you have to ensure that you have the mechanisms in place to stop that happening.

Jonathan Slater: The answer I was trying to give you was that no, it did not and it has got a lot better, but we continue to need to improve. Whenever we see any example, we need to ensure that the appropriate regulators are taking the appropriate action. It is better than it was but it is not as good as it needs to get to. It is a disgrace when you see those things happen.

Q55 **Chair:** Do you have any comments for the university sector? They award degrees and often license out that degree-awarding status to those colleges. Clearly there were some issues there, particularly in the case of the University of Plymouth, which was awarding degrees. Do you look at that or do you think there are enough systems in place for you to be sure that those degrees are being awarded properly? Do you think there is a role for the Department there at all?

Jonathan Slater: One of the most important purposes of the Office for Students, which was created on the back of Acts approved by Parliament at the end of the last session, was to strengthen regulation of the higher education sector in a more risk-based way than the previous regime under HEFCE, which did not have any legislative powers in respect of fee income and did not have the responsibility to take a more proportionate pace. Obviously I would like to see the Office for Students focus more on areas of income growth with institutions with less of a track record, as is implied by your question. That is precisely the point of the OFS and that is what we will be holding it to account to deliver against.

Q56 **Chair:** Do you not think there is a damage to UK plc? In this case, a university was licensing degrees and there was clearly something the police need to be looking at there. Do you have any plans to mitigate the impact that that could have as it ripples out across the world? A lot of people come to Britain because we have a good university system; a degree from a British university is highly prized. It may be a small number overall, but there are evidently now people out there with degrees that are not worth the paper they are written on, which is a kick in the teeth for the students who have done the work.

Jonathan Slater: Which is why it is absolutely important that we have more effective regulation in the ways that I have described. The introduction of the teaching excellence framework is designed to demonstrate good quality, but wherever you have bad stories like that, they will have some negative impact, and we need to minimise the number. I absolutely agree.

Q57 **Chair:** Do you have a message for students out there about whether they should apply to colleges and what safeguards there are to ensure they are getting a good deal? Can you assure them that you are on top of this enough now to make sure it will be minimised in future?

Jonathan Slater: I can assure them that the quality of regulation of this sector is a very high priority for the Department and that we have made significant progress. This is the whole point of the creation of the Office for Students, on which we are currently consulting to see what people think is the best way of meeting this challenge as well as possible. It will be interesting to see what comes out of that. I would say to those students that my task and the task of Michael Barber and Nicola Dandridge at the Office for Students is to protect their money.

Chair: We will come back to this. It is important. A lot of people out there are feeling quite bruised because they have good degrees from organisations that have now been questioned, quite rightly, in public. We will move on to the main session.

Q58 **Layla Moran:** Is this country facing a teacher retention crisis? How seriously do you take this?

Jonathan Slater: The country is seeing, as you discussed at the previous session, more teachers leaving, particularly in their early years, and the Department needs to support schools in doing all sorts of things of the sort you were describing to tackle that challenge. I am looking forward to having a conversation with you this afternoon, to the extent that you want one, about the sort of thing we are doing. We absolutely need to help schools to retain more great teachers for longer in order to get good value for money and in recognition of the fact that pupil numbers continue to rise. I think we can do more than we are doing at the moment.

Q59 **Layla Moran:** But you do not think it is a crisis.

Jonathan Slater: I do not use words like "crisis". That is not typically what you get from Permanent Secretaries. I am straightforward with you that although the overall level of teacher retention is pretty much the same as it was a few years ago, in the first five to six years there has been an increase in drop-out rates. It is very important that the Department works with schools to tackle that, which is why the proposal I guess we will be discussing about strengthening the qualified teacher status, an early career framework, more CPD—

Q60 **Layla Moran:** So come to it. What are you doing to fix this?

Jonathan Slater: From the point of view of retaining teachers, we have been looking carefully at the data, and I have highlighted a particular challenge that we face. It seems to me and to the Department that the most obvious way we can support schools in meeting that challenge is to develop, on the back of what we all know is a very professional profession—as you were discussing previously, teachers do not see the opportunity to develop with high-quality CPD, moving onwards and upwards in their career, to the same degree as in other professions. Teachers feel they are not getting sufficient support from the Department

in that regard, as the NAO identifies, so we will shortly be consulting on work we have been doing with teachers, other experts and the College over the last six months on what a really top-class, strengthened QTS, followed by really good CPD for the years after that, would look like.

Q61 **Chair:** We probably all know what we are talking about, but we keep using these acronyms, so we should spell out what they mean.

Jonathan Slater: Qualified teacher status and continuing professional development. It is clearly not there to the extent that everybody would like it to be, so what we have been wrestling with over the last few months with teachers and headteachers is what the best way for the Department to support them is. The sorts of things we were getting ready to consult on are things like whether we should have a much clearer framework for what you might expect to do as a new teacher and when and how you might develop, or how we might improve the quality assurance of that CPD.

A lot of money is spent by a lot of schools on things that they are not that happy with afterwards. What role might we or an independent provider play in quality assuring that? What level of entitlement might you give a new teacher, or a teacher after three years or five years? How would you incentivise them and the schools to do it?

Chair: These are all questions that you are asking. Ms Moran?

Q62 **Layla Moran:** They are questions I would also like to ask. What are your specific plans to address all those questions, and what timeframe are you planning to address them in?

Jonathan Slater: We have been addressing those questions over recent months. The bad news, for the timing of this particular hearing, is that we are about to consult on a specific set of proposals, and the Secretary of State would not welcome me announcing her plans today.

Q63 **Chair:** Let's cut to the chase. From what you are saying, we welcome the fact you were in the room to hear the previous witnesses, but do you disagree with any of their analysis of the problem, without your having to breach any confidentiality on the advice you are giving to your Minister?

Jonathan Slater: Well, they said quite a lot of things, didn't they, and they did not always agree with each other in every respect.

Q64 **Chair:** On retention?

Jonathan Slater: I think that they and other headteachers need more support from the Department in helping them to retain the best teachers that they can. One thing we need to do is to put into place a strengthened set of arrangements for QTS and early career progression.

Q65 **Layla Moran:** Just to clarify, is the Department considering reinstating QTS for all schools?

Jonathan Slater: So, 95% of new teachers come in on the basis of qualified teaching status. It is true that, a number of years ago, the Government decided to give schools the freedom to recruit non-qualified

teachers if they wanted to, on that basis of the Government's judgment at the time, which has not changed, that individual headteachers are best placed to make those sorts of judgments. You can imagine a number of scenarios in which a headteacher might choose—

See footnote.

Q66 **Chair:** Sorry, we are not really asking too much about QTS. So, the policy remains that schools still have that freedom, but you are saying that 95% of teachers—

Jonathan Slater: It is a freedom to do it if they particularly want to. In 95% of cases they do not. The Secretary of State's particular priority is to strengthen QTS, but not to abolish the other one.

Chair: That is what we need to know. Thank you.

See footnote.

Q67 **Bim Afolami:** In the NAO Report, it says that roughly £555 million is spent on the recruitment of teachers, and that about £36 million is spent on the retention of teachers. Bearing in mind all we have heard and what you have said, does that strike you as the right balance?

Jonathan Slater: No, which is why we are proposing to do more work to help schools to retain teachers. I will give you one example; we can go on to others as and when you like. A recommendation you made at a previous meeting was that we should carry out a detailed evaluation of the money we spend in supporting new teachers coming into the profession. You definitely would not want us to turn that tap off, given the level of demand required, until we are very clear.

That is a very detailed evaluation and it is looking into the bursaries right now. It finishes in April and we will publish it in the summer. It will then give us the ability that you quite rightly asked us to have to compare and contrast. However, we clearly need more support for schools on retention.

Q68 **Layla Moran:** To Mr Kett, do you now know why people are leaving the profession? Do you feel the Department has a handle on that?

Paul Kett: We've got a better understanding than we had previously. We have drawn on research from the National Foundation for Educational Research that was cited in the NAO Report. We have also had a number of different conversations with both school leaders and the various reference groups of headteachers that we work with as a Department. There is a very high degree of consistency in the reasons people have been giving. I heard the previous panel citing workload as one of the concerns, but also access to good opportunities for progression and support for professional development. That is one of the reasons why, as the Permanent Secretary was saying, we are focusing on how we can provide that—particularly in that three to five-year bracket where there seems to be a change in the numbers of those leaving the profession.

Q69 **Layla Moran:** Do you understand the difference between the three to five-year bracket and the early retirees? Is there a difference in the

reason why they are leaving?

Paul Kett: No, I do not think we do. In the conversations I have had with those three to five-year leavers, the reason tends to be the opportunities for progression and the workload. One thing we have seen in the workload analysis is that teachers at an earlier stage in their careers tend to be working longer. How do we support those teachers to manage the workload that those later in their careers find easier to manage?

Jonathan Slater: It is also helpful, isn't it, to look at what happens to them and where they go, as that research shows us. The NAO have highlighted the fact that slightly more than half of those who leave early go to other jobs in schools, so they are just doing different jobs within the schools. That is obviously good news for the schools, but it raises questions about workload being one factor, which we will come back to. Others go into further and higher education, so as the Permanent Secretary for Education that is a win for me.

One in 10 of them, about 10% of teachers who leave teaching early, go into jobs outside education. That is the group of people I am most interested in, but equally I am interested in those who choose to go into caring responsibilities, who we might well—if we can make the progress that you were discussing with your headteachers earlier—keep in by providing more flexible working. Given that more than 40% of women in the economy work part-time, and fewer than 30% of female teachers do, that has to be a great opportunity for us.

See footnote.

Q70 **Geoffrey Clifton-Brown:** I have two questions on that. Those people who have left the profession seem to be an obvious pool that you should be fishing in. Why do so many people leave the profession and come back as teacher assistants? Surely that is a failure of the system?

Jonathan Slater: As Paul said, there is definitely a workload issue here that we have to make progress on. In February, we published our updated plan for what we are doing about it and how we are helping schools. The good news is that 40% of those schools that have used the advice on the back of the 2015 plan, which followed loads of consultation with teachers about what gets in the way—the marking, data and planning, and the waste of time in those areas—and have taken the benefit of the recommendations to focus on those areas have got their workload down. One fifth of them had got it down by more than two hours per teacher per week. The bad news is that only about half of the schools had taken advantage of those tools. My task is to ensure that all schools are getting the benefit of those tools and taking advantage of those opportunities, because we need them to do so, don't we?

