RESEARCH

The Recruitment, Deployment and Management of Supply Teachers in England

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Executive summary

Aims

The aims of this research were:

- to address the shortfalls and gaps in the data on the characteristics, recruitment, deployment, management and development of supply staff;
- to identify good practice in the areas listed above for dissemination; and
- to explore supply teachers' motivations for taking up this work, and any barriers or incentives that may prevent or encourage them from returning to or joining the permanent teaching sector.

The focus of the research was on supply teachers undertaking placements of no more than one term.

Background

Previous research relating to supply teachers in England has generally been small-scale, and much of it took place before the emergence of private supply agencies. However, using a variety of sources including research carried out in Scotland, it is possible to gain some picture of the issues around the recruitment, deployment and management of supply teachers. In the years since 2000 the DfES has taken a number of steps to try and increase quality of provision. These include the introduction of a Quality Mark for agencies and LEAs; provision of self-study materials for supply teachers; and guidance to schools, *Using Supply Teachers to Cover Short-term Absences* (DfES, 2002a). At the same time, wider education policies have impacted on the work of supply teachers: in particular, the National Agreement *Raising Standards and Tackling Workload* (DfES, 2003). Changes introduced as a result of the National Agreement allow schools to deploy support staff with appropriate skills, expertise and training to provide 'cover supervision' and/or undertake specified teaching activities under the direction and supervision of a teacher. Other changes outlined in the National Agreement provide annual limits to the amount of cover for absent colleagues that teachers are allowed to carry out, and give all teachers a guaranteed amount of time for planning, preparation and assessment (PPA). This policy was at a relatively early stage at the time of the research, but one of the objectives was to assess its impact at that date.

Research design

The research design involved collection of quantitative and qualitative data in each of three strands:

- *LEAs and agencies*: A survey of all LEAs was conducted, achieving a 55% response rate. Interviews were conducted in ten LEAs with varying forms of supply teacher provision; where relevant, private sector organisations in partnership with LEAs were also interviewed. Interviews were also conducted with eleven private supply agencies, chosen to include large national agencies, and smaller local and more specialist agencies.

- *Schools*: A survey of a national sample of schools was conducted (completed by the member of staff with responsibility for supply teachers); this was designed to include equal numbers of primary and secondary schools. In total 1375 responses were entered into the database and analysed. Case studies were conducted in twenty schools with the aim of obtaining much more detailed information than could be obtained from a survey about the schools' use of, and systems for the deployment of supply teachers. In each school the member of staff responsible for supply teachers was interviewed, documentation and records relating to supply teachers were reviewed, and where possible, any supply teachers in school that day were interviewed.
- *Supply teachers*: A survey of a national sample of supply teachers was conducted. Questionnaires were sent to schools: headteachers were asked to distribute them to the next four (secondary) or two (primary) supply teachers in the school. A total of 1554 responses were analysed. Nine focus groups were conducted, each with five supply teachers who were employed for a day. Each group was selected to include a group of people with a shared motivation for supply teaching in order to enable in-depth discussion of issues affecting specific groups of supply teachers. In addition nine telephone interviews were carried with supply teachers whose particular interests had not been represented in the groups.

Data collection took place between January and October 2005.

Findings

Schools' use of supply teachers and the impact of the remodelling agenda

Drawing on data provided by schools, it is estimated that there are over 40,000 teachers who do supply teaching at some point in a year.

There are differences between school sectors in the extent to which supply teachers are used (mean number of supply teacher days used in a year: primary, 82; secondary, 295). There is also a considerable range of use within each sector. The number of supply days used is positively, though not strongly, correlated with size of school. It is also related to percentage of pupils eligible for free school meals in primary schools (the schools with the highest percentage use more supply teachers) and to GCSE results in secondary schools (schools with over 65% 5A*-C grades use fewer supply teachers).

In nursery and primary schools, 42% of supply days used are to cover short-term sickness. In secondary and special schools this is 54% / 50%. The variation in mean sickness absence days across regions appears to contribute to the range of supply day use across regions. Professional development accounts for 41% of supply day use in primary schools, but only 17% in secondary. Schools that use a high proportion of supply teacher days to cover unfilled vacancies and long-term teacher sickness generally use more supply days altogether. In contrast, schools that use a large proportion of supply days to cover short-term sickness generally use a smaller proportion to cover professional development, and vice versa. There were some suggestions in the qualitative data that some schools were using supply teachers to cover for PPA time, but this did not appear to be a widespread practice.

Data relating to different ways of providing cover was examined. Secondary schools reported the greatest use of all forms of cover, with 95% of schools using internal regular teachers at least once a week, 86% using supply teachers and 33% using

support staff. Comparable figures for primary schools were 24%, 45% and 10%. Primary schools made less use of support staff than other sectors. Nursery schools reported the lowest use of both supply teachers and regular teachers to provide cover (less than 20% used either at least once a week).

Less than half the schools in the survey reported any increase in the use of support staff to provide cover following the National Agreement on workforce reform (DfES, 2003a). Fewer schools in London reported any increase, and this appeared to be partly related to their view that their support staff are not currently sufficiently skilled or trained. Almost a third of secondary schools were using support staff to provide cover because this was more cost-effective, although a third of these did not consider their support staff to be adequately trained or skilled for this role. The questionnaire and school case studies indicated that many headteachers / deputy heads (and particularly those in primary schools) did not want to use support staff to provide cover, and that many headteachers believed that the best solution would be for schools to have sufficient funding to employ floating teachers to provide cover, rather than using support staff.

There was some evidence that some supply teachers are finding less work than previously; this evidence was strongest in the focus groups, which were conducted in July and September 2005.

Organisations that provide supply teachers

There is no definitive list of private supply agencies; there appear to be well over a hundred in operation but the list is constantly changing. There is considerable variation in the scale of operation, with a few large companies operating nationally and dominating the market, and a large number of smaller local and specialist companies. Agencies generally pay teachers at a 'market rate' and charge schools that rate plus about £40 mark-up. Teachers paid by agencies are not eligible to pay into the Teachers Pension Scheme; a few agencies offer stakeholder schemes but take-up is limited. The provision of a quality service is a major concern for agencies, and they offered wide-ranging definitions of what they saw as quality provision. In relation to quality of deployment, some agencies laid greater emphasis on personal relationships while others emphasised effective IT systems that can select the most appropriate supply teacher based on their skills, previous experience in the school, and schools feedback. The Quality Mark was seen as a minimum definition of quality that was useful as a guide for new agencies, but was not seen to be of major concern for schools. Many agencies would welcome a more rigorous process of quality assurance.

Our survey of local authorities suggested that approximately one third of local authorities have no provision; one third have some sort of provision within the LEA or with other LEAs, and approximately one third make some provision through an arrangement with a private supply agency. Half those with no provision circulate a preferred supplier list to schools. Local authority provision varies immensely; some local authorities simply offer lists of supply teachers, which schools generally find unhelpful; others run services ranging from small-scale operations within HR to self-financing services run on the same lines as private supply agencies. There is in some cases an aim to provide an 'ethical' service that pays teachers on national scales, and meets the needs of challenging schools. The limited size of LEAs can make it difficult to meet schools' requirements, particularly for secondary subject teachers. While teachers are paid on national pay scales, it is generally agreed to be difficult to pass the pay threshold while working as a supply teacher. Very few local authority supply

services/agencies have been awarded the Quality Mark; some were not aware that they were eligible, and some felt that their small-scale service would not meet the criteria.

There are a wide variety of arrangements between local authorities and private sector companies. These include, for example:

- private sector companies managing deployment of supply teachers, or providing software through which schools can book online, while the local authority manages other aspects;
- arrangements in which schools and supply teachers are encouraged to use a preferred supplier, which charges schools a lower mark-up than agencies normally do; and
- arrangements in which a new agency is formed with a separate identity from that of the private agency or the local authority.

Many of these have proved unsatisfactory, and several of those existing at the time of our survey were being terminated by the time we arranged the interviews. A variety of limitations were identified; these do not apply to all arrangements, but represent some of the potential pitfalls:

- agencies not achieving the volume of bookings that would make the arrangement cost-effective because schools contact the teachers directly;
- the private sector company not having a local office, and operating entirely along call-centre lines;
- lack of clarity in the arrangements about who was responsible for what;
- where the pool of teachers was small, agencies seeking back-up from other agencies, and resultant lack of clarity about responsibility for quality;
- teachers in some cases not having access to the Teachers Pension Scheme, and in some cases not being paid on Upper Pay Scale.

However, the most effective arrangements offer a high quality service that combines the strengths of local authority and private agency provision, and have a strong focus on raising standards of provision.

Supply teachers' characteristics

In comparison with regular classroom teachers, supply teachers are older (50% aged 50 and over, compared with 26% of classroom teachers, DfES, 2005a). Supply teachers in Inner London are significantly younger than those elsewhere, and those in the East of England significantly older. The proportions of men and women are similar to the proportions nationally. A higher proportion of supply teachers than of regular teachers come from minority ethnic groups (14.3% compared with 8.9%); this is mainly accounted for by the number of overseas-trained white supply teachers.

In comparison with teachers nationally, the supply teacher sample includes a higher proportion of teachers without QTS and not on a route to QTS (7.8% compared to 2.8% nationally). This includes both overseas-trained teachers not on a route to QTS (5.4%) and those with no teaching qualification related to school (2.4%). Both groups are found in secondary schools more than primary, and a third of the overseas-trained teachers work in London. The supply teacher sample also included a higher proportion of NQTs than nationally (8.1% compared with 3.9%). NQTs in supply

teaching are significantly older than NQTs nationally. Of supply teachers working in primary schools, 12% had qualified to teach in secondary or post-16. Secondary teachers were qualified and experienced in a wide range of subjects, with the highest numbers in English, Modern Foreign Languages and Science. The majority (72%) of those working only in special schools have some relevant training.

Supply teachers' patterns of work

Of the supply teachers in the sample, 56% said their main way of obtaining work was directly from schools, 31% through private supply agencies, and 9% through local authority supply services. Several groups made significantly more use of agencies: secondary teachers, those working in inner city neighbourhoods, NQTs, overseas-trained teachers and those with no teaching qualification relating to schools. One fifth of those working through agencies were influenced by whether the agency had the Quality Mark, but availability of work and helpfulness and reliability were seen as more important factors.

The supply teachers in the sample worked an average of 2.9 days a week; this was significantly higher for younger teachers, those working through private supply agencies, secondary teachers, overseas-trained teachers and those in London. Primary supply teachers worked longer hours than secondary, and were more likely to work at home in the evenings. On average, supply teachers had worked in six different schools in the last year; however, a quarter of the sample had worked in only one school (often one where they had previously been employed). Those who worked through agencies and the younger teachers worked in more different schools. Most placements lasted less than a week.

Pay and pension arrangements

Average daily pay for those working through private supply agencies was £114 outside London and £119 in London, and for those working through local authorities or directly for schools, £132 outside London and £140 in London. The teachers in their twenties earned more working through private supply agencies than through local authorities or directly for schools, whereas all other age groups earned less through agencies then through other channels of work. Only half the respondents aged under 60 stated that they paid into any pension fund, and only 13% of those in their twenties. Around 40% of those aged under 60 working through local authorities or directly for schools (who were presumably eligible to pay into the Teachers Pension Fund) said that they did not do so.

Career patterns and motivations

The supply teachers in the sample have had quite varied careers, often including periods of fixed-term and part-time teaching, and employment outside teaching. On average they have been in permanent full-time teaching posts for less than half their years of employment. We have divided the sample into 'career groups', based on previous literature about supply teachers' careers. A third of the sample were retired or approaching retirement; a quarter combine supply teaching with another occupation; 8% were recently qualified (since 2000) and had not worked in a permanent teaching post for more than 6 months; and 8% of the sample were overseas trained teachers. The remaining quarter of the sample did not fall into any of these categories, and were divided into two career groups based on age.

Seventy-one per cent of the recently qualified teachers were supply teaching because they had been unable to get a permanent teaching post. The overseas-trained group emphasised the opportunity to travel and gain experience. Those combining with another occupation most often said they were supply teaching because it fits with childcare and family commitments, but some indicated that they were trying to develop other careers. The majority of the retired and retiring were supply teaching to supplement their pensions. All groups indicated that the lower workload was an important supplementary reason; this was more important as a main reason for the 'other' groups. The 'other aged 50 and over' group were the most likely to identify positive aspects of supply teaching that they particularly enjoyed: variety, flexibility, a focus on teaching and learning, less stress.

Job satisfaction

Overall, supply teachers indicated a high level of satisfaction with their work. More than three-quarters indicated that they were very or fairly satisfied with the schools and classes they were placed in; their workload, hours of work and conditions of employment, the degree of choice they had about when they worked and the amount of work they were offered. The lowest levels of satisfaction were with opportunities to develop relationships with other teachers, and pupil behaviour. Of the career groups, the overseas-trained teachers and the recently qualified teachers were the least satisfied, while the retired and retiring were the most satisfied. Overall satisfaction increased with age. Women indicated higher levels of satisfaction than men, and primary supply teachers than secondary (especially in the 30-59 age group). The latter was the case even when we control for gender. Supply teachers had some concerns about the status accorded to them by pupils and teachers in some schools, especially when on short-term placements.

Aspirations for the future

The recently qualified and younger supply teachers see their ideal employment and their expected future occupation as permanent full-time teaching. The overseas-trained teachers also generally expect to move out of supply teaching into permanent teaching, though often not in this country. Those who combine supply teaching with other occupations see their ideal as part-time teaching jobs or supply teaching, but generally anticipate that they will be doing the latter; this group were the most uncertain about their future employment. The retired and retiring teachers expect to continue in supply teaching until they retire.

Fourteen percent of supply teachers would prefer to be in permanent full-time teaching posts, and 17% in part-time permanent posts. For the remainder (excluding those who are retired), the main factors that might encourage them to join or return to the permanent sector were a reduction in workload (70%, 60% secondary) and better behaviour management in schools (43% primary, 74% secondary). Greater availability of part-time or job-share posts was seen as a major incentive by those who combine supply teaching with another occupation, and by a higher proportion of primary teachers (46%) than secondary (30%). Those teaching secondary shortage subjects were no more likely than other groups to anticipate moving into permanent posts.

Recruitment

Most supply teachers had approached an agency, LEA or school directly to obtain supply work. Their choice of which organisation(s) to approach were often constrained by their knowledge of which organisations supplied local schools. Those working through agencies had in some cases responded to advertisements. Many of those working through local authorities or directly for schools had retired from permanent work and continued in the same school (or a small number of local schools) as a supply teacher.

Both private supply agencies and local authorities recognised that word of mouth was probably the most important way in which they attracted supply teachers, and that providing a good service to those teachers already registered is crucial to increasing numbers. Local authorities undertook some advertising to ensure that prospective supply teachers were aware of their existence. Agencies stressed that in a competitive market it is important to attract both teachers and schools; advertising is used to attract supply teachers, and cold-calling to increase business among schools. The larger companies indicated that making schools aware of the whole range of services they could offer was an important aspect of this strategy.

More than two-thirds of the schools in the sample had recruited supply teachers directly, including former members of staff (in 63% of schools), and parents (in 20% of nursery and primary schools). Word of mouth and recommendation had been used by a fifth of the schools, and a tenth had advertised for supply teachers. These strategies indicate the importance that schools accord to building up a group of supply teachers who can be used in the school on a regular basis. However, this is much more feasible for rural and suburban schools, and for those outside London., which are regarded by teachers as more attractive places to work, and are more likely to have retired and former members of staff living locally.

Deployment to schools

Overall responsibility for cover in a school normally rests with a member of the management team (generally the headteacher in a primary school and an assistant or deputy head in a secondary school), but this is not always the case. The practical arrangements are most often made by support staff. The role of support staff in both managing and arranging cover appear to be increasing with workforce reform. There were some tensions between the notion of arranging cover as essentially a data exercise, and the idea that deciding who teaches which class is an important aspect of teaching and learning, and should therefore be managed by a senior member of teaching staff.

About two-thirds of all schools said their first strategy to obtain a supply teacher is to make direct contact with a supply teacher who is familiar with the school. However, around half the primary, special and nursery schools turn to agencies if their first contact is unsuccessful, as do almost 80% of secondary schools. Where agencies and local authority supply services are used, over 70% of schools say they ask for a preferred teacher by name. The use of local authority supply services is much lower than of agencies, but this is partly accounted for by the patchy provision. Where local authorities run supply services or agencies they are often very well used.

