



Department
for Education

Early career CPD: exploratory research

Research report

November 2018

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for Educational Research**

Acknowledgements

We would like to extend our thanks to the Department for Education for funding this project. We would also like to thank the staff in the ten primary and ten secondary schools who took part – without you we would not have been able to capture such rich insights into the professional development opportunities and support provided to teachers in their first few years. Finally, thanks must also go to Caroline Stanford, Gill Keightley, Pauline Wade and Chloe Rush for help with the interviews, and Julie Thompson and Neelam Basi for their fantastic administrative support.

Contents

List of figures	4
List of tables	5
Executive summary	7
1. Introduction	13
2. Rapid review of UK evidence	19
3. Analysis of School Workforce Census data	22
4. Training and support received in teachers' induction year	24
5. Training and support received in teachers' second and third years of teaching	39
6. Key findings	57
References	63
Appendix 1 Sampling and analyses undertaken	66
Appendix 2 Early career CPD practice in five international jurisdictions	72

List of figures

Figure 1: Funnel plots of early-career teacher retention rates

68

List of tables

Table 1 Type and method of data collection	69
Table 2 Selected characteristics of the primary schools	70
Table 3 Selected characteristics of the secondary schools	71

Glossary of terms

Throughout this report we use a number of different terms to describe the different stages of a teacher's career. For clarity, these are defined below.

- NQT – Newly Qualified Teacher: Teachers in their first year of teaching who have gained Qualified Teacher Status (QTS) but have not yet completed the statutory twelve-month programme known as the 'induction for newly qualified teachers'.
- RQT – Recently Qualified Teacher: Typically used to describe teachers with QTS who are in their second to fifth year of teaching. However, we use the term to describe someone who is in their second year of teaching (the year immediately following the induction year).
- ECT – Early Career Teacher: We use this term to describe teachers who are in their second or third years of teaching.
- MCT – Mid-Career Teacher: Someone who has been teaching for between five to ten years.

Executive summary

Research shows that continuing professional development (CPD) can play a crucial role in helping to support and develop teachers (Cordingley *et al.*, 2015), including Newly Qualified Teachers (NQTs) and early career teachers (ECTs). Specifically, there is evidence that CPD can help to manage the stress and difficulty often experienced by teachers in this phase of their career (e.g. Ashby *et al.*, 2008, Day and Gu, 2010), although the impact of CPD on retention at this phase is less clear.

Recent educational policy announcements suggest there is an increasing recognition of the need to strengthen teacher training and CPD. In May 2018, the Department for Education published the government response to a consultation on 'Strengthening QTS and improving career progression for teachers', which set out a range of commitments. These included: ensuring all new teachers have the right support in place at the beginning of their careers by increasing the length of the induction period from one to two years; developing an Early Career Framework of support and mentoring for all NQTs; and supporting the development of new specialist qualifications for experienced classroom teachers.

For such reforms to teacher training and CPD to have a positive impact on the experiences of teachers and the quality of our education system, evidence is required to identify good practice and the potential benefit it brings. In this report, examples of effective practice in high-performing jurisdictions are set alongside in-depth data gathered from teachers working in 20 schools in England that have been identified as having higher than average rates of retention of early career teachers. Our hypothesis was that the provision of high-quality training and support for teachers in their first three years may have contributed to case-study schools' high levels of retention, although other factors may have also contributed. Together, this data provides understanding of how CPD can support, develop and retain teachers in the early stages of their careers.

Aims of the project

The overall aim of the project was to gather robust evidence on development needs amongst teachers in their early careers and effective practice in supporting and meeting these needs.

The main objectives of the project were to explore:

1. The views of teachers and schools regarding the professional development opportunities and support provided during the induction/NQT year and the variation in practice between schools and areas.
2. The range of support and professional development opportunities available for teachers in the early years of their career following the NQT year and their effectiveness.

3. Whether there is any evidence that high levels of support or structured programmes of professional development bring benefits to teachers and their schools through, for example, improved teaching quality and levels of confidence, greater aspirations and levels of job satisfaction, and retention.
4. Whether there is any evidence to suggest what the critical areas of development or knowledge are for teachers in the early years of their career.
5. What we can learn from high-performing jurisdictions in continental Europe and the US in terms of their support of teachers following qualification and in the early years of their careers.

Methodology

The project involved a mixed-methods approach comprising:

- a rapid review of UK and international evidence
- analysis of data from the School Workforce Census (SWC) to support sampling of schools
- in-depth school case studies involving interviews with 41 ECTs, 37 MCTs (mid-career teachers), and 22 CPD leads across ten primary schools and ten secondary schools.

Key findings

Rapid Review of UK evidence

- New teachers commonly experience 'practice shock' when beginning to teach and need collegial support to help them acclimatise to the reality of work in schools. A supportive school culture is critical to the success of early career teachers' professional development.
- Early career teachers commonly report that informal conversations with colleagues in school meet their professional development needs more than formal CPD. While mentoring emerges in a positive light, there is some evidence of a perception that formal conversations with mentors are primarily evaluative, with a lesser or absent developmental function.
- Effective professional development should start from a clear appreciation of the objective of the development activity, benefits from collaborative learning opportunities, such as coaching and mentoring, and needs appropriate conditions, such as the right climate and culture, professional responsibility, and sufficient time and resources.

Training and support received in teachers' induction year

The findings from the case-studies are described below.

Main development needs

- ECTs and MCTs reported that their main development priorities at the start of their induction year included: behaviour management; use and understanding of assessment; pedagogical knowledge; and supporting pupils with particular needs, such as pupils with special educational needs and disability (SEND).
- Other common, but less frequently reported development needs included subject knowledge, particularly for NQTs who were non-specialists, as well as understanding of safeguarding processes. In addition, some interviewees reported that 'basic things', such as what to do in a fire drill, how to take the register, and where to go for lunch, together with practical concerns such as how to manage marking workload and learning to prioritise, were also common issues that NQTs typically wanted support and guidance with.

Training and support offered to NQTs

Mentoring support

- The vast majority of ECTs described having two mentors as an NQT, one, a 'professional mentor', who would typically be a member of the school's senior leadership team with responsibility for coordinating the school's induction arrangements, and the other a 'subject mentor', who would provide day-to-day support and coaching. This split in roles was generally valued by ECTs, as they benefitted from having two formal points of contact.

NQT training programmes

- All of the ECTs we spoke to had taken part in structured training programmes, designed to cover core knowledge and professional skills that schools thought teachers should have developed to a certain standard during their time as an NQT.
- These programmes often included a common spine of topics which included (in no particular order): behaviour management; use and understanding of assessment; support for specific pupil groups; subject and curriculum knowledge; pedagogical knowledge; lesson planning; and safeguarding.

- Sessions were typically delivered once or twice a fortnight, usually within or at the end of the school day, and lasted for approximately one to two hours.

Observation and feedback

- The number of formal observations undertaken in schools appeared to vary, with some undertaking approximately one formal observation every half term, or six over the course of the induction year.
- Interviewees sometimes made distinctions between these formal observations, which contributed directly to judgements about the extent to which NQTs were meeting the expected standards, to more informal, developmental observations. These were often undertaken by the subject mentor, and sometimes by the professional mentor, and would often occur much more frequently, sometimes once a week. They would typically involve a 'drop in' or 'micro' observation, where only part of the lesson would be observed.

What worked well

ECTs' and MCTs' positive views of induction were associated with a number of common enabling factors, identified across our sample of case-study schools. These included:

- the importance of having a balanced package of support, typically involving a standardised training programme alongside more personalised, teacher-led opportunities
- a supportive whole school culture, where induction was viewed as the start of a lifelong journey of training and support
- having a range of support options available, including informal support from a variety of colleagues.

What worked less well

ECTs and MCTs were less likely to report positive induction experiences where:

- NQTs' mentors were not subject or phase specialists
- support from the NQT mentor was limited, or perceived to be, of low quality
- there was a lack of tailored training and support opportunities.

Training and support received in teachers' second and third years of teaching

Main development needs

- Many teachers in their second or third year reported that they wanted training and support that would help them to progress into subject, year group/key stage, or other middle leadership roles, while some wanted to take on specialist roles or responsibilities.
- Many ECTs also wanted to 'hone their craft' and to broaden their skillset. This often accompanied new opportunities that presented themselves to RQTs, such as working with pupils with different educational needs, or teaching year 6, GCSE and A-level pupils, which, for many, was for the first time.

Training and support offered to RQTs

Support from other colleagues

- There is no statutory requirement for schools to provide training and support specifically for RQTs. As such, it is perhaps not surprising that, in most of our case-study schools, dedicated support for RQTs appeared to be limited. However, in most cases, ECTs reported that they had continued to receive informal support from a more senior colleague, who, in many cases had been their NQT subject mentor.
- None of the ECTs or MCTs we spoke to appeared to have received any formal mentoring support in their second or third year of teaching. However, in most cases, RQTs reported that they had continued to receive informal support from a more senior colleague, who, in many cases had been their NQT subject mentor.

Leadership and excellent teacher courses

- There was recognition in schools that many RQTs were looking for opportunities to progress in their careers, particularly into subject and middle leadership roles, and that offering such opportunities was essential to ensuring that some ECTs maintained high levels of job satisfaction.
- It was clear from our interviews with ECTs that high-quality training opportunities alone would not ensure job satisfaction, and that they needed to be accompanied by genuine opportunities to take on new roles and responsibilities. The extent to which schools were able to offer such opportunities, particularly ones that

attracted an additional teaching and learning responsibility (TLR) payment, appeared to vary, leading to some ECTs feeling frustrated by the lack of genuine opportunities to progress, and what they saw as a lack of recognition. In such cases, ECTs reported that a key reason for them staying in their settings was because of the positive and supportive school culture.

What worked well

The formal training and support opportunities available to teachers in their second and third years of teaching were often the same as those available for all staff who had completed their NQT year. Nevertheless, most ECTs and MCTs were positive about the support they had received in their second and/or third year of teaching. Their positive reflections were associated with a number of common enabling factors, identified across the sample of case-study schools. These included:

- a supportive and developmental school ethos
- accessing opportunities to learn about the range of career options available
- the provision of more personalised, light-touch training and support.

What worked less well

ECTs and MCTs were less likely to report having had a positive experience of receiving training and support in their second and/or third year of teaching where:

- formal CPD involved ECTs being 'presented at', and did not take account of attendees' differing needs and aspirations
- insufficient time was allocated to follow-up formal training
- there appeared to be a lack of consistency in the number and type of training and/or progression opportunities available.

1. Introduction

Research shows that continuing professional development (CPD) can play a crucial role in helping to support and develop teachers (Cordingley *et al.*, 2015), including Newly Qualified Teachers (NQTs) and early career teachers (ECTs). Specifically, there is evidence that CPD can help to manage the stress and difficulty often experienced by teachers in this phase of their career (e.g. Ashby *et al.*, 2008, Day and Gu, 2010), although the impact of CPD on retention at this phase is less clear. Previous research has suggested that a specific issue facing NQTs is that not all have an individualised or formalised development plan, while significant proportions of teachers in their second year of teaching are not receiving formal CPD (Moor *et al.*, 2005; Thewlis, 2006; Worth *et al.*, 2017). Indeed, Thewlis (2006) found that only 53 per cent of teachers considered that their initial teacher training had prepared them well for their first teaching position. In evaluations of early CPD, NQTs and ECTs have reported experiencing a range of positive outcomes from the additional support and opportunities they have received, including feeling more confident about their roles and careers (Macleod *et al.*, 2012; Moor *et al.*, 2005).

Recent educational policy announcements suggest there is an increasing recognition of the need to strengthen teacher training and CPD. In May 2018, the Department for Education published the government response to a consultation on 'Strengthening QTS and improving career progression for teachers', which set out a range of commitments. These included: ensuring all new teachers have the right support in place at the beginning of their careers by increasing the length of the induction period from one to two years; developing an Early Career Framework of support and mentoring for all schools to follow; and supporting the development of new specialist qualifications for experienced classroom teachers.

There is also a particular focus on better preparing teachers to work in schools in the most challenging areas. The Teaching and Leadership Innovation Fund (TLIF) is funding programmes that support high-quality professional development for teachers and school leaders in areas and schools that need it most. In addition, the social mobility action plan - Unlocking Talent, Fulfilling Potential - published in December 2017, seeks to increase high-quality initial teacher training partnerships in areas experiencing challenges. It also highlights the need to increase the support received by teachers during their first years (GB. Parliament. HoC, 2017).

For such reforms to teacher training and CPD to have a positive impact on the experiences of teachers and the quality of our education system, evidence is required to identify good practice and the potential benefit it brings. In this report, examples of effective practice in high-performing jurisdictions are set alongside in-depth data gathered from teachers working in 20 schools in England that have been identified as having higher than average rates of retention of early career teachers. Our hypothesis was that the provision of high-quality training and support for teachers in their first three

years may have contributed to case-study schools' high levels of retention, although other factors may have also contributed. Together, this data provides understanding of how CPD can support, develop and retain teachers in the early stages of their careers.

1.1 Aims of the project

The overall aim of the project was to gather robust evidence on development needs amongst teachers in their early careers and effective practice in supporting and meeting these needs.

The main objectives of the project were to explore:

1. The views of teachers and schools regarding the professional development opportunities and support provided during the induction/NQT year and the variation in practice between schools and areas.
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4. Whether there is any evidence to suggest what the critical areas of development or knowledge are for teachers in the early years of their career.
5. What we can learn from high-performing jurisdictions in continental Europe and the US in terms of their support of teachers following qualification and in the early years of their careers.

1.2 Methodology

The project involved a mixed-methods approach comprising:

- a rapid review of UK and international evidence
- analysis of data from the School Workforce Census (SWC) to support sampling of schools
- in-depth school case studies.

Each strand is discussed in the sections below.