See footnote.

Q71 **Geoffrey Clifton-Brown:** People go through changes in their lives; they leave because maybe they are having a family, but they may well want to come back into the profession. Using those tools, and given Mr Kett's

comments about progression, are there more initiatives the Department could take to encourage teachers to come back into the profession?

Jonathan Slater: I will bring Paul in. The good news is that, while increasing numbers of people have been leaving at a particular point in their career, an increasing number of people have been returning. That is why class sizes have remained constant, with the same pupil-teacher ratio as we had 10 or 20 years ago, because the two have kept in step with each other. We have been piloting—well, piloting is not quite the word, but trying some small-scale ways in which we might support people to return. Possibly Holly had not come across the scheme was because we tried something on a small scale, which did not achieve all it might have, as the NAO Report said. We are exploring how we can help them to do that more, through refresher training, one-to-one support and that sort of thing.

Paul Kett: Absolutely. It is worth saying that 14,000 people return into the profession anyway. The challenge is to ensure that any support we provide is getting at those who were not going to come back anyway. The initiatives that the Permanent Secretary referred to were particularly targeted at those subjects where we know that there are particular challenges, such as physics and maths and, this past year, modern foreign languages as well. We provided support to the prospective returner based on some user research we had done with those who were considering coming back about what would help them to do so. Often it was about confidence in being able to return to the classroom—so offering them a package around getting back up to speed and so on, and also personalised support from an adviser, similar to the model that we use for those in high-priority subjects for our graduate recruitment, which is about giving them tailored advice on their application and getting them experience in schools.

The evaluation that we did of those small-scale initiatives was that they were a positive experience for those candidates, but one of the challenges was the concern that a number of schools still had about whether to take someone who had not been in the classroom for a long time. That is the next challenge that we are working on: how do we work with the sector to address the concern that schools have in taking back those who have been out of the classroom for a long time. We are looking at whether we could provide a version of our various initiatives on teacher subject-specific training that was particularly targeted at those returning.

Chair: A quick question from Bridget Phillipson and then back to Ms Moran. I know that another couple of people want to come in.

Q72 **Bridget Phillipson:** That all sounds great, but I want to know how we can make that happen more broadly. For those with caring responsibilities who might want to return to teaching, it is not always just the issue of flexible working; sometimes it is the expectation that they go through an agency or take up unpaid work to demonstrate that they are classroom-ready. How can we make that happen across the country, not just in those target pilots?

Paul Kett: Absolutely. I would highlight two challenges. First, I would come back to the fact that there is already a highly-functioning returners' market, and we don't want to spend public money that would otherwise go to those who were coming back into the profession anyway, so there is a question of targeting. We might be able to do that where we know that there is a mismatch between supply and demand, and where there are large numbers of potential returners who are looking for part-time roles, but there aren't enough part-time roles being advertised to meet that demand.

The previous panel said that it would be great if we had the single national recruitment service available. We have a prototype for that under way, which we hope to launch a pilot of in the spring and then scale that up. We think that that will be the most effective way of helping reach those looking for flexible opportunities.

Q73 **Layla Moran:** Mr Slater, how confident are you that those initiatives will make a difference in time for, say, next term? How soon do you think they will have an effect?

Jonathan Slater: It will be through a combination of things, won't it? We have managed to help schools to keep teacher-pupil numbers in sync. We have managed to support schools in that task over the last few years. In primary schools, pupil numbers went up from about 14% and teacher numbers went up by about 13%, so class sizes stayed about half a child extra per class. Secondary school teacher numbers went down, but so did pupil numbers, so we have managed to keep them in sync.

We absolutely have a bigger challenge. My point is that we have some success to build on, but it will be harder because it is in secondary, so we will need to continue with the success of the returners' programme, which I think we will succeed in doing. That is on an upward trajectory, and we have some good evidence for what works and what doesn't.

We absolutely need to make more progress on initial teacher training at secondary level. The good news is that we had a marginal increase in the number of secondary school initial teacher-training applicants in the last year. We are now starting to move upwards as we need to, but we need to go further than that. The biggest opportunity that we have not tapped sufficiently so far is the retention issue, which is of course where you started. There is a tremendous opportunity and we are completely focused on it.

Q74 **Layla Moran:** We have seen ratios going up. Is there an ideal ratio in your eyes? What would be a trigger for the Department?

Jonathan Slater: We don't—you'll be surprised to hear—have a view about what is the right number of children to have in a class on average. The numbers move along, actually. Back in 2000, the average pupil-teacher ratio was 17:1 in a secondary school. It is 16.5:1 today.

See footnote.

Q75 **Layla Moran:** Of course, in secondary, that hides big fluctuations

between different subjects. Would you say that it is time to institute a maximum class size, as in primary? Are you considering that?

Paul Kett: Just to update on what Mr Slater said, in primary we do have a cap on pupil numbers in a class. We don't have that in secondary schools. You are right to highlight the variation. We don't have particularly strong data on the variation. What we do have is information on the number of teachers globally, across the system, and the subjects they are qualified in. As the previous panellists and the NAO highlighted, for the majority of subjects, pupils are taught by those with the right specialisms.

See footnote.

Q76 **Layla Moran:** Is that data you are seeking to get? It strikes me that it is quite important. If it is the odd class in a school doing that, fine, but if there is a systematic issue—an entire school doing that—that is another thing.

Paul Kett: We do not seek to add to the data burdens on individual schools, but we certainly try to pick up through the various conversations we have with schools—through regional schools commissioners and through our conversations at a local level—whether that is happening.

Jonathan Slater: You were discussing the national position and the more local one with the headteachers, and you highlighted the need for us to have more good local data. Our first step on that journey was the supply index that we published in September, which started to give more granular data about which schools have got the greatest challenge. Unsurprisingly, you find that two schools in the same town have got very, very different levels of challenge. We need to get more data of that sort.

One of the benefits of the national teacher vacancy service—we start going live next year, fingers crossed—which will help schools recruit teachers more cheaply, and will be easier for teachers. Another is that it will give really good-quality data about what is actually happening, rather than anecdotal conversations about how many people apply for job x. There is it. We will have much better data in the future. I can tell you that 90% of secondary school teachers teach the EBacc and have the appropriate qualification, but what you and I want to know is which schools are struggling.

See footnote.

Q77 **Layla Moran:** On 5 November, *The Sunday Times*, did a story—I am sure you saw it, because it raised a few eyebrows—based on an FOI request looking at the number of pupils in classes. Among other things, they found 52 classes with 50-plus students. Some were in PE, but they also said that some were in maths. Mr Slater, do you feel confident that you have got an absolute handle on all of the schools where there are these problems?

Jonathan Slater: Paul will come in with more detail than me. I am saying that I think there is more data that we would benefit from, and I have talked about the ways in which we are securing it. Equally, I am nervous

about the idea that I decide what the right maximum number is in a particular set of circumstances in a secondary school. Obviously, that option is available to Ministers if they want to take it.

Paul Kett: Building on the point about seeking information, I will say two things. First, in relation to the story that you mentioned, we did seek to understand what lay behind those numbers. The explanation was often one of bringing together several classes for a particular lesson at the start of a particular topic. It was choir practice in one case and a PE lesson in another.

Coming back to the Permanent Secretary's point about how we get better local intelligence, we are using a supply index, which is an experimental methodology. We have published that are seeking feedback on it. We are then going and talking to schools at the bottom end of that supply index to understand the nature of the problems they face. That could include understanding whether they are having to increase class sizes in particular subjects.

We are also, from some of the early conversations with those schools, discovering what factors those school leaders think are problematic. What some of them have said to us is consistent with the NFER research. It might be about supporting teachers, in terms of workload, or about the location of the school, if it is geographically dispersed. By working with those schools we want to then make an offer to those schools to try some things out that will help them in their circumstances, which may then help us scale up how we address the problem more globally across England.

Q78 **Layla Moran:** I kind of don't buy that these numbers came from two classes coming together from the beginning, because that was not what the FOI was about. Everyone does that. In fact, school assembly would mean that you would have classes of the entire school number, so I am not sure that is true. But thinking specifically about maths, do you think there is a number where it starts to become detrimental to have too many students in a class?

Paul Kett: I don't. The people who are best placed to make that judgment are the school leaders themselves.

Q79 **Layla Moran:** What we are hearing from school leaders is that they feel that some classes are beyond the point and there needs to perhaps be some intervention from the Department. Why do you feel it is not for the Department? Mr Slater, shouldn't the Department take a view on this?

Jonathan Slater: The intervention that schools are asking for my help with is not determining class sizes, but helping them recruit more maths teachers. I do not mean that in a facetious way at all. Clearly, schools face a challenge. In the circumstances where they face challenges—

Chair: That is a good answer, because Ms Moran is going to move on to that point.

Jonathan Slater: If it was a good answer I'll stop. I'm happy with that.

Chair: They don't have to be long to be good.

Q80 **Layla Moran:** I want to quickly come back to workload. There are these initiatives that have come in. We welcome those absolutely, but when do you know you have succeeded? It is roughly 55 hours a week now. Have you got a target in mind? What is a reasonable number of hours a week that a teacher should work, in the Department's view?

Jonathan Slater: Just as I don't want to tell them how many children should be in each class, I don't want to tell them how many hours to work. What I am struck by, to the extent that teachers are saying this, is that they spend the time they want to be spending on counselling their pupils and on management and that sort of engagement. Where they are spending too much time is on marking, on data and on planning—not universally—and they say they do not spend as much time as they would like on other areas. You heard from Holly what she sees. This is a matter for each teacher and each head. This is my experience of engaging with schools. They do not typically say, "I'm working more hours than I want." They say, "I am not working the hours as productively as I would like. I am wasting time on x that I would prefer to spend on y." But those judgments need to be made at the school level. Where I need to help them is in doing the minimum possible unproductive work.

Q81 **Layla Moran:** So how do you know when you have done enough? Surely you need to have some kind of target to aim for. I don't mind what that is, but I would like to know you have one. Do you?

Jonathan Slater: If I were aiming for a particular number, that would be me saying what I think is the right number of hours for teachers to work.

Q82 **Layla Moran:** What are you waiting for? For them to stop moaning? If that is what you are looking for, it is not going to happen.