Some schools are less able to obtain supply teachers through direct contact; this includes the following groups: schools in urban areas, particularly London; schools that are larger; schools with lower attainment; and schools with high free school meals

eligibility. Such schools are more likely to use private supply agencies and to use more different and less familiar supply teachers. In contrast smaller schools in rural areas or outside London; schools with high attainment; and schools with low free school meals eligibility are more likely to obtain supply teachers through direct contact, and to use more familiar supply teachers. The most challenging schools are likely to have to pay more for their supply teachers. Around 30% of teachers (more secondary than primary) had turned down work in particular schools, most often because of poor pupil behaviour and lack of support.

Secondary schools experience the greatest difficulty in obtaining supply teachers to teach practical subjects such as PE and technology, while primary schools reported a shortage of supply teachers willing to teach Year 6 and Foundation Stage classes.

Schools' evaluations of private supply agencies, local authority services and supply teachers

Schools consider that the most important factors in any agency or supply service are reliability of service and quality of teacher provided (each rated very important by more than 95% of respondents). Positive relationships with agency staff and monitoring of teachers in post were also seen as important (rated very important by around 50%). The Quality Mark was rated as very important by only 8% of respondents, and appearing on a preferred supplier list by 14%. The majority of schools rated the agencies or supply services they used as good or excellent in relation to efficiency of booking (90%), providing cover when needed (84%), and quality of teacher provided (73%). Secondary schools gave higher ratings and special and nursery lower in relation to the first two of these.

Schools also rated their supply teachers against a list of qualities. Overall mean ratings of excellent or good were given by the vast majority of nursery (94%), primary (87%) and special (84%) schools, and by 67% of secondary schools. Less than 1% of schools gave an overall rating of poor. The schools that were able to use directly contacted teachers (generally suburban or rural, with low free school meals eligibility and good attainment) rated these as more effective than did the schools that used many unfamiliar teachers (more often urban, high free school meals eligibility, poor attainment, secondary). Schools that provided supply teachers with pupil information gave significantly higher ratings for overall satisfaction.

Deployment in schools

There is a considerable difference between the expectations that primary and secondary schools have of supply teachers on short placements. The vast majority of secondary schools (97%) 'usually' expect supply teachers to supervise pupils doing set work, and 75% do not aim to achieve a subject match on short placements. On average secondary supply teachers spent only 40% of their time teaching subjects in which they had qualifications and experience. Primary schools usually expect supply teachers to teach, following the absent teacher's plans (74%). This difference contributes to the greater job satisfaction indicated by primary teachers. Schools have limited expectations of the tasks that supply teachers on short (less than a week) placements will undertake, and some schools also have very limited expectations of those working for longer periods.

Supporting supply teachers

The DfES guidance, *Using Supply Teachers to Cover Short-term Absences* (2002a), sets out very clearly what is good practice in relation to supporting supply teachers. Only 36% of secondary schools and 18% of primary schools indicated that they were familiar with this document. Schools considered supply teacher induction and the provision of a named individual to support and supervise supply teachers to be important in maximising the effectiveness of supply teachers. Most schools (81% primary and 93% secondary) reported that they provide supply teachers with a brief handbook of information. However, only 33% of primary and 68% of secondary supply teachers reported that they were 'almost always' or 'sometimes' given such a handbook. Those who had experienced this reported that such information was very useful. In the same way far more schools reported that a named individual was responsible for supporting supply teachers than supply teachers reported having such support. It is thus very difficult to assess the extent of good practice in this respect. In many schools more than one person shares responsibility for supporting the supply teacher, and while this may be very effective, it can also leave the supply teacher with no support at all, and nobody aware of their needs. Supply teachers reported some experiences of very inadequate support, in terms of not being given information, and not supported in relation to pupil behaviour. But many also reported positive experiences and supportive teachers in the schools they worked in.

It appears from both school responses and supply teachers' accounts that secondary schools generally provide more systematic information and support than primary schools, but this is by no means universal. However, those supply teachers in primary schools generally felt that they were well supported by the neighbouring teachers even when systematic information and support was not provided. The worst experiences of lack of support reported were all in secondary schools.

Professional development of supply teachers

The majority of agencies and LEAs offer some professional development for supply teachers, though several noted that many supply teachers are not enthusiastic about CPD. Forty-three percent of the LEAs in the survey provide CPD designed to meet the needs of supply teachers, and 43% said that supply teachers had access to some of the range of LEA CPD; however, a further 21% commented that this would only be the case if the school or the supply teacher paid for the CPD training/provision. LEAs that provide a supply service or agency are more likely to offer CPD, and in some cases this was carefully designed to meet supply teachers' needs, and training needs were identified from feedback from schools. LEAs partnerships with private sector companies varied enormously in their provision: in some cases no provision for CPD had been made in the partnership agreement, and in other cases one partner or other was responsible. The best practice came where both partners had an equally strong commitment to the development of supply teachers. Private supply agencies offer a wide range of provision, often linked to social events where supply teachers can meet each other. While there have been some imaginative attempts to improve provision, including accredited courses and internet courses, the general view was that take-up is limited. Schools tend to include long-term and regular supply teachers in INSET days and twilight training, but generally feel that this is not their responsibility.

Overall, 34% of the supply teachers responding to the survey and who had been supply teaching throughout the previous year had had some CPD in that year. The overseas-trained teachers (49%) were the most likely to have done so, while those in

their sixties (23%) and NQTs (25%) were the least likely. Primary supply teachers were more likely than secondary to have undertaken any CPD (39%, 27%). Although they were not specifically asked about reasons for not engaging in CPD, many explained that this related to loss of pay (if held during the day) or to inappropriate timing (if held in the evening); the latter was the view of those doing supply because it offers flexibility and allows them to prioritise child-care. Those approaching retirement simply felt that they were too old. But a substantial group indicated that they had never been offered any CPD. Those who had experienced CPD indicated that this was in many cases limited to a single twilight session in the year. Supply teachers working through LEAs were the most likely to have accessed CPD, and those working directly for schools the least likely; however, schools were overall the largest provider. Of those that had experienced CPD, 17% had attended ICT training (most often provided by a school), and 13% behaviour management courses (most often provided by agencies). Fifty percent of the supply teachers identified areas in which they would like CPD in the year ahead: ICT and behaviour management were the most frequently mentioned areas.

A quarter of the supply teachers were aware of the DfES self-study materials for supply teachers (DfES, 2002b); 9% had used them; and the majority of these had found them useful. Most agency and LEA interviewees were aware of them and promoted them; however, very few schools (4%) said they were familiar with the materials, and only 1% had recommended them to supply teachers.

Emerging themes: good practice

Clear descriptions of good practice are set out in the criteria for the Quality Mark and in the DfES guidance (2002a). While LEA, schools and supply teacher respondents were not all aware of or familiar with these documents, the accounts of good (or less good) practice given by all respondents were largely in accord with those of the Quality Mark criteria and guidance for schools.

Overall, much good practice was evident. Agency practices were, with few exceptions, good, and appeared to be very much better than research conducted a few years ago has indicated. They argued that in the competitive market they need to operate with good practice in order to survive. While some LEA arrangements (including private sector partnerships) were models of good practice, the quality was variable, and some make little or no provision. Where schools recruited and employed supply teachers directly, it was difficult to assess how far appropriate procedures were being employed, for example in relation to checks and quality. Comparisons between the different forms of employment / deployment are generally inappropriate because they are catering for different school markets and using different groups of supply teachers.

In relation to employment and deployment to schools, the main issues of concern among supply teachers and schools were:

- Pay and pensions: the process for threshold assessment is not entirely appropriate in relation to the working patterns of supply teachers. Fifty-five percent of supply teachers aged under 60 are not paying into any pension fund.
- Challenging schools: such schools use more supply teachers, often have to pay them more, but also often receive less well qualified and experienced teachers. The operation of a market (which includes agencies, LEAs and all schools and

supply teachers) militates against such schools obtaining high quality supply teachers.

- Professional development: 66% of supply teachers had experienced no professional development activity in the last year.

Many schools were operating in line with the DfES guidance on using supply teachers, but some were not. Some supply teachers could have contributed more effectively to teaching and learning if they had been better informed and supported by the schools. The main issues of concern in relation to the use of supply teachers in schools that arise from the data collected are:

- lack of familiarity of schools with the DfES guidance;
- limited provision of information hand-outs, adequate information about pupils, and in some cases, resources;
- varied expectations of supply teachers that were not always made explicit.

It remains to be seen whether support staff and cover supervisors can provide cover effectively in all schools; it is a concern that a minority of schools were using support staff who they said were not appropriately skilled and trained to provide cover, and indicated that they were doing this as a cost-cutting measure.

Many schools intend to continue using supply teachers to provide short-term cover in the foreseeable future, and most expect to use them to cover long-term absences. Many supply teachers would prefer to continue in this role. It therefore seems crucial to continue to work to support this part of the workforce so that they can make an effective contribution to teaching and learning.

1 Introduction

This research was commissioned by the DfES in November 2004, with the aims of addressing the shortfalls in the data on the characteristics, recruitment, deployment, management and development of supply teachers; identifying and disseminating good practice in these areas; and exploring supply teachers' motivations for taking up this work, together with any barriers or incentives that may prevent or encourage them from returning to or joining the permanent teaching sector. In the context of this research, the DfES have defined supply teachers as temporary teachers used by the school to teach lessons where the regular teacher is unavailable, regardless of method recruitment. The focus of the study is on supply teachers undertaking cover of no more than one term in duration.

There has been little previous research on supply teachers and teaching in England. In Chapter 2 the existing research from England and elsewhere is reviewed, and the policy context is described.

Data was collected though national surveys of LEAs, schools and supply teachers, and through interviews and focus groups with representatives of private supply agencies and local authorities, and with schools and supply teachers themselves. The research design and methodology are described in Chapter 3.

Chapter 4 considers the extent of schools' use of supply teachers, and how this varies across schools and geographical areas. This leads to an estimate of the total volume of the market. The reasons why schools need to use supply teachers are discussed; this is followed by a review of the various ways in which schools provide cover (using internal teaching staff, support staff and supply teachers), and the factors that impact on the strategies used, including the remodelling agenda. Chapter 5 then considers the various organisations that are involved in the provision of supply teachers: private supply agencies, local authority supply services, and partnerships between local authorities and private sector companies. It reviews the variety and scale of their operations, their pay and charging arrangements, and their perceptions of quality, and the role of the Quality Mark and of preferred supplier lists in this.

Chapter 6 sets out the characteristics of supply teachers: their age, gender, ethnicity, qualifications and subject specialisms. It reviews the ways in which they obtain work and their patterns of work (days and hours worked, number of different schools worked in, pay and pension arrangements). Chapter 7 also focuses on the supply teachers; it describes the career patterns and experience of supply teachers, their motivations for entering supply teaching and their aspirations for the future, including whether they hope to return to or join the permanent workforce, and if not, what might encourage them to do so.

In Chapter 8 we review the way supply teachers are recruited by private supply agencies, local authority supply services and schools. Chapter 9 focuses on deployment of supply teachers to schools. It outlines schools' procedures and practices in obtaining supply teachers from different sources (schools' own lists, use of agencies and LEA services) when they need them, and their perceptions of the effectiveness of these practices. It also considers the extent of schools' awareness and perceptions of recent government initiatives such as the voluntary Quality Mark for teacher supply agencies and LEAs, and London's preferred supplier list.

Chapter 10 presents data about the deployment of supply teachers within schools; this includes the nature of the teaching they do (including the extent to which secondary subject specialists teach their own subjects), and the expectations that schools have of those on placements of different lengths.

Chapter 11 reviews the extent to which schools are aware of DfES guidance on the use of supply teachers, and then focuses on the ways that the supply teachers are inducted and supported within schools, and the very wide range of practice in this. Chapter 12 turns to professional development activity for supply teachers. It reviews the provision made by local authorities, private supply agencies and schools, and then presents data about the professional development activity that supply teachers have been involved in during the previous year.

Chapter 13 draws together the various issues arising from the research, and focuses particularly on the extent to which there is good practice in the recruitment, deployment and management of supply teachers.

Throughout the report we demonstrate the range of provision, and how this differs across schools and supply teachers. At one end of the spectrum are rural schools with low pupil numbers, low free school meals eligibility, and good attainment. These schools generally have a pool of local supply teachers who work directly for them; these are often former members of staff, parents or personal contacts. Such schools use the same familiar supply teachers on a regular basis, and generally consider their arrangements to be satisfactory. At the other end of a spectrum are those urban and inner-city schools that have large numbers of pupils, high eligibility for free school meals, and relatively low attainment. Such schools are not able to develop their own list of familiar teachers, and so they tend to use private supply agencies, who supply them with teachers who are often young and relatively inexperienced; they tend to use many unfamiliar supply teachers. Schools regard such arrangements as less satisfactory.

2 Research and policy context

Introduction

Research focusing on supply teachers has been very limited. In England, there was a flurry of research published in the early 1990s (see for example, Trotter and Wragg, 1990; Shilling, 1991; Morrison, 1993; Galloway and Morrison, 1994). However, the context in which this research was undertaken differed from the current context in that few private supply agencies then existed, and they are hardly mentioned in these publications. During the last ten years the main research published has been:

- Morrison (1999), focusing on the role of private supply agencies;
- Hutchings, examining the role of agencies in teacher supply in London (2000), and the growth of agencies since 1989 (2004);
- Barlin and Hallgarten (2002) considering supply teachers in the context of the teaching profession as a whole;
- Hutchings (2002) analysing the career histories and motivations of UK-trained supply teachers in England;
- Grimshaw, Earnshaw and Hebson (2004) in a case study of one private supply agency, considering legal issues, quality and costs; and
- McNamara, Lewis and Howson (2005) focusing on the recruitment of overseas-trained supply teachers.

The Value for Money Unit (DfES, 2002a) collected data from schools relating to the use and management of supply teachers. The Ofsted report, *Schools' Use of Temporary Teachers* (2002), starts from a concern about the impact of temporary teachers on schools and pupils. In addition, some books of advice for supply teachers draw on small-scale research (e.g. Dougherty, 2002); similarly, Cockburn and Haydn (2004), advising schools about teacher supply and retention, drew on interviews with a few supply teachers.

Research focusing on supply teachers in other countries has also been limited. The Scottish Executive has commissioned two studies of the management of supply cover: Spratt (2000) focused on the role of education authorities, and Menter *et al.* (2004) examined the perspectives of local authorities, schools and the supply teachers themselves. In Australia, Webb (2002a, 2002b) has focused on the work of relief teachers in schools.

What is a supply teacher?

Many authors have drawn attention to the wide variety of work arrangements encompassed by the term 'supply teacher'. The DfES (2002a) pointed out that it can be used to describe any teacher who is not contracted to the school, and may include both those teachers carrying out ad hoc work when the regular teacher is not available (generally due to illness or professional training), and those covering for a long period of time due to long-term absences or recruitment difficulties.

Supply teachers experience a variety of different employment arrangements, including working through LEAs, supply agencies, or directly for schools. They may be paid a daily rate in relation to national pay scales, or a rate fixed by a private supply agency.

In addition, supply teachers come from a range of backgrounds and have varied qualifications. A number (particularly those working in London) are overseas-trained teachers, generally from Commonwealth countries. Their teaching qualifications are not automatically recognised in this country, and thus they are considered to be unqualified teachers until such time as they go through an assessment for Qualified Teacher Status (QTS) in England and Wales.

This wide variety of arrangements has resulted in the use of many different terms to describe such teachers: for example, occasional teacher, emergency cover, temporary teacher, short/long-term supply, overseas teacher, agency teacher, LEA pool, most of which do not have agreed standard definitions (Barlin and Hallgarten, 2002). In Australia they are referred to as relief teachers, and in the USA as substitute teachers: the latter has been adopted by some researchers as a clearer indication of the role that is undertaken (e.g. Morrison, 1994).

Numbers of supply teachers

The variety of forms of work, employment arrangements and qualifications described above makes it difficult to describe this group clearly in educational statistics. Some data are collected, but present an incomplete picture. There are two figures it would be useful to have: the total number of people who ever work as supply teachers in a particular year, and the number working in schools on any one day. Research in Scotland showed that supply teachers there work in schools on average 3.5 days a week (Menter *et al.*, 2004); thus the total number of supply teachers is substantially larger than the number working on any particular day.

It is difficult to assess the total number of people who ever undertake supply teaching. The register of teachers kept by the General Teaching Council (GTC) aims to include all teachers with Qualified Teacher Status (QTS), and thus probably the majority of supply teachers. Its 2003-4 *Annual Digest of Statistics* included 22,254 supply teachers (3.9% of the total registered) (GTC, 2004). The 2004-5 *Annual Digest* noted that in order to improve the quality of the data held, a data collection exercise had been undertaken which included LEAs, schools and 300 teacher supply agencies. As a result, the number of supply teachers recorded rose to 36,458 (6.9% of all teachers registered)[1] (GTC, 2005a).