1.3 A rapid review of international evidence

To provide context to the findings from the interviewees with school staff, we drew on UK and international research literature to explore how early career teachers are being supported across the UK and internationally. Working with NFER's information specialists, the research team identified 13 pieces of key recent research, published between 2012-2018, which provided insights into teachers' early career development needs and/or effective practice in supporting them. These pieces were sourced using searches of key education bibliographic databases (British Education Index and ERIC); searches of targeted websites; and reference lists of key reports. The findings from this rapid review informed development of the qualitative research instruments and are reported in Chapter 2. In addition to using these UK based sources, we identified five high-performing jurisdictions¹ with comparable qualification approaches and/or innovative arrangements to the support of early career teachers. These were: Australia (New South Wales), the Netherlands, Norway, Singapore, and the USA (Massachusetts). The key messages from this international review are included in Appendix 2.

1.4 Analysis of data from the School Workforce Census (SWC)

The main findings from this report are based on interviews with staff in ten primary schools and ten secondary schools that have been identified as having higher than average rates of retention of early career teachers. Our hypothesis was that the provision of high-quality training and support for teachers in their first three years may have contributed to case-study schools' high levels of retention, although other factors may have also contributed. In order to identify this sample, we undertook a light-touch analysis of data from the School Workforce Census (SWC) to identify schools with a good record of retaining ECTs. We measured the retention rate of ECTs in each school to draw a sample of schools with high retention rates to approach for the in-depth qualitative research. Although the main purpose of this analysis was to draw a sample for the qualitative research, the analysis of how ECT retention rates differ between schools is of interest in itself and is reported separately in Chapter 3.

The ECT retention rate for each school was estimated in three steps as follows:

¹ These jurisdictions were identified in discussion with the DfE, using data from TALIS, PISA and OECD reviews which suggested that these countries had evidence of interesting practice in the support of beginner teachers. While the original focus was on countries in Europe and US, it was agreed to include Singapore within the selection.

1. We identified the number of ECTs employed in each school in the 2013, 2014 and 2015 SWC. ECTs were identified in the data as qualified teachers who were, at that time, in the first three years of having entered teaching in a state-funded school after qualifying.
2. We looked at the 2014, 2015 and 2016 SWC to establish whether the ECTs in step 1 were still employed as teachers at the same school one year later.
3. We estimated an early-career teacher retention rate for each school by aggregating all the ECTs identified and across all three years of data.

The number of ECTs in each school is quite small for a large number of schools, particularly in primary schools. To ensure we had enough ECTs within each school to be confident the retention rates measured were genuinely above average, we measured retention rates over a three-year period (2013-14, 2014-15 and 2015-16). We double-weighted retention data in the most recent year of available data (2015-16) to increase the likelihood that we sampled schools that were still effective in retaining ECTs at the time of interviewing (April to June 2018). We aimed to achieve a balance of drawing a large enough sample of schools with a consistent approach to retaining ECTs, while minimising our reliance on data that was several years old. More details about the definition used and the sampling approach taken can found in in Appendix 1.

We drew our sample of schools from among those with the highest retention rates of ECTs according to our retention measure. We drew our sample to include schools with a range of school characteristics, see Section 1.5 below.

1.5 In-depth school case studies

The main strand of the project involved in-depth qualitative research with ECTs, mid-career teachers (MCTs) and CPD leads within each school to understand their approach to supporting and developing teachers in the early stages of their careers. We consulted with staff in 20 schools in total. This included telephone interviews with staff in 15 schools, with staff in a further five schools interviewed as part of face-to-face visits. In total we consulted with 100 staff. This included consultations with 41 ECTs, 37 MCTs, and 22 CPD leads.

The content of the case studies

Each of the 15 telephone case studies involved in-depth interviews with three people, comprising:

- an early career teacher (in their second or third year of teaching)
- a mid-career teacher (someone who had been teaching for between five to ten years)

- a CPD lead (the person who was best placed to discuss the package of support that was in place for ECTs²).

The interviews with ECTs lasted for up to 45 minutes, while the interviews with MCTs and CPD leads lasted for approximately 30 minutes. We devised semi-structured interview schedules and captured data in the form of handwritten notes and audio recordings (with participants' permission).

Each of the five face-to-face visits involved:

- a focus group with up to six ECTs for up to 45 minutes
- a focus group with up to six MCTs for up to 45 minutes
- an interview with a CPD lead for up to one hour.

In addition to exploring the support arrangements for ECTs in individual schools, we were also interested in approaches to support that were implemented across groups of schools, which we explored through the visits. To support this aim, visits were undertaken in schools that were multi-academy trusts (MATs) or teaching schools.

Themes explored in the case studies included:

- views on the quality of professional development opportunities and support provided during the induction/NQT year and the extent to which support was continued and extended in teachers' second and third years of teaching
- schools' approaches to supporting and developing ECTs, reasons for implementing particular approaches, the aims of approaches and the extent to which they were based on evidence
- the elements of support ECTs particularly valued and the impact realised (e.g. in terms of intentions to stay in teaching or confidence to take on additional responsibilities)
- gaps in support and suggestions for further support that could be provided
- schools' evaluation processes for assessing the effectiveness of their CPD provision for early career teachers, including what evaluation findings have shown and what changes have been made as a result
- key drivers for success and learning, including lessons and effective practice applicable to other schools.

² In secondary schools, this was typically a member of the senior leadership team, but not the headteacher, while in primary schools this was typically the headteacher or an executive headteacher.

The characteristics of the case-study schools

Within the sample of 20 case-study schools we aimed to include schools with the following characteristics:

- primary and secondary schools
- LA maintained and academies/MATs
- urban and rural
- schools with different proportions of pupils eligible for free school meals (FSM)
- schools with different levels of pupil progress.

The characteristics of the case-study schools are reported in Appendix 1. To maximise the value of the interviews, including to allow concerns or challenges that ECTs might have experienced to be explored, we assured consultees and schools of anonymity.

Analysis of case-study data

The interview data was analysed using qualitative data analysis software MAXQDA. MAXQDA is a programme designed to facilitate and support the analysis of qualitative, quantitative and mixed-methods data. It allows you to import, organise and analyse all forms of data that can be collected electronically, including interview and bibliographic data. We used a broad set of agreed codes for all strands, which enabled comparative analysis across them and aided reporting against the research questions and objectives. Common themes, aligned to the research questions, were analysed at both the respondent-level (e.g. ECT, MCT and CPD lead) and school-level, allowing an exploration of particular 'cases' as well as the 'whole-picture'.

2. Rapid review of UK evidence

The rapid review of UK evidence aimed to gather insights into teachers' early career development needs, and effective practice in meeting them, across the United Kingdom, in answer to two specific research questions. The findings below are based on the key messages from 13 of the most robust and relevant articles retrieved by searches for literature relating to professional development for early career teachers in primary and secondary education. Some of these studies, all published within the last five years, focus specifically on early career teachers, while others are broader in scope.

Details of the sources searched and the strategies used are provided in Appendix 1. Summaries of five high-performing international jurisdictions' approaches to early career qualifications and professional pathways accompany this rapid review and are presented in Appendix 2.

2.1 What are the key early career development needs of teachers in England and across the UK?

Below, we have detailed the key messages from the UK review of evidence. They come from articles and reports by the Education Committee (2017), Harju and Niemi (2016), Hulme and Menter (2014), McIntyre and Hobson (2016), Scottish Government (2017), Sellen (2016) and Spencer *et al.*, (2018).

- New teachers commonly experience 'practice shock' when beginning to teach and need collegial support to help them acclimatise to the reality of work in schools. A supportive school culture is critical to the success of early career teachers' professional development.
- Early career teachers are individuals with varying needs and a 'one-size-fits-all' approach does not address these.
- Emotional support is a commonly expressed need but appears to be the least well addressed.
- Early career teachers' reported priorities for development also include:
 - developing strategies for behaviour management and handling conflict situations
 - curriculum and assessment
 - coping with change in a school's circumstances
 - differentiating their teaching to suit pupils' abilities
 - using and developing information technology

- cooperative action research.
- New teachers' confidence in their own knowledge of a topic appears to be greater than their confidence in their ability to teach that knowledge which, in turn, is greater than their confidence in their ability to develop teaching materials on the topic.
- School- or system-level factors, rather than individual teachers' needs, can drive the content of CPD in practice. Examples include meeting accountability requirements and compliance with the Prevent duty³.
- Workload and work schedules pose a key barrier to engagement in professional development (for early career and experienced teachers alike).

2.2 What evidence is there of effective practice in early career development for teachers in England and across the UK?

The following key messages have been drawn from the articles and reports by Coldwell (2016), GB. Parliament, HoC, Education Committee (2017), McIntyre and Hobson (2016), Spencer *et al.*, (2018).

- Early career teachers commonly report that informal conversations with colleagues in school meet their professional development needs more than formal CPD. While mentoring emerges in a positive light, there is some evidence of a perception that formal conversations with mentors are primarily evaluative, with a lesser or absent developmental function.
- One study found that external mentoring by an experienced teacher with the same subject specialism, but employed in a different school from the teacher they are supporting, enabled developmental mentoring relationships independent of the performance management relationship. This provided a fresh perspective and space for reflection.
- Findings from one study suggest that teachers' career intentions appear to crystallise in their third year of teaching, when very few remained undecided regarding whether teaching is the career for them long-term; most participants in the study thought it was. Effective professional development at this point in teachers' careers could bolster their intentions to remain in the profession.

³ The Prevent duty, introduced under the Counter-Terrorism and Security Act 2015, requires specified authorities (including schools) to have due regard to the need to prevent people from being drawn into terrorism.

2.3 Characteristics of effective professional development

Several articles and reports highlight the general characteristics of effective professional development, as identified by their authors. These key messages are taken from the articles and reports by the GB. Parliament, HoC, Education Committee (2017), the Education and Training Inspectorate (2016), Furlong (2015), Hadfield *et al.*, (2017), Knight (2015), McIntyre and Hobson (2016) and Nelson *et al.*, (2015).

Effective professional development:

- should start from a clear appreciation of the objective of the development activity
- requires effective communication, coordination and leadership
- requires critical thinking about, and challenge of, existing practice
- benefits from collaborative learning opportunities, such as coaching and mentoring
- requires access to internal and external knowledge and expertise
- needs appropriate conditions, such as the right climate and culture, professional responsibility, and sufficient time and resources.

These messages reflect the evidence-based characteristics of effective professional development presented in the *Standard for Teachers' Professional Development* (DfE, 2016):

1. Professional development should have a focus on improving and evaluating pupil outcomes.
2. Professional development should be underpinned by robust evidence and expertise.
3. Professional development should include collaboration and expert challenge.
4. Professional development programmes should be sustained over time.
5. Professional development must be prioritised by school leadership.

3. Analysis of School Workforce Census data

School Workforce Census (SWC) data was used to identify a long-list of primary and secondary schools from which we selected 20 case-study schools. This section briefly outlines how we analysed this data and constructed the long list. It also provides a brief summary of the findings that emerged from this analysis.

3.1 Methodology

The research team surmised that high retention of ECTs could be an indicator that schools were offering effective training and support to these teachers. We therefore decided to analyse SWC data to identify a sample of primary and secondary schools with an established track record of retaining ECTs. The ECT retention rate for each school was estimated in three steps as follows:

1. We identified the number of ECTs employed in each school in the 2013, 2014 and 2015 SWC. ECTs were identified in the data as qualified teachers who were, at that time, in the first three years of having entered teaching in a state-funded school after qualifying.
2. We looked at the 2014, 2015 and 2016 SWC to establish whether the ECTs in step 1 were still employed as teachers at the same school one year later.
3. We estimated an early-career teacher retention rate for each school by aggregating all the ECTs identified and across all three years of data.

3.2 The findings

SWC data showed that the average retention rate of ECTs during the period was 77 per cent per year in primary schools and 74 per cent per year in secondary schools. ECTs who were not retained (on average 23 per cent per year in primaries and 26 per cent per year in secondaries) included teachers who left teaching in the state-funded sector and also teachers who moved school.

The retention rate of ECTs varies considerably between schools and cannot be explained fully by differences in schools' local contexts. The schools with the highest retention rates could be thought to be more effective at retaining ECTs than the average school. Among primary schools with at least five ECTs during the period 2013-2015, the school

at the 90th percentile⁴ had a retention rate of 93 per cent and the school at the 10th percentile had a retention rate of 54 per cent. Among secondary schools with at least five ECTs during the period 2013-2015, the school at the 90th percentile had a retention rate of 88 per cent and the school at the 10th percentile had a retention rate of 58 per cent.

A long list of schools with high retention rates of ECTs was then selected, separately for primary and secondary schools. Retention rates in the long list of schools varied between 89.7 per cent and 100 per cent for primary schools and 83.2 per cent and 100 per cent for secondary schools. We used a 'funnel plot' approach to select schools that had high retention rates of ECTs. The 'funnel plot' approach gives schools with a large number of ECTs a fairer chance of being selected than simply selecting schools with the highest retention rates. More detail about this sampling approach, and its strengths and limitations, is explained in Appendix 1.

⁴ A percentile is a measure used in statistics indicating the value below which a given percentage of observations in a group of observations fall. For example, the 90th percentile is the value (or score) below which 90 per cent of the observations may be found.

4. Training and support received in teachers' induction year

4.1 Main development needs

ECTs and MCTs were asked what their main development needs were at the start of their induction year. Common development priorities included:

- behaviour management
- use and understanding of assessment
- pedagogical knowledge
- supporting pupils with particular needs, such as pupils with special educational needs and disability (SEND).

Other common, but less frequently reported development needs included subject knowledge, particularly for NQTs who were non-specialists, as well as understanding of safeguarding processes. In addition, some interviewees reported that 'basic things', such as what to do in a fire drill, how to take the register, and where to go for lunch, together with practical concerns such as how to manage marking workload and learning to prioritise, were also common issues that NQTs typically wanted support and guidance with.

CPD leads typically reported that their school would look at NQTs' targets from their final assessment on their ITT placement. The school would then identify areas for development through continuous observations and other activities, such as book scrutinies, and requests from the NQTs themselves. The NQTs would also share what they would like more support with and then the school decided what support arrangements were needed.

ECTs' and MCTs' responses to this question were informed by a range of factors, including their route into teaching, and the context and circumstances of the school in which they taught. For example, some ECTs who had entered teaching via Teach First and School Direct routes reported they felt they were already well established by the time they started their induction year. Compared to trainees from some other routes, such as PGCE, some had already experienced an 80 per cent teaching timetable and had already had opportunities to teach on their own, without the presence of a supervising teacher. This, they explained, meant that they felt that their support needs were different, and more akin to RQTs from other routes into teaching (see Chapter 5). Despite this, most of the ECTs we spoke to from these routes reported they had had a positive induction experience, suggesting that case-study schools had been largely successful in tailoring their offer to the needs of different NQTs, as explored in the sections below.