Jonathan Slater: We published our first plan for how we might support teachers to bring down the amount of unproductive work in those areas in 2015, along with a survey that drew attention to the size of the problem, and we said we would publish a new survey with an updated plan every two years. In February just gone we published a second survey, which is why I was able to say that 40% of schools had achieved x and 60% had not. So now I am focusing my efforts on supporting those schools that have not, and we will do another survey in two years. I would want to see continued reduction at more significant levels in schools that are concerned about the level of unproductive working, because it is really a significant challenge. Do you want to add anything, Paul?

Paul Kett: I can offer more on how we are going about doing that.

Jonathan Slater: But I do not have a particular number.

See footnote.

Q83 **Layla Moran:** I am not sure I am satisfied, but I am not sure I will get to the bottom of this. We might be better off moving on.

On pay, we know that the Department allowed flexibility for schools to vary pay, but we are told by the School Teachers' Review Body that very many are not doing that. Mr Slater, do you know why?

Jonathan Slater: I will bring Paul in, but yes, you are right. When we speak to schools, we do not see much in the way of examples of schools in practice using those flexibilities. You are right that they don't. Paul, do you want to say something more about that?

Paul Kett: We have been trying to find that out, so we have visited a number of schools to find out whether and how they are using those flexibilities. On the whole, they are cautious to do so and they tend to stay with the standards across the system. The places where they are using them a bit more are in recruitment and retention allowances in some schools, and sometimes greater use of allowance, but it is very much at the margins. That is why the STRB highlighted those flexibilities and encouraged schools to consider how they could use them, and we support that.

Q84 **Layla Moran:** What are you doing to help schools recruit teachers with the required experience? The headline from the Report was that the number of schools that cannot fill roles seems to be increasing. What are you doing to fix that?

Paul Kett: I would refer to some of the examples I have already given; through things like a national teaching vacancy service, we can provide easier routes to advertising and reach more candidates. Ultimately, through our efforts on workload, we are trying to encourage more people to stay in the profession so that more teachers with appropriate experience stay. Similarly, we are making efforts on professional development and career paths for those at the three to five-year stage, which we have highlighted, who might leave the profession. So the more we can keep them in, the more choice there will be for schools.

Jonathan Slater: Where we have—

Layla Moran: In Oxfordshire—sorry.

Jonathan Slater: The obvious question we ask ourselves—sorry, I promise that I will answer it—is, where we have an opportunity to invest new money, can we use that money in support of specialist subjects and/or those areas of the country that need teachers the most? The Government have announced their loan forgiveness scheme, that is an obvious opportunity—isn't it?—for would-be science and MFL teachers. When we spend money on the teaching and leadership innovation fund, as well as focusing it in opportunity areas, we also focus it on things like physics. So along with the national stuff, where we do have opportunities to spend money in support of those particular shortage subjects, that is what we do.

Q85 **Layla Moran:** Back to workload, does your answer mean that you reject the first panel's testimony that contact time is too high? They all said that contact time is too high, which increases preparation time. Is that

something you recognise? Your answers were suggesting not.

Jonathan Slater: I was simply answering the question about whether you think I should set a number. I see that workload is a problem and that when staff are spending time on activities that they themselves find unproductive, we should be helping them to reduce that. There are all sorts of practical ways we can do that. It is striking—

Q86 **Chair:** What Ms Moran is saying—on the bigger, more strategic picture, clearly you are not managing a school as the two heads are. But if a teacher is well prepared going into the classroom and can do a differentiated lesson and get more out of their pupils, there must be some analysis somewhere in the vast Department you are responsible for of the impact of that on pupil attainment. Or is that something beyond your ken?

Jonathan Slater: I am sorry—I am not sure I quite understand the question. We have lots—

Q87 **Chair:** Okay. If you have a teacher with enough time to prepare excellent lessons and therefore every lesson is prepared as well as it could be—we are talking the absolute perfect model here—what we heard from our first panel and from some of the evidence we have had is that those lessons would be excellent lessons. But non-contact time is used for what you call non-productive things. Do you have any idea or measure of the difference in quality of teaching when you have got a teacher who is able to prepare well, compared with a teacher who is basically a bit squeezed on that preparation time?

Jonathan Slater: Absolutely, we have all sorts of data. We are absolutely happy to share it. To take a practical example, the sorts of activities that teachers themselves find do not add value and stop them doing what they want to do—I think that is the same thing; I am probably using jargon, and apologies if I am. In a typical "requires improvement" school, the teachers will spend one hour more—more!—marking per week than in a typical "outstanding" school, as measured by Ofsted. So the irony is that schools often spend more time unproductively preparing for an Ofsted exam, hoping to get through—obviously "exam" is not the official term—

Chair: We let that slide, Mr Slater. There you go.

Jonathan Slater: A bit Freudian—I hope my mum is not watching. Yet your typical outstanding school is doing less unproductive work than your typical RI school, which, when you think about it, is not that surprising. The question is: how can we help them do less unproductive work? That is why we worked with teachers on practical tools, pointing out the actual stuff that some teachers think they need to do but they just do not need to. You can see why perceptions take time to change and why, for example, the new Ofsted regime asks teachers to what extent their school is supporting them in reducing workload, rather than the opposite. There are all sorts of ways in which we can help schools.

Q88 **Chair:** But there is a bigger picture here. With the funding situation as it is—we have raised this with you before—and with schools having to look

at taking non-teaching time off staff so that they can do cover and other activities, there is going to be a squeeze. Just the financial squeeze can make it difficult for schools directly to provide that. You would acknowledge that there is an impact of funding.

Jonathan Slater: As you say, we have discussed this before, and no doubt we will discuss it again. Clearly, things are going to get a bit easier for Holly when the national funding formula comes in, because she is going to get a 7% increase—

Gareth Snell: Not in Stoke, she won't—

See footnote.

Q89 **Chair:** I will bring in Mr Snell in a minute. Hold the thought, Mr Snell; I can see that you are itching to get in. Mr Slater, finish digging yourself into the Stoke hole, and Mr Snell will then help you out.

Jonathan Slater: The Government—the Department for Education—will make available to schools like hers a 7% increase in funding on the back of the national funding formula. It is true that local authorities will have some choice as to how they allocate that funding within Stoke.

Chair: Well, let's not go through that choice of taking from Peter to pay Paul again. I have to say, if Stoke is a beneficiary, my borough is not. We are already having to lose teachers as a result. But I will park that one; tempted though I am to go down that path, I have had an opportunity to do that before.

See footnote.

Q90 **Gareth Snell:** Just for the record, the situation in Stoke-on-Trent is that the city council are taking £3 million of the £4 million extra cash allocated to Stoke-on-Trent to fund other things. They currently have an application pending with your Department to approve that moving of cash. We have not had a response, so if you could take that back, Mr Slater, we would be very grateful. Clearly, that money was designed for Holly's classroom and it should go to Holly's classroom.

I should probably declare my interest in this: I trained to be a teacher before I did many other things. I would dispute partly the idea that marking is unproductive time. Assessment of learning and assessment for learning are incredibly important parts of planning the—

Chair: Question.

Gareth Snell: Yes. On flexible funding, you said that a number of schools that you had spoken to had the opportunity to do flexible funding for pay but chose not to. How many of those schools told you that the reason was that they simply could not afford it?

Jonathan Slater: Before Paul answers that, can I just make it clear that I am not suggesting, particularly as the father of a nine-year-old girl, that I do not want her teachers to mark her work any more? One of the things that schools found for themselves—that teachers told us—was that there

was triple marking going on. Triple marking of the same piece of work. Just imagine the workload involved in that.

Q91 **Chair:** Realistically, how often is triple marking happening?

Jonathan Slater: In many schools, teachers still think this is what Ofsted are going to be looking for when they come.

Q92 **Gareth Snell:** But is that not a failure of the Ofsted system—that it created a myth culture around teaching so that teachers feel they have to do that to—

Jonathan Slater: I am not blaming anybody; I am describing the world as I see it. Obviously, we want to help schools and teachers move away from that, and Ofsted themselves have published myth-busting campaigns. There is more of that to be done. There is absolutely more of that to be done.

Q93 **Layla Moran:** Mr Slater, is that happening more in schools with more NQTs particularly?

Jonathan Slater: Now you are getting beyond—

Q94 **Chair:** Well, Ms Moran has a point. Her question is pertinent. Surely, trainee teachers will have the work that they have marked looked at by someone more senior.

Jonathan Slater: To be clear, I do not think there is a difference of view between the profession and the Department, or indeed the experts. The Education Policy Institute published in October 2016 its assessment of where there was inappropriate workload, and it said that the three areas that I described were the right areas to be working on. That is all I wanted to say.

Q95 **Gareth Snell:** Mr Kett, my question was, specifically: you said that you had spoken to schools that had the flexibility to vary pay but had chosen not to do so. How many of those schools said that the reason for not doing so was that they simply could not afford it within their budgets? It is all very well and good to say that you will pay teachers more money, but if you have not got the money to pay them then that is really not a privilege.

Paul Kett: I do not have the exact numbers in front of me in terms of how many. Certainly, the amount of funding available in the system was one of the factors. However, the flexibilities are quite broad, so it was not just a question of insufficient funding but one of wanting to stick within a framework that was similar to that in other schools in the area—that was the most common. There was also a concern, particularly among individual schools, about the complexity that arose. Those that were more interested in applying those flexibilities were the chains of schools—multi-academy trusts—where they could use that flexibility more.

Jonathan Slater: Equally, I do not want to give the Committee the impression that we think that that flexibility will be the thing that fixes the teacher supply issue that we have been discussing. I have referred to

workload, CPD—all sorts of things. We would love schools to use those flexibilities where they can, but it is not the absolute answer to the question.

Q96 **Layla Moran:** I will ask about push factors, and indulge in asking about my local area. I declare the interest that I am a qualified teacher and a school governor. In our school and in Oxfordshire, we struggle to keep hold of teachers in the three to five-year bracket because house prices are so incredibly high that they just do not feel that they can bear living there. In fact, they are moving to London because they receive London weighting. Are you aware that that is happening?

Heidi Allen: Same in my area.

Layla Moran: Yes. And, Mr Slater, are you planning to do anything about it?

Jonathan Slater: As to next year's pay regime, if that is what we are referring to—

Chair: That will not solve the housing problem.