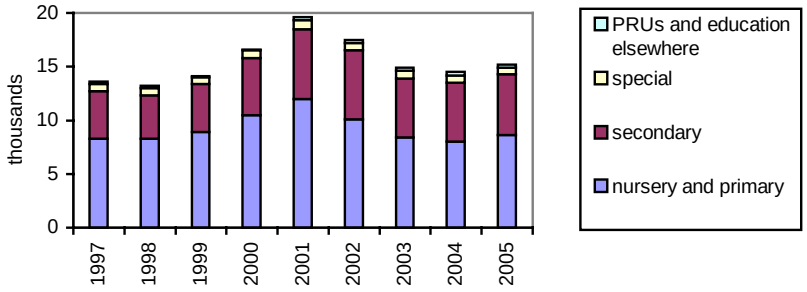
Data on the total number working in school at any time are also limited. The DfES collect data about 'occasional teachers', who are defined as teachers employed for the whole day on the survey date, but having a contract of less than a month. This definition excludes those supply teachers in longer-term placements. While the work done by those on longer placements may be seen as more like the work of a permanent teacher, 'the motivations of long-term supply teachers may differ greatly from a teacher committed to spending a significant number of years in a particular school' (Barlin and Hallgarten 2002: 67). Moreover, in Scotland, Menter *et al.* (2004)

[1] In this context, the GTC notes that 'supply teachers are teachers whose record shows that they are currently in service and are employed as a supply teacher with either an LEA or other organisations such as private agencies. Supply teachers are counted once regardless of the number of LEAs or supply agencies they are registered with' (GTC, 2005a).

found that the same teacher will often undertake a mixture of both long- and short-term placements.

While the DfES data on occasional teachers does not include all supply teachers, it is particularly useful because it is possible to track changes over time. Schools are asked on a specific date in January to report the number of 'occasional' teachers employed, together with other data about staffing. Those without QTS are included in the total figure (unlike the GTC data). Figure 2.1 shows the numbers of occasional teachers recorded each January from 1997 to 2004.

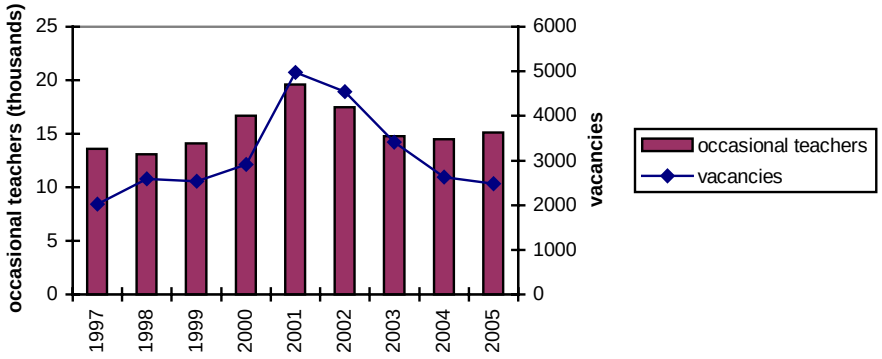
Figure 2.1: Occasional teachers in school in January each year in different types of schools



Source: DfES (2005b) *School Workforce in England, January 2005 (revised),* Table 1.

Figure 2.1 shows that the primary sector consistently uses more supply teachers than secondary sector (though the total number of permanent teachers in the two sectors is very similar). This reflects a greater use of internal cover in secondary schools (DfES, 2002a). The number of occasional teachers peaked in 2001, when many schools experienced a teacher shortage, and has since fallen. This pattern echoes the pattern of teacher vacancies, as shown in Figure 2.2.

Figure 2.2: Number of occasional teachers 1997-2005 plotted against numbers of vacancies in January each year



Source: DfES (2005a) *School Workforce in England, January 2005 (revised),* Tables 1 & 7

A second source of data on the number of supply teachers comes from the private supply agencies. In 2002, Barlin and Hallgarten claimed that agencies estimated that agency teachers made up 10% of the total teaching population; this included teachers

undertaking long-term placements as well as 'occasional' teachers, but did not include those working for LEAs or directly for schools. However, it is unclear what data this estimate is based on.

Changing demand for supply teachers

Traditionally supply teachers were used mainly to cover sickness absence. However, during the 1990s demand rose rapidly because professional development sessions for teachers were increasingly scheduled during school hours. Thus the Value for Money Unit (DfES, 2002a) found that 50% of schools reported staff training as the most common reason for using supply teachers, with 26% indicating 'immediate crisis', 11% 'long-term absence' and 14% 'other'. In Scotland the education authorities reported that up to 35% of supply teacher days were used to cover professional development (Menter *et al.*, 2004).

Supply teachers' careers and motivation

The advantages of working as a supply teacher have been identified as gaining wide experience, working flexibly, having less workload and responsibility, and having the power to turn down work, while the disadvantages include lack of security and feeling undervalued, deskilled and excluded (e.g. Nias, 1989; Hutchings, 2002; Menter *et al.*, 2004). Researchers have identified a number of different groups of supply teachers with differing motivations and career patterns, including recently qualified teachers; overseas-trained supply teachers; those combining supply teaching with another occupation such as child-care; and those who are approaching the end of their careers and which to work less hours, or who have already retired.

Several studies have drawn attention to the high number of supply teachers who are recently qualified and have not yet found permanent posts (e.g. Hutchings, 2002; Menter *et al.*, 2004). In England, this appears to result in part from a concern among NQTs to try out a school before accepting a permanent post there, and among headteachers to try out the NQT before offering a permanent post. Mature entrants to the profession have had particular difficulty gaining permanent posts, possibly because they are less mobile than younger teachers and have to wait longer for a suitable vacancy to arise (Bird, 2002). Some of these find themselves reluctantly as continuing to work as supply teachers for long periods (Hutchings, 2002; Cockburn and Haydn, 2004).

This phenomenon of recently qualified teachers doing supply work is common across a number of countries, though the causes may be rather different. In Scotland, buoyant teacher supply has resulted in those who are newly qualified having real difficulty finding permanent work. Draper *et al.* (1997) found that two-thirds of Scottish probationers started their careers doing supply teaching, and one-third still had not achieved a permanent post after two years. Even after the introduction of a one-year induction placement, ensuring that all newly qualified teachers gain some solid experience, it was found that about 40% of those completing the induction year could only find supply work. In Australia, Tromans (2002) also reports concerns about the high proportion of recently qualified teachers undertaking supply and other temporary work.

Another group of supply teachers are those trained overseas. The majority of these are young, taking advantage of the working holiday visa scheme which allows young Commonwealth citizens aged 17 – 30 to work for up to two years in the UK. Many

schools have reported preferring overseas-trained teachers because they often have a positive attitude and good class control (Morrison, 1999). However, such migration has exacerbated teacher shortages in some other countries (Hutchings, 2004; Commonwealth Secretariat, 2004). Such teachers are not generally seeking permanent work in the UK, but appreciate the flexibility of supply work which allows them to both earn and take time out to travel (Barlin and Hallgarten, 2002; McNamara *et al.*, 2005). However, some are attracted by pay levels and professional development opportunities, and want to live in Britain (McNamara *et al.*, 2005). Numbers of overseas-trained supply teachers increased around 2000-2001 when teacher shortages in some parts of England were acute (Barlin and Hallgarten, 2002). However, this is not simply one-way traffic; there is an increasing trend for UK-trained teachers to be recruited to work overseas in this global market (Hutchings, 2004).

A third group of supply teachers are those in mid-career, who are combining supply teaching with another occupation, most commonly child-care, though also a range of other work including careers in the arts (Hutchings, 2002). For this group, flexibility and the lower workload associated with supply teaching are particular attractions (Menter *et al.*, 2004). Acker (1999) drew attention to the high proportion of women among supply teachers, commenting that they were often women returning to teaching after career breaks for child-care. Cockburn and Haydn (2004) reported that it is a useful way back into teaching in that it can be a tentative step, but the experience of teaching can remind people what they enjoy about the job. In Scotland MacDonald and Munn (1992: 2) found that while some women returning after career breaks saw supply teaching as an attractive option, over a third did not want supply posts, either because the work was not secure, or because they saw it as 'personally and professionally unfulfilling'.

There is evidence that some teachers leave permanent jobs in mid-career to take up supply teaching, often attracted by shorter hours and less paperwork and responsibility (Troman and Woods, 2001; Cockburn and Haydn, 2004; Menter *et al.*, 2004). Smithers and Robinson (2005) have investigated the destinations of teachers resigning permanent posts or coming to the end of short-term contracts (together termed 'resignees') for each of the years 2003-4 (Table 2.3).

Table 2.1: Percentage of resignees whose destination is supply teaching

	2002	2003	2004
primary	10.9%	10.0%	8.4%
secondary	3.6%	3.3%	3.5%

Source: Smithers and Robinson, 2005, Table 3.1

They showed that primary teachers were more likely to move into supply teaching than secondary, but noted that in 2004 fewer primary teachers did so; they suggested that this may reflect less opportunity in supply teaching, which may be a consequence of falling pupil numbers and possibly also of workforce reform increasing the amount of cover provided by support staff. They reported that men were slightly more likely to move into supply teaching than women.

Smithers and Robinson (2005) also broke these figures down by type of contract and post that the resignee was leaving. These findings are summarised in Table 2.2, and show that, while some teachers move into supply teaching from permanent contracts,

the main group doing so are those with fixed-term contracts, whether full-time or part-time.

Table 2.2: Percentage of resignees from different types of contract and post whose destination is supply teaching, 2004

	PERMANENT CONTRACTS full-time					part-time	FIXED TERM CONTRACTS	
	headteacher	deputy head	head of dept / faculty	other qualified teacher	all permanent full-time	all permanent part-time	full-time fixed term	part-time fixed-term
primary	0.0%	1.0%	n/a	6.0%	4.9%	5.1%	21.1%	20.0%
secondary	0.0%	0.0%	0.9%	2.7%	2.1%	4.1%	12.8%	8.6%

(Source: Smithers and Robinson, 2005, compiled from Tables 3.2, 3.5, 3.6)

Of those who move from permanent or fixed-term contracts into supply teaching, some do so because they cannot find other jobs, for example, after re-location. But in addition, some see supply teaching as a more attractive long-term career, enabling them to focus on teaching rather than administration and paper work (Grimshaw *et al.* (2004). Others use supply teaching as a stepping-stone to facilitate the development of a career outside teaching.

Some older teachers use supply teaching as a way of winding down towards retirement or supplementing their pensions (Hutchings, 2002). In Scotland, many in this last group undertook supply teaching only in the schools they had retired from (and possibly one or two other local schools where they knew staff). The teachers enjoyed the continuing contact with school and with ex-colleagues, while schools valued such supply teachers because they were familiar with routines, expectations and pupils (Menter *et al.*, 2004).

Barlin and Hallgarten (2002) argue that when reviewing retention issues, 'we should question to what extent full-time retention is affected by the rise of the supply teacher'. They point out that:

> If teachers are moving from permanent positions to supply teaching and then out of teaching altogether, then this process has grave implications for the future of the teaching profession. (Barlin and Hallgarten, 2002: 71)

Two surveys offered evidence about supply teachers' future intentions. Dalgety *et al.* (2003), in a survey of 2800 teachers in seven local authorities, found that in comparison with other teachers, supply teachers were less likely to expect to stay in teaching throughout their working lives (only 27% indicating that they would). Less than 10% expected to remain as supply teachers, while about 25% anticipated moving into jobs outside education in the next ten years. The *GTC Survey of Teachers 2005* also reported a significant difference between how supply teachers saw their careers developing in the next five years compared to class teachers. More supply teachers expected to leave teaching (28%, compared with 18% of class teachers), and more indicated that they wanted to reduce their responsibilities and time commitment. Supply teachers were less likely than any other group to anticipate taking on management responsibility (3%) (GTC, 2005b).

Employment and pay issues

Before 1989, supply teachers were registered on LEA lists, and deployment was managed by the LEA. Supply teachers were normally paid a daily rate at the

appropriate point on national pay scales. However, after the Burnham pay negotiating body was replaced in 1987, at least 12 authorities introduced flat-rate or restricted pay for supply teachers. These moves were criticised, and the Interim Advisory Committee recommended that supply teachers pay should remain linked to that of regular teachers (Shilling, 1991).

The introduction of local financial management of schools in the 1989 Education Reform Act brought about a shift in finances from LEA to school, and many LEAs reduced or abolished their pools, leaving schools to find their own supply teachers (Shilling, 1991). At the same time, the first private teacher supply agency, TimePlan, was created, introducing an alternative way of obtaining a supply teacher. The early 1990s saw a rapid increase in the number of agencies. The agencies found schools unwilling to pay more for more experienced supply teachers, and some introduced a flat rate of pay. The legality of this was confirmed in the court case TimePlan Education Group v The National Union of Teachers and Another (14 June 1995), which established that supply teachers recruited through an agency are not employed by the local education authority or the school governing body (DfEE, 1996a). Thus it was established that they were not subject to the terms of the School Teachers' Pay and Conditions Act (or subsequently the provisions within the Education Act 2002). This issue has remained a concern for teacher associations.

The current situation is that LEA supply services pay to national scales, while agencies often do not. However, where LEAs have entered into partnership with agencies to run local supply services, these pay to national scales (Hutchings, 2004). Less experienced teachers tend to earn more on agency rates than they would on national scales, while more experienced teachers earn less (Barlin and Hallgarten, 2002).

Grimshaw *et al.* (2004) pointed to the issues that may arise as a result of the lack of contractual relationship between agency supply teacher and school. In particular, schools may find it difficult to monitor and enforce quality standards, since they have to rely on the agency, and at the same time, supply teachers may experience lack of support in schools. In legal terms, agency workers are generally regarded as self-employed, in that the agency is not obliged to offer work to a given individual, or the individual to accept it. In theory, therefore, they can choose which schools they work in and can take time off when they like, or even walk away from an uncongenial placement. However, both Grimshaw *et al.*, and in Scotland, Menter *et al*. (2004), found that while in theory supply teachers relish this aspect of their work, in fact they rarely make use of it; they need to earn a living and maintain their own reputations as reliable workers.

Recruitment of supply teachers

Private supply agencies generally attract teachers through advertisements, and through their web-sites. Some have offered incentives to encourage teachers to register, such as entry in a draw, or air miles (Hutchings 2004). The larger agencies have overseas offices, and many of them undertake recruiting trips to Commonwealth countries. Newspaper advertisements are used by agencies and LEAs.

The process for registering for work on the list of an agency or local authority generally involves a process of selection (usually though a face to face interview), and a series of checks, which are now carried out by the Criminal Records Bureau (CRB). CRB checks for supply teachers have to be carried out every three years, or earlier if

there has been a break in service for three months or more, or if there are grounds for concern about the person's suitability to work with children (DfES, 2002c).

There have been criticisms that some agencies have not carried out checks thoroughly, and have not been sufficiently selective, though most of the larger agencies state explicitly that they carry out face-to-face interviews (Hutchings, 2004). In Scotland the process was found to vary hugely across authorities, with some simply registering any teacher with appropriate qualifications who had passed the checks, while others interviewed and in some cases also observed candidates teaching lessons (Menter *et al.*, 2004).

Internationally, requirements vary in relation to qualifications. In Scotland all teachers including supply teachers must have a teaching qualification and registration with the GTC Scotland. In the USA, some states use only qualified supply teachers, where in others the norm is for supply teachers to be unqualified (Ferguson, 2001; Greenburg, 2001). This has led to the development of materials to support these unqualified 'substitute teachers' (Utah State University, no date).

Deployment arrangements

Research studies have reported widespread agreement that, in comparison with LEA supply pools, the first agencies provided a more efficient deployment service (Hutchings, 2000; Barlin and Hallgarten, 2002). This was because they operated longer office hours, introduced effective IT systems, and were able to ensure that supply teachers got into schools at the start of the school day.

There is limited research about deployment of supply teachers. The Value for Money Unit research (DfES, 2002a) carried out telephone interviews with 74 schools (42 primary and 32 secondary), finding that primary schools generally used a supply teacher one day a week, and secondary schools four or more days. Around two-thirds of the schools preferred to use their own contacts rather than either agencies or LEA pools; a key factor was that the supply teacher should be familiar with the school. LEA lists were seen as unhelpful because they were generally out of date.