Selected quotes about the development needs of NQTs

The development needs that the NQTs have is very much dependent on the training that they have had and the schools that they have been based in.

CPD lead, Primary Teaching School

As a Teach First trainee, I felt very confident as an NQT having already had experience of teaching on my own in the classroom. For me, I really wanted support with things like understanding what progression for different children looked like [rather than support with things like behaviour management].

ECT, Primary MAT, Teach First trainee

When you go through your [ITT] placements, you can't truly understand how much work there is to do, or how much responsibility comes with the job. So I think that kind of hit me hard in the NQT year.

MCT, Primary MAT, PGCE trainee

4.2 Training and support offered to NQTs

The DfE's statutory guidance on induction for newly qualified teachers ([DfE, 2018](#)) states that 'a suitable monitoring and support programme must be put in place for the NQT, personalised to meet their professional development needs. This must include:

- support and guidance from a designated induction tutor who holds QTS and has the time and experience to carry out the role effectively
- observation of the NQT's teaching and follow-up discussion
- regular professional reviews of progress
- NQTs' observation of experienced teachers either in the NQT's own institution or in another institution where effective practice has been identified.

Our interviews revealed that all of the participating schools we spoke to had such arrangements in place, although there was some variation in provision, as explored below.

4.2.1 Mentoring support

The DfE's statutory guidance on induction for newly qualified teachers ([DfE, 2018](#)) states that coaching and mentoring 'is a very important element of the induction process', and suggests that this role should be undertaken by the induction tutor. However, the vast majority of ECTs described having two mentors as an NQT, one, a 'professional mentor', who would typically be a member of the school's senior leadership team with responsibility for coordinating the school's induction arrangements, and the other a 'subject mentor', who would provide day-to-day support and coaching. This split in roles was generally valued by ECTs, as they benefitted from having two formal points of contact. The two mentors were described by some ECTs as providing different, but usually complementary, types of support, which typically reflected their different roles within school. In most cases the subject mentor was a member of the NQT's department/teaching phase. They were sometimes, but not always, their Head of Department. ECTs expressed no particular preference or difference in experience related specifically to whether the subject mentor was their Head of Department or not. However, ECTs who had been assigned an NQT mentor who was not a subject specialist or did not teach the same teaching phase were more likely to report greater variation in their satisfaction with the quality of support received, suggesting that it is important that NQT's have access to a mentor who is working in the same department/teaching phase.

Where this split in roles existed, subject mentors would typically meet frequently with NQTs, often once a week for between 20 minutes to an hour. In some cases, this time appeared to be formally timetabled in by the school, but in others, it appeared to be left to the NQT and the subject mentor to make their own arrangements. According to the ECTs we spoke to, both models appeared to generally work well. Key to success was the flexibility and willingness of both parties to meet. For example, most ECTs described how, rather than following a set programme of meetings, they valued the flexibility of their mentor to both vary the focus and use of their time together, as well as the length of the meetings. In a small number of cases, ECTs described where they felt these arrangements had not worked, for example where mentors had cancelled planned meetings at short notice, or where meetings had been hard to schedule, resulting in fewer meetings overall.

The role and expertise of the mentor was often viewed by ECTs as being key to the success of their relationship, and which subsequently impacted on their perceptions of the quality of the support received. In general, ECTs particularly valued mentors who:

- worked in the same department or teaching phase
- were respected by NQTs as expert practitioners (this respect was earned through observations, where NQTs could observe the mentor teaching first hand)
- were approachable and accessible

- were able to provide regular feedback, and lots of opportunities for professional dialogue
- were flexible and responsive to the needs of the NQT.

These traits are similar to the Mentor Standards, which are outlined in the national standards for school-based ITT ([Teaching Schools Council, 2016](#)). This suggests that the Mentor Standards could be adapted to develop similar standards for induction mentors.

Unfortunately, it was not possible to discuss the training arrangements for mentors in any detail as part of the interviews. However, it was clear from the interviews that where mentoring support was working well, adequate time and support had been given to mentors, as well as to NQTs, to help ensure that the support provided was of a high quality.

Selected quotes about the role of the mentor

The fact that my mentor was also an assistant headteacher probably did mean that he commanded some extra respect, but it was the fact that I had observed him several times and knew he was an excellent teacher, which was the main reason why I valued his guidance so much.

ECT, Secondary Teaching School

One of the key things is that although she [the NQT] has a mentor, it is made clear that newer staff are everybody's responsibility because the mentor may not be a subject specialist...It's about building capacity and the expectation that we are all here to support each other.

CPD lead, Primary Teaching School

4.2.2 NQT training programmes

All of the ECTs we spoke to had taken part in structured training programmes, designed to cover core knowledge and professional skills that schools thought teachers should have developed to a certain standard during their time as an NQT. These programmes often included a common spine of topics which included (in no particular order):

- behaviour management
- use and understanding of assessment
- support for specific pupil groups, such as pupils with special educational needs and disability (SEND), pupils with English as an additional language (EAL), and

the most and least able, and how to narrow gaps in outcomes between these different pupil groups

- subject and curriculum knowledge
- pedagogical knowledge
- lesson planning
- safeguarding.

In addition to this common combination of topics, additional topic areas included:

- phonics (primary specific)
- computer programming (primary specific)
- leadership
- how to interact with parents/carers, for example at parents' evenings
- the use of data
- report writing
- effective forum tutoring
- emotional intelligence
- wellbeing and how to manage workload.

Given the move towards introducing apprenticeship standards for teaching assistants (TAs), it was perhaps surprising that, when thinking out their time as NQTs, only one ECT reported receiving training on how best to work with TAs. However, it is possible that other schools' NQT training programmes were also covering this, and there was some evidence that, as NQTs, interviewees had met with TAs to discuss and plan how best to support specific pupils.

As the induction year is the bridge between initial teacher training and a career in teaching, it is perhaps not surprising that the topics covered as part of schools' NQT training programmes appeared to be closely aligned to the Teachers' Standards, were often practical in nature, and designed to prepare NQTs for the next steps in their careers. It is also notable that these topic areas closely correlate with what the ECTs and MCTs reported they needed help with at the start of their induction years (see Section 4.1). Where these programmes appeared to be most effective, schools were able to combine a standardised training programme with a personalised programme of development and professional dialogue; the latter being largely facilitated through mentoring support.

These sessions were typically delivered once or twice a fortnight, usually within or at the end of the school day, and lasted for approximately one to two hours. These events were

sometimes run for the benefit of all NQTs in a MAT, at a specific school in the MAT, or alternatively just for the NQTs in a particular school. Most of the training was delivered in-house by specialist teachers in the school or, less frequently, from specialist teachers drawn from across the MAT. In smaller primary schools, this training was typically delivered by the school's CPD leader and/or by members of the school's senior leadership team.

Some CPD leads described how these training programmes were deliberately delineated over the year. For example, in one school, the first term was spent on a fixed programme of topics that all NQTs had to cover. The second term was more bespoke, allowing NQTs to tailor the training to their needs. The third term was spent re-visiting topics from the first two terms, and reflecting on what they had learnt.

There was also evidence that schools were also constantly reviewing the content of their NQT training programmes, and revising them accordingly. This was informed by NQTs' feedback which was usually systematically collected at the end of each training session. Feedback was often also collected in a separate meeting with NQTs towards the end of the induction year, or as part of the final assessment meeting at the end of the induction period. Well-being and how to manage workload were recognised by some school leaders as becoming increasingly important at a whole-school level, and had been recently introduced into NQT training programmes by a small number of schools, at least in part due to the feedback received from NQTs.

4.2.3 Observation and feedback

The DfE's statutory guidance on induction for newly qualified teachers ([DfE, 2018](#)) states that:

An NQT's teaching should be observed at regular intervals throughout their induction period to facilitate a fair and effective assessment of the NQT's teaching practice, conduct and efficiency against the relevant standards. Observations of the NQT may be undertaken by the induction tutor or another suitable person who holds QTS from inside or outside the institution.

The number of formal observations undertaken in schools appeared to vary, with some undertaking approximately one formal observation every half term, or six over the course of the induction year. Interviewees sometimes made distinctions between these formal observations, which contributed directly to judgements about the extent to which NQTs were meeting the expected standards, to more informal, developmental observations. These were often undertaken by the subject mentor, and sometimes by the professional mentor, and would often occur much more frequently, sometimes once a week. They would typically involve a 'drop in' or 'micro' observation, where only part of the lesson

would be observed. While there was variation between schools in terms of who undertook the observations, in most of the primary schools we spoke to, the formal observations were carried out by the CPD lead or a senior leader. In secondary schools, these observations were more typically split between the professional mentor and the subject mentor.

NQTs received feedback following every observation, with most ECTs reporting that this was both prompt and constructive. Observations were primarily aimed at assessing whether NQTs were making progress in relation to the teacher standards, for example knowing when and how to differentiate appropriately, and managing behaviour effectively. ECTs also reported that they were being monitored for their use of school-developed teaching materials and for their knowledge of, and adherence to, school policies. ECTs reported that, following an observation, they would typically agree a set of development needs with their mentor which would be monitored as part of a constant cycle of review and improvement.

In some schools, observations appeared to be closely aligned to the structured NQT training programme, described in Section 4.2.2. For example, where training was delivered on support for specific pupil groups, such as pupils with special educational needs and disability (SEND), NQTs were expected to deploy these techniques in the classroom, with the observations used to facilitate an assessment of the extent to which the NQT had been able to apply what they had learnt.

In addition to the opportunities to be observed, most ECTs reported they also had opportunities to observe other expert teachers.

Most ECTs reported that the feedback received from their observation opportunities (both from being observed and from observing others) was amongst the most valuable that they received throughout their induction year. The professional dialogue that followed such opportunities, appeared to be a key mechanism by which NQTs were able to develop their skills as independent teachers. There was some evidence to suggest that where they were being used effectively, MAT structures were helping to enhance the benefits of observation by creating more opportunities for NQTs to observe expert teachers in other schools.

4.2.4 Networking opportunities

In most schools, NQTs took part in networking events, whereby NQTs from across a local authority or MAT would come together for a day of support or training specifically for NQTs. The programmes for these events appeared to mirror the topics covered by the NQT training programmes, albeit sometimes in greater depth, and sometimes with special guest speakers. ECTs generally spoke positively about the networking opportunities afforded by these events, which typically took place once a year. There

were some instances where NQTs were in schools where they were the only person in their department, and in this situation, the opportunity to meet with teachers working in the same subject areas but in different schools was found to be particularly helpful.

4.2.5 Peer-to-peer support

Staff in a small number of schools reported operating a 'buddy' system, where NQTs were partnered with other staff, including other NQTs, to carry out observations and to feedback on one another. In some cases this was a colleague working in the same department/teaching phase, and in others it was not. In one school, buddies were encouraged to film one another teaching. ECTs were generally positive about this type of support, which appeared to be more informal than many of the other forms of support available. Away from this official pairing of NQTs, a common feature of all the schools we spoke to was that most ECTs reported that they had been able to draw on the support of their colleagues, including other NQTs and more experienced staff. This was often obtained informally as part of day-to-day interactions with other staff who were working in the same and/or different subject areas, and was credited by many ECTs as being a highly valuable source of support and encouragement.

4.2.6 External training

While the majority of training and support came from the NQT's host school or the wider trust (where applicable), some ECTs talked about having opportunities to engage in externally-delivered training. This included local authority delivered training and training delivered by teaching schools as well as external CPD providers and specialists. There was some evidence to suggest that the providers used for this training often appeared to be those recommended by other schools or providers that schools had used in the past. Details on the type and nature of this training were limited, but it appeared that training often mirrored the themes covered by the NQT training programmes. In other cases, outside trainers were sought to help train staff in the use of new software packages.

4.2.7 Leadership courses

Some schools offered NQTs opportunities to develop their leadership skills, typically as an aspiring middle leader. This training was typically offered through an in-house training programme, usually as part of a module delivered as part of the NQT training programme. Some NQTs appeared to have access to more in-depth training, delivered internally or externally, such as the National Professional Qualification for Middle Leadership (NPQML). However, such opportunities appeared to be more frequently available to Recently Qualified Teachers (RQTs) (see Chapter 5). Where they were

made available, they appeared to be optional, with NQTs having to weigh up the potential benefits with their time and other commitments.

4.2.8 New to school sessions

Most schools appeared to operate some kind of ‘new to school’ sessions, which were open to all new staff, not just NQTs. These sessions were typically focused on inducting new staff into school-specific processes, such as familiarity with computer systems, and policies.

4.2.9 Other training and support opportunities

In addition to the training and support opportunities described above, interviewees described a number of additional support mechanisms and training opportunities that were used to support NQTs. These included:

- induction days – sometimes held in July before the start of the new school year, and covering things like safeguarding, registering NQTs on school systems, looking at NQT Handbooks (including dates for submitting paper work etc.), and meeting key staff
- learning walks⁵
- book scrutinies⁶
- INSET.

4.3 Time spent participating in training or receiving support

In most schools, it was reported that NQTs were given dedicated ‘NQT time’ to undertake activities in their induction programme equivalent to ten per cent of their timetable, in addition to their planning, preparation and assessment (PPA) time. This would typically equate to approximately one full day per week. How this time was used appeared to vary. For example, a typical week might see an NQT have the equivalent of half a day to meet with their mentor, to be observed and/or to observe others, with another half day allocated to attendance at training and/or staff meetings. However, in most cases, these time allocations appeared to be fluid, with NQTs spending more time on training in some weeks, and less in others. This variation appeared to reflect a desire by schools to

⁵ An approach, often used by senior leaders and line managers, to help measure teacher performance and determine individual goals and areas for development through teacher observation. Most walks are designed to be less intense than a full classroom observation and typically last for less than ten minutes.