Jonathan Slater: Or we might have been referring to house building. But on the subject of the flexibility available to schools and the pay regime for future years, the chief secretary has written to the school teachers' review body to say that, in the light of the Government changing their policy on public sector pay and lifting the 1% pay cap, they are looking for opportunities to increase flexibility and funding where they see an opportunity to do so. Next week is the Budget. Following that, the Secretary of State for Education will follow that up with her own advice. She will seek advice from the pay review body, which will consult and come back with its recommendations next year.

Q97 **Layla Moran:** But are you aware of the specific issue with the London weighting?

Jonathan Slater: Typically, to be honest, I hear London schools telling me that they are struggling to keep people, rather than that they are getting them from Oxford. I had not heard that story before. But I am acutely conscious of the challenge that schools face in hanging on to teachers who want to start a family in areas where house prices are rising.

Q98 **Layla Moran:** What more can you do for schools in London and the south-east to help to retain their teachers? What can the Department do to intervene? Specifically on the cost of living.

Jonathan Slater: I have to use the resources I have as efficiently as I possibly can across a series of competing needs. It is true that I am focusing resources where I can in those areas of the country where the schools are struggling the most. There is obviously a balance, which you were discussing with those two headteachers, between the resources we put into schools in areas that have been lower funded that are struggling the most to get good teachers and where the exam results are the worst

across the piece. I only have a certain amount of money to go around. I am trying to get the balance right in that.

Q99 **Layla Moran:** So is the answer nothing?

Heidi Allen: I am looking for something strategic to address this particular point, not a generic answer.

Q100 **Layla Moran:** How closely are you working with local authorities to ensure that they have the right housing stock to have teachers living there?

Heidi Allen: Keyworker housing initiatives.

Layla Moran: Are you involved in keyworker housing initiatives?

Jonathan Slater: We are increasingly working with local authorities at sub-regional partnership, but I cannot give you—

Q101 **Chair:** Can I give you an example of something that is in your control? Your Department funds pre-schools directly to the provider. A number of those—there is one in my constituency and I am sure we all have examples from around the country—are on a site where housing has been built as part of the package. When I corresponded with Mr Lauener in one of his many previous roles on this, I pointed out that if housing was provided that was affordable for teachers—not necessarily teachers at that school, but teachers in general—that would be the thing that would benefit my schools most. I have received a lot of evidence in preparation for today's session from headteachers, and housing is top of the list. They lose teachers because those teachers do not want to live in a shared house any longer. After two or three years, people are moving. Could some of that housing on the land that your Department pays for be earmarked for teachers as part of an education dividend, and not just swept back in to pay for physical buildings? Surely that would be a logical and sensible approach to help tackle this problem. That is not completely in your gift, Mr Slater—I recognise you are part of Government—but that is something you have more control over. Have you considered that, and if not, why not?

Jonathan Slater: I have been involved in conversations with individual multi-academy trusts and individual local authorities, as have my staff, on supporting initiatives like that. I do not want to overclaim though; we are supporting individual initiatives and I cannot give you the confidence that we have a comprehensive strategy that definitely meets the level of need. That is work we are doing at a more tactical level.

Q102 **Chair:** Is that work that you think needs to happen? Are you making any commitment to us today that you are going to look at the issue?

Jonathan Slater: I am looking at the issue. I do not think it is within my gift as the Permanent Secretary in front of you to announce—

Chair: No, we are not asking that.

Jonathan Slater: You can see that a policy on prioritising one group of people over another group of people for housing, while definitely desirable for me as Permanent Secretary, does exceed my pay grade. That is all I am saying. It is a reasonable challenge.

Q103 **Chair:** Are you putting the argument across Government? You meet your colleague Permanent Secretaries. You have the ear of your Secretary of State. Are you ensuring that this issue is being raised as the Government profess to tackle the housing problem and that the issue of teachers' housing is part of that?

Jonathan Slater: I absolutely am, because I completely recognise where that is an issue. It certainly is an issue.

Q104 **Layla Moran:** Let us move on to Spanish and physics in particular, Mr Kett. We know that these are two problem areas at the moment. You spoke about initiatives to help them—can you be more specific?

Paul Kett: Certainly. The first one I might mention in terms of our recruitment efforts has been for this coming recruitment cycle, and that is the loan forgiveness pilot for those studying science or modern foreign languages. That will affect up to 800 potential modern foreign language teachers and 1,700 science teachers across the spectrum. We will be forgiving them the cost of their student loans in the first 10 years of their career. That will be a benefit in attracting them in and in retention.

You did not specifically cite maths, but I would put it with physics and modern foreign languages. Those three are at the top of our in-tray in terms of our focus. We have also introduced a new form of bursary for maths this year, which goes all the way back to some of the challenge that this Committee gave around how we use the bursary funding. We have introduced a bursary that gives £20,000 up front, but two early career payments of £5,000 after their third year in the profession and after their fifth year, provided that they keep teaching maths. We are trying these approaches to attract in but also then keep in.

In relation to Spanish teachers, we are also looking at opportunities such as working with Spain to bring their teachers here and supporting schools to bring them on. We have got a scheme that would allow 90 or so modern foreign language teachers from Spain to work in our schools, and we are supporting them to make the transition.

Q105 **Layla Moran:** As ever, Brexit plays in this. What impact will Brexit have on these modern foreign language teachers coming over?

Jonathan Slater: About 3.5% of secondary school teachers currently are from elsewhere in the European Union. My task is to share that data with my colleagues who are working on the overall Brexit strategy and negotiating with the European Union. On the back of that, as they are developing the immigration policies that follow that, my task is to ensure that the decision makers—Ministers—are well informed about the extent to which the school system benefits from those teachers and would want to benefit from more of them in the ways that Paul was just saying to your colleague. It is a matter for future Government policy negotiated with the

European Union and subsequent immigration policy. That will determine the extent to which it will be easy or not easy to attract those teachers in the future.

See footnote.

Q106 **Layla Moran:** Do you have a plan B if they suddenly cannot come or stay?

Jonathan Slater: Most of the way in which we meet the demand for foreign language teachers is from teachers who are here already, and we are doing lots of work in support of that.

Paul Kett: In addition to the initiatives I have mentioned, you heard a little from the pre-panel about what we call teacher subject specific training—TSST—which is the extra support provided to those who might have a relevant qualification but who have not gone into teaching to teach that particular subject. We are making 5,000 places available in the next year across maths, physics and modern foreign languages, to give those currently in the profession the skills to teach those subjects as well. All our efforts on the domestic side are really focused on those priority subjects, as well as our overall recruitment and retention and workload efforts.

Q107 **Layla Moran:** One thing that we heard from the earlier panel that would help is flexible working and attracting some of those people from a profession. Mr Slater, what are you doing to help schools to achieve that aim, given that we were told that it will cost them a bit more money? That is a really important context to put this in.

Jonathan Slater: There is quite a lot of this already; there just isn't as much as there could be and needs to be, so my first task is to make sure that the good practice of those schools that are experts in it, doing well and finding ways of doing it for the minimum possible additional cost, is shared more widely. We published some guidance and advice earlier this year. We are updating it for next year, on the back of a summit we held recently with a number of schools and multi-academy trusts that do it really well, to share what they do and the success of their work. Paul mentioned earlier the national teacher vacancy service. We would like, as we roll that out, to use it as a tool that can support schools, particularly in doing flexible working. In my own experience in the civil service and before that in local government, this was as much about a cultural change as it was about practical support.

Q108 **Chair:** What about money problems around—

Jonathan Slater: There are clearly, as you heard, some challenges that come when you recruit two people to a job. It depends partly, of course, on how you do it. That is why we need to share the good practice that we have seen from schools that have succeeded in doing it.

Q109 **Layla Moran:** But do you accept that on-cost is on-cost? What are you doing to address that? Are you at least looking at how we can help schools with on-costs?

Chair: The point is that you could have a school with lots of part-time teachers and it would just have a higher wage bill than that for the equivalent number of full-time teachers. That is what Ms Moran is driving at.

Layla Moran: Yes. There is nothing you can do about that.

Jonathan Slater: I agree that there are some on-costs that come with jobshares. In my career to date—okay, I have not been a teacher, but in my career to date, I have seen in the culture of the organisation I work in that that is not the first question; the question is, how do you get the best out of two people, on a jobshare basis, rather than one? There are some costs that come with it, and there are some benefits that come with it, too. The schools that we got together in a summit that we did the other day with ASCL—which are doing this the most—were not saying that they have had to spend more money than they would ideally like and that the money is a barrier. That is not what they were saying.

Q110 **Layla Moran:** But we have heard today from the earlier panel that it is, so perhaps you can take that away with you.

Jonathan Slater: Sure.

Q111 **Layla Moran:** It sounds to me that there is a lot riding on the national teacher vacancy service. We always like to hear about the new initiatives, but it concerns me that the National Teaching Service sounded as though it was doing a similar thing, and folded. What lessons, Mr Slater, did you learn from that?

Jonathan Slater: They do sound the same, but they are completely different. The National Teaching Service was an idea—actually, it sounded very like what one of your headteachers was recommending in the previous session; yes, it was, exactly—to give teachers up to £10,000 to relocate from an area of the country where there was an excess of supply, to an area where there was an insufficient supply. That was the idea—£10,000 if you will go and work where you are needed, essentially. A pilot was done in the north-west, and the objective was to find 100 teachers who would move into the north-west.

Q112 **Layla Moran:** And 24 did, we know. So what did you learn?

Jonathan Slater: What I learned was that it is good to pilot. *[Laughter.]* In all seriousness, your Committee has given us—

Q113 **Layla Moran:** But it is a negative case. In academia, a negative case can be just as useful in terms of the learning points. So what exactly did you learn?

Chair: We don't mind if it doesn't work and you stop it. We are fine about that, but what did you learn?

Layla Moran: Why did it not work?

Jonathan Slater: There were a number of things. First, we found that a £10,000 relocation sum did not incentivise enough people to move.

Secondly, we found that there were more people wanting to move than there were schools wanting to receive them. While 24 people were reallocated successfully—tick—there were 29 people who wanted to, but the schools in question did not want to receive them because of the particular subject specialism or the particular phase. Do you see? It is a complicated business. Those were particular things we learned. I suppose that a final thing we learned was that we did it in a bit of a hurry, to be honest. I have to be honest.

Chair: That is great.