Just as agencies have offered incentives to teachers to register with them, so a minority have also offered schools loyalty rewards (for example, financial discounts or, in one case, Argos catalogue points that could be saved towards selected items such as a kettle or a laminator (Hutchings, 2004). More often, however, they aim to attract and retain schools by offering a professional and personal service.

Grimshaw *et al.* (2004) argue that there is 'clear evidence of opportunistic behaviour' on the part of the agencies, in that 'the need to sell takes precedence over the careful selection of candidates for schools'. They reported that agency staff receive bonus payments reflecting numbers placed in school. Several studies have drawn attention to the difficulties experienced by some challenging schools (Grimshaw *et al.*, 2004; Hutchings, 2004). Both agencies and supply teachers may select which schools they wish to work in, and certain schools may be charged more for supply teachers, or may find it impossible to obtain them. Such 'cream-skimming' is a recognised risk arising from involvement of profit-making businesses in a field where social equity is seen as desirable (IPPR, 2001). However, this is not simply a concern relating to private sector involvement; in Scotland, where agencies are almost absent, Menter *et al.* (2004) found similar issues. They were able to explore in detail the impact of the various deployment systems in operation. As in England, most schools preferred to

develop their own lists (often made up of teachers on the education authority list who regularly worked in the school, but also including part-time or job-share teachers, retired members of staff and parents), and to use supply teachers who were familiar with the school. But the most challenging schools found it hard to establish their own lists. Some authorities operated a centrally managed system; this was seen as having the advantage that the needs of challenging schools could be prioritised. However, in that supply teachers are not permanent employees, it has been found that some still turn down work in challenging schools. A potential solution to this used in some Scottish education authorities is to employ supply teachers on permanent contracts. They cannot then turn down particular placements (Hutchings *et al.*, 2006).

The nature of supply teachers' work

In England, most research that examined the work that supply teachers do in schools was carried out in the early 1990s (e.g. Morrison, 1993, 1994). Expectations of supply teachers vary with length of placement and school sector. Morrison (1994) described a primary supply teacher arriving at school with a collection of resources appropriate for nursery classes through to Year 6. This enabled her to occupy the children if no work has been left. More recently in Scotland, Menter *et al*. (2004) found a similar pattern; primary supply teachers used their own resources while they read the teachers' weekly plan and locate resources. Detailed lesson plans were rarely provided, although school respondents believed that this would be useful. Those on long-term placements were expected to plan lessons. While primary teachers would normally expect to take one class for the whole day, they were sometimes used as general cover, taking different classes during a day (something also reported by Morrison, 1994).

In secondary schools, the pattern is rather different. Supply teachers on short placements are often expected to provide 'general cover' (i.e. not necessarily in their own subject), supervising pupils doing set work (Morrison, 1993; Menter *et al.*, 2004). This is a very deskilling experience, as the teachers frequently have no knowledge or expertise of the subjects they are supervising, and are not able to develop their own subject teaching skills. Teachers in Scotland reported that this work provides very little job satisfaction. Morrison described how in secondary schools, the person responsible for cover, normally a deputy head, takes into account factors such as the difficulty of some classes and the imminence of exams in making decisions about how to provide cover. Supply teachers were seen as more likely to expect to teach (rather than simply supervise) than colleagues providing internal cover, but had the disadvantage of being less familiar with the pupils. Generally the head of department was responsible for ensuring that work was set, and staff in the department had to undertake marking in the absence of a subject specialist supply teacher. Morrison likened the role of secondary supply teacher to that of a caretaker, or, as Fielder (1991) put it, a 'baby-sitter'. However, the longer the supply teacher covered the same classes, the greater the expectations among staff and pupils that they act less like caretakers and more like permanent colleagues.

Support in schools

There is evidence from several sources that supply teachers are often not offered sufficient information (for example, about pupils, behaviour policies and curriculum) or sufficient support to enable them to do an effective job. For example, Ofsted (2002) reported that procedures for induction of temporary teachers were weak in some

schools, and that supply teachers often lacked information about the pupils they were teaching. Features of good practice were identified as careful induction, mentoring by a clearly identified senior teacher, constructive feedback, provision of information about the abilities and prior attainment of pupils, and access to professional development opportunities. Similar findings came from studies in Scotland (Menter *et al*., 2004) and Tasmania, where Webb (2002b), concluded that schools failed to maximise the use of relief teachers as resources. School-based induction was seen as a more helpful approach than agency induction.

Professional development

There is widespread agreement that supply teachers tend to miss out on professional development. The GTC Survey of Teachers (2005b) showed that, in comparison with all other groups of teachers, a much smaller percentage of supply teachers reported involvement in a range of different CPD activities. For example, only 34% had taken part in external courses, compared with 78% of class teachers. Similarly in Scotland, almost two-thirds of the supply teachers surveyed had not taken part in any professional development activity in the previous twelve months. This rose to over 80% of those undertaking mainly short-term work (Menter *et al*., 2004). The letter accompanying the DfEE consultation, *Supply Teachers: Meeting the Challenge* (DfEE, 2000) stated that a review of existing arrangements for training of supply teachers had identified a number of obstacles that prevent them gaining access to training; these included schools' unwillingness to invest in training for temporary staff; the reluctance of some supply teachers to devote time to training when they had entered supply teaching in order to reduce their time commitment (often because of child-care responsibilities); and the fluidity of the workforce, with teachers moving in and out of supply teaching.

Most supply agencies in England do provide some professional development, and this is a requirement for the award of the Quality Mark (see below). An investigation of induction arrangements for overseas-trained supply teachers in London (Maylor and Hutchings, 2003) found that induction provided by agencies was limited, and schools expressed concern about teachers' knowledge of the curriculum. For the teachers themselves, the greater concern was about behaviour management, because the norms and expectations in London schools contrasted with the systems that they had come from.

Several studies have emphasised that supply teaching requires considerable skills which may differ from those required in a permanent post (e.g. Robertson, 2000; Menter *et al*., 2004). Cockburn and Haydn (2004) pointed out that a successful regular teacher may not be successful in supply teaching. In the Scottish research (Menter *et al*. 2004) there was a general agreement with this view, and a concern that the recently qualified teachers who often found themselves doing supply work did not have the classroom management skills that are needed to do the job effectively, and were not being provided with the sort of professional development activities that would help them to develop such skills.

The impact of supply teachers in schools and on pupils' learning

Ofsted (2002) found that temporary teachers taught a higher proportion of unsatisfactory or poor lessons than permanent teachers: twice as many in primary schools and four times as many in secondary schools. As a result, the quality of

pupils' work had declined in some secondary schools where pupils had been taught by temporary teachers for significant periods of time. Pupils' attitudes to their work and their behaviour in lessons taught by temporary teachers were of a lower standard than in lessons taught by permanent teachers in the same school.

Schools in Scotland reported spending significant amounts of time trying to obtain supply teachers, and managing them within the school. Similarly, in England it was found that the use of supply teachers resulted in additional work for permanent teachers in terms of long-term school development and planning, thus creating stress (Menter *et al.*, 1999).

Government policy relating to supply teachers

In the 1990s there were concerns that the private teacher supply agency business lacked regulation. The larger agencies themselves were keen to have a greater degree of regulation (e.g. TES 16.06.95, 26.07.96, 19.12.97, 20.03.98). In 1996, a ten-minute Bill was introduced by Margaret Hodge, aimed at providing a statutory framework to vet agencies before registration and provide for 'annual unannounced inspections by Government inspectors', as well as improving systems for checks on teachers (Hansard, 16 July 1996, column 948). While this Bill did not become law, the DfEE issued two documents in 1996 that provided guidance to schools and agencies. Circular 7/96, *Use of Supply Teachers* (DfEE, 1996a), gave guidance to schools on the checks that had to be carried out when recruiting supply teachers and legal requirements relevant to the use of supply teachers. In parallel with this, *Guidance Notes for Teacher Employment Businesses and Agencies* (DfEE, 1996b) contained background information on the legislation affecting the recruitment and use of supply teachers, guidance on the statutory duties of agencies and guidance and suggested procedures for the checks that should be carried out on teachers.

As part of the government drive to raise standards set out in the Green Paper, *Teachers: Meeting the Challenge of Change* (DfEE, 1998), a review of the existing arrangements for the training, performance measurement and employment of supply teachers took place. This led to a consultation, *Supply Teachers, Meeting the Challenge* (DfEE, 2000). Comments were invited on 'proposals designed to equip supply teachers with the skills and training they need to support pupils' learning and play a part in maintaining school standards' (letter accompanying consultation document, 9 February 2000). While no regulation of the teacher supply agencies was proposed (other than the DTI regulations governing all employment agencies. e.g. DTI, 2002), the proposals were designed to ensure that supply teachers could access professional development. There were five proposals:

- supply teachers to maintain portfolios to demonstrate that they are keeping their skills up to date through training and/or experience;
- a quality mark scheme for agencies and Local Education Authorities supplying schools with temporary teachers;
- a framework of responsibilities for the continuing professional development of supply teachers;
- government-funded distance learning packages for supply teachers; and
- model introduction packages for supply teachers to be made available to all schools.

These proposals have had a number of outcomes. The DfES created on-line packages of learning materials for supply teachers, which are available at the DfES website (DfES 2002b). The Quality Mark was launched in July 2002 as a joint initiative between the DfES and the Recruitment and Employment Confederation (REC) (REC website). The REC is the industry body for employment agencies and businesses, and is responsible for administering and awarding the Quality Mark. The Quality Mark set minimum standards for agencies and LEAs to meet in four areas: selection and referral; development; working with schools; and working with overseas teachers. In the first instance agencies and LEAs submitted documentary evidence that was inspected; since January 2005, an inspection visit is also made, and a re-inspection process has been introduced for Quality Mark holders who have had the award for two years (DfES, 2004a). In November 2005, the REC website indicated that 56 private agencies and three LEA supply services were holders of the Quality Mark, and a further 29 were in the process of applying.

In 2002, following research into the use of supply teachers by the Value for Money Unit, the DfES issued guidance to schools. *Using Supply Teachers to Cover Short-term Absences* (DfES, 2002a) summarised the findings of the Value for Money Unit's research, and offered examples of good practice in relation to school policies on using supply teachers, advice on induction of supply teachers new to the school; examples of information sheets and induction handouts for supply teachers and of feedback sheets. A *Supply Teacher Insurance Guide* was issued to accompany this guidance.

Another initiative aimed at quality assurance in relation to private supply agencies was the creation by the Government Office for London of a list of preferred suppliers (Government Office for London, 2004). Agency applications were assessed against criteria including induction processes, CPD provision, value for money, ongoing support and assessment of teachers and communication strategies with schools. Schools are under no obligation to use agencies from the list.

There have thus been sustained efforts to raise the quality of supply teachers over the last decade. In addition, wider education policies have impacted on the work of supply teachers. In 2002, *Time for Standards: Reforming the School Workforce* (DfES, 2002d) was published. Following this, a National Agreement *Raising Standards and Tackling Workload* (DfES, 2003a) was agreed by DfES, national employers' organisation and all the teacher unions and associations with the exception of the National Union of Teachers. This aimed to bring about a progressive reduction in teacher hours and the reform of support staff roles to enable them to help teachers and support pupils more effectively, so that teachers could focus on teaching and learning. New roles were introduced, including cover supervisors and higher level teaching assistants who could supervise classes. The national agreement has led to a process of remodelling the school workforce, supported by the Workforce Agreement Monitoring Group (WAMG) which was established to monitor progress. Linked amendments to the School Teachers' Pay and Conditions Document were introduced with effect from September 2004 and September 2005.

One of the aims of the National Agreement was to reduce the amount of cover for absent colleagues that teachers at a school are required to carry out. To this end, guidance on cover supervision was produced (WAMG, 2004). From September 2004 a contractual limit to cover of 38 hours a year was introduced; the intention in the longer term was for teachers rarely to cover at all. To bring this about schools are able to deploy support staff with appropriate skills and training to provide 'cover

supervision'. The Guidance specifies that cover supervision can be used when no active teaching is taking place; pupils will continue their learning by carrying out set work under supervision. This offers headteachers greater flexibility 'to deal with teacher absence in a way which is compatible with the Standards agenda and the efficient use of resources' (para. 3). The Guidance goes on to state:

> Permanently appointed staff providing cover supervision will be known to pupils, will be familiar with the school's policies and procedures and can provide continuity when the class's usual teacher returns. (para. 3)

The Guidance specifies that cover supervision should be used only for short-term absences; 'headteachers will exercise their professional judgement in determining what should be regarded as a "short-term" absence for these purposes' (para. 9). Where a class is taught by a single teacher for most of the day, as in a primary school, it indicates that it would be inappropriate for the class to be 'supervised' for more than three consecutive days, but that 'where pupils are only timetabled for occasional lessons which are affected by teacher absence, the use of cover supervision over a longer period of time may be appropriate' (para. 11).

While this guidance does not mention the use of supply teachers, it is clear that cover supervisors could be used by schools to cover short-term absences instead of employing supply teachers.

The National Agreement also highlights the contribution made by support staff. Guidance has been issued on the new role of higher level teaching assistant (HLTA) (WAMG, 2004); support staff at this level can work with whole classes under the direction and supervision of a teacher. This is distinguished from cover supervision, which occurs 'when no active teaching is taking place and involves the supervision of pre-set learning activities in the absence of a teacher' (para. 12). The guidance specifies that 'HLTAs could provide timetabled cover as part of their role, but it would not be an appropriate use of their skills, knowledge and expertise for this to be a major element of their role' (para. 14).

The School Teachers' Pay and Conditions Document 2004 (DfES, 2004b) indicates that HLTAs:

> … may be deployed as one of the strategies schools choose to release teachers for guaranteed PPA [Planning Preparation and Assessment] time, provided they carry out work specified in the regulation under section 133 of the 2002 act under the direction and supervision of a qualified teacher. In addition they may be used to provide short-term cover, but headteachers would need to balance their use in this way against the educational desirability of regularly removing them from planned activities with the teachers to whom they are normally assigned (para. 76 and 77).

Subsequent advice for schools (WAMG, 2005) similarly distinguishes between two areas of support staff deployment: *cover* is provided when a teacher is absent from a lesson that they are timetabled to teach, while *PPA time* is time during which a teacher is not timetabled to teach.

Among the objectives for this research, then, is to collect information on the impact of government polices in relation to supply teaching and of the remodelling agenda.

3 Research Design

Aims and objectives

This research builds on previous research set out in Chapter 2, and was designed to investigate issues around the recruitment, deployment and management of supply teachers in England at a time when current policies may be impacting on schools' use of supply teachers, and when a number of steps have been made to increase quality. These include the introduction of a Quality Mark for agencies and LEAs; provision of self-study materials for supply teachers; and guidance to schools, *Using Supply Teachers to Cover Short-term Absences* (DfES, 2002a). The aims set by the DfES for this research were:

- to address the shortfalls and gaps in the data on the characteristics, recruitment, deployment, management and development of supply staff;
- to identify good practice in the areas listed above for dissemination; and
- to explore supply teachers' motivations for taking up this work, and any barriers or incentives that may prevent or encourage them from returning to or joining the permanent teaching sector.

Objectives

To collect information on the following:

1. The reasons for and extent of schools' use of supply teachers and how their numbers vary across schools and geographical areas.
2. The characteristics of supply staff (e.g. their age, gender, ethnicity, experience, subject area, career stage, hours worked, pay and qualification levels) and to identify any patterns that emerge.
3. The factors that influence their decision to become supply teachers and, where relevant, whether anything might have convinced them to stay in the permanent sector.
4. Their future career aspirations, and what factors might encourage or dissuade them from returning to, or joining, the permanent sector.
5. Schools' procedures and practice in recruiting supply staff, and the effectiveness of these practices.
6. The deployment of supply staff, including the tasks they undertake, how their work is organised, planned and managed.
7. The nature and perceived quality of support, induction and training available for supply teachers.
8. Good practice in the management, development and deployment of supply teachers, including how current practices might be developed in the light of the remodelling agenda, to enable supply teachers to make the most effective contribution in schools.
9. The extent of awareness and perceptions of recent government initiatives such as the voluntary Quality Mark for teacher supply agencies and LEAs, and London's preferred supplier list.
10. The impact of the remodelling agenda, including the introduction of higher level teaching assistants, on the market for and deployment of supply teachers.
11. The provision of baseline data against which changes in the supply teaching population can be tracked in future years.