⁶ Another approach, also used by senior leaders and line managers, to help measure teacher performance and determine individual goals and areas for development through the examination of pupils’ books.

provide NQTs with a flexible programme of support that was responsive to their needs. It was notable that in some schools, NQT time was more highly directed, while in others there was a greater focus on NQTs self-directing this time. ECTs reported positive and negative experiences associated with both approaches, with models that allowed for a balance of both directed and self-directed time, perhaps working best. While in most cases, ECTs reported that they had been able to protect their NQT time for the intended purpose of undertaking activities in their school's induction programme, a small number of ECTs and MCTs reported that this time had been used as extra PPA time, which they perceived to be useful and necessary.

Selected quotes on use of NQT time

I would spend about two hours per week in total [on training and support], but this is on average because sometimes it varied on different weeks. Sometimes I went for training for a full day. I would usually meet with my mentor in my NQT time but the formal training was delivered as and when.

ECT, Primary LA maintained

Sometimes the NQT time will be directed by me, and sometimes it is self-directed by the NQT themselves. It depends on the individual, and how much support we feel they need.

CPD lead, Primary MAT/Academy

4.4 Extent to which training and support was based on evidence of 'what works'

CPD leads reported that their schools constantly monitored NQTs' experiences of their schools' induction arrangements, and that this helped to further improve provision. However, evidence was usually described by CPD leads in terms of teacher feedback or perceptions, rather than in terms of research evidence or evidence of 'what works'. As reported in Section 4.2.2, NQTs' feedback was usually collected at the end of each training session. Feedback was often also collected in a separate meeting with NQTs towards the end of the induction year, or as part of the final assessment meeting at the end of the induction period. As might be expected, it was the CPD leads in Teaching Schools, which have a specific responsibility for providing evidence-based professional and leadership development for teachers and leaders across their network, who appeared to more frequently report that research evidence, such as that summarised in

the Sutton Trust-EEF Teaching and Learning Toolkit, was used to inform induction arrangements. Where training was delivered by recognised specialists within a school or MAT, CPD leads sometimes expressed a view that these staff were drawing on research evidence to inform their provision. While this did appear to be happening in some cases, we found only limited evidence that this was being systematically monitored.

Selected quotes on use of evidence to inform training and support for NQTs

We know from previous years what the best courses are and what the best support networks are. We also know which schools [from within the MAT] are the best to support with different things and, within the school, who are the best teachers to support with different areas. We know what works because we are constantly doing it.

CPD lead, Primary MAT/Academy

I think we do base it on evidence of what works, based on our own experience, and we look at what other schools do. We shape it to their needs because each cohort of NQTs is different. CPD is recognised as an area of excellence at the school and others come to see what we do.

CPD lead, Secondary LA maintained

The programme [for NQTs] is a programme that is entirely research driven. All of the sessions are designed around what the latest research and theorists are saying. Everything we do as a teaching school is routed in the latest evidential practice. We talk a lot about Rosenshine⁷...and meta studies and the EEF Toolkit and what those things show that they should be doing. The leaders who design the sessions always start from the research.

CPD lead, Secondary Teaching School

⁷ Refers to [Barak Rosenshine's 10 research-based principles of instruction](#) Available [online]: [13/06/18]

4.5 What worked well

ECTs' and MCTs' positive views of induction were associated with a number of common enabling factors, identified across our sample of case-study schools. These included:

- **the importance of having a balanced package of support** – whereby NQTs would typically engage in a standardised training programme (see Section 4.2.2), but alongside more personalised, teacher-led opportunities (e.g. training/support tailored to the needs of individual NQTs)
- **a supportive whole school culture** – where induction was viewed as the start of a lifelong journey of training and support, and where schools would typically operate an 'open door policy', providing frequent opportunities for professional dialogue
- **having a range of support options available** – rather than focusing on the role of a single mentor, schools with the more successful induction arrangements, as reported by ECTs and MCTs, appeared to offer NQTs multiple points of support, such as through peer-to-peer arrangements (see Section 4.2.5) and networking opportunities (see Section 4.2.4). While in some cases these points of contact were formally managed by a school, ECTs and MCTs also remarked on the importance of receiving informal support from a variety of colleagues. Indeed, in some cases, it was the informal support that NQTs received that was perceived to be the most valuable
- **training and support that is deliberately targeted and sequenced** – induction arrangements appeared to be enhanced where schools sequenced training with particular outcomes in mind, for example in predicting pressure points and catering for this (e.g. changes in GCSE specification, timing of external examinations, etc.), or in timetabling training to allow for reflection and reinforcement of what had be learnt
- **the personality and expertise of the mentor** – viewed as key to the success of the NQT-mentor relationship. In general, ECTs valued mentors who worked in the same department or teaching phase as them and who, through observing them teach, they had developed respect for as expert practitioners (see Section 4.2.1)
- **networking opportunities for NQTs** - viewed as important by ECTs, both in terms of broadening their informal and professional support networks
- **having opportunities to observe teachers who are specialists** – the opportunity to observe expert teachers and to be observed, and the professional dialogue that followed such opportunities, appeared to be key mechanisms by which NQTs were able to develop their skills as independent teachers. Rather than viewed solely as an evidence-gathering activity, in the more effective schools, such opportunities were described as truly developmental. There was some

evidence to suggest that where they were being used effectively, MAT structures were supporting this

- **giving sufficient time to mentors, as well as to NQTs** – appeared vital to ensuring that mentoring support was of a high quality (see Section 4.2.1).

4.6 What worked less well

ECTs and MCTs were less likely to report positive induction experiences where:

- **NQTs' mentors were not subject or phase specialists** – while there were exceptions, NQTs appeared to be more likely to report that mentoring support had been useful where a mentor had been based in the same subject department or teaching phase (see Section 4.2.1). This appeared to be primarily to do with subject mentors being more likely to provide support and guidance that was more closely tailored to the needs of the NQT, but may have also reflected a perception that mentors based in the same faculty were easier to access. These findings present a challenge to small primary schools or secondary school subject departments, where it may not be possible to find a mentor who is teaching the same subject or phase
- **support from the NQT mentor was limited, or perceived to be, of low quality** – in a small number of cases, ECTs reported that they had been unable to meet very frequently with their mentor, and/or when they had met, they perceived that the support they had received had not been very helpful. This was reported to be due to a range of factors, including the perception that mentors were not enthusiastic or did not want to undertake the role, and/or had not received proper training. In such cases, ECTs had sought out support from other colleagues, often on a more informal basis, and most appeared to have received it. In at least a few cases, these alternative arrangements appeared to have been entirely managed by the NQTs themselves, rather than by the schools
- **there was a lack of tailored training and support opportunities** – A small proportion of ECTs reported their frustration with what they felt was a lack of tailored support, with their induction programme relying too heavily (they felt) on a one-size-fits-all approach to training and support.

4.7 Challenges

In addition to the features of induction that appeared to work less well (described in Section 4.6 above), a small number of ECTs and MCTs identified additional challenges associated with their NQT year. These included:

- notification, late in the summer term, that the NQT's performance against some of standards had not been satisfactory. This was reported to have come as a total surprise to the NQT, and left little time to remedy the situation
- a lack of formal opportunities to network and to meet a wider range of staff, which was perceived as limiting an NQT's support network
- a lack of time and/or funding to attend external training opportunities. In at least one case, such opportunities were reported to have been made available to only one or two NQTs, with the expectation that they would feed back what they had learnt to others
- travelling to training held outside of the school, particularly where this was reported to have been scheduled at an inconvenient time, or at a location that was reported to be difficult to get to
- a lack of experienced teachers within the NQT's subject department or teaching phase. In such a situation, the subject specialist advice that could come from colleagues working in other schools, such as those in the MAT, appeared to become all the more important.

4.8 Impacts

The collective impact of NQTs' training and support experiences were reported to bring a range of benefits to participants, notably improved confidence. This was linked to the perception, held by NQTs, that their practice had improved, which appeared to be primarily driven by NQTs' growing bank of skills, developed through feedback from observations (both from being observed, and in observing others). Other reported benefits included the development of subject knowledge and practice (e.g. better differentiation and planning), as well as self-worth. Impacts associated with greater aspiration and higher levels of job satisfaction were also reported, but were more frequently associated with the RQT years (see Chapter 5).

Selected quotes about the impacts on NQTs resulting from the induction year

My confidence to teach a PE lesson increased throughout my NQT year. This included my confidence to share my thoughts and ideas during staff meetings.

ECT, Primary Teaching School

I came into teaching with low confidence, and it has taken until this point for me to realise my full potential. The atmosphere of the school with all the teachers being friendly and supportive has really helped me [in this regard].

ECT, Secondary LA maintained

5. Training and support received in teachers' second and third years of teaching

5.1 Main development needs

Perhaps not surprisingly, the self-reported development needs of teachers in their second and third years of teaching were often different to those in their NQT year. Most reported that they no longer required introductory training on fundamental areas such as behaviour management and assessment, which was frequently reported to be required by NQTs and offered by schools in the induction year (see Section 4.1). Instead, most ECTs reported that they wanted training and support that would help them to progress into **subject, year group/key stage, or other middle leadership roles**. Some wanted, or had already taken on, **specialist roles or responsibilities**, such as responsibility for behaviour management, safeguarding, being an NQT or ITT mentor, managing a literacy programme, liaising with feeder primary schools, becoming a subject expert, and organising sporting fixtures. In many cases these were whole-school roles, while in some, they were cross-MAT.

Many ECTs wanted opportunities to shadow other subject leaders, or to gain an understanding of responsibilities such as working with pupils with SEND or a pastoral care role.

Many ECTs also wanted to 'hone their craft' and to **broaden their skillset**. This often accompanied new opportunities that presented themselves to RQTs, such as working with pupils with different educational needs, or teaching year 6, GCSE and A-level pupils, which, for many, was for the first time. Thus, ECTs explained that, as a second or third year teacher, they now needed to know about how best to support different groups of pupils, which sometimes involved:

- further development of subject knowledge, particularly for key stage 2 and A-level classes
- familiarisation with new curricular, schemes of work and with SATs and GCSE and A-level requirements
- a further focus on differentiation in planning and lesson delivery, for example to accommodate classes with more challenging or more able pupils
- understanding of effective practice in examination preparation and moderation
- learning how to be an effective form tutor
- supporting children with specific learning needs and behaviour.

For many, the RQT years were also about **considering career progression opportunities**, understanding the different pathways that were open to them, and ensuring that they had the training and support that they would need to progress. This included key stage, subject leader, principal or lead teacher, middle leader, and even senior leader roles, as well as tutor group, year group and pastoral responsibilities.

Development needs were identified at the end of the NQT year and reviewed on an on-going basis by line managers. One CPD Lead also reported analysing pupil progress and examination data of RQTs and using this to review areas for development.

Selected quotes about the development needs of RQTs

As an RQT, my focus has been on trying to raise the progress that my children make, which I do through better differentiation, and from generally developing my skills as a teacher. I still struggle with maths a bit, and I've arranged to observe another teacher who is good at teaching maths to learn and to try and to develop my own practice in this area.

ECT, Primary MAT/Academy

During the second and third years, the focus is more on the member of staff perhaps becoming a subject leader or sharing a subject leader role. Strengths are identified through lesson observations and books scrutinies and monitoring of their [teachers] general practice. Strengths are also identified through discussions held during performance management and pupil progress meetings.

CPD lead, Primary MAT/Academy

A lot of it is about career progression and thinking about what their paths can be, and some of them aren't ready to take on the natural linear development of Head of Department and so on, but they are ambitious and they need some sense of responsibility.

CPD lead, Secondary LA maintained

5.2 Training and support offered to RQTs

There is no statutory requirement for schools to provide training and support specifically for RQTs. As such, it is perhaps not surprising that, in most of our case-study schools, dedicated support for RQTs appeared to be limited. In addition, where it was offered, it was more light-touch than the provision offered to NQTs. As one CPD lead commented: 'Once you have achieved your NQT and you are then fully fledged, we just consider you

as part of the team. The support that we have in place, such as the collaboration, such as providing whole-staff CPD, that is for everyone...'

Interestingly, interviewees had mixed views on the value of dedicated support for RQTs being provided, with some CPD leads regarding this as unnecessary, particularly where there was a strong whole-school professional development offer available for all staff. This offer might include formal CPD, opportunities to join research and development groups, collaborative planning and marking, co-planning as part of staff meetings in which administrative time had been reduced, best practice days which included opportunities to observe other teachers, data days (where staff analysed pupil data and co-planned), weekly coaching sessions, opportunities to observe other members of staff and to be observed for developmental feedback, and practice sessions. One school had introduced weekly practice sessions for all staff whereby they could practice something with a colleague in advance of an activity e.g. speaking to parents at a parents' evening or dealing with a difficult pupil. Many ECTs also reported that, as RQTs, they 'wanted to spread their wings more', and wanted more light-touch, flexible support than that which was typically provided to NQTs.

Examples of the types of dedicated support provided to RQTs are described below.

5.2.1 Support from other colleagues

None of the ECTs or MCTs we spoke to appeared to have received any formal mentoring support in their second or third year of teaching. However, in most cases, RQTs reported that they had continued to receive informal support from a more senior colleague, who, in many cases had been their NQT subject mentor. This continuation of support from the same individual, albeit, on a more informal and less frequent basis, was generally reported to have worked well, particularly where positive working relationships had been developed in the induction year. The CPD lead in one school, a secondary MAT/Academy, reported that a mentor would only be formally assigned to an RQT where there were 'causes for concern', and similar arrangements existed in other schools. In some schools, RQTs were assigned a buddy or a 'link person' and of course, as RQTs had transitioned from schools' induction to appraisal arrangements⁸, every RQT had a line manager who, in many cases, also performed a mentoring role.

Beyond the focus on the support received from a particular individual, it was clear from the interviews that, as RQTs, most early career teachers relied more heavily on the

⁸ Following the successful completion of the induction period, teachers in all maintained schools and unattached teachers employed by a local authority move onto a performance management cycle, in each case where they are employed for one term or more, as set out in the Appraisal Regulations. Available [online]: [Teacher appraisal and capability](#) [16/06/18]

support of a broader range of colleagues than had generally been the case in their induction year: 'that encouragement to help each other is really strong in the school'. This included colleagues drawn from their own subject department/teaching phase, as well as senior school managers and staff recognised as demonstrating best practice. The breadth and quality of support networks developed in the induction year appeared to provide a strong foundation for this. Indeed, there was some evidence to suggest that, where these networks had been less developed during the induction stage, RQTs had to work harder in their second and third years to develop and strengthen them, for example by volunteering to take part in whole-school working groups. The type of support that RQTs accessed from a range of colleagues included coaching, professional dialogue, opportunities to observe and shadow other teachers, and opportunities to be observed and receive developmental feedback.