Paul Kett: I would just add that the fundamental learning in relation to paying teachers to move is that it was not enough of an incentive. The fundamental learning that we have then applied is that instead of trying to move teachers, we should be investing in those teachers in those areas so that they go and get the development and move into leadership. That is the focus we are now putting into our efforts.

Jonathan Slater: That is what is at the heart of the teaching and leadership innovation fund—focusing on those parts of the country where the schools need it the most, to get more teachers working in those particular areas.

Q114 **Bridget Phillipson:** The NAO Report talks a lot about regional variation. What do you think are the factors driving the significant regional variation that exists in teaching quality?

Jonathan Slater: Paul will want to come in on this in more detail, but what we see is a need for a combination of national activity, of the sort we are describing, but because some schools need more support than others—for reasons that you know as well as I do, such as the challenge facing a school in a particularly challenging area or on the back of a particularly difficult Ofsted report—to bring in the people they need to support them, we think we need a more targeted, focused approach. That is why the teaching and leadership innovation fund is focused as it is. That is why we will create the opportunity areas to try to provide more support to those schools that are going to struggle to recruit as many as others because of their location, their challenge and so on.

Q115 **Bridget Phillipson:** So is the opportunity fund about recruiting and retraining, as opposed to teaching quality? Those are overlapping issues but they can be distinct.

Jonathan Slater: I would say it was about all those things and more, but do you want to come in Paul?

Paul Kett: On the specifics of the opportunity areas, what we are doing in those 12 areas is working with a range of local partners to work out what the priorities should be in those areas. I was recently at the Norwich opportunity area partnership board, where attracting maths teachers in particular was a priority. It will be different in different opportunity areas. On the broader question, as the Permanent Secretary was saying, the biggest issue is sufficient capacity to support schools in all areas of the country. At the individual teacher level, in terms of the various

programmes that are offered under the teaching and leadership innovation fund, we want to grow capability among the profession, but we also want to grow the wider system capacity, for example teaching schools. One of the challenges we have had is insufficient coverage of teaching schools, so we have changed some of the criteria and have put some additional support in those areas that have not got sufficient coverage of teaching schools, to try to create more capacity. It is those kinds of efforts.

Q116 **Bridget Phillipson:** I wholly accept that there are different challenges in different parts of the country that may require a tailored approach, but that similarities might be rolled out elsewhere. I have to ask, however: what criteria were used to determine these areas and what would success look like? Finally, I am concerned about my own part of the country: the north-east does not seem to get a look in.

Jonathan Slater: The Secretary of State asked for data about levels of social mobility challenge, area by area around the country, so we did some analysis of that. If you want to see more detail, I am happy to let you see it. We thought we should start small and try something out in half a dozen areas. On the basis that those initial conversations were making good progress, let's build that to another six. There is always a balancing act in learning from what you have done before you go on to the next stage. As you heard in the conversation with the headteachers, we are still at an early stage, aren't we?

Q117 **Bridget Phillipson:** No one would argue against seeking to achieve improvement in areas of particular challenge.

Jonathan Slater: That is why there aren't more than 12 at the moment. It is not anything about the north-east, but about a wish to learn from what we do before we expand, but obviously that will be a decision for Ministers to take.

Q118 **Bridget Phillipson:** Yet at the same time, other Government-commissioned on, for example, the northern powerhouse teaching work, showed that there was a particular problem in the north and the midlands—and the north-east is obviously in the north.

Chair: Just in case you were in doubt!

Bridget Phillipson: I do not understand the criteria that would have been used to determine these areas. For all that, I wish them well and I hope it succeeds.

Jonathan Slater: And I think the Secretary of State is well aware of the level of commitment from MPs representing other areas of the country to a bit of the cake themselves. That is absolutely understood. I think that is probably above my pay grade. I am happy to share with you the data. I was advising—that was not a facetious answer to the previous question—to try something small scale and see, but obviously somebody loses when you do that.

Chair: As long as you scale it up if it works and get rid of it if it does not, and learn the lessons.

Q119 **Bridget Phillipson:** I would not argue against those areas getting the support that they need, but it does not appear that it is connected to other work that is apparently ongoing in Government on addressing the skills imbalance in parts of the country and the particular challenges in attainment and the connection to deprivation. We also saw research from the University of Cambridge about teachers who are often less experienced working in some of the most challenging areas and the impact that that can have on the outcomes that young people see. How do we connect this across your Department and across Government?

Jonathan Slater: You have referred to the northern powerhouse, which goes beyond individual opportunity areas. To give an example of how we are trying to join it up, the Secretary of State recently announced a £30 million fund to support schools that have particular retention problems. I can go into detail about how the money is being used, if you would like. It was not just allocated to opportunity areas, but it was also allocated—£10 million comes to mind—in support of the northern powerhouse. It would be wrong if our approach to piloting something in a number of areas meant that they were the only people who got a slice of the pie. Similarly, opportunity areas have access have access to school improvement funds and teaching leadership funds, but so do other schools in challenging circumstances.

Paul Kett: If it is helpful to add to that, the £10 million figure was correct, but we have also put in additional money to try to grow the number of initial teacher training providers in the north, for example, and to provide some curriculum development as part of that funding. I should just clarify my early comment on the teaching leadership innovation fund: although a number of its initiatives are particularly focused on the opportunity areas, it is across categories 5 and 6, which are broader measures of deprivation, and those in the lower Ofsted categories can access those as well, so it is not all or nothing.

Q120 **Chair:** May I ask how you are going to evaluate these opportunity areas and, if it works, how quickly areas in the north-east and Ms Phillipson's constituency will get that?

Jonathan Slater: One of the great things about being a relatively new Permanent Secretary at the Department for Education is that I have inherited the Education Endowment Foundation, which has been going for a few years and is producing really good stuff, of the sort that was not there before. We asked Kevan Collins, who runs it, to be, along with his normal job, the opportunity area evidence champion. The specific role we have given him is to evaluate the educational success or otherwise of the outputs from the opportunity areas.

Sir Amyas Morse: Forgive me—it is great that you have an evidence champion, but once you have the evidence you have to evaluate it and come to a conclusion from it. How are you going to do that? Can you just answer how you are going to actually know whether this is working or not? Having evidence is great, but it does not tell you it is working.

See footnote.

Q121 **Chair:** How are you going to evaluate it? How will you know it is working, Mr Slater?

Jonathan Slater: I am not going to evaluate it, we are contracting an independent research organisation following a competitive tender process. The process evaluation was commissioned in January 2017 and is being conducted by National Foundation for Educational Research (NfER) who are tracking the first year of the programme. The Department is currently running a tender competition for the Opportunity Area impact study. This will look at statistical measures of overall impact, the qualitative difference the programme has made on the ground particularly in relation to systemic change, the implementation and sustainability of the programme and an analysis of the costs and benefits of the programme. We aim to appoint a contractor by the end of January 2018.The Education Endowment—

Chair: Okay, well how will—

Jonathan Slater: Sorry. The Education Endowment Foundation will evaluate it by comparing what they see today with the results of the initiatives and the extent to which they can demonstrate cause and effect. That is a technical task, which needs to be done by experts.

Q122 **Chair:** How long will it take to see the results?

Jonathan Slater: We really are at an early stage. Six of the opportunity areas have just published their delivery plans and the other six have not yet reached that stage. I do not want to overclaim this. As they publish their plans, we will then be able to evaluate the extent to which their plans were delivered. A key aim of the process evaluation is to provide regular internal reporting to ensure lessons are learned and good practice shared. NfER will also be publishing their final report into the initial set up of the programme by summer 2018. In the plans, where they set out the outputs that they hope to achieve from them, the EEF will be able to evaluate the extent to which they did so. That will be their task, but we are just at the beginning.

Q123 **Bridget Phillipson:** I am sorry to labour this point, but the Department has commissioned other work directly on the challenges under this northern powerhouse umbrella that are facing schools in the north and the midlands. That does not appear to be connected to some of the other work that is going on in the Department. Why is it not joined together?

Jonathan Slater: We are obviously not doing a very good job of demonstrating how it is. When we invite bids, for example, for our strategic school funds and for our CPD funds on teaching leadership development, we prioritise bids from opportunity areas and other schools facing challenging circumstances. We use the jargon of categories 5 and 6 to mean schools in particularly deprived areas, wherever they are in the country. That is how we are trying to get the balance between the two.

Chair: Ms Phillipson?

Bridget Phillipson: I think that has run its course, although I am not

actually satisfied with the answer.

Chair: Mr Snell, briefly—time is tight.

Q124 **Gareth Snell:** Briefly, on the evaluation of the opportunity fund, I know from local experience in Stoke-on-Trent that one of the things the opportunity board wants to look it is the longer-term issues about the aspiration of our children. That is a long-term project. What concerns me in your answer—that you have independent evaluation looking at this—is this: how much danger are we going to be in from simply setting up the opportunity zones to spend their money quickly and generate a series of quick evidential bases on which you can judge success, which does not really deal with the acute underlying problems that they were originally meant to address on a long-term, sustainable basis? I do not want £6 million being spent in Stoke-on-Trent to plaster over the problems we currently have and then, in three or four years' time, when the money has run out, find that we have not actually addressed the problem.

Jonathan Slater: Absolutely. We need to get the balance right here, don't we? I did not say that we have said each of the opportunity areas has the objective of hitting a particular number on a particular day to achieve a particular thing. That would have made it easier for me to answer the previous question, but it would not address the fundamental point of setting them up, which was as you described it. We are doing something more bottom-up than that. What do local communities think they most need? We have a certain amount of resource going to each area. We can bend our resources in support of them. We ask them what the priorities will be. They publish an action plan locally. We then evaluate the extent to which the plan that they have developed locally delivers success.

You would hope, wouldn't you, that we and local people could see some practical improvements within a couple of years or so? Equally—because otherwise, you are going to lose interest, aren't you?—by definition, social mobility is a generational challenge and it is going to go beyond what one opportunity area can do. We need to get the balance right, which is why I try not to give a simplistic answer but to say that I am using an expert to help me.

Q125 **Bridget Phillipson:** I am not against trying new things, but in recent years, have we not seen a focus on novelty and variety as opposed to focusing on some of the bread-and-butter issues on teaching quality and standards? I am no education expert, but the evidence for what needs to be done is there. Should we not see more of a focus on that as opposed to trying new initiatives all over the place?