Research design: overview

The research design involved collection of quantitative and qualitative data in each of three strands:

- *LEAs and agencies*: a survey of all LEAs, and interviews with relevant agency and LEA staff;
- *Schools*: a survey of a national sample of schools, and case studies of the way that supply teachers are used in schools;
- *Supply teachers*: a survey of a national sample of supply teachers, and focus groups with a purposive sample designed to enable in-depth discussion of issues affecting different groups of supply teachers.

LEAs and agencies

LEA survey

All 150 LEAs in England were sent a questionnaire in January 2005 to find out:

- whether they have a supply pool, and if so, how large it is, when it was set up, and to what extent it meets the supply cover needs of schools in the LEA;
- whether the LEA has (or has had) any arrangement with a preferred agency, or has a 'public-private agency' arrangement;
- the extent to which they monitor the availability and quality of supply teachers working in the LEA; if so, what their findings are and what action results;
- whether they make any provision for the professional development of supply teachers, and if so, what, and how effective it is.

The questionnaire was piloted by staff in four LEAs selected to include LEAs with different forms of provision, and was amended in the light of their comments. It is included as Appendix A.

Questionnaires were sent to the contact person listed on a previous DfES database of LEA supply teacher provision, asking them to pass it on to whoever currently has this responsibility. Questionnaires were completed by people with a range of responsibilities including Recruitment Strategy Manager, Human Resources Assistant, Personnel Manager, Schools Personnel Administrator, Supply Agency Manager, Personnel Adviser, Senior Education Officer, Senior Adviser, and so on. Where possible, respondents were invited to attach relevant documentation. Of the 150 LEAs, 82 returned questionnaires.

LEA interviews

We interviewed staff in ten LEAs, selecting those which play a major role in the provision of supply teachers. Five operated their own supply pool or agency, and the other five had arrangements with a private agency or employment business. Two of the LEAs were in London, and the remainder widely distributed across the country. The interviews were conducted between June and October 2005.

In most cases we interviewed both a policy officer and the person responsible for operating the supply teacher arrangements. In two cases the latter was a member of staff of a private supply agency with which the LEA had an arrangement. (The private

agencies that were in partnership with other LEAs interviewed were included in the agency interview sample.) The interview investigated in detail how the particular arrangements operate; their strengths and limitation; and how they are monitored. We also investigated the provision for induction and continuing professional development of supply teachers, and the part the LEA plays in ensuring quality of supply teachers, and working with schools to maximise the effectiveness of supply teachers.

Agency interviews

We interviewed key staff in eleven supply agencies, generally this was the Managing Director. These were selected to include agencies that are part of larger firms with considerable involvement in other aspects of education; agencies that are part of larger firms with a wider recruitment business; agencies dedicated to staff supply in education; those that focus particularly on recruitment from overseas, and have overseas offices and those that do not; agencies that operate locally in particular LEAs or regions; those that specialise in supply for particular sectors or skills (e.g. SEN); agencies that have achieved the Quality Mark, and those that have not; agencies that are on the London preferred supplier list, and those that are not. Obviously these criteria were not mutually exclusive, but were designed to include a range of agencies that vary in type and scale of operation. The interviews were mainly conducted between January and September 2005 (the majority in the early part of the year).

The interview asked about how they recruit, select and deploy staff; the proportion of their work which is short-term supply (e.g. no more than one term in duration), and how this has changed over time; the provision for induction, professional development activities and support for teachers, and the extent to which teachers engage in these activities; pay arrangements and how, if at all, these relate to the national scale or vary with the degree of challenge in the school; awareness and perceptions of recent government initiatives such as the voluntary Quality Mark, and, where relevant, London's preferred supplier list; their perceptions of the current state of the supply market, and of issues impacting on it such as the remodelling agenda; and their expectations for the future of supply teaching. Documentation relating to training provided by the agency was also collected.

In addition to these eleven interviews, representatives of a further two agencies were interviewed, because they worked in partnership with LEAs that were included in the LEA interview sample.

Schools

School survey

The school questionnaire was sent in January 2005 to the headteacher, with a request it should be competed by the member of staff responsible for supply cover in the school. In primary schools this generally the headteacher, and in secondary schools a deputy head.

The questionnaire asked about:

- use of supply teachers and of internal cover by teachers or support staff, and how this had changed with the remodelling agenda;
- how supply teachers are obtained;

- provision for induction, support, monitoring and professional development of supply teachers;
- expectations of the work undertaken by supply teachers; and
- how effective they are.

Some questions were addressed specifically to the particular school phase or sector. For example, secondary schools were asked about subject match, and how often this is achieved, as well as on what teachers are asked to do in classrooms (supervise work provided, introduce new work, etc.). For special schools and nurseries the focus will be on the extent to which they are able to obtain supply teachers who have training and/or experience that matches their specific needs. Questions include both 'tick-box' questions such as Likert scales, and opportunities for respondents to write in more detailed comments. The questionnaire was piloted by three primary and two secondary headteachers, and amended in the light of their comments. The questionnaire is included as Appendix B.

The construction of the sample of schools started from the assumption that it would be helpful to boost the sample of secondary schools in relation to primary schools. Supply cover is relatively straightforward in primary schools because teachers are all trained to teach the curriculum, whereas in the secondary sector the issues of attempting to match subject expertise to need are much more complex. Thus we aimed at a random sample stratified by Government Office Region, with approximately equal numbers of primary and secondary schools (City Technology Colleges and Academies were included in the secondary school list).

This involved sending questionnaires to 1 in 12 primary schools and 1 in 2.5 secondary schools. In order to investigate the supply situation in London in more depth, the sample was boosted there, with questionnaires sent to twice as many schools as elsewhere. In view of the relatively small numbers of special schools and nurseries, and the particular issues around supply cover in these contexts, the sample in these sectors was 1 in 3 schools.

Questionnaires were despatched to schools by post. Headteachers were asked to fill in the questionnaire themselves, or where relevant, to pass it on to the member of staff with responsibility for supply cover.

A 30% response rate was anticipated. As this was not initially achieved, each London secondary and special school in the sample was sent a further copy of the questionnaire (the return rates in these areas being particularly low). We also sent questionnaires to a further sample of primary and secondary schools across the country. This was partly to boost the returns in the regions with low returns, but also reflected our concerns about the composition of the original sample, selected by DfES. While balanced by regions, it was not well balanced by LEA. It also included a disproportionate number of middle deemed secondary schools (around 20% of secondary schools, when the proportion nationally is 8%, DfES, 2004c).

Table 3.1 shows the sample and the returns. The total number of questionnaires entered into the database and analysed was 1375. This substantially exceeds the original target of 1138. A further 86 questionnaires were received after the deadline date and have not been entered into the sample. However, written comments on these questionnaires are referred to in the analysis. Four questionnaires were not usable because the number had been torn off, and so we were unable to link the questionnaire data to school data provided by the DfES.

Table 3.1: School questionnaire distribution and response rates,

	no of schools in England	proportion for sample	no. of q'aires distributed (original distribution plus booster)	target return	actual return	entered in database and analysed	response rate %
Primary schools	17762	1 in 12	1634+964	490	683	611	26.3
Secondary schools	3435	1 in 2.5	1536+430	461	583	567	29.7
Special schools	1148	1 in 3	435	131	136	134	31.3
Nursery schools	470	1 in 3	185	56	63	63	34.1
TOTAL	22815		3,790+1394	1,138	1,465	1375	28.0

Case studies of schools

The aim of these case studies was to obtain much more detailed information than could be obtained from a questionnaire about the schools' use of, and systems for the deployment of supply teachers. Each case study consisted of:

- An in-depth interview with the head / deputy head responsible for cover, to investigate policies and practices for the use of supply staff; use of internal cover (including by teachers, teaching assistants and cover supervisors); strategies for and experience of finding appropriate supply teachers; practices for inducting, supervising, monitoring and supporting supply staff; mechanisms for providing feedback to LEAs/agencies; evaluation of quality of supply staff and impact on teaching and learning.
- Examination (and where possible collection of copies) of any documentation that supply teachers are provided with on their arrival or in each class.
- Interview(s) with any supply teacher in school on the day of the case study visit to find out how effectively they had been inducted into the school routines and policies; what documentation they had been given; how well the placement matched their training and subject expertise; what specifically they had been asked to do in classes and how well supported they were.
- Collection from school records of detailed data relating to the use of supply cover.

Case studies were conducted between May and September 2005 in twenty schools: eight primary, eight secondary, two nursery and two special schools, selected across the regions of England, but with six schools in London. Schools were selected from the questionnaire responses to include rural and urban; schools that use different sources of supply (private agencies, public-private agencies and LEAs); schools that make more and less extensive use of supply cover; those that have particular difficulties in meeting their supply needs; and schools that appeared from the questionnaire to have developed good practice in this area.

Table 3.2: Details of school case studies

	region	interviewees
primary	London (primary)	headteacher, supply teacher
	London (infant)	headteacher

	East Midlands	headteacher, supply teacher
	North East	headteacher
	North West	headteacher, supply teacher
	South East (infant)	headteacher, supply teacher
	West Midlands	headteacher
	Yorks and the Humber (junior)	headteacher
secondary	London (girls)	deputy head
	London (mixed)	teacher i/c cover
	Yorks and the Humber	deputy head, supply teacher
	East of England	deputy head
	North East (middle deemed secondary)	headteacher, supply teacher
	South East	business manager
	South West (boys)	deputy head, 2 support staff, 2 supply teachers
	West Midlands	teaching resource assistant
special	London	deputy head
	North East	deputy head, supply teacher
nursery	London	headteacher, supply teacher, supply nursery nurse
	East of England	headteacher, supply nursery nurse

Supply teachers

Survey of supply teachers

The supply teacher questionnaire asked about

- the characteristics of the teachers themselves;
- the nature and pattern of their work;
- the induction, documentation and support provided by schools;
- the agencies / LEAs they work through;
- the professional development opportunities available to them, and their participation in development activity;
- their previous careers and their future aspirations, and what could be done to encourage or enable them to work in the permanent sector;
- what they considered to be the advantages and the disadvantages of working as a supply teacher; and
- how they think the remodelling agenda has impacted on their work.

The questionnaire is included as Appendix C. The questionnaire was piloted by six teachers in all; some of these were accessed through an agency, and some through personal contacts. It was amended in the light of their comments.

As there is no information about the total population of supply teachers, it was not possible to construct a representative sample. Having recognised that any strategy to survey supply teachers has advantages and disadvantages, the process decided on was

to send each school in the school sample some questionnaires for supply teachers, each packed in a separate envelope with a reply paid envelope. We asked schools to distribute these to the next supply teachers to work in the school. Four supply teacher questionnaires were sent to each secondary school, and two to each primary, special and nursery school. In order to achieve responses from approximately equal numbers of primary and secondary supply teachers, a further group of primary schools, equal in number to the primary school survey sample, were sent two teacher questionnaires to distribute. These questionnaires were sent out with the school questionnaires in January 2005.

A large number of questionnaires had to be distributed to achieve a sufficiently large sample (Table 3.3). Our assumption was that only about 30% of the schools would respond, and a similar proportion would distribute the teacher questionnaires. We then assumed that only 30% of the teachers who received questionnaires would complete and return them. The target number of returns was exceeded. However, 74 questionnaires arrived after the cut-off date and have not been entered in the database, though we have read through them, and refer to written comments on them in our analysis. A further 23 questionnaires were removed because the teachers did not meet the DfES definition of a supply teacher devised for this research – that is, a person teaching in a school for a period of a term or less; thus in total 1554 were analysed.

Table 3.3: Supply teacher questionnaire distribution and returns

	sent out	target return	actual return	entered in database and analysed
Primary schools	6,536	588	795	752
Secondary schools	6,144	553	765	712
Special and nursery schools	1,240	111	91	90
TOTAL	13,920	1,252	1,651	1554

Focus groups and interviews with supply teachers

We collected qualitative data from a sample of supply teachers through nine focus groups held in different parts of England, each composed of five supply teachers selected to enable in-depth exploration of a particular theme relating to their career position and aspirations, and the context they work in. The groups included: recently qualified teachers; overseas-trained teachers (two groups, young travellers, and teachers who would like to have permanent jobs in the UK); supply teachers in urban and rural areas; those working through agencies and those working through LEAs; and those with different motivations for taking up supply work.

In order to ensure attendance and allow sufficient time for in-depth discussion, each group met for a day (10.00am - 3.00pm). They were recruited through agencies and LEAs and were paid.

In addition, telephone interviews were conducted with nine supply teachers. These were selected from the questionnaire responses to shed more light on some particular contexts that had not been covered in the focus groups: for example, a supply teacher who worked only in nursery schools; supply teachers who worked directly for schools, and so on.

Focus groups and telephone interviews took place between July and October 2005.

Ethical issues

Throughout the research we complied with the ethical code of the British Educational Research Association (BERA) and the research ethics code of London Metropolitan University. This meant that we have

- obtained the informed consent of all participants, having explained the purposes and sponsorship of the research, and informed them of their rights to protection of data under the Data Protection Act;
- anonymised all data, so that informants, institutions and organisations cannot be identified.

Data analysis

The research design required some weighting of the data because London was over-represented in the sample; the proportion of schools in London in the sample was doubled in order to ensure that a full picture of the use of supply teachers in London was achieved. Therefore, when giving national figures, the proportion of London schools has been halved. The secondary school sample also over-represented responses from middle deemed secondary schools because the sample drawn by the DfES included a disproportionate number of middle schools. Therefore, to calculate national figures, each type of school in each region was given a weight according to their representation in the sample in order that their proportions matched those in the national population. In most cases, this was based on response to the questionnaire as a whole; although where questions had a high level of missing data (>20%), weights were calculated using the proportions responding to the question.

School responses were linked to data from DfES sources, including school characteristics (size, faith, selective etc.) and pupil characteristics and attainment (percentage eligible for free school meals, special educational needs, attainment).

Table 3.4: Number of schools in the sample for which school data were available from the DfES

	Achieved sample	Number of pupils	Percentage eligible for free school meals	Attainment data
Nursery	63	62	62	n/a
Primary	611	606	606	469
Secondary	567	565	564	476
Special	134	134	134	n/a
Total	1375	1367	1366	945

In many cases these data have been divided into groups. In the case of children eligible for special meals the groupings adopted by the DfES have been followed. In all other cases (school size, percentages of children with special educational needs, attainment and use of supply) schools have been divided into four or five groups designed to hold roughly equal percentages of the data.

Where we have specified the number of respondents on tables and figures, for multi-part questions this figure is the maximum number that attempted any one part. In

cases where there was high non-response to particular questions, we have indicated this.

Data analysis was conducted using SPSS. Initially, percentages for each phase of education were calculated. Schools' responses were then compared by location (urban/rural, London/non-London), size, academic performance, percentage eligible for free school meals, and in most cases, by reported extent of use of supply and source of supply. ANOVA and chi-squared tests were used, and where these tests were significant at the 5% level, the data was further investigated, either by further t-tests for rating data, by examining residuals in chi-squared tables and by testing correlations between answers. Where correlations have been described as weak, moderate, strong etc, rules of thumb following Davis (1971) and Cohen (1988) have been followed (de Vaus, 2002), referring to 0.1 – 0.29 as low, 0.3 – 0.49 as moderate, 0.5 – 0.69 as substantial and >0.7 as very strong).

Similar procedures were used for the supply teacher questionnaire. Although questionnaires were sent to teachers via the primary, secondary, special and nursery schools that were included in the schools survey, we could not assume that supply teachers normally worked in those sectors. On the questionnaire they were asked about the schools they normally work in and allocated to groups accordingly (see Chapter 6). Many supply teachers worked in more than one sector and we had only 14 responses from teaches working only in nursery schools; these have therefore been included with primary. Analysis focused firstly on the school sector the teacher worked in and their personal and professional characteristics (age, gender, place and of training, qualifications, region). We also grouped the teachers by their main way of obtaining work (through a private supply agency, through a local authority supply service or directly from one or more schools).

The qualitative data was analysed using NVivo. This is a qualitative data analysis programme that allows the user to code the data in various ways and to interrogate it systematically. In this research, our initial coding of the data was based on the objectives set for the research and listed at the start of this chapter.

Structure of the report

The report has been structured thematically, with reference to the research objectives. Thus qualitative and quantitative data from different sources is used throughout. The chart below shows which chapter addresses each objective.