Many ECTs reported that they had also taken on formal support roles for the new cohort of NQTs. The nature of these roles appeared to vary, but, in many cases, they offered a second tier of mentoring support, alongside those of the subject and professional mentor roles described in Section 4.2.1. This appeared to be actively encouraged by schools, and ECTs were positive about how such opportunities had provided them with further opportunities to reflect on and further develop their own practice. Formal training was sometimes reported to have been provided for this new role, although the extent to which this was informed by research evidence was unclear.

Selected quotes about support received from colleagues as an RQT

I continued to receive good support from senior colleagues as an RQT, but I lost the formal arrangement of having a mentor. In the second year, support mainly comes from the friendships and relationships you have built with other teachers.

ECT, Primary MAT/Academy

We have been successful in creating an environment here where if you feel you need help with something you can ask, you can do it and you feel safe to do that. I think that is the key to success in terms of going forward beyond the formal training in the NQT year.

MCT, Secondary LA maintained

A lot of the early career teachers have training to be mentors for the NQTs. This is a termly meeting about how to set targets for the NQTs, how best to support throughout the year, and how to adapt the support to meet their experiences. I've found that really valuable. A lot of my mentors say that by being mentors it makes them more reflective of their practice, and when they are advising our NQTs and trainee teachers it makes them more rigorous in their own practice.

CPD lead, Secondary LA maintained

You've got a bit of experience to deal with issues without having to seek advice that much but the model in our school is such that even now I would go and talk to other people for advice and support...Because there is so much here and there are so many people with different skillsets, I've been able to find most of the things I need here.

MCT, Middle Deemed Primary

5.2.2 Training and support for specific roles

A number of RQTs had taken on additional roles and responsibilities in their second and third year and reported receiving specific CPD and support to prepare them for these roles. This included key stage or subject leader CPD, moderation training, training to take on a Personal, Social and Health Education (PSHE) lead role or mentoring training. As one MCT commented: 'You're not left on your own to take on something new'.

5.2.3 Leadership and excellent teacher courses

There was recognition in schools that many RQTs were looking for opportunities to progress in their careers, particularly into subject and middle leadership roles, and that offering such opportunities was essential to ensuring that some ECTs maintained high levels of job satisfaction. As a result, it was not surprising that all of the case-study schools appeared to offer RQTs opportunities to develop their leadership skills, typically as an aspiring middle leader. This training was often delivered through an in-house training programme, although some ECTs reported they had pursued external or nationally recognised courses, such as the National Professional Qualification for Middle Leadership (NPQML). Most of the ECTs reported that such opportunities had been valuable and of a high quality. A number of RQTs also reported that they had been provided with opportunities to develop their teaching expertise, for example by attending courses such as 'from good to outstanding' in their second year.

However, it was also clear from our interviews with ECTs that high-quality training opportunities alone would not ensure job satisfaction, and that they needed to be accompanied by genuine opportunities to take on new roles and responsibilities. The extent to which schools were able to offer such opportunities, particularly ones that attracted an additional teaching and learning responsibility (TLR) payment, appeared to vary, leading to some ECTs feeling frustrated by the lack of genuine opportunities to progress, and what they saw as a lack of recognition. In such cases, ECTs reported that a key reason for them staying in their settings was because of the positive and supportive school culture

5.2.2 RQT training programmes

A small number of case-study schools reported that they offered dedicated training programmes specifically for RQTs. These programmes were open to all RQTs but, in some cases, they might be offered on an optional basis. They were led by a range of teachers across the school, MAT or Federation. The scope of the study did not include an exploration of the relative effectiveness of RQT programmes delivered by different schools, and of their constituent topics.

Examples of specific RQT programmes included:

- an 'NQT+1 programme', which ran throughout the academic year and comprised of between three to six twilight sessions. One ECT described how this programme was delivered in a neighbouring Teaching School while, in another school, the programme appeared to rotate around different schools in the MAT
- a focus on an 'excellent teacher' programme for year 2 teachers (a 12 week programme) and a focus on the 'teacher researcher', specifically class-based research, in year 3

- half-termly professional development sessions for RQTs (across the school, MAT or Federation)
- RQT networking session within the school or across the MAT - in some cases, RQTs and NQTs networked together with the aim of RQTs supporting NQTs.

Dedicated RQT programmes typically covered:

- differentiation
- developing a classroom culture and climate
- excellent teaching and learning
- advanced formative assessment
- learning about different roles and preparing for additional responsibilities such as subject leader, pastoral care, SENCO, Vice Principal: 'Part of our retention programme is that we talk to teachers about staying within the federation and what career options there are for them...'
- the performance management process
- working with parents
- developing strategies for managing an increased workload
- wellbeing and work-life balance.

In general, RQT training programmes appeared to be practical in nature, enabling teachers to continue to develop their classroom practice whilst also beginning to consider the next steps in their teaching careers. CPD leads reported that attendance on these programmes was generally good, although ECTs suggested a more mixed picture, for reasons summarised in Section 5.7. In some cases, RQTs were given the opportunity to suggest what they needed the sessions to cover: 'In your NQT year the seminars are set out...but in the second year it was led by us [the RQTs]'.

Selected quotes about dedicated RQT CPD programmes

The MAT has a programme for year 2 teachers which moves them on from NQT and has different topics. They have half-termly sessions for one and a half hours and cover topics like cognition, advanced formative assessment, developing a classroom culture and climate, work-life management and time management again but through a career development lense. We look at what they want to do and how to get there...They get inspiration from this

CPD Lead, Secondary MAT

There is a programme for RQTs, but the training is delivered outside of my contracted hours. I think if the training was really valued [by the school], it would be scheduled within the school day.

ECT, Primary MAT/Academy

At the end of the NQT year, NQTs are asked what areas they would like to further develop, and then a bespoke programme is put together for that cohort that can vary from year to year. This is open to all RQTs...This training is voluntary. Unfortunately, one school we work with has not participated because the leadership team there have not released RQTs to attend.

CPD lead, Secondary Teaching School

5.2.3 Networking opportunities

ECTs and MCTs spoke positively about their opportunities to network with other teachers, including other RQTs. However, although a small number of schools offered dedicated networking opportunities for year 2/3 teachers, these types of activities more often arose from school-based or cross-MAT collaborative planning activities for all staff. Some ECTs reported that they valued opportunities to meet with other colleagues who were at a similar career stage to them, and/or were teaching the same subject/teaching phase. However, there appeared to be a general shift in preference, since being an NQT, towards opportunities that brought RQTs together with colleagues who taught in a different subject department/teaching phase or who had specialist expertise such as working with pupils with SEND. For many ECTs, it appeared that at this stage in their career, broadening their exposure to the ideas and experiences of colleagues in other subject areas, and with different expertise or areas of specialism, was very helpful in supporting their development. While it was clear from the interviews that, as RQTs, many teachers had opportunities to work collaboratively with their peers, and valued such

opportunities, we did not speak to anyone in schools in more isolated or coastal areas, where such opportunities may be less likely to be available.

I've found the opportunities to meet with lots of other teachers who are in different subjects to me, and in different stages of their careers as well, to be particularly helpful. Having training with teachers of other subjects is valuable because they use strategies that I wouldn't necessarily think of using.

ECT, Secondary Teaching School

5.2.4 Research programmes

In one secondary school teachers undertook a personal research project in their second year of teaching. This involved the RQT focussing on a particular aspect of teaching and learning that they were interested in, and then developing a formal project with an action plan. For each individual, the project gave the opportunity to develop an area of interest and research skills. It could also be used as the basis for a Master's degree. The CPD lead felt it gave teachers confidence and could be useful for their Faculty. It was developed independently, although the RQT's subject department could give some support if needed. At the end of the year, RQTs produced a PowerPoint presentation, which they shared with the CPD lead, with their faculty, and with the headteacher. It could also be presented at a whole staff training day and so have wider impact.

Another school ran a 'teacher researcher' programme for year 3 teachers, which included class-based research. The aim was for teachers to research and reflect on an area of practice for six weeks and then feedback the answers to key questions: What problem did they explore? What did they do? What did they find out? What are their next steps?

In both of the cases described above, the ECTs and MCTs spoke positively about their respective experiences, suggesting that both schools had been successful in implementing these programmes without adding to teachers' workloads. In addition, while the outcomes from these activities were reported by ECTs to have informed their individual practices, it was unclear whether these impacts extended to increased job satisfaction, or to wider departmental or whole-school changes.

While it is possible that the case-study schools, which were outside of the Research Schools Network, were making use of that network to support evidence-based teaching, no mention was made to this by any of the interviewees.

Selected quotes about research programmes

In their second year, they decide which aspect of teaching and learning they want to focus on. This is a formal project with an action plan taking evidence from students and developing strategies. At the end of the year they produce a PowerPoint presentation on their topic, which is shared with their faculty, with me and the headteachers... the reflection time of the research project has a real impact.

CPD lead, Secondary LA maintained School

In my second year I undertook a research project on the best way to engage different ability students in GCSE theory. I looked at various resources and tried to isolate what worked best. I have made use of it since, and although it wasn't assessed formally, I presented it to other staff and it has been used by others.

ECT, Secondary LA maintained School

What we are trying to do is encourage our teachers to see what is out there and to see what actually works and what evidence there is of what is working in classrooms. And to join that process, to actually reflect on what is happening in their classroom that may not be having as much impact as they thought it was or may be for different reasons if they look at it more closely.

CPD lead, Primary MAT

5.2.5 Other training and support opportunities

In addition to the training and support opportunities described above, interviewees described a number of additional support mechanisms and training opportunities that were used to support RQTs. In almost all cases, these were part of a school-wide offer of professional development, available to all staff, and not just RQTs. They included:

- weekly or fortnightly twilight training
- peer observations
- team teaching
- attendance on externally-led courses, typically standardisation meetings held by exam boards
- cross-phase activities (liaising with colleagues in feeder primary or secondary schools)
- cross-MAT planning meetings with staff teaching in the same subject department/teaching phase
- performance management processes
- learning walks
- book scrutinies
- observing others and being observed
- local Teach Meets (an organised but informal meeting for teachers to share good practice, practical innovations and personal insights in teaching)
- presenting learning from external CPD attended at departmental or whole-school staff meetings.

In addition, a number of RQTs commented that they had sought out external CPD to meet their needs which had, in most cases, been paid for and supported by their school: 'You typically have to ask for the training but they are then usually enabled to go. Teachers need to be proactive with leading their own development'.

5.3 Time spent participating in training or receiving support

Given the variation in the types of support available for teachers in their second and third years of teaching, it was not surprising that the time ECTs reported they spent on training and support also varied. This appeared to range from a couple of days a year, to up to half a day a week. The lower allocation appeared to reflect teachers' access to CPD in general in some schools, while the higher allocation appeared to reflect the additional time given to RQTs who held additional responsibilities, such as Head of Department. For most ECTs, the time spent in training or receiving support appeared to be the same

as any other post-NQT teacher, which included a heightened offer of support for teachers who were perceived to be struggling.

Selected quotes on time spent participating in training or receiving support as an RQT

We don't have a set amount of time for training for RQTs. It is bespoke to the individual and how they have finished their NQT year.

CPD lead, Primary Teaching School

The amount of time dedicated to CPD for second and third year teachers depends on the subject area they are looking in to. If they were leading maths or English then they would be given half a day each week. If it was PE or Science then they are given half a day a fortnight. For other subjects, the member of staff is given some time during each term to focus on their subject. This time is given to subject leaders and anyone sharing the subject leader role.

CPD lead, Primary MAT/Academy

5.4 Extent to which training and support was based on evidence of 'what works'

As was the case with schools' induction arrangements, evidence behind the provision of support and training that was offered to staff in their second or third year of teaching was usually described by CPD leads in terms of teacher feedback or perceptions, rather than in terms of research evidence or evidence of 'what works'.

As appeared to be the case with induction, it was the CPD leads in Teaching Schools, who have a specific responsibility for providing evidence-based professional and leadership development for teachers and leaders across their network, who appeared to report more frequently that research evidence was used to inform whole-school CPD. For example, one CPD lead discussed how the school had drawn on academic evidence of effective teaching to develop its CPD programme. In another school, teachers were asked to present on particular topics as part of whole-school CPD and to draw on academic research in reflecting on current practice and suggesting areas for development. A CPD lead in another school reported that they used a prescribed coaching model from the US which had robust evidence of impact and that they also drew on EEF evaluation evidence to frame their CPD and support for staff.

Selected quotes on use of evidence to inform training and support for ECTs

We never do anything unless it's got a substantial basis behind it – it's feedback from the people, what the current research is saying...Our self-evaluation is pretty tight.

CPD lead, Primary MAT

The type of support we provide to ECTs is based on what we know has worked in the past.

CPD lead, Primary MAT/Academy

After each round of observations, I will assess where we are as a school and as a staff and look at the profile and say "well, as a staff, or as a group of teachers, we need to focus on a certain standard". I will amend the training provision the following half term to address our needs as a cohort of staff.

CPD lead, LA maintained

Everything is driven by the research. When we talk about it [to the] whole staff, named research is a common currency to a really quite impressive degree. I think we really internalise the CPD standards and emphasise how important it is that things must be research driven, must be evidence based. Particularly in this climate of lack of money and workload, if you're asking someone to do something in a particular way you have to have a good reason for it, and that reason has to be related to progress and outcomes.

CPD lead, Secondary Teaching School

We use a prescribed coaching model from the US which has lots of evidence of impact and our general CPD fits well with EEF guidance reports.