Jonathan Slater: Yes. Absolutely. I am just answering questions about what we are doing in opportunity areas at the moment, but I think that one of the most exciting things that is happening is the creation of the chartered college. Dame Alison is in the middle of creating something that could be really transformational system-wide, building the profession and taking the space that the Department is currently in. There is a massive opportunity there. Alongside that—

Q126 **Chair:** You have given them start-up funding, but what is the long-term future of funding? You talked about them having enough money to be independent. Is that something you support as a Department?

Jonathan Slater: Yes. Independent means funded by teachers rather than funded by Government. That is, of course, the model that you would see in other professions. Equally, as I have said, we are currently in the space, pursuing various initiatives, precisely because there isn't a well-developed college taking that space for itself. It would be great, wouldn't it, if Alison and her colleagues—if the teaching profession itself—were supporting themselves to tackle these issues more, and the Government were doing less, and the resource lay more with them than with us? But they have just started.

Q127 **Chair:** In an ideal world, do you envisage a college that you would commission work from on a paid basis? It is independent, funded by its members, but it couldn't be funded by its members , surely, for all the work that you are currently doing in the Department. Or are you shifting the costs to individual teachers, which would effectively be the impact of that decision?

Jonathan Slater: We need to be careful how we do this, don't we? If I start paying the college to achieve a particular thing that I want, it starts getting a bit less independent, doesn't it? So we need to be careful about this. Alison feels this just as strongly as I do. It is the extent to which the profession itself, supported by the college, can take up more of the weight and do the activity itself, supported by its teachers, rather than me holding money centrally and allocating it to things. That could be money in schools, with teachers buying from the college. But we are just at the beginning—

Q128 **Chair:** You have just skirted through some models. What is the proposed future funding model for the chartered college?

Paul Kett: As Dame Alison has said, she wants it to be self-financing—so from membership fees. We have agreed to provide it with some start-up funding so it can get going. It has got growth figures for its membership and it is doing well in terms of attracting members. We work closely with them in terms of their progress towards getting to the point where it is self-financing.

Q129 **Chair:** And you are confident it will be?

Paul Kett: They are meeting their targets at the moment. As Dame Alison said, she is looking for us to promote the work that the college is doing, and be supportive, and we are committed to doing that.

If I could give a practical example of how we are working with the college on chartered teaching status, Cat Scutt sits on our advisory group for continuing professional development, and so we are designing any frameworks we put in place to be complementary so we can provide support to the college.

Q130 **Bridget Phillipson:** On the issue of continuing professional development,

the Education Policy Institute, as quoted in the Report, showed that teachers in England spend four days a year on CPD, compared to 10 and a half in the other 36 countries that were surveyed. Do you want to see that number increase? Do you think it is the right level? Do you think it should be higher and closer to that international comparator?

Jonathan Slater: There is an opportunity for schools to improve both the quantity and the quality of the CPD that they receive. I see this as a tremendous opportunity. Absolutely.

Q131 **Bridget Phillipson:** And the question of the number.

Jonathan Slater: Yes, the quantity—more of it taking place.

Q132 **Bim Afolami:** Just to take you back over the relationship between the Department, schools and teachers, and the support that happens within that structure. You mentioned earlier that as part of new Ofsted guidance or regulation, Ofsted ask teachers, "How is your school supporting you?" Bearing in mind that context, we already discussed with the headteachers earlier the number of initiatives over the past couple of years. I won't list them all, but how effective do you think they have been in toto? If some of them have not been effective, to what extent are you withdrawing them and maybe looking at a more streamlined approach for your retention of teachers?

Jonathan Slater: Undeniably, some have been more effective than others and some have failed. We talked earlier about one that had failed. We talked earlier about another one, the returners pilot—sorry, I keep saying pilot and I'm not supposed to say pilot—the small-scale project; I am not sure why, but there is a distinction. We made more success in some areas than others, such as maths and physics more than modern foreign languages. We have had good success in some areas and not good success in others. There is quite a variety.

We definitely see an opportunity to take a more streamlined, more strategic approach; smaller numbers of larger resources allocated seem to be the way to go.

Q133 **Bim Afolami:** Did it worry you when you heard the heads not be entirely sure about most of the initiatives?

Jonathan Slater: It did not surprise me, no. That is the conversation that we've been having with head teachers: that we are trying to do too many small-scale things. The creation of that strategic school improvement fund—the teaching leadership one—is the direction we want to go in. Frankly, it also helps with workloads. We talked a bit about marking earlier; one of the three areas is data and submission of bids to the Department. We can save time, money and effectiveness, we really can.

Q134 **Bim Afolami:** That's helpful. Do you think that in a year's time you will be able to say, "Right, we have looked at it; we have a more streamlined approach and I can explain to the Committee how that has been done"?

Jonathan Slater: Yes. We are working on a plan that we hope to have agreed before the end of this financial year.

Q135 **Bim Afolami:** I will move on to savings that schools have to make under the current funding arrangements. What assurance do you have that schools can make the savings by using their staff more efficiently and effectively, while at the same time retaining and developing teachers in the ways that we have described? I am not expecting you to repeat all the stuff around retaining and developing teachers. Bearing in mind that a school's budget is roughly 70% to 75% staff costs, how confident are you that they can make those savings while doing those things around retaining and developing new teachers?

Jonathan Slater: I can feel the direction that this conversation will take. The Government announced an increase in school funding such that, from now, at the macro level, where the position varies school by school, schools will receive a real-terms per pupil protection.

Q136 **Chair:** We know the policy.

Jonathan Slater: That means that the average school—though it varies, obviously—does not have to reduce its teaching costs—

Q137 **Chair:** They already are, though.

Jonathan Slater: in the light of the pressures going forward. Obviously, some schools will have to; London schools will be less generously funded than they are at the moment.

Q138 **Chair:** Let's be clear: you talk about the funding formula. We know that that policy has been announced in the House. But when we sat with you last time or the time before—you are such a frequent visitor so forgive me for forgetting—we discussed the £3 billion of efficiency savings: £1.7 billion for more efficient use of staff and £1.3 billion for more effective procurement. Mr Afolami is talking about £1.7 billion for more efficient use of staff.

Jonathan Slater: All I am saying, Chair, is that staff savings have had to be made by schools as a consequence of that budget not having been protected. Between 2015 and 2017 that happened, but it does not have to happen in future at macro level. That is all I am saying. But for individual schools it does, so where they have—

Chair: I'm sure that headteachers around the country will be jumping up and down with excitement that suddenly they will not have to make the cuts that they thought they would.

Q139 **Bim Afolami:** That is clear—and thank you for that.

To characterise what I think you are saying in general terms about the changing relationship that you want the Department to have with schools in terms of developing and retaining teachers, do you think that we will be able to evaluate how successful this shift in approach has been in six, 12 or 18 months? We appreciate that a lot is going on. We appreciate the new, streamlined approach to the initiatives. When do you think we can come back and say, "You've got a new strategy; how's that working?"?

Jonathan Slater: Specifically on your point about helping schools to operate more efficiently and using their workforce more efficiently—I don't want to duck the question I am just trying to make the macro point—as I mentioned briefly at the last hearing, we are starting to support individual schools that have the biggest efficiency gap, which, obviously, some have, despite the macro position. We are offering expert advisers to work with those schools to help them use their resources more efficiently.

They report back on what they find, so in a years' time I expect to be able to have a sensible conversation with you about what they found and how they've helped those schools to improve their efficiency, and where they have and where they haven't.

Q140 **Bim Afolami:** What about in terms of all the initiatives on recruitment and retention that we have talked about today?

Jonathan Slater: At the moment, we publish an annual set of data on the level of teaching vacancies in November. It is quite significantly backdated and it is national data. The point of the supply index—Paul might want to come in on more detail—is to give more local, granular data on that. We just published that for the first time. When we have a national teaching service up and running, we will have something that is essentially real time, but we are quite some way away from that yet.

Paul Kett: We are, and one of the things we are trying to do, which is noted in the NAO Report, is to get, if not better firm data, a better indication in real terms. We have been trying to web scrape vacancy information, in terms of getting an indication of how things are going. That has been very hard to do. The vacancy service we talked about will help us do that.

In terms of some of the broader initiatives, some will take quite a long time to be able to evaluate. Because we are making payments for the new maths bursary in year 3, we will not know the impact of that for a number of years. That is why we thought it was important to get started.

In terms of loan forgiveness, we would hope to see the benefits of that probably three years from when people start in teaching, because that is the first point of the drop-off. We want more real-time information to give us indications of what is working, but some of the longer-term evaluation will inevitably take longer.

Q141 **Chair:** We are already seeing teachers drop down to lower roles in schools or move and leave the profession; we went through those numbers earlier. Will the new strategy be considered to be working if teachers are still voting with their feet and leaving that school, or the teaching profession entirely?

Jonathan Slater: No. This year, the numbers leaving and arriving are pretty much in sync.

Q142 **Chair:** Once you have trained somebody, you want to keep them, don't you?

Jonathan Slater: What we are aiming for is to push that in the right direction, clearly, so that more people are staying for longer—particularly in those early years. Absolutely. The point of this activity is to achieve that outcome, and 20% more kids are going to be in secondary schools in 2025, so we have to get more teachers in as soon as possible.

Q143 **Chair:** Okay. Ms Moran talked earlier about EU teachers. There is also some indication about a challenge with teachers from other parts of the world. If you are Australian or from Canada, you can get a visa to work over here for a certain period of time. However, there is some evidence that some schools are then trying to keep those teachers on, but they have to become a visa sponsor in order to do that.

We have had some evidence that suggests that that sometimes includes a salary increase. Are you aware of the tier 2 visa requirements? That is not a trick question.

Jonathan Slater: Yes.

Q144 **Chair:** To meet the tier 2 requirements, which is the one where you have to have a job offer, you have to earn at least £30,000 per annum. In some places it seems to be higher than that, but I think that is what the Government website says. Is that something you are aware of? If teachers are having to get pay rises because they happen to be an Australian who needs to stay under a visa sponsorship, is that really desirable? Are you talking about that across Whitehall, especially in the light of Brexit?

Jonathan Slater: We are. The way the system works—

Q145 **Chair:** Is it a shortage profession?

Jonathan Slater: Departments and others make a submission to the Migration Advisory Committee, which makes recommendations to the Home Office, and the Home Office sets the rules. As you would expect—a bit like the answer that I gave you as to what we do on our housing—we make our representations across Whitehall.