The reasons for and extent of schools' use of supply teachers and how their numbers vary across schools and geographical areas.	Chapter 4
The characteristics of supply staff (e.g. their age, gender, ethnicity, experience, subject area, career stage, hours worked, pay and qualification levels) and to identify any patterns that emerge.	Chapter 6
The factors that influence their decision to become supply teachers and, where relevant, whether anything might have convinced them to stay in the permanent sector.	Chapter 7
Their future career aspirations, and what factors might encourage or dissuade them from returning to, or joining, the permanent sector.	Chapter 7
Schools' procedures and practice in recruiting supply staff, and the effectiveness of these practices.	Chapter 8

The deployment of supply staff, including the tasks they undertake, how their work is organised, planned and managed.	Chapters 9 - 11
The nature and perceived quality of support, induction and training available for supply teachers.	Chapters 11 and 12
Good practice in the management, development and deployment of supply teachers, including how current practices might be developed in the light of the remodelling agenda, to enable supply teachers to make the most effective contribution in schools.	Chapters 5, 8 - 13
The extent of awareness and perceptions of recent government initiatives such as the voluntary Quality Mark for teacher supply agencies and LEAs, and London's preferred supplier list.	Chapter 5, 9, 12
The impact of the remodelling agenda, including the introduction of higher level teaching assistants, on the market for and deployment of supply teachers.	Chapter 4
The provision of baseline data against which changes in the supply teaching population can be tracked in future years.	Chapters 4 and 6, and throughout

4 The supply teacher market

4.1 Introduction

Currently the size of the total supply teacher market is determined largely by the demand for supply teachers from schools. None of the data we collected indicated an overall shortfall in supply; schools were able to find supply teachers when they wanted them, though some areas of demand were less easy to meet (Foundation Stage, Year 6 and certain secondary subjects, and some categories of special need); this will be discussed in Chapter 9. The current position contrasts with the situation described in Scotland by Menter *et al*. (2004), where many schools reported that they were often not able to get hold of supply teachers. It also contrasts with the situation in England in 2000-2001, when some schools could not obtain the supply teachers they wanted because the overall supply did not match the demand.

This chapter starts by considering the extent of schools' use of supply teachers. We then consider how and why this varies across geographical areas and schools. There are two main factors that could change the number of supply teachers used: changes in the demands for cover and changes in the way cover is provided. The sections that follow focus on each of these in turn. Thus the reasons why schools use supply teachers are discussed; this is followed by a review of the various ways in which schools provide cover (using internal teaching staff, support staff and supply teachers), and the factors that impact on the strategies used, including the remodelling agenda.

4.2 Schools' use of supply teachers

The extent of schools' use of supply teachers

The questionnaire asked schools to state how many supply teacher days had been used in the last five days and in the last year (2004). We asked about the last five days rather than selecting a specific week in the hope that this would make it easier for schools to fill it in, and encourage a higher response rate. The questionnaire asked that respondents should give estimates rather than leaving blanks. Nevertheless, there were high levels of missing data (Table 4.1) in this particular question.

Table 4.1: Percentage of schools responding to 'How many supply teacher days have been used in your school in the last 5 days and in the last year?'

	% answering questions about:	
	Last 5 days	Last year
Nursery	77%	73%
Primary	92%	82%
Secondary	93%	79%
Special	84%	63%

The case studies enabled us to examine how schools keep records of supply teacher use, and it was clear from this that while some schools would have been able to obtain accurate data from their IT management system with very little difficulty, others

would have had to check against a variety of documents including supply agency invoices, budget codes and the school diary. An added difficulty for respondents in this case was that schools were asked to give data only for supply teachers as defined in this research project: that is, those working in a school for a term or less. While focusing on the last five days it was possible for schools to distinguish the supply teachers that fitted this definition, in relation to the figures for a whole year it would have proved more challenging; this may have contributed to the higher level of missing data for this question. Moreover, the figures provided may be less reliable in this case.

Table 4.2 shows the mean and median figures for supply teacher days in the last five days for nursery, primary, secondary and special schools.

Table 4.2: How many supply teacher days have been used in your school in the last five days?

	Weighted mean	Median	*N*
Nursery	1.4	1	*49*
Primary	3.3	2	*562*
Secondary	11.7	9	*529*
Special	3.6	2	*113*

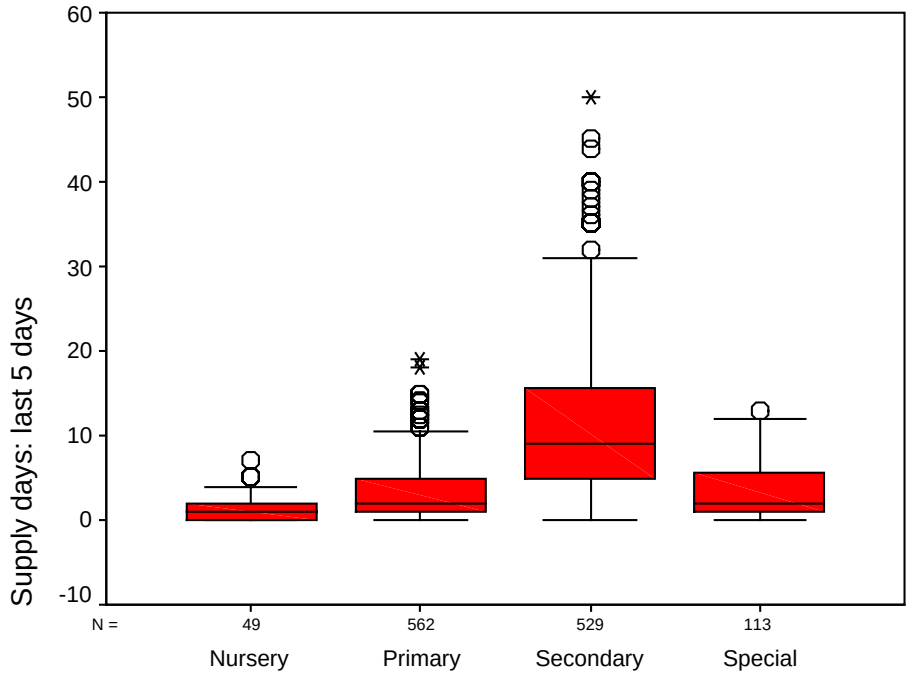
Schools completed the questionnaire in February or March 2005, a time of year when all stakeholders interviewed indicated that use of supply teachers is high. The LEA questionnaire asked about variation in demand through the school year, and this was also included in agency interviews. The general picture is that demand is low in September, and rises gradually through the autumn term. It then plateaus through the late autumn, spring and early summer terms, and declines in the second part of the summer term. Several of the agencies that were interviewed showed us graphs of the number of days supplied per week over a year, and the patterns were all similar. It follows from this, then, that the mean number of days used in a year is lower than would be suggested by simply multiplying the mean number of days in a week in February / March by the number of weeks in a school year. This is clear in the figures for use over a year on Table 4.3.

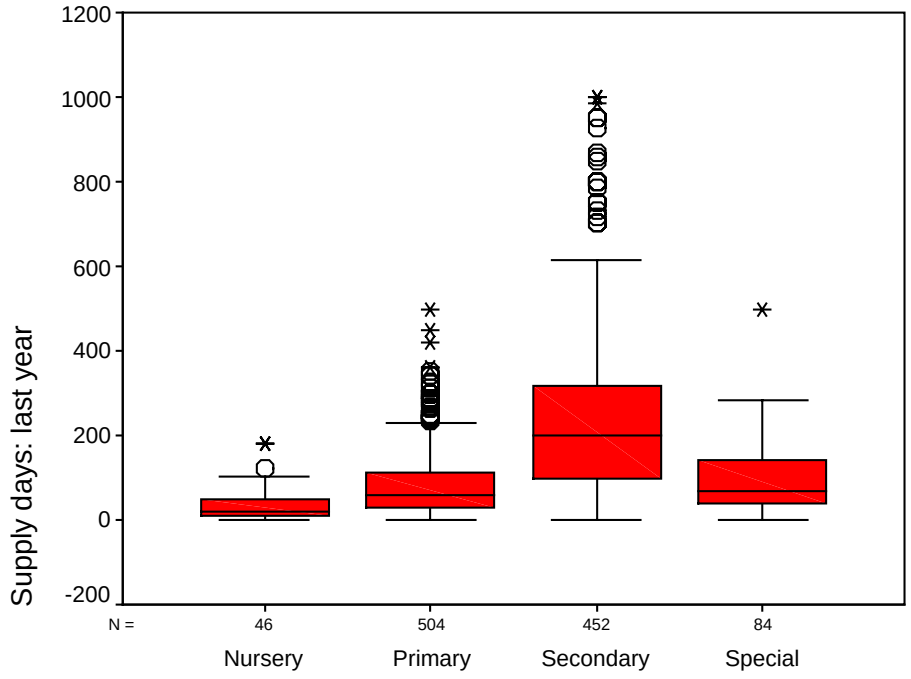
Table 4.3: How many supply teacher days have been used in your school in the last year?

	Weighted mean	Median	*N*
Nursery	32.7	20.5	*46*
Primary	81.4	57	*504*
Secondary	262.4	200	*452*
Special	101.0	70	*84*

This information is illustrated on Figure 4.1, which enables us to compare across sectors, and see the considerable variation within each sector in the use of supply teachers over five days and over a year.

Figure 4.1: Supply teacher day use by phase of education (N =1253: last five days, N=1086: last year)*





* The shaded box shows the inter-quartile range (that is the range into which the middle 50% of the data fall). The line in the middle of the box shows the median value. The outer lines show the range of the data, excluding outliers, which are defined to be more than 1.5 times the inter-quartile range (or box length) from the upper or lower edge of the box i.e. if the inter-quartile range was from 2 to 3, then a value of more than 4.5 or less than 0.5 would be considered an outlier. Cases with values between 1.5 and 3 times the inter-quartile range from the upper or lower edge of the box are shown as circles; extreme outliers, shown as stars, have values more than 3 times the inter-quartile range from the upper or lower edge of the box.

These data allow us to estimate the total number of supply days used in England in a week in February / March 2005, and in the whole of 2004[2] (Tables 4.4 and 4.5).

Table 4.4: Total number of supply teacher days used in schools in England in a week in February / March across all sectors (thousands) (weighted estimate)

	Minimum	Estimated number	Maximum
Primary and nursery	51.5	59.4	67.3
Secondary	41.1	44.0	47.5
Special	3.4	4.3	5.2
Total	95.8	107.7	119.5

Weighted estimate

Table 4.5: Total number of supply teacher days used in schools in England across all sectors in 2004 (millions) (weighted estimate)

	Minimum	Estimated number	Maximum
Primary and nursery	1.29	1.50	1.67
Secondary	1.07	1.09	1.10
Special	0.09	0.12	0.16
Total	2.45	2.71	2.93

Weighted estimate

Table 4.4 estimates that there were 107,700 supply teachers in schools in five days in February or March 2005; thus on a single day in that period there would have been over 21,000 supply teachers in school. This figure is rather larger than the DfES (2005b) count of 15.1 thousand 'occasional' teachers in school on the third Thursday in January 2005, but this is explained by the difference in the group defined. The teachers in our sample were those working in school for up to a term, whereas 'occasional' teachers are those working for periods of a month or less.

If we take this estimate of supply teacher days used in five days in England, together with data supply teachers provided about the number of days that they work in a week, we are able to arrive at an estimate of the total number of supply teachers working in that week. The supply teacher questionnaire asked teachers how many days they teach in the average week. The mean response from our sample of 1554 teachers was 2.92 days. To provide the 107,700 supply days worked in the average week in February/March would have taken 36,880 supply teachers working 2.92 days each. This estimate coincides neatly with the GTC (2005a) figure of 36,458 supply teachers registered on its database.

However, the total number of people who ever work as supply teachers in a year must be higher than either of these figures, because each omits some teachers. The GTC database is of qualified teachers; thus it does not include supply teachers without Qualified Teacher Status (QTS). In our sample, 10% of the supply teachers did not have QTS. To add these to the GTC's figure would suggest a total of 40,700 supply teachers.

[2] These estimates are based on the assumption that the school sample is representative, and that the schools that did not respond are similar to those that did. The maximum and minimum values given represent 95% confidence intervals.

Our survey, on the other hand, is likely to under-represent those who only worked very occasionally, because they would have been less likely to be in school when the questionnaire was being distributed. From both these sources, then, it would appear that more than 40,000 individuals work as supply teachers at some point during a year.

Variation in use of supply teachers across geographical regions

We have examined the figures for supply teacher days used by schools in different Government Office Regions. Figure 4.2 shows the responses from primary schools, and Figure 4.3 from secondary schools.

Figures 4.2 and 4.3 show that there is variation across regions, but also that there is considerable variation within each region. In the primary sector, mean and median use of supply teachers is highest in London, the South West, the South East and the West Midlands, and mean use is significantly lower in the East of England.

In secondary schools (Figure 4.3) there is even more variation within regions, (see for example, Yorkshire and the Humber). The East of England shows the smallest variation and range, and mean supply day use here is statistically significantly lower than use in the North West and South West.

While these differences between regions are interesting, the number of schools of each type in the sample in each region does not allow robust analysis of these variations because of the extent of variation *within* each region. We turn, then, to consider the factors that may contribute to differences between schools in their use of supply teachers.

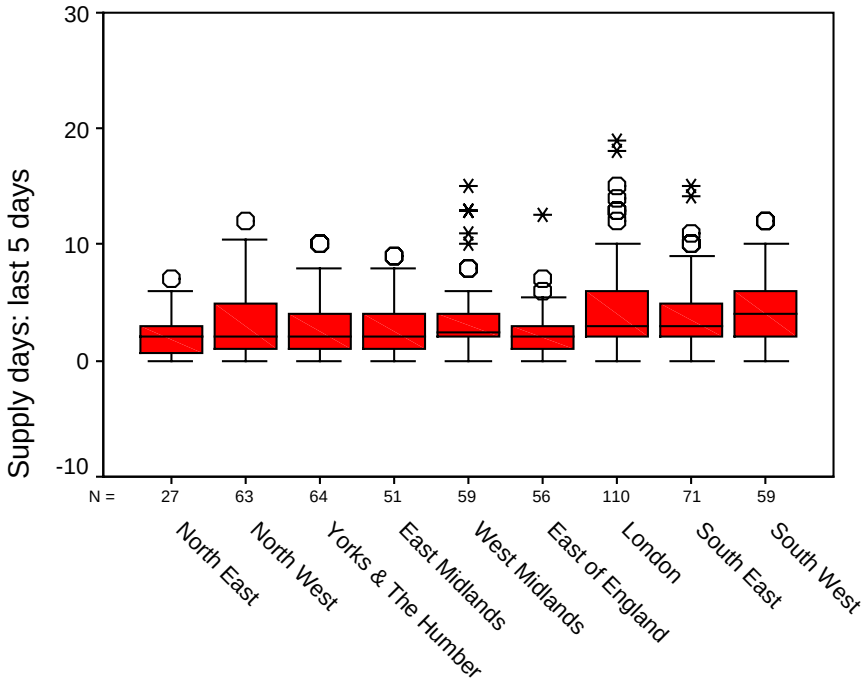
Variation in the extent of supply teacher use across schools

The first obvious factor that is likely to impact on the extent of use of supply teachers in each school is the size of the school. If primary schools are grouped by number of pupils, the mean number of supply days used is greater in the larger schools (Table 4.6).