CPD lead, Secondary MAT/Academy

5.5 What worked well

As mentioned previously, the formal training and support opportunities available to teachers in their second and third years of teaching were often the same as those available for all staff who had completed their NQT year. This meant that second and third year teachers would typically spend less time receiving training or formal support than they did as an NQT, and usually did not have a mentor. Nevertheless, most ECTs and MCTs were positive about the support they had received in their second and/or third

year of teaching. Their positive reflections were associated with a number of common enabling factors, identified across the sample of case-study schools. Of key importance was a supportive school ethos and personalised support and development opportunities targeted at an individual's specific needs.

The range of enabling factors cited included:

- **a supportive and developmental school ethos** – as was the case with induction, RQTs felt that their development needs had been fully met in schools that were reported to have a supportive and developmental culture and to operate an 'open door policy', whereby RQTs could seek support from a range of colleagues without feeling judged and were able to access frequent opportunities for professional development and dialogue. This linked directly to the quality of leadership:

A lot of what helps NQTs and RQTs is the quality of leadership – the school culture and vision – and the focus on simplicity and efficiency. This is a huge benefit. Teachers are coming into a school where the systems work, where there is a range of support and brilliant leadership. We'll challenge you but we'll support you...

- **the importance of having access to daily, high-quality support from fellow subject-specialists/staff teaching the same age group** – for many teachers, there appeared to be a greater focus on the importance of informal support arrangements in their second and/or third year of teaching. This was seen to be an effective approach and, in many cases, ECTs had been able to build on relationships they had developed with colleagues in the induction year (see Section 5.2.1)
- **offering middle leadership CPD but not enforcing take-up** – many RQTs reported that they had been offered middle leadership CPD which they appreciated but, in some cases, they were also grateful when they could say 'no' without being judged, as they did not always have the inclination or time to take up this CPD and were worried that they could be 'stretched too thin'
- **providing support for paid progression opportunities** – as RQTs, many teachers were looking for opportunities to progress in their careers, particularly into lead teacher and other leadership roles. ECTs in schools that were able to provide such opportunities, together with bespoke training and support for these roles, were more likely to report high levels of job satisfaction
- **having opportunities to observe teachers who are specialists** – as with the induction year, the opportunity to observe expert teachers and to be observed, and the professional dialogue that followed such opportunities, appeared to be

one of the key mechanisms whereby RQTs were able to continue to develop their skills and expertise

- **accessing opportunities to learn about the range of career options available** – RQTs valued the opportunities to hear from teacher in range of roles to support their career decision making: ‘I remember it inspired me because I wanted to then move up the career ladder and the next step for me was that I wanted to be a subject leader’
- **the provision of more personalised, light-touch training and support** – there appeared to be a general preference amongst ECTs towards moving away from more standardised programmes of training, which were regular features of the support offered to interviewees in their induction year. As ECTs, they wanted more personalised training and support opportunities that were aligned with their chosen career path
- **moving from mentee to mentor** – many ECTs spoke of the positive experience of taking on formal mentoring and support roles for the new cohort of NQTs, working alongside the designated subject and professional mentors. This appeared to be actively encouraged by schools, and ECTs were positive about how such opportunities had provided them with further opportunities to reflect on and further develop their own practice.

5.6 What worked less well

Most ECTs were very positive about the support and/or training opportunities they had received in their second and/or third years of teaching. However, ECTs and MCTs were less likely to report having had a positive experience of receiving training and support in their second and/or third year of teaching where:

- **formal CPD involved ECTs being ‘presented at’**, and did not take account of attendees’ differing needs and aspirations
- **they were signposted to online forums for sharing teaching ideas with teachers at other schools** – in particular, these forums were less effective where prior relationships did not exist, the system was not anonymised and there was no private messaging function
- **there appeared to be a lack of consistency in the number and type of training and/or progression opportunities available** – the variation with which ECTs in different subject departments/teaching phases or in different schools in the same MAT, were able to access training and to take on new roles, was a source of frustration for some. These judgements were of course based on a range of factors, but in the view of some ECTs, not all these decisions appeared to be fair or transparent

- **training was scheduled at times, or in locations, that were judged by some ECTs to be inappropriate** – such as twilight training that was held in a neighbouring school that did not finish until 8pm. This also presented a logistical challenge for an ECT who did not drive
- **insufficient time was allocated to follow-up formal training** – a number of RQTs commented that they often did not have the time to follow up learning from a course they had attended: ‘Very often people go on great courses and come back with good ideas but do not have the time to implement the stuff they have learnt because they are back in class again’
- **training was being delivered by a local teaching school or by another school in the MAT where previous provision had been poor** – some ECTs reported they were hesitant to attend such training due to concerns about the quality of similar provision that had been offered by the same school during their induction year.

5.7 Challenges

Despite the fact that case-study schools were deliberately chosen for having higher than average rates of retention of early career teachers, for most of the ECTs we interviewed, the opportunities available for second and third year teachers for training or support appeared to be the same as any other post-NQT teacher. Thus, it is perhaps not surprising that when asked if they had experienced any challenges in accessing or acting on CPD, their responses often related to challenges that are associated with the ingredients of good CPD more generally. These included:

- not giving teachers enough time to reflect on what they had learnt from CPD opportunities, or to put it into practice
- a lack of funding to send staff on training, or to release staff to attend training
- busy heads of department who had little time to offer support or to discuss training opportunities with staff
- variability in the quality of support received from line managers.

Some ECTs and MCTs also reported that the transition from the induction year to the second year of teaching had been challenging, a feature sometimes described as ‘practice shock’ (see Chapter 2), which is exacerbated by the combination of an increase in teaching hours with the reduction in formal support. However, these teachers also reported that the informal support they had received from colleagues, often itself a feature of a supportive whole-school culture, had helped them with the transition. Indeed, the majority of ECTs were happy with the training and support received in their second and/or third year of teaching, and reported no challenges.

Selected quotes about the training challenges experienced by RQTs

I think it's difficult in your second year because your NQT time goes...it can be difficult to adjust to the workload. It's a bit of a shock to the system! I think the second year is harder than the first year, as more is expected of you.

ECT, Primary MAT/Academy

5.8 Impacts

The collective impact of training and support offered to teachers in their second or third year teaching, were reported by ECTs, MCTs and CPD leads to bring a range of benefits, notably improved confidence and improved teaching practice, as well as the development of confidence and skills in commenting on others' practice. Impacts associated with greater career aspirations and higher levels of job satisfaction were also reported. These related to new-found opportunities to take on additional responsibilities, and/or to undertake training designed to prepare ECTs for such roles, such as subject leadership or head of key stage, in the future.

Given that case-study schools were selected on the basis of their high retention of ECTs over a three year period (see Chapter 3), it was perhaps not surprising that the ECTs we spoke to generally reported feeling settled, with very few expressing any short-term plans to move schools or to leave teaching. Some ECTs reported that, as NQTs and pre-service teachers, they had moved schools because of what they perceived to be a school culture or ethos that wasn't sufficiently supportive or developmental, and where they received little or poor quality support and guidance from colleagues. Some reported moving to their current settings on the basis of the quality of the support they had experienced there as trainee teachers, or based on what they had heard from other teachers about these institutions' supportive and developmental cultures. In these examples, case-study schools' collaborative and supportive whole-school cultures had clearly influenced early career teachers' decisions about the institutions they did and did not want to work in. However, as second and third-year teachers, it was the combination of factors, such as the school's ability to offer paid progression opportunities alongside a more a supportive and developmental school culture, which made the biggest difference to a teacher's job satisfaction.

There did not appear to be any significant differences in the impacts experienced by ECTs in their second or third year of teaching in different settings (i.e. by phase or type of school). While ECTs in secondary schools were often able to draw on the support of a

broader range of staff due to their larger size relative to primary schools, this did not appear to diminish the positive experiences of ECTs in primary settings.

Selected quotes about the impacts on RQTs

I think the biggest impact on me was just gaining support from a lot of experienced teachers, because I could draw on their experience and their resource. I could go and observe them and go and see their classroom set up, their classroom routines, and they were very keen to share their practice with me as a new teacher, new in to the role.

MCT, Primary Teaching School

The training that has had the most impact on me is that training that I've been able to apply directly to my teaching in the classroom.

MCT, Secondary Teaching School

It inspired me to want to move up the ladder and look in to what I wanted to do in the future.

ECT, Primary MAT/Academy

6. Key findings

The final chapter of this report draws together the evidence that has been collected to address each of the study's underpinning research questions.

1. What are the views of teachers and schools about the professional development opportunities and support provided during the induction/NQT year? How do these practices vary between schools and areas?

Most of the ECTs and MCTs we spoke to reported having a positive experience of induction, suggesting that the case-study schools, and other schools that some of the ECTs had started their careers in, had been largely successful in tailoring their offer to, the needs of different NQTs. ECTs' and MCTs' positive views of induction were associated with a number of common enabling factors, which included:

- **the importance of having a balanced package of support.** NQTs would typically engage in a standardised training programme alongside more bespoke, teacher-led opportunities (e.g. training/support tailored to the needs of individual NQTs)
- **a supportive whole-school culture.** In schools providing such a culture, induction was viewed as the start of a lifelong journey of training and support. Schools would typically operate an 'open door policy', providing frequent opportunities for professional dialogue
- **the personality and expertise of the mentor.** This was viewed as key to the success of the NQT-mentor relationship. In general, ECTs and MCTs valued mentors who worked in the same department or teaching phase as them and who, through observing them teach, they had developed respect for as expert practitioners.

However, even in the case-study schools, which had been identified as having higher than average rates of retention of early career teachers, there were a minority of ECTs who had reported experiencing problems during their induction year. These typically stemmed from having NQT mentors who were not subject or phase specialists, having limited or low- quality support from the NQT mentor, and/or from having a lack of tailored support opportunities.

The enabling factors, described above, were common features across all the case-study schools. There was variation, however, in the degree to which schools that were part of MATs were working in partnership. The strength of collaboration in supporting induction arrangements appeared to vary, with some schools in MATs pooling resources to share training expertise and to create additional opportunities to build teacher support networks. In others, such arrangements appeared to be less formalised, with variation in provision between schools sometimes justified as a need to maintain separate school

cultures and to protect schools' autonomy. The number of schools involved was too small to comment on variation by region. In terms of differences by school-level characteristics, it was perhaps not surprising to find that, compared to some of the case-study schools, it was the Teaching Schools that generally appeared to be working in closer partnership with other schools.

2. What support and professional development opportunities are available for teachers in the early years of their career following NQT year (often called the RQT year)? Are there any examples of good practice and are these based on evidence?

There is no statutory requirement for schools to provide training and support specifically for RQTs. As such, it is perhaps not surprising that, in most of our case-study schools, dedicated support for RQTs appeared to be limited, with many ECTs reporting that the professional development opportunities available to them were the same as those available for other staff, post-induction. Where support was offered specifically for RQTs, it was more light-touch than the provision offered to NQTs. Examples of the types of support provided to RQTs included:

- **support from other colleagues.** None of the ECTs or MCTs we spoke to appeared to have received any formal mentoring support in the year immediately following induction. However, in most cases, ECTs reported that they had continued to receive informal support from a more senior colleague, who, in most cases had been their NQT subject mentor. Beyond the focus on the support received from a particular individual, it was clear from the interviews that, as RQTs, most early career teachers relied more heavily on the support of a broader range of colleagues than had generally been the case in their induction year. This included colleagues drawn from their own subject department/teaching phase, as well as senior school managers and staff recognised as highly-effective practitioners
- **leadership and excellent teacher courses.** There was recognition in schools that many RQTs were looking for opportunities to progress in their careers, and that they wanted to better understand the different pathways that were open to them, including into key stage, subject leader, lead teacher, middle leader, and even senior leader roles, as well as tutor group, year group and pastoral roles. It was clear to schools that offering such opportunities was essential to ensuring that some ECTs maintained high levels of job satisfaction. As a result, it was not surprising that all of the case-study schools appeared to offer RQTs opportunities to develop their leadership skills, typically as an aspiring middle leader, with opportunities to progress into other roles, such as that of lead teacher, appearing more mixed. Training for middle leaders was often delivered through an in-house training programme, although some ECTs reported they had pursued external or

nationally recognised courses, such as the National Professional Qualification for Middle Leadership (NPQML). Most of the ECTs reported that such opportunities had been valuable and of a high-quality

- **RQT training programmes.** A small number of case-study schools reported that they offered dedicated training programmes specifically for RQTs. These programmes were open to all RQTs but, in some cases, they were offered on an optional basis. In general, RQT training programmes appeared to be practical in nature, and designed to enable teachers to continue to develop their own classroom practice whilst also beginning to consider the next steps in their teaching careers.

Many ECTs appeared to have identified a move into a middle leadership role as the next step on their career path, a view which was reflected in the fact that most schools also appeared to be focussing their efforts in supporting ECTs to take up such roles. However, there were other ECTs for whom progress into middle leadership roles was less attractive and where, in some cases, there appeared to be a more mixed offer, or indeed a gap, in progression opportunities, support and training for other specialist roles. Thus, the government's proposals to develop new qualifications for classroom teachers could find support amongst many ECTs.

As was the case with schools' induction arrangements, evidence behind the provision of support and training that was offered to staff in their second or third year of teaching was usually described by CPD leads in terms of teacher feedback or perceptions, rather than in terms of research evidence or evidence of 'what works'. Where strong emphasis was made regarding the use of research evidence, it was the CPD leads in Teaching Schools, which have a specific responsibility for providing evidence-based professional and leadership development for teachers and leaders across their network, who appeared to report more frequently that research evidence was used to inform whole-school CPD.

3. Is there any evidence that high levels of support or structured programmes of professional development bring benefits to teachers and their schools, for instance through, improved teaching quality, levels of confidence, greater aspiration and levels of job satisfaction?

All of the ECTs and MCTs we spoke to had taken part in structured training programmes as part of the support received in the induction year. These were designed to cover core knowledge and professional skills that schools thought teachers should have developed to a certain standard during their time as an NQT. These structured programmes consisted of discreet sessions, which were typically delivered once or twice a fortnight, usually within or at the end of the school day, and lasted for approximately one to two hours. Where these programmes appeared to be most effective, schools were able to combine a standardised and structured training programme with a personalised

programme of development and professional dialogue; the latter being largely facilitated through mentoring support.