Q146 **Chair:** Is there a prospect that teaching might be listed as a shortage occupation—or that certain types might, such as physics teachers, now that we have lost one to Parliament?

Paul Kett: Certain types of teachers already are. The conversation we are having and the evidence we are putting into the Migration Advisory Committee is to inform whether other teaching subject areas should be.

Q147 **Chair:** Okay, that might be one way of solving the problem, but would they have to meet the £30,000 if they are on the shortage occupation list? They would not have to, would they?

Paul Kett: We are making representations.

Q148 **Chair:** So they could be paid the same as a neighbouring teacher. That seems a bit rough on a British-born teacher. I have nothing against foreign national teachers—many of them are excellent—but it seems a bit unfair that they are paid more in order to handcuff them to the job.

On the agency point, I had some quite compelling evidence from one of my headteachers, Stephen Hall, who is the excellent executive headteacher of three primary schools in Hackney. He gives these figures. When he used to advertise through *The Times Educational Supplement*, it cost in the region of £3,000 to £5,000. He said: "A few years ago we would have had near to 100 applications in the spring term. Now we are lucky to get 15 to shortlist from. When we recruit from agencies, we pay in the region of £5,000 per NQT, rising to £8,000 to £9,000 for an experienced teacher." We heard some of those concerns from our pre-panel too. Are you convinced about the new approach the Government are taking? You have a challenge, don't you? You have private sector agencies legitimately doing their business, and you are trying to find an alternative, cheaper solution for schools, which is a good thing, but are you convinced that people will go towards the service that the Government are looking to provide, over and above the private sector one? It is difficult to take on the sector.

Jonathan Slater: Paul might come in on this in more detail, but we are working with the Crown Commercial Service on—this is a completely obvious area to do it in—a national framework broken down regionally. We talked in a previous hearing about regional buying hubs in which, rather than schools having to do this for themselves—goodness me—they can just draw down from a regionally organised contract, where we should be able to get a better price for them than they can get for themselves. We absolutely need to get that done.

Q149 **Chair:** Okay. Even at that cost, if a school has a relationship with an existing agency—are you effectively saying that the Government are trying to wipe out private sector agencies because they are too expensive, or do you think the market will speak and agencies will start reducing their fees?

Paul Kett: There are two issues here: the supply teachers element and specialist agencies and finder's fees, if you like, and then the more general advertising of vacancies. On the former, the framework with the Crown Commercial Service—the approach that the Permanent Secretary is outlining—will be for a commercial relationship of some form. On the former, which is—

Q150 **Chair:** More expensive

Paul Kett: More expensive. We already have seen the market respond, to a certain extent. Some of the main players are no longer charging for some of the basic services that they provide. One of the reasons we are taking an iterative approach to the development of the national teacher vacancy service is to see how the market responds and therefore to work out exactly what we need to provide versus what is provided by the market. What we know consistently from schools is they think they are paying too much money for vacancies, and that price has been going up. That is why we are providing the service, but we are doing it step by step, to see how the market responds.

Q151 **Chair:** Okay. We are always interested in the many initiatives you have.

Setting up a whole new system to deliver teachers to schools at a cost-effective price sounds so simple, but Government have a habit of not always getting these IT systems right. We will no doubt come back and look at that. We are very happy, Mr Slater, to look at it at an earlier stage, if you would like to discuss that with us in detail. We could probably help you uncover some of the potential pitfalls. That offer is always open—we are so generous, aren't we?

Can I ask about curriculum changes? We heard clear evidence from our previous panel, and we know this from what we see in schools in our constituencies, that the curriculum changes happened at a very fast pace, with some pupils doing two or three different types of exams in the same year and teachers having very little time to prepare, with no past papers. I remember testing old GCSE papers three years before they came in, as a cohort. That has not happened this time. That has put a lot of pressure on teachers. There are reports of teachers taking weekend classes and so on in order to get their pupils up to speed. On reflection, is there anything you would have done differently or would do differently in future, if pressed by a Government in a hurry—all politicians are in a hurry—to deliver a curriculum change of the scale we have seen in the last three years?

Jonathan Slater: One of the outputs from the workload challenge work that was done in 2014-15, which we are now trying to make sure has the biggest effect, was a new protocol setting out the notice that would be given to the profession—the time taken to introduce a new reform—and the frequency with which they would be done. I cannot take any of the credit for that, because it was back in 2014-15, but I think it was with a view to recognising the challenge faced at the sharp end when reforms like that come in and the fact that it created extra work. We needed a new—

Q152 **Chair:** That was 2014-15. We are in 2017. Pupils are going through—

Jonathan Slater: Sure, but back in 2012, there was a decision to do these things. We agreed then that, learning from experience, we would have a more—

Q153 **Chair:** Okay. It is great that there is a protocol, but what is the status of that protocol? Presumably any other Government could come along and rip it up.

Jonathan Slater: That is the nature of democracy.

Chair: Exactly.

Jonathan Slater: But nobody has asked me to do so yet.

Q154 **Chair:** You are guardians of that, and you are working with the profession. Is that embedded within your Department?

Jonathan Slater: Yes. Of course, I do not want to stand in front of you and say there will never be any circumstances in which there is some need to operate more quickly than the protocol suggests because of particular circumstances. The good news is that that will be open and transparent,

and you would be able to hold me to account for why, if we weren't following it, we weren't.

Q155 **Layla Moran:** In the primary school that I am a governor of, the teachers are lamenting the fact that they do not have access to some of the old resources that were available from the Department under the old spec. Specifically for them but I am sure other primary teachers too, would you consider doing an archive of resources under the old specifications that teachers could draw on and change to help them navigate the new ones?

Jonathan Slater: Neither of us is aware of the request personally. We are very happy to take it back, just as we are happy to take back the Stoke thing, about the council there. We are here to help teachers do their job better.

Layla Moran: They appreciate that it won't be up to date, but they don't care. There were really good resources but they can't get hold of them anymore.

Q156 **Chair:** You've got an easy win there from Ms Moran. There is a rare opportunity for you, Mr Slater, from this Committee.

I have one question before I pass to Mr Snell. You talked earlier about the £10,000 you had in your pilot to try to get people to move. Did you look at what figure would have been the right amount for people to move? Presumably housing and removal costs are a big part of it. Was it that £10,000 was not enough, or were there other barriers? Did you look at what would be the right incentive?

Jonathan Slater: Yes. It was a combination of barriers. It was striking that, although 24 people were allocated, more than that wanted to be—wanted to move, with the ten grand—but the schools didn't want them because it is more complicated—

Q157 **Chair:** But that is still a small number. The pilot was never going to be very big, but would you have got more if you had offered more? Obviously you would have done if you had offered £20,000, but what should have been the figure? How did you measure—

Jonathan Slater: I don't think we got to an exact figure. Paul described earlier that the evidence we got was that it was better to invest in the teachers in the area. When you looked at it—again, the supply index gives you really good data here—what might look like a problem across a whole area is actually very, very focused on individual schools.

Paul Kett: Yes. And I think ultimately it wasn't just about a quantum of money, it wasn't that money was the main issue. That was why we felt—

Q158 **Chair:** Or maybe money incentives to keep people in particular jobs—golden handcuffs.

Paul Kett: That is certainly where things like the retention payments, the loan forgiveness, are trying to do that. There is evidence in other sectors that those kinds of initiatives can work, which is why we think there is a case for piloting them, as I described earlier.

Q159 **Chair:** It does strike me as ironic that we are scrabbling about trying to find a bit of money to keep teachers in jobs in some cases, and yet some of the large multi-academy chains in particular, but a number of schools with freedom, are paying high salaries to their highest-paid staff without necessarily increasing salaries at the lower level. I know you—or the Government—have given the schools the freedom, but is this something you keep an eye on? Do you have any comment on very high salaries in some of these schools?

Jonathan Slater: We absolutely do. Where we see some activity that seems unjustified, the governance is not properly in support of it, or the school is facing challenges and that does not seem to be matched—Peter will have talked to you in previous hearings about the ESFA going in and challenging on precisely that sort of thing.

Q160 **Chair:** Have you an example of any that you have challenged? Perhaps you will send us a written list of examples where you have gone in and challenged it, and the pay has gone down. That would be the real test.

Jonathan Slater: I knew the first hearing I had without Peter Lauener would be the hearing at which I had a question that I could not answer.

Q161 **Chair:** Perhaps you could write to us—

Jonathan Slater: We will—

Q162 **Chair:** But it would be very helpful to know. If it doesn't go down, you have absolutely no teeth on this—

Jonathan Slater: No, he has taken action and—

Chair: We will be looking at this again, but you know that this Committee will express some of the concerns about that—lack of transparency and unaccountability of not just multi-academy trusts, although they are particularly bad on the whole because you cannot drill down to individual schools.

Q163 **Gareth Snell:** Mr Slater and Mr Kett, you have both talked a lot this afternoon about the collection of data, at the local level and the national level and on a variety of indicators. What I am conscious of and curious about is, first, why was that data not being collected in the first place and, secondly, an over-production of data will not necessarily help you find the root cause of a problem, because you will be able to tease out of it many different potential root causes? So what is it that the Department is actually going to do? This kind of follows on from what Mr Afolami said. What will change between now and the next six to 12 months that will give us confidence? What you cannot see but I can is the headteachers behind you shaking their heads when you talk about all the various wonderful things that the Department is doing. What will you do so that the next time you appear here the headteachers sat behind you will be nodding rather than shaking their heads?

Jonathan Slater: I can't guarantee that! I spend lots of time with headteachers and teachers myself, obviously, in exactly the same way you do. I recognise the scale of the challenge. I hope that I haven't given a

sense that any of this is easy. We need to support them in ways that we are not currently.

A practical thing that we are going to be doing over the next six months, to give you one example, is providing schools with specific levels of support where they have the greatest recruitment challenges. The money we will be offering them—experts who have helped tackle similar problems in other schools, combined with investment in CPD in those schools. A really good way of recruiting new people to schools that struggle the most is by offering those teachers the opportunity for additional development that they would not get otherwise, combined with the opportunity to fund the backfill of that recruitment, in the light of the point that you discussed with the headteachers, that one thing that stands in the way of CPD is the cost of backfill. It is not going to transform the world; it is a practical thing we are going to do to try to help some schools that need it the most in the next six months.