Table 4.6: Primary schools: Mean number of supply teacher days used by school size (N=555: last 5 days, N=498: last year)

	Mean number of supply teacher days used:	
Number of pupils	in the last five days	in the last year (2004)
0 -	2.05	54.0
100 -	2.40	67.3
175 -	3.27	88.0
225 -	3.74	91.4
325 -	5.28	118.3
Significance	0.000	0.000

Figure 4.2: Primary schools: supply teacher day use by Government Office Region
(N = 560: last five days, N=503: last year)



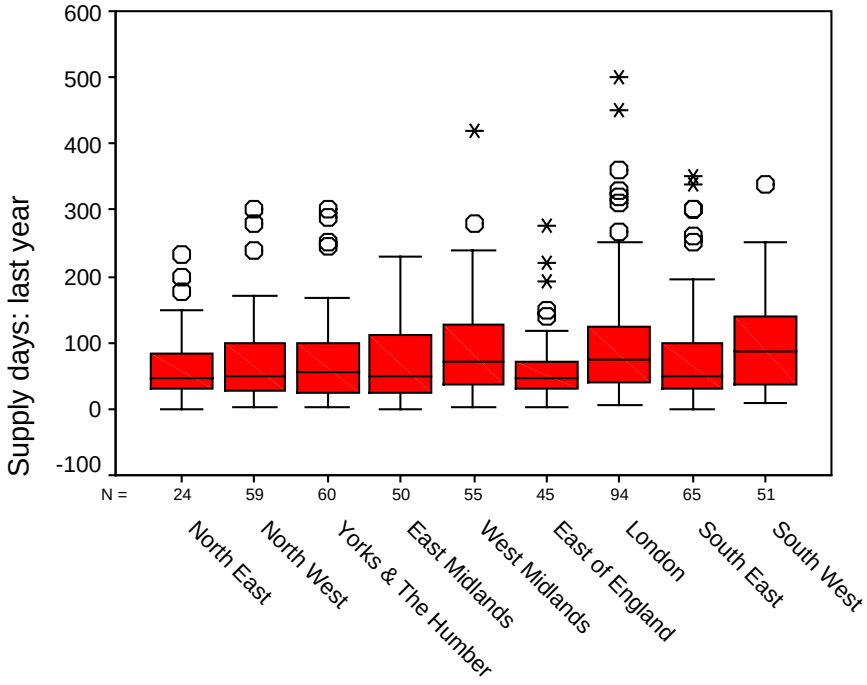
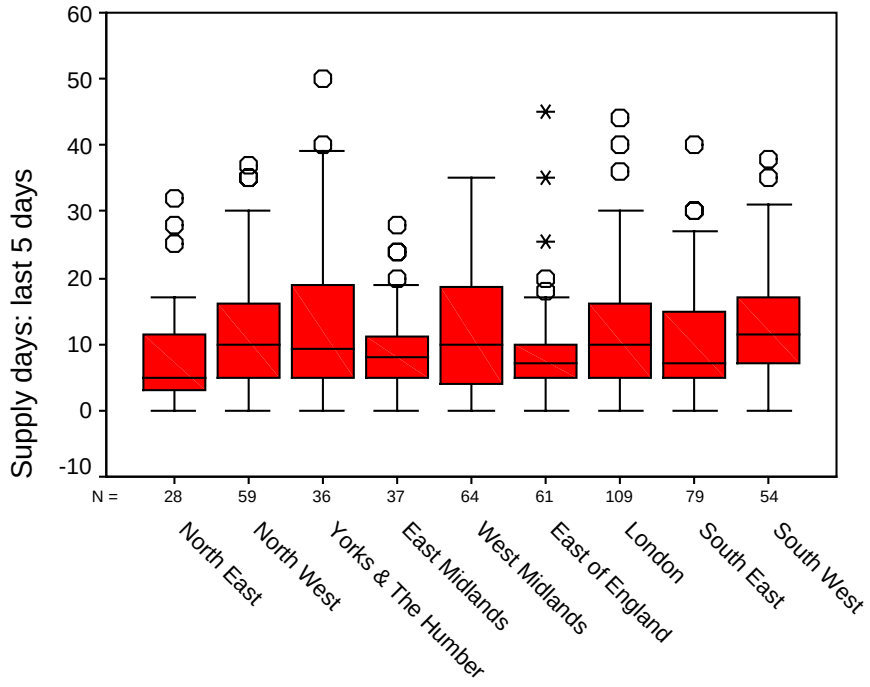
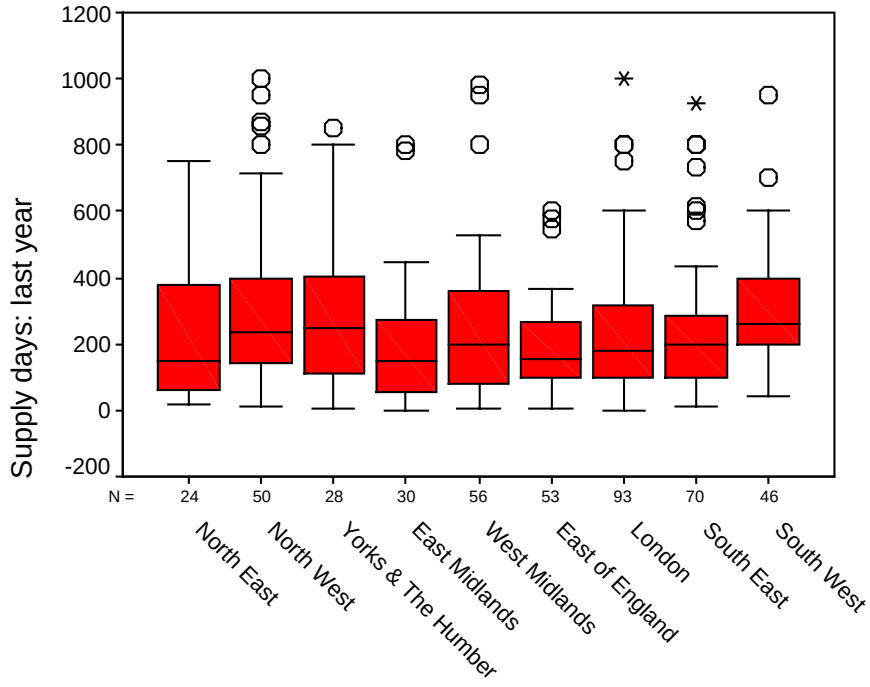


Figure 4.3: Secondary schools: supply teacher day use by region (N = 527: last five days, N=450: last year)





However, while there is a statistically significant pattern, the correlation between schools size and number of supply days used is only moderate (Pearson's correlation coefficient is 0.382 over the last 5 days, p<0.000, and 0.316 over the last year, p<0.000)[3]. This is illustrated on Figure 4.4. The scattergrams show that while there is a clear trend for larger primary schools to use more supply teachers, the variation in use of supply teachers between schools of similar sizes is considerable.

In secondary schools, as in primary, there is a clear and statistically significant pattern through which supply day use increases with school size (Table 4.7).

Table 4.7: Secondary schools: Mean number of supply days used by school size (N=525: last five days, N=449: last year)

	Mean number of supply teacher days used:	
School size	in the last five days	in the last year (2004)
0 -	8.2	189.5
700 -	9.1	209.2
900 -	11.5	246.7
1100 -	12.3	326.3
1350 -	16.2	307.0
Significance	0.000	0.000

However, the correlation between school size and the number of supply days used is slightly smaller than that in primary schools (Pearson's correlation coefficient is 0.311 over the last 5 days, p<0.000, 0.267 over the last year, p<0.000), indicating that the relationship between school size and supply use is not as strong in secondary schools as in primary schools.

In both sectors, while there is a relationship between school size and supply days used, a school twice the size of another would not use twice as many supply teacher days. This is probably because larger schools have more flexibility in the use of internal cover – something that will be discussed later in the chapter.

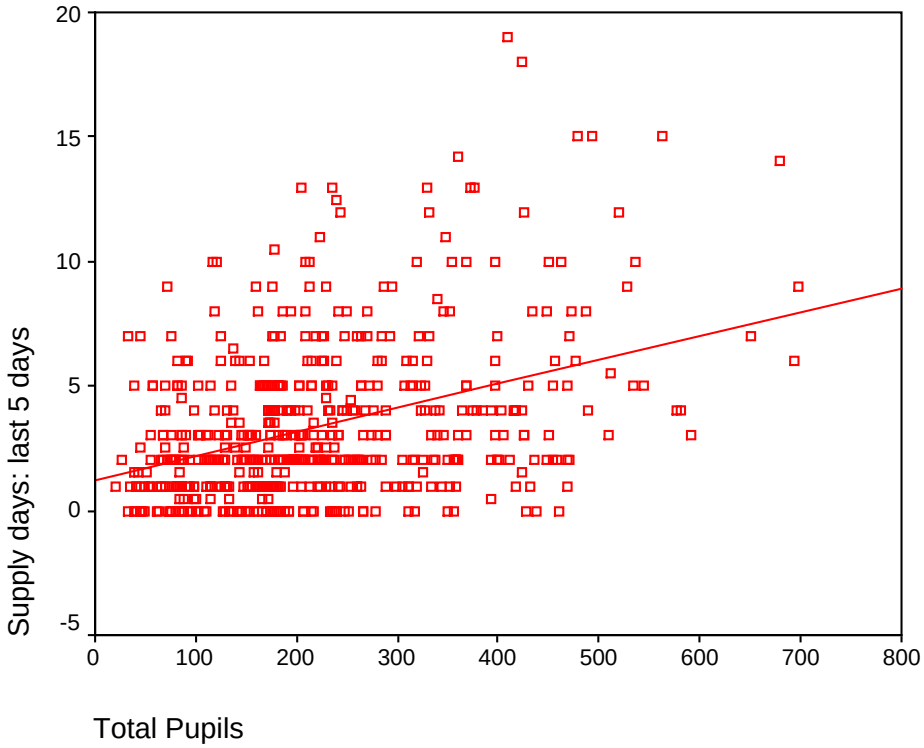
As well as school size, there are other factors that can be related to the number of supply days used in a school. Primary schools with less than 35% of their pupils eligible for free school meals (FSM) had similar levels of supply day use, but schools with levels of FSM of over 35% used significantly more supply days in the last five days (Table 4.8).

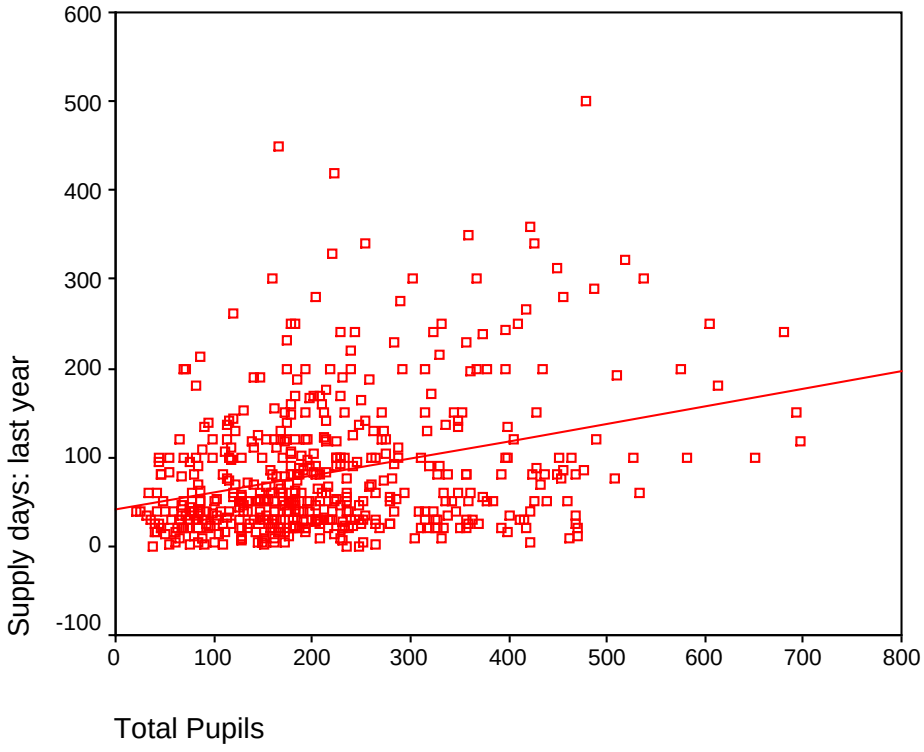
Table 4.8: Primary schools supply day use by free school meals (N=555: last 5 days, N=498: last year) (T-test)

Supply days used:	% of pupils eligible for free school meals	Mean	Significance:	*N*
… in the last five days	more than 35%	4.2	0.005	*81*
	less than 35%	3.2		*474*
…in the last year (2004)	more than 35%	108.1	0.004	*72*
	less than 35%	80.0		*426*

[3] This correlation coefficient describes the slope of the line of best fit in the scatter diagrams. A coefficient of 0 indicates no relationship between variables, and a coefficient of 1 would suggest a perfect relationship.

Figure 4.4: Primary schools: Scattergram of total pupils and supply use over the last 5 days and the last year, showing line of best fit (N=555: last 5 days, N=498: last year)





In secondary schools, there is a small negative correlation (-0.210 over 5 days $p<0.000$ and –0.154 during 2004, $p=0.003$) between the number of supply days used and the percentage of pupils achieving A*-C in at least 5 GCSEs. Secondary schools with less than 65% of pupils achieving 5 A*-C have similar levels of supply day use, but a T-test suggests that the mean number of days is substantially lower in the schools achieving over 65% pupils with 5 A* - C grades (Table 4.9).

Table 4.9: Secondary schools: Number of supply days used by GCSE results (N = 441: last five days, N=377: last year)

Number of supply teacher days:	% achieving 5 A*-C	Mean	Significance	*N*
In the last five days	over 65%	8.8	0.000	*99*
	less than 65%	13.0		*342*
In the last year (2004)	over 65%	217.8.3	0.010	88
	less than 65%	278.2		289

However, there was no clear relationship between the percentage of children eligible for free school meals in secondary schools and the number of supply days used.

These factors account both for some of the differences between schools, and for some of the variation shown across regions. For example, we found that more supply days were used in primary schools in London compared to non-London schools, and by urban primary schools compared to rural schools, but when schools of similar sizes and similar levels of free school meals are compared, these differences disappear.

We have conducted a linear regression analysis to try and model the effects of different school characteristics on the total use of supply teacher days over the last year. We included in this all the variables that we believe to be of importance (school size, attainment data, level of FSM, level of SEN and extent of daily or weekly use of support staff to cover classes). This model has an R squared value of 0.259, indicating that it only explains just over a quarter of the variation in the data. This suggests that there are other factors at work; these would include the amount of staff sickness absence and the extent to which staff attend professional development courses in school hours. In the next section, then, we examine the reasons why schools use supply teachers.

4.3 The reasons why schools use supply teachers

Schools were asked to estimate the proportion of supply days in the last year that were used for different listed reasons (Table 4.10). Responses were provided by 89% of primary, 83% of secondary, 75% of special and 78% of nursery schools. It was clear from the records we inspected in schools that accurate data was not generally available; the nearest schools could come to this would be to examine the budget codes and check against sickness and professional development records. Thus even where responses have been provided they need to be viewed as estimates that are unlikely to be precise.

Table 4.10: Mean percentage of supply days estimated to be used for different reasons

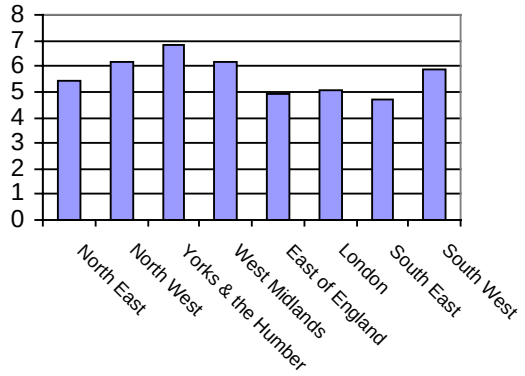
	Nursery %	Primary %	Secondary %	Special %
All sickness absence	41	42	54	50
of which: short-term (less than 4 weeks)	27	26	32	31
long-term (more than 4 weeks)	12	16	22	19
Professional development activity	35	41	17	26
Unfilled vacancies	7	1	10	8
Other professional absence (meetings, sports events etc.)	9	7	8	6
Short-term teacher absence for personal reasons (jury service, funerals etc.)	4	4	7	6
Other	2	3	1	5
N	*57*	*548*	*484*	*109*

Weighted data

Sickness absence accounts for over half of the supply days used in secondary and special schools, and over 40% in primary schools and nurseries (Table 4.10). We divided sickness absence into short-term sickness – less than four weeks, and long-term sickness – more than four weeks. The DfES (2005c) figures for sickness absence show that 44% of all sickness absence is taken as periods of more than 20 working days (equivalent to our long-term sickness). In the responses on Table 4.10, the proportion of sickness cover that was over four weeks is around 40% (but less in nursery schools). However, some sickness absences are more than one term, and the cover for these should not have been included here because of the definition used for a supply teacher in this research.

Variation in amount of teacher sickness contributes to the variation in supply day use across schools and regions (Figure 4.5).

Figure 4.5: Average number of days sickness absence in the calendar year 2004 for all teachers by region



Source: DfES, 2005c, *School Workforce in England: provisional sickness absence in 2004 and teacher ethnicity 2005*, Table 3

The East of England, which has the lowest mean supply days used, has one of the lowest sickness rates. Yorkshire and the Humber, which has high use of supply days in secondary schools, also has the highest sickness rate.

Absence for professional development accounts for 35% and 41% of supply days used in nursery and primary schools respectively, but only 26% in special schools and 17% in secondary schools. The interviews we carried out in schools suggest that primary schools were the least likely to be able to use internal cover when a member of staff was absent for professional development, whereas all the other types of school had more flexibility. This will be reviewed later in the chapter when we discuss the options for providing cover.