The collective impact of NQTs' training and support experiences was reported to bring a range of benefits to participants, notably improved confidence. This was linked to the perception, held by ECTs, that their practice had improved, which appeared to be primarily driven by NQTs' growing bank of skills, developed through feedback from observations (both from being observed, and in observing others). Other reported benefits included the development of subject knowledge and practice (e.g. better differentiation and planning), as well as self-worth. Job satisfaction was less frequently discussed as an outcome in the induction year, and was more frequently attributed to training undertaken in the RQT year. It is difficult to attribute these self-reported benefits to the structured training programmes described above. However, it was the combination of different types of support, both structured, and (through the provision of mentor and peer-support) more fluid and personalised types of support that led to such benefits being realised.

4. Is there any evidence to suggest what the critical areas of development or knowledge are for teachers in the early years of their career? For instance, is training around general teaching knowledge practice more important than subject specific training? Is there any effective CPD focused on reducing workload?

Most school NQT programmes covered similar areas such as behaviour management, assessment and marking, the development of subject-knowledge, meeting the needs of particular children, and familiarity with school policies and processes. Programmes were aligned with the development needs reported by NQTs and the teacher standards. A critical area moving from Initial Teacher Training (ITT) to the NQT year was classroom/behaviour management, with NQTs being in charge of their own class, as opposed to teaching another teachers' class during ITT. However, there was evidence to suggest that NQTs' needs differed, depending on their routes into teaching. For example, some ECTs who entered teaching via Teach First or school-based ITT routes reported they were more familiar with their school's culture and policies and had more experience in the classroom than was the case for teachers from other ITT routes. Where they existed, dedicated CPD programmes for second and third year teachers covered areas such as differentiation, developing a classroom culture and climate, excellent teaching and learning, advanced formative assessment, developing strategies for managing an increased workload and an overview of the range of career options. Again, these topics generally aligned to the needs cited by RQTs, as well as to the teacher standards. Crucially, many ECTs also reported that, as RQTs, they 'wanted to spread their wings more', and wanted more light-touch, flexible support than that which was typically provided to NQTs.

As NQTs, ECTs typically viewed training around general teaching knowledge practice as being just as important as subject-specific training, although having time to apply, and where necessary adapt this training to their own classes was seen as important. RQTs generally felt secure in their subject knowledge but sometimes required support to teach older year groups and exam classes, particularly A-level. RQTs also benefitted from observing the teaching practice and strategies of teachers in other key stages and departments across the school.

Professional development on well-being and how to manage workload was seen as increasingly important at a whole-school level, but most schools were in the early stages of developing whole-school strategies to reducing workload. CPD related to workload management for early career teachers tended to focus on time management and prioritisation, and effective planning and marking.

5. What can we learn from international comparisons? Do any high-performing jurisdictions in Europe or US have clear support and structured programmes of professional development immediately following qualification and in the early years of a teacher's career?

As part of the rapid review, we looked at the practice in training, inducting and developing beginning teachers in New South Wales in Australia, the Netherlands, Norway, Singapore and Massachusetts in the USA (see Appendix 2). In three of the five jurisdictions, structured programmes of professional development are available immediately following qualification. For example, New South Wales operates a two-year model of quality school-based induction, with responsibility for this shared between the beginning teacher and the school. In Singapore, the Academy of Singapore Teachers (AST) provides a comprehensive two-year teacher induction programme for beginning teachers. This involves teachers being provided with mentoring support, with most matched to teachers who teach the same subject. In Massachusetts in the USA, the Department of Elementary and Secondary Education (DESE) requires school districts to provide beginning teachers with an induction programme which includes 50 hours of mentoring beyond the induction year.

By contrast, the Netherlands has no mandatory induction period for new teachers, with the expectation that schools will organise their own procedures for inducting, mentoring and coaching new teachers, while in Norway there is an entitlement to induction and mentoring, but this is not regulated. A 2014 OECD review of the Netherlands' provision, recognised that there was no guarantee that such structures existed for all schools, and recommended that regular support, guidance, feedback and mentoring was made available to beginning teachers. In Norway, school autonomy is a key feature of the education system, and up until 2010, there were no formal arrangements for supporting beginning teachers. However, in 2010, an agreement between the Norwegian Ministry of Education and Research and municipalities gave all new teachers an entitlement to

induction and mentoring, although the Ministry does not regulate the content or duration of schools' induction programmes.

It appears that from looking across these five international jurisdictions that there have been moves towards the formalisation and standardisation of support arrangements for teachers in their early stages of their careers, with mentoring being a common component of the support being provided.

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Appendix 1 Sampling and analyses undertaken

Method for identifying long list of case-study schools using SWC data

The research team surmised that high retention of ECTs could be an indicator that schools were offering an effective package of training and support to these teachers. We therefore decided to analyse SWC data to identify a sample of primary and secondary schools with an established track record of retaining ECTs. The ECT retention rate for each school was estimated in three steps as follows:

1. We identified the number of ECTs employed in each school in the 2013, 2014 and 2015 SWC. ECTs were identified in the data as qualified teachers who were, at that time, in the first three years of having entered teaching in a state-funded school after qualifying.
2. We looked at the 2014, 2015 and 2016 SWC to establish whether the ECTs in step 1 were still employed as teachers at the same school one year later.
3. We estimated an early-career teacher retention rate for each school by aggregating all the ECTs identified and across all three years of data.

The aim of the sampling approach was to select schools that had high retention rates of ECTs. However, as explained below, simply selecting the schools with the highest retention rates would be inappropriate because such an approach would systematically exclude schools with large numbers of ECTs.

Figure 1 demonstrates this issue: it plots each school's retention rate against the number of ECTs in each school over the three-year period. This type of diagram is known as a funnel plot, which is widely used for comparing institutional performance where the size of institutions affects how inferences can be drawn about relative performance (see Spiegelhalter, 2014⁹). The blue and red dots are individual schools and the yellow line shows the overall average retention rate for all schools. The data for primary and secondary schools is shown separately.

The funnel plot shows that schools with a small number of ECTs have a large variation in the retention rates, whereas schools that have had many ECTs have a smaller variance. Drawing a sample containing schools with the highest retention rates would result in a sample of small schools, which is undesirable for the qualitative research as the experiences of schools with many ECTs will not be included.

⁹ [Funnel plots for comparing institutional performance](#) [Available online]: [11/06/18]

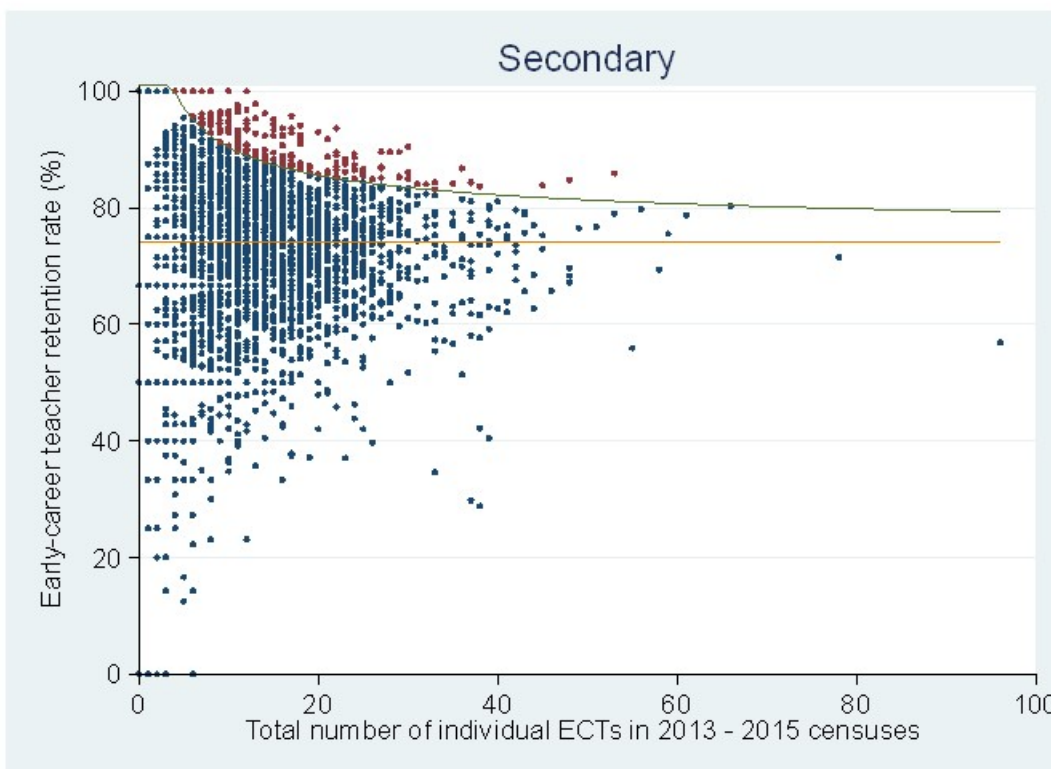
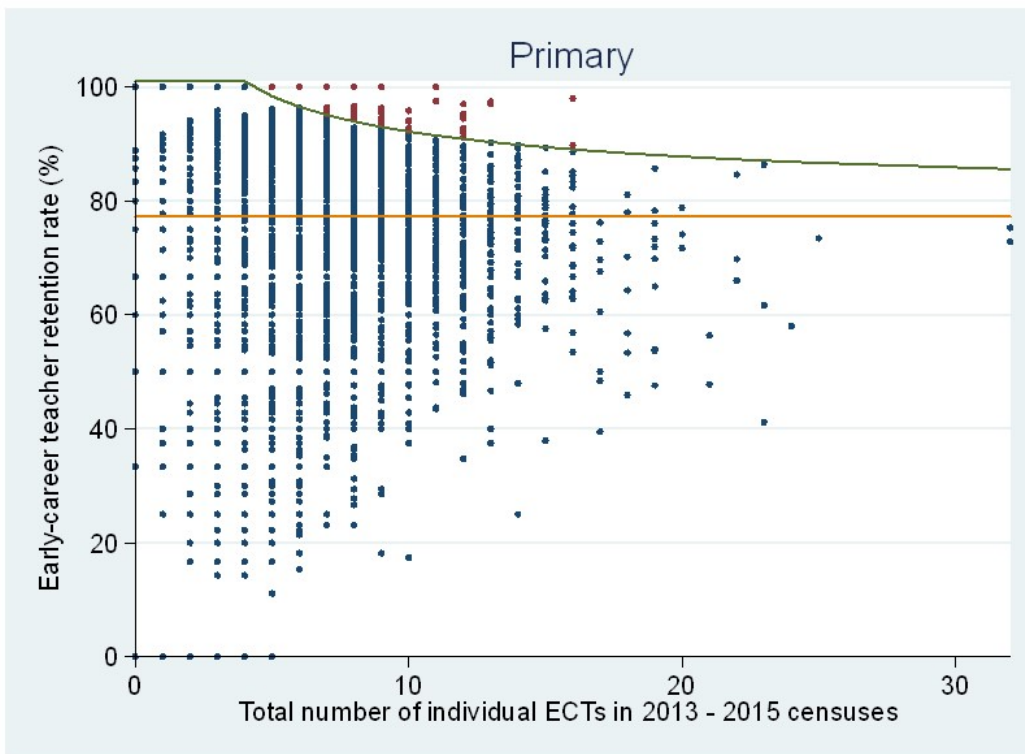
The relationship between how spread out the data is and the number of ECTs it is based on follows a mathematical formula derived from statistics. This is known as the 'control limit' in funnel plots, and is similar to a statistical confidence interval. The green line shows the shape of this relationship. In both cases the formula to draw the green line has been adjusted to move the line up or down to select a long-list of schools with the highest retention rates¹⁰. By using the control limit, this sampling approach gives schools with a large number of ECTs a fair chance of being selected.

However, this approach also had limitations. Schools with very small numbers of ECTs display a wide variation, and the control limits are consequently very wide. Applying a control limit effectively introduces a minimum sample size. This meant that any primary school with fewer than 5 ECTs during 2013-2015 and any secondary school with fewer than 4 ECTs during 2013-2015 was not sampled. However, the research team felt that most of these schools are unlikely to have extensive experience of, or formal programmes for, supporting early-career teachers.

The red dots show the schools that were selected for the long list and the blue dots are schools that were not selected.

¹⁰ The control limit for primary schools was an 87 per cent confidence interval and the control limit for secondary schools was an 88 per cent confidence interval.

Figure 1: Funnel plots of early-career teacher retention rates



Source: School Workforce Census data

1.2 Selected characteristics of the 20 case-study schools

Table 1 Type and method of data collection

School type	Primary schools		Secondary schools	
	Telephone	Visit	Telephone	Visit
LA maintained	School 01 School 05 School 06 School 07		School 11 School 12 School 15	
MAT/ Academy	School 02 School 03 School 09	School 04 School 10	School 18 School 19	School 16 School 17
Teaching School	School 08		School 14 School 20	School 13

Source: NFER research into early career CPD, 2018

Table 2 Selected characteristics of the primary schools

	Progress			FSM			Urban/ rural		Type	
	High	Middle	Low	High	Middle	Low	Urban	Rural	LA maintained	Academy / MAT
School 01		✓				✓	✓		✓	
School 02		✓		✓			✓			✓
School 03						✓	✓			✓
School 04			✓	✓			✓			✓
School 05	✓					✓	✓			✓
School 06					✓			✓	✓	
School 07						✓	✓		✓	
School 08						✓	✓		✓	
School 09	✓			✓			✓			✓
School 10		✓		✓			✓			✓

Data taken from school workforce census (where data is missing, this is because it is missing from the census)

Source: NFER research into early career CPD, 2018

Table 3 Selected characteristics of the secondary schools

	Progress			FSM			Urban/ rural		Type	
	High	Middle	Low	High	Middle	Low	Urban	Rural	LA maintained	Academy / MAT
School 11	✓				✓		✓		✓	
School 12			✓			✓		✓		✓
School 13	✓			✓			✓			✓
School 14		✓			✓		✓		✓	
School 15		✓				✓		✓	✓	
School 16	✓					✓	✓			✓
School 17	✓			✓			✓			✓
School 18		✓				✓		✓		✓
School 19		✓				✓		✓		✓
School 20	✓			✓			✓			✓

Data taken from school workforce census (where data is missing, this is because it is missing from the census)

Source: NFER research into early career CPD, 2018

Appendix 2 Early career CPD practice in five international jurisdictions

This summary briefly describes practice in training, inducting and developing beginning teachers in five jurisdictions internationally. The systems, selected in agreement with DfE, are New South Wales in Australia; the Netherlands; Norway; Singapore; and Massachusetts in the United States of America. We have incorporated relevant findings from the Organisation for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD)'s Teaching and Learning International Survey (TALIS), last run in 2013, for all jurisdictions excepting Norway, which did not participate.