Q164 **Chair:** So how are you going to identify which schools? They will all be bidding, I am sure. We have got two in the room today.

Gareth Snell: Can I add a line to that, Chair: and how many schools will you be working with?

Chair: Yes; so how will you identify them, and how many?

Paul Kett: I mentioned earlier, the supply index we published in September, and that is the basis—it is a piece of analysis that we did in response in part, at least, to the challenge from this Committee previously that we did not understand sufficiently what was happening at the local level. That supply index has a number of different features, looking at ratios of numbers of adverts and the sequence in which there have been a number of vacancies. We have then looked at those in terms of that supply index—the bottom few hundred schools—and we are going to talk to all those schools to understand whether they do, indeed, as we would predict through that supply index, have issues with sufficiency of teachers, and offer to work with them from the bottom up if they would find it helpful. That is how we are identifying it. It is not a perfect methodology, which is why we have published it and invited comments on it.

Q165 **Gareth Snell:** That sounds like a plan, good or bad we will decide later on, I suppose. How many schools would you say you would have to have worked with for that plan to be considered comprehensive? As a second part of the question, I want to take Ms Moran's point: say a school in Ms Moran's constituency says "Our problem with retention and recruitment is nothing to do with the quality of its case, nothing in the school, but it is to do with house prices"; what flexibility will your Department have with the school to say "One of the things we can do is help towards a loan for deposit scheme," something that is a tangible benefit to a teacher outside the classroom that helps with retention and recruitment in the school?

Paul Kett: I shall answer the first half of that question at least. In terms of the number, we have not set a specific number, because we want to

understand by working through, in a sort of sequence; but it would be of the order of hundreds of schools, so that is the sort of level of ambition.

Q166 **Gareth Snell:** The time scale for that?

Paul Kett: We have identified and we are beginning the conversations now, so it has started.

Jonathan Slater: I do not think I have got anything further to say to my previous not-very-impressive effort to answer the question on key worker housing. We are—

Chair: You are lobbying hard.

Jonathan Slater: We are supporting some schools taking tactical action and we are involved in cross-departmental discussion.

Q167 **Chair:** So if other schools approached you wanting support for tactical action, as you describe it, you would be willing to talk to them about that.

Jonathan Slater: I am always willing to talk to people about how we can help them.

Q168 **Gareth Snell:** On the money point, you said there was some extra money available for schools that had recruitment problems. If the specific issue in a school was related to the infrastructure in the wider community, the flexibility doesn't exist, then, to use that particular pot of money and they have got to go back to lobbying, what tangible help can that school get from the Department under that scheme?

Jonathan Slater: I haven't announced—Ministers haven't announced; I do not have a strategic response to that challenge. We are facing a number of different ways in which we use our capital resources. We had a session at a previous meeting about the balance—the need for investment in the school infrastructure itself, let alone housing for the teachers. The best I can say is that, where we see individual schools with ideas that require our support, we seek to support them. We are involved in cross-departmental conversations. These things we are now announcing came out of conversations with the profession. Clearly, if we saw a groundswell of views saying, "Actually, don't spend it here; spend it there," we would want to come up with a plan accordingly. If they said, "Spend it here with everything you've got, and give us some more money," then I would require a deal with the Treasury.

Q169 **Chair:** My final question is how you didn't see this coming. There has been investment in the teaching workforce in the past that has massively improved it. We got to a point where we were in a much better place, and it has gone downhill. Didn't the Department see that coming? If it didn't, why not?

Jonathan Slater: I think it is more complicated than that, isn't it? As I said earlier and as you pointed out in your introduction, the number of teachers has gone up in schools. The numbers of primary school pupils and of teachers have gone up together, and the numbers of secondary school pupils and of teachers have gone down together.

Q170 **Chair:** But not in the right places.

Jonathan Slater: The pupil-teacher ratios are the same as they were in 2010 and 2000. Where we have made good progress in the last few years is in the number of people returning to the profession; where we have not made progress and gone backwards is in retention, particularly in the early years, and we need to fix that problem. We absolutely do.

Chair: When you talk about those global figures, it makes it sound like it is all fine, but we all know—particularly from talking to heads, as I have done in my constituency—that there is hardly a school, especially in London and the south-east, that is not struggling. Petchey Academy says that it is struggling to recruit science teachers, and it is not the only one. There are huge challenges: teachers teaching subjects that they are not qualified in; teacher vacancies; people patching things together. Yes, of course a good head will make a school function, but they are struggling, Mr Slater. I cannot understand why it got to this bad point in the first place, and how you actually pick it up sooner. Is there a failure that the Department is not picking up soon enough? All these new initiatives sound very interesting, but they are only just starting. Why weren't they happening two, three or four years ago?

Layla Moran: And how can we stop this happening again?

Q171 **Chair:** Yes, exactly. That is crucial. We are keen to look for future-proofing.

Jonathan Slater: The reality of the circumstances is that pupil numbers have gone up by over half a million in the last five years. The Department has had its hands full helping schools meet that need: building additional classrooms, recruiting additional teachers—

Q172 **Layla Moran:** So are you saying the Department took their eye off the ball?

Jonathan Slater: No, they have been focusing on meeting that challenge, and they have succeeded at an overall macro level. As pupil numbers increase very significantly, and as the level of graduate unemployment gets lower and lower, the challenge gets greater and greater.

Q173 **Layla Moran:** But we also have the birth data, so we have got some lead time before they come.

Jonathan Slater: I don't get the impression that my predecessors were inactive.

Q174 **Chair:** No. I don't want to repeat, but we did a report on pupil numbers and we were impressed. I remember Barking town hall with your predecessor.

Jonathan Slater: Sure. The NAO did some work a few years ago. They reached the conclusions they did, you reached the conclusions you did and we have implemented all recommendations. I am not denying that reality; it is what it is. We are in the middle of confronting these challenges.

Chair: In the middle of it late in the day.

Q175 **Bridget Phillipson:** Does that not go back to the point that the focus has been on structures, on trying new things and on novelty, while the core issues—making sure that we have enough teachers in the right place and that schools are providing enough places for children—have been overlooked? In the last seven years, the Department's focus has been on those other issues, not on core issues of places, standards and teacher numbers.

Layla Moran: It might help you to know that the teachers are nodding now.

Jonathan Slater: It is important for me to stay in lane, to recognise my responsibilities as a Permanent Secretary and to sit in front of you and be held to account for the extent to which my predecessors and I have spent the money allocated to us in accordance with good value for money. That is what I am doing. I think that the Department, over that time, has done rather well in building—supporting schools and councils; we do not do it ourselves.

Q176 **Chair:** I hate to say this, Mr Slater, but you are paid a good whack, which is fair enough if you do a good job. I am not worried about that, but I am saying that it should not be beyond the ability of the Department for Education to make sure not just that there are enough classrooms for new pupils and that you are keeping pace with that change but that there are qualified teachers in classrooms up and down the country. A year or two of a secondary school pupil's life could be the difference between being able to consider taking that subject at university.

Jonathan Slater: All I am saying, Chair, is that the total number of pupils, the total number of teachers and the total number of places have kept in step over the last few years—

Layla Moran: But that is only because of the low numbers in secondary schools. That was a dip in the population; now we are about to see the growth. The point is that you knew this was coming.

Q177 **Gareth Snell:** Also on that point, when they were planning to build all the new classrooms, did no one think, "How many teachers will we need to put in the classrooms?" Those two things are interlinked.

Jonathan Slater: What I am saying is that the Department succeeded in meeting that challenge for primary school numbers, which is where it was in the last eight years, and now we need to make sure that we succeed in secondary schools in the next eight years. That creates some different challenges. Back in 2010, I would be amazed if my predecessor had said it was all going to be fine. He would have had the same conversation with you, presumably, that I am having. There are lots of things that will be hard, and we need to succeed. That is what I am saying to you in 2017 about the challenge that we face over the next eight years.

Chair: Okay. I think we will leave it there, because we want this Report to look forward. We may well call you back at some point, because you have

given us a whole list of initiatives today that you will be delivering in six or 12 months' time, and we will have opportunities to tackle you on that and ask whether it is working.

In terms of evidence, people were not holding back. We had plenty of evidence from people at the coalface. Part of our job—and, I am sure, yours as well—is to focus on them and make sure our pupils get the benefit. We hope that our Report will keep you on your toes making sure that you achieve that, and I am sure it is a priority for you. Thank you very much, Mr Slater and Mr Kett. The transcript will be up on our website, uncorrected as ever, within the next couple of days, and we will produce our Report, with a fair wind, by Christmas, but quite possibly not till January.

Footnotes:

Q65 Clarification from witness: 94.7% of new teachers come in on the basis of qualified teaching status.

Q66 Clarification from witness: In **94.7%** of cases they do not.

Q69 Note by witness: I should have said that between **50-60%** of teachers who leave teaching early, go into jobs outside education

Q70 Note by witness: in fact it is 32% of teachers who have reduced their time by two hours per week

Q74 Clarification from witness: Back in 2000, the average pupil-teacher ratio was **17:2** in a secondary school. It is **16:1** today.

Q75 Note by witness: Regulation 4 of the School Admissions (Infant Class Sizes) (England) Regulations 2012 imposes a maximum of 30 pupils in an infant class (5-7 year olds) when an ordinary teaching session is conducted by a single school teacher.

Q76 Clarification from witness: I can tell you that almost **88%** of secondary school teachers teach the EBacc and have the appropriate qualification

Q82 Note by witness: I should have said that the findings were published in July 2017.

Q88 Clarification from witness: Holly when the national funding formula comes in, because she is going to get a **6.9%** increase

Q89 Clarification from witness: The Government – the Department for Education – will make available to schools like hers a **6.9%** increase in funding

Q105 Clarification from witness: 3.6% of secondary school teachers currently are from elsewhere in the European Union.

Q120 Note by witness: A fill account of how the Opportunities Area Programme will be evaluated is included in the Department's Written Evidence

Questions 120-122 (Chair): How the Opportunities Area Programme will be evaluated.

In July 2017 Sir Kevan Collins, Chief Executive of the Education Endowment Foundation (EEF), was appointed the "evidence champion" for the government's opportunity areas. The specific role is to ensure that the implementation of the Opportunity Area programme is rooted in high quality evidence and analysis.

Q129 Note by witness: It is in fact Cat Scutt, Director of Education and Research at the College, who is a member of the Department's advisory group for continuing professional development.