Australia – New South Wales

To teach in New South Wales (NSW) publicly-funded schools¹, teachers must complete teacher education studies at a recognised Australian teacher education institution. They must also pass a national literacy and numeracy test before they complete their course. The [Graduate Recruitment Program](#), which student teachers enrol on during the last two semesters of teachers training, is the mechanism for gaining approval to teach. The student teachers receive 'interim approval to teach', enabling them to work as casual or temporary teachers while they complete their studies.

The [Australian Professional Standards for Teachers](#), developed by the Australian Institute for Teaching and School Leadership (AITSL), indicate what teachers should aim to achieve at every stage of their career to improve their practice. The Standards cover four career levels: 'Graduate', 'Proficient', 'Highly Accomplished' and 'Lead'. 'Lead' teachers are expert practitioners; a separate [Australian Professional Standard for Principals](#) applies to the holders of management roles.

[Graduate to Proficient: Australian guidelines for teacher induction into the profession](#) (AITSL, 2016) outlines the critical factors for high quality and effective induction of early career teachers. These include practice-focused mentoring, leadership contact, participation in collaborative networks, targeted professional learning, observation and reflection on teaching, practical information and time allocation. The guidelines recommend that induction should be a two-year process.

NSW operates a two-year model of school-based induction, detailed in the Department of Education's [Strong Start, Great Teachers](#) resource. Two research-based principles underpin this guidance: quality school-based induction needs to be comprehensive; and needs to be a shared responsibility between the beginning teacher and the school.

The Organisation for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD)'s country note, [Australia: Key Findings from the Teaching and Learning International Survey](#) (2014), indicates that teachers and principals in Australia report strong access to and support for teacher development programmes, and significantly fewer unmet professional development needs than the TALIS average. There is almost universal access to induction programmes (95 per cent of principals report their schools run these) and to professional development opportunities (97 per cent of teachers report this). Most teachers have access to mentoring opportunities, whether for all teachers (39 per cent), teachers new to the school (39 per cent) or teachers new to the profession (19 per cent).

Fewer Australian teachers than the TALIS average report that their professional development experiences have had a meaningful impact on their capabilities, yet more than three-quarters did report a positive impact in the development areas of subject knowledge and understanding, curriculum knowledge and pedagogical competencies.

Note:

¹ Qualified teachers wishing to move into the publicly-funded sector from the Catholic or independent sectors, which between them enrol 34 per cent of pupils, must apply for approval to teach, unless they have previously received approval and have taught in a NSW publicly-funded school within the last five years.

Netherlands

Teacher training courses in the Netherlands can lead to qualification to teach in primary education, or to a 'grade one' or 'grade two' qualification for teaching in secondary education; 'grade one' is higher and authorises the teacher to teach at the senior stages of the secondary education pathways. (It is possible to progress to management roles with either grade of qualification.) In addition, unqualified individuals who possess relevant knowledge and experience, and pass an aptitude test, may train through 'lateral entry' and teach on a temporary contract for a maximum of two years. During this period, they undertake training to gain a full teaching qualification, and thus a permanent contract.

In 2013, the Ministry of Education, Culture and Science published a Teacher Agenda ([De Lerarenagenda](#)), which outlined its key priorities for the profession until 2020. One of the Agenda's goals is 'Ensuring a good start for beginning teachers', a vision that, by 2020, 'all starting teachers in primary and secondary education will receive the guidance they need to be able to do their work as members of a professional team'. In 2015, the Ministry reported that the proportion of new teachers who entered from postgraduate training routes and had received guidance since commencing teaching had risen from 72

per cent in 2014 to 79 per cent in 2015. Meanwhile, the 2014/15 Collective Labour Agreement (CLA) entitles new teachers to a coach and extra time for professional development.

These actions mirrored the recommendations of an [OECD Review of Evaluation and Assessment in Education](#). This noted that the Netherlands currently had no mandatory induction period for new teachers. While an expectation held that schools would organise their own procedures for induction, mentoring and coaching of new teachers, there was no guarantee of such structures existing in all schools. OECD recommended that the Netherlands should focus in particular on beginning teachers, indicating that most high-performing education systems require their beginning teachers to undertake a mandatory period of probation or induction. The recommendation included providing regular support, guidance, feedback and mentoring to enable beginning teachers to confirm their competence to move on to the next stage of their teaching careers.

OECD's country note, [The Netherlands: Key Findings from the Teaching and Learning International Survey](#) (2014, pre-dating the 2014/15 CLA) reported that Dutch teachers had slightly higher than average participation rates in several types of professional development activity, but spent fewer days than average engaging in such activities.

Norway

Teacher education in Norway is university-based and the majority of training programmes are concurrent. Different types of initial teacher education qualify teachers to teach at different educational levels.

Local autonomy is a key feature of the education system and teachers' participation in professional development is a matter for municipal education authorities. The national authorities (the Ministry of Education and Research and its executive agency, the Directorate for Education and Training) have sought to limit the wide variation between regions by entering cooperation agreements with the municipal authorities. The GNIST initiative (Norwegian for 'spark'), a national partnership between the Ministry, municipalities and main stakeholders (2009-14), aimed to increase the quality and status of the teaching profession, teacher education, and school leadership.

The [Network for Mentoring Newly Qualified Teachers](#) disseminates information on mentoring for newly qualified teachers to graduates, new teachers, employers and the university / college sector.

An agreement between the Ministry and municipalities in 2010 gave all new teachers an entitlement to induction and mentoring, though the Ministry does not regulate the content

or duration of induction programmes. Prior to this, supporting measures for new teachers in their first post were not usually formal arrangements in Norway.

In 2016, the [Evaluation of the Guidance System for Graduates in Kindergarten and Schools](#) (Norwegian language report, with a summary in English) found that participants valued mentoring for ensuring a smooth transition between education and working life and to reduce 'practice shock'. They stated that mentoring gives them confidence and awareness of their own competence, that they develop as professionals and that they become more comfortable in their teaching roles. Participants also noted the importance of a good work environment, social support and opportunities for professional cooperation with colleagues. However, the research found that the provision of guidance was not universal, and its operation and the providers' competence were not standardised.

The [OECD Review of Evaluation and Assessment in Education](#) for Norway recommended that, to focus the offer of professional learning opportunities for teachers, the Ministry and the Directorate should consider engaging universities and stakeholders in a process to define a set of teacher competencies related to assessment and integrate these into overall teaching standards. OECD identified potential for competencies to inform the development of induction and mentoring programmes for newly employed teachers. It also recommended the Directorate and the universities to draw on research when developing professional learning programmes, and provide a mix of learning to maximise outcomes.

Norway did not participate in TALIS 2013.

Singapore

The National Institute of Education (NIE) is the provider of professional teaching qualifications in Singapore. All such qualifications have a practicum component built into the training programme. The Ministry of Education (MOE) also considers applicants' content mastery, experience and personal qualities when deciding on their suitability to teach. The system is competitive and recruits only those candidates deemed most suitable.

The Academy of Singapore Teachers ([AST](#)), a body established to lead the professional development of education staff, provides a comprehensive, two-year [teacher induction programme](#) for beginning teachers (those already deemed suitable). This aims to establish consistent and high standards of professional expertise. Its objective is to assist the transition from pre-service to in-service professional learning by providing teachers with:

- an understanding of their roles and responsibilities, professional expectations and ethos
- the opportunity to take ownership of their professional growth and development
- a sense of belonging to the teaching fraternity
- a support structure for their personal wellbeing.

The programmes engage beginning teachers at various ‘touch-points’, designed to best suit the needs of teachers at different milestones in their early teaching career. Activities include a beginning teachers’ orientation programme, in-service training courses run by AST (including several which BTs are ‘strongly encouraged’ to attend), and a Beginning Teachers’ Symposium (BTS). This is a platform to encourage teacher ownership and teacher leadership amongst BTs. The symposium focuses on the theme, ‘What Matters Most: Purpose, Passion and Professionalism’, and highlights effective practices and ‘ways to stay committed to becoming competent and caring education professionals’.

OECD’s country note, [Singapore: Key Findings from the Teaching and Learning International Survey](#) (2014) highlights successful features of the Singaporean system:

‘With a young teaching force resulting in a larger proportion of teachers with fewer years of teaching experience, Singapore has put in place strong teacher preparation and mentoring programmes to help newer teachers succeed.

- Singapore has the youngest teaching force across all TALIS countries, with an average age of 36 years, suggesting that initial teacher education may positively impact classroom practices. Teacher education is thus designed with a strong classroom practicum component, and 83 per cent of teachers (vs. a TALIS average of 67 per cent) have undergone a practicum in the subjects that they teach before becoming full-fledged teachers.
- In Singapore, formal induction programmes are virtually universal for all new teachers to the school (99 per cent), compared with 44 per cent on average across TALIS countries and economies.
- Moreover, during a teacher’s first two years in a school, further guidance is provided by assigning experienced mentors or senior teachers, enabling young teachers to learn practical knowledge and skills. Singapore has among the highest proportion of teachers serving as mentors for other teachers (39 per cent) or who currently have an assigned mentor (40 per cent), compared with the TALIS averages of 14 per cent and 13 per cent. In Singapore, 85 per cent of mentees are matched with mentors who teach the same subject, compared with the TALIS average of 68 per cent.’ (page 1)

Teachers in Singapore have higher participation rates than the TALIS average for a number of types of professional development activity.

USA – Massachusetts

Teachers in Massachusetts must hold a bachelor's degree or above, and complete a state-approved teacher preparation programme. The Massachusetts Department of Elementary and Secondary Education (DESE) is responsible for accrediting these programmes. In common with most other US states, Massachusetts requires trainee teachers to take tests to demonstrate their competence in basic skills and in their desired subject area. On completion of these requirements, a novice teacher may then apply for licensure.

The USA's National Board for Professional Teaching Standards (NBPTS) envisages a [teacher career continuum](#), which it defines as 'a coherent path to accomplished practice':

Pre-service teacher → Novice teacher → Professional teacher → Board-certified teacher → Educational leader

The vision foresees that, during the early years of their careers, teachers should build from their preparation experience, with a robust mentoring and induction programme for novice teachers seeking to further new teachers' efforts to improve their practice, understand the priorities of their school and school system and build relationships with their colleagues. Teachers will begin to develop their practice against five 'core propositions' outlined by NBPTS in [What Teachers Should Know and Be Able to Do](#) (2016):

- Teachers are committed to students and their learning
- Teachers know the subjects they teach and how to teach those subjects to students
- Teachers are responsible for managing and monitoring student learning
- Teachers think systematically about their practice and learn from experience
- Teachers are members of learning communities.

In Massachusetts, the DESE requires school districts to provide beginning teachers with an induction programme that includes orientation and a mentor during their first year and expects them to provide an additional 50 hours of mentoring beyond the induction year. Feedback from induction supervisors should provide the teachers with actionable steps to improve their practice. Participation in such a programme is a condition of the teacher advancing to Professional Teacher Status, awarded after the completion of three full and

consecutive school years in a district. The teacher may also undergo evaluation under a [Developing Educator Plan](#) at this point.

The Massachusetts Teachers Association's publication, [A Road Map for Beginning Teachers](#) (2017) provides guidance to help new teachers navigate the process.

OECD's country note, [United States of America: Key Findings from the Teaching and Learning International Survey](#) finds that American teachers tend to participate in professional development at a higher rate than the TALIS average, but they are less positive about its impact. For every type of professional development activity, fewer teachers report a moderate or large positive impact on their teaching.

Teaching Careers in Europe: Access, Progression and Support

Since we conducted our rapid review, the Eurydice Network – the European Commission's information network on education in Europe – has published a comparative report on *Teaching Careers in Europe: Access, Progression and Support* (EC, EACEA and Eurydice, 2018). The report highlights the emphasis given in the European Commission's *Communication on School Development and Excellent Teaching for a Great Start in Life* (EC, 2017) to the provision of special support for teachers during the early stages of their careers, to acclimatise them to real school environments and reduce drop-out.

Findings from Teaching Careers in Europe include:

- Twenty-six European education systems have compulsory induction for beginning teachers and, in 23 of these, mentoring is a mandatory element. Professional development activities such as training courses and seminars, and scheduled meetings with the headteacher or senior colleagues to discuss progress, are the other features most likely to be mandatory (in 17 and 15 systems respectively).
- Twenty-two systems require CPD planning within the context of the school development plan. For the most part, schools are responsible for deciding what training their teachers need, sometimes jointly with the education authority, sometimes by consulting teachers or teacher representative organisations. In only four systems is the responsibility held solely at central level.
- Incentives for teachers to participate in CPD most commonly exist in the respect that it is necessary for taking on additional responsibilities or for gaining promotion. In eight systems, undertaking CPD is a requirement for salary progression.

- All systems have a range of measures to facilitate teachers' participation in CPD activities by addressing barriers to participation. These may be financial, for example the provision of free or subsidised courses, travel grants for teachers or funding for schools to employ cover staff. They can also be non-financial, such as the option to attend courses during working hours or to take unpaid study leave.
- Specialist support also addresses teachers' needs, whether by assisting them in providing for pupils with general learning difficulties, improving their professional practice, or dealing with personal or health issues and interpersonal relations in the workplace.

A previous Eurydice Network study, *The Teaching Profession in Europe: Practices, Perceptions, and Policies* (EC. EACEA and Eurydice, 2015), found that the time teachers in lower secondary education spend in CPD is higher in countries where it is mandatory. This study also underlined that the mismatch between the CPD offer and the needs expressed by teachers was generally lower in countries where schools and teachers themselves have responsibility for defining training priorities.



Department
for Education

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Reference: DFE-RR860

ISBN: 978-1-78105-953-1

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