Primary schools used very few supply days to cover unfilled vacancies, and secondary the highest proportion (primary 1%, secondary 10%). This presumably relates to the buoyant state of primary teacher supply. The use of supply days to cover unfilled vacancies varied across secondary schools: those with lower GCSE results, or a higher percentage of pupils eligible for free school meals, or a high percentage with special educational needs all used a statistically significantly higher proportion of supply teacher days to cover unfilled vacancies. They also used a higher overall number of supply days. This suggests that the number of days used to cover unfilled vacancies does not impact on the extent to which supply teachers are used for other purposes, presumably because it is paid for with the money allocated for that post, rather than coming out of the supply budget.

Similarly, when more supply days have been used for long-term sickness, the schools actually use more days in total. This may relate to insurance cover for staff absence. We asked schools what insurance arrangements they had in place; while more than 85% of nursery, primary and special schools have such cover, only 43% of secondary schools do (Table 4.11).

Table 4.11: What, if any, insurance arrangements offering cover in case of staff absence does the school make? Responses by school sector

	Nursery %	Primary %	Secondary %	Special %
Total with insurance	90	89	43	85
Arrangements made independently	22	20	12	24
Insured through LEA scheme	69	69	30	60
No insurance cover	10	11	57	15
N	*60*	*603*	*524*	*126*

Weighted data

We also asked those who have insurance cover at what stage in an absence it starts. Overall, a fifth of the schools that had insurance reported that their cover starts immediately; in most cases there was some time delay, such that short absences would not be covered (Table 4.12).

Table 4.12: At what stage does insurance cover start? Responses from the schools that *have* insurance cover

	Nursery	Primary	Secondary	Special
	%	%	%	%
immediately	36	18	23	19
after 1-3 days	20	29	28	37
after 4-9 days	13	22	11	13
after 10-29 days	22	29	26	29
after 30 or more days	9	1	3	0
only for maternity	0	0	1	0
other	0	2	8	2
N	*52*	*535*	*286*	*106*

Weighted data

'Other' included arrangements where the date cover starts relates to the total number of days absence for the whole teaching staff (e.g. 'After 135 days taken by all teaching staff'); arrangements where the cumulative days for a particular individual were a factor (e.g. 'After 20 consecutive working days or any 30 days in one academic year'); and where it depended on the number of staff off sick (e.g. 'After 3 days or when more than 2 staff phone in ill').

These data indicate that most short-term sickness is paid for from the supply budget, this is also the case for most professional development absence. (In some circumstances schools are provided with the costs of cover in order to ensure that they send a member of staff on a particular course, but interviews showed that this is not the general rule.) We found that where the proportion of days used for short-term teacher sickness was high, schools did not use more supply days in total. They used a smaller proportion of supply teacher days for professional development. They were also more likely to indicate that they used internal cover in cases of professional development absence. In contrast, where the proportion of supply days used for short-term sickness was low, they were able to use the supply budget for professional development, and were less likely to use internal cover for that purpose.

Larger primary and secondary schools used a higher mean percentage of days for short-term teacher sickness and unfilled vacancies, and a lower percentage for professional development activity (Table 4.13 and Table 4.14); this is statistically significant.

Table 4.13: Primary schools: mean proportion of supply days used for short-term sickness and professional development activity by size of school (N = 538)

	Mean proportion of supply days used for:	
School size (no. of pupils)	short term sickness	professional development activity
0 - 99	20%	48%
100 - 174	27%	41%
175 - 224	26%	41%
225 - 324	28%	38%
325 and over	32%	32%
Significance (Anova)	p = 0.007	p = 0.003

Table 4.14: Secondary schools: Mean proportion of supply days used for short term teacher sickness and professional development activity in schools of different sizes

Total proportion of supply days used for:	School size	Mean	Significance (T-test)	*N*
… short term teacher sickness	less than 700 pupils	28%	0.031	*126*
	700 or more pupils	34%		*350*
… professional development activity	less than 700 pupils	24%	0.000	*125*
	700 or more pupils	16%		*351*

This may be because larger schools have more flexibility to use internal cover, and so, in relation to their size, have allocated a rather smaller budget for supply cover than smaller schools.

What the data appear to show, then, is that the volume of demand is related primarily to school budgets. Long-term sickness and unfilled vacancies may cause a school to use more supply teacher days. But the demands created by short-term sickness and professional development activity are limited by the amount in the budget, and when short-term sickness goes up, schools use more internal cover rather than buying in more supply teachers. This was confirmed in interviews where headteachers indicated that they would not cancel professional development activity that had been agreed, but would provide cover internally.

The questionnaire asked school respondents to comment on the impact in their schools of the September 2004 change to the School Teachers' Pay and Conditions Document, specifying that no teacher shall be required to provide cover for absent teachers for more than 38 hours in any school year. Around 85% of nursery, primary and special schools noted that they had never in any case asked teachers to cover for more than 38 hours in a year, as did 60% of secondary schools (Table 4.15). But the remaining schools indicated that the this policy had had an impact in a variety of ways including problems with the budget; greater use of support staff in secondary schools; and the headteacher providing more cover in nursery and primary schools.

In the qualitative data there were a number of suggestions that the introduction of PPA time might create more demand for supply teachers in primary schools. One of the agencies interviewed felt that this was an area of potential growth for them. Some of the supply teachers in focus groups carried out in September 2005 had arrangements to cover PPA time on a regular basis in particular schools[4]. We do not know how widespread such arrangements are; most of the primary schools interviewed were coping with PPA time by making temporary or part-time appointments, or in some cases by increasing the amount of cover (often in the form of supervising the whole school) undertaken by the headteacher and deputy headteacher.

[4] This was not necessarily work that supply teachers were enthusiastic about, as it could prevent them from taking on other longer placements. They were also concerned that the schools wanted them to work for parts of the days, for example, for two hours in the morning and two hours in the afternoon. Such an arrangement would reduce the amount earned in a day.

Table 4.15: Coded comments about the impact of the requirement that no teacher shall be provide cover for absent teachers for more than 38 hours in any school year

	Nursery %	Primary %	Secondary %	Special %
No effect, never asked staff to cover for more than 38 hours a year	88	83	60	85
Budget problems	0	6	12	7
Use more support staff to provide cover	4	1	11	0
Headteacher provides cover more often	7	4	1	2
Need to keep more careful records	0	1	5	3
Employ more staff	2	1	1	1
Other	0	4	10	3
N	*56*	*489*	*463*	*105*

'Other' included general difficulties, changing the timetable, cutting down on activities that require cover, decreasing cover by teaching staff, not making a subject match when providing cover.

4.4 The various options for providing cover, and the impact of the remodelling agenda

While the focus of this report is supply teachers, it is important to set the use of supply teachers in the context of the whole range of ways in which schools provide cover. This section presents data about the extent of the use of internal teaching staff and of support staff to provide cover in schools. The reasons schools give for their practices in this respect are discussed.

It should be noted that in their responses, primary school headteachers consistently used the word 'cover' to refer to any time that a class teacher was not available to take a class, whether through absence or because they were timetabled to have NQT release time or PPA time. Thus they did not use the distinction made by WAMG (2005), and set out on page 15 of this report, between teacher absence, for which cover is required, and Planning Preparation and Assessment (PPA) time. Both were seen equally as times when someone else had to take the class, and that person could be a member of internal teaching staff, a supply teacher, an HLTA or another member of the support staff with less training.

As Chapter 2 explained, remodelling of the school workforce enables schools to use support staff to cover classes. The school questionnaire asked schools whether they were familiar with the Workforce Agreement Monitoring Group guidance on cover supervision. Responses are shown on Table 4.16. It should be noted that 5% of primary and secondary schools, and over 15% of nursery and special schools, did not respond to this question.

Table 4.16: Responses to 'Are you familiar with Workforce Agreement Monitoring Group guidance on cover supervision?' by school sector (N = 1289)

		Yes	Not in detail	No	*N*
Nursery	%	36	44	20	*52*
Primary	%	57	33	11	*581*
Secondary	%	60	28	12	*542*
Special	%	51	38	11	*113*

Weighted data

Over half the schools that responded said they were familiar with the guidance, around 30% indicated 'not in detail', and just over 10% of primary, secondary and special schools said they were not familiar with it. The nursery schools were the least likely to indicate familiarity.

The questionnaire also included a number of questions about the use of support staff to provide cover. Throughout the questionnaire, references to 'support staff' were always followed by 'e.g. teaching assistants or cover supervisors'. At that time there were no higher level teaching assistants in post. First, schools were asked to indicate how often in the last twelve months classes had been covered in various ways. This revealed very different patterns of cover provision in the different sectors, summarised on Table 4.17.

Table 4.17: Percentage of schools in each sector using different forms of cover every week

	Nursery %	Primary %	Secondary %	Special %
Regular teacher	18	24	95	37
Support staff	30	10	33	30
Supply teacher	19	45	86	44
N	*45*	*587*	*558*	*105*

Weighted data

Secondary schools reported the greatest use of all forms of cover. Primary schools made very much less use of support staff than other sectors (10% compared to over 30% in nursery, primary and secondary schools). Nursery schools reported the least use of both supply teachers and regular teachers to provide cover. These differences in practice in the ways that cover is provided are not only between sectors, but also relate to school location and free school meals eligibility. For example, urban primary schools, primary schools in London and primary schools with higher levels of free school meals use internal cover by regular teachers more frequently. Larger primary schools are also more likely to make use of internal cover. The full responses from each sector are considered in turn.

The responses from primary schools showed that supply teachers were the most frequently used form of cover and only a few schools made more than occasional use of support staff for this purpose (Table 4.18).

Table 4.18: Primary schools: How frequently in the last 12 months has cover been provided by teachers, support staff and supply teachers? (N = 587)

	Percentage of schools using:		
	Regular teacher	Support staff	Supply teacher
Almost daily	11	2	5
At least once a week	13	8	40
At least once a month	24	8	34
At least once a term	9	8	11
Occasionally	32	37	8
Never	12	37	1

Weighted data

Just 4% of primary schools indicated that they would use support staff to cover for three consecutive days (the maximum period suggested for primary schools). A number of primary school respondents wrote additional comments indicating their lack of enthusiasm for using support staff to provide cover:

> *I expect the use of support staff to cover will increase despite adverse impact on standards.*
>
> *Not convinced, using of support assistants will help - will present longer-term problems. It is a cost cutting exercise.*
>
> *Used probably once or twice per week which is a large increase on nothing. Would much prefer to employ 'regular' supply teachers rather than support staff, but not enough money.*
>
> *From September 2005 support staff will be used to provide cover. This is a very retrograde step, will affect standards, will affect behaviour. The agreement should be fully funded so extra staff can be appointed.*
>
> *Supply teacher cover is still our first option.*
>
> *I feel that we are being pushed* [to use support staff] *due to lack of funding & Government's 'hidden' agenda.*

Only a fifth of primary schools reported that they 'normally' use internal teachers to provide short-term cover. This was the practice in some larger schools that employed teachers who did not have class responsibility. Primary headteachers and non-teaching deputies also provide a considerable amount of cover; more than half the primary schools indicated that classes are 'very often' or 'sometimes' supervised by members of the management team. Some interviewees explained that this was a budgetary issue:

> *Our budget is really tight and the first fifteen days we have to cover ourselves before the insurance kicks in. So for the first fifteen days myself and the deputy head, if we could, tried to cover this particular teacher's class.* (North East primary)

Some primary schools also acknowledged that they split pupils between other classes: only 40% said this 'never' happened. Again, this was presented as a budgetary issue, not an ideal procedure:

> *We split classes yes. The staff are not ecstatically happy about it but it is a fact of life if we want budget left to do other things then we have to make some sacrifices and that is one of them. And then the deputy usually, me in her absence, we set work for the first lesson which is photocopied and quickly prepared and so not ideal I admit. We have both got work available at the various levels we need and then we put the children into other classes.* (London infants).

Almost half the primary schools (46%) indicated that they sometimes combined two classes as a way of providing cover. But the main strategy used by primary schools in cases of sickness absence was to get a supply teacher in to cover on the first day of the absence; two-thirds of primary schools said this was what they did.

The responses from secondary schools were very different (Table 4.19). In the vast majority of schools, teachers provide cover on a regular basis. In responding to another question, 82% of secondary respondents indicated their teachers 'normally' cover classes in the early days of an absence or in the case of short sickness absence. In another question, 77% of secondary respondents indicated that they would not aim to have a supply teacher providing cover until the third day or later of a sickness absence.

Table 4.19: Secondary schools: How frequently in the last 12 months has cover been provided by teachers, support staff and supply teachers? (N = 558)

	Percentage of schools using:		
	Regular teacher	Support staff	Supply teacher
Almost daily	81	29	51
At least once a week	14	4	35
At least once a month	3	4	10
At least once a term	1	2	1
Occasionally	1	21	1
Never	0	42	1

Weighted data

The secondary school interviewees explained in considerable detail how they decided who should cover in each case. This involved taking into account how fully each teacher was timetabled and ensuring that cover lessons were fairly distributed, because '*everyone has a passionate interest in the cover and it's where they either see fair play or favouritism at its best or worst*' (Yorkshire and the Humber secondary deputy head). The classes to be covered were also taken into account: for example, a subject specialist (either an internal teacher or supply teacher) might be moved to teach an exam class, leaving non-exam classes to be supervised by non-specialists.

Supply teachers are also extensively used in secondary schools, with half the schools surveyed using supply teachers 'almost daily', and a further third 'at least once a week'.

Twenty-nine percent of the secondary schools in the survey also used support staff to provide cover on a daily basis (25% using them for periods of three consecutive days), but 63% said that this occurred only occasionally or not at all. There was a clear divide between the two groups.

It was evident that there was a relationship between the extent of use of supply teachers and of support staff to provide cover (Table 4.20). Those schools that reported the lowest use of supply teachers generally reported higher use of support staff, and vice versa. (The relationship, although present, was less marked in primary schools.)

Table 4.20: Secondary schools: 'How often are classes supervised by support staff?' by grouped total supply teacher days used in 2004 (N=551)

Quartiles of total supply teacher days 2004		How often are classes supervised by support staff?			
		very often	sometimes	occasionally	never
Lowest 25%	%	30	7	24	39
2	%	19	8	23	50
3	%	15	7	22	55
Highest 25%	%	20	8	15	58

Significance (chi-squared): p = 0.007. Shaded squares have adjusted standardized residuals of more than 3.

Table 4.21 shows the relative use of different forms of cover in nursery schools and special schools. Interviewees from both special and nursery schools argued that in covering classes a key issue is the preference for an adult who is familiar with the pupils themselves. Thus, support staff, who in both sectors are more plentiful than in

primary and secondary, and play a central role in teams of adults, have always had some responsibility for providing cover.

Table 4.21: Nursery schools and special schools: How frequently in the last 12 months has cover been provided by teachers, support staff and supply teachers?

	% of NURSERY SCHOOLS (N =48)			% of SPECIAL SCHOOLS (N = 105)		
	Regular teacher	Support staff	Supply teacher	Regular teacher	Support staff	Supply teacher
Almost daily	12	12	0	11	8	12
At least once a week	6	18	19	26	22	32
At least once a month	18	21	21	24	23	36
At least once a term	15	3	21	9	1	11
Occasionally	32	29	27	25	28	4
Never	18	18	13	5	16	4

Weighted data

As well as asking what the schools' practices were at the time they filled in the questionnaire, we tried to assess the extent of change by asking how much the use of support staff to supervise classes had increased in the light of the National Agreement on workforce reform (for details see page 14-15). More than half the schools in each sector indicated that there had been no change (Table 4.22). The greatest effect was in secondary schools, where 28% said that there had been a large increase in use of support staff. The smaller proportion reporting an increase in nursery and special schools is partly because these schools have always made greater use of support staff to supervise pupils, and they see the current change as less radical than do primary and secondary schools.

Table 4.22: How much has the use of support staff to supervise classes increased in the light of the National Agreement on workforce reform signed in January 2003?

		no change	slight increase	large increase	*N*
Nursery	%	66	28	6	*57*
Primary	%	58	30	13	*593*
Secondary	%	52	20	28	*535*
Special	%	67	24	9	*128*

Weighted data

In comparison with the rest of the country, fewer schools in London reported increases in the use of support staff to supervise classes. This was true of primary and secondary schools, but the effect was larger in secondary; half the secondary schools outside London reported a slight or large increase in the use of support staff but only 30% of those in London did so (Table 4.23). A possible reason for this might be the current level of training and skills of the support staff; in London, a lower (but not statistically significant) percentage of both primary and secondary schools indicated that their support staff are appropriately trained.

Table 4.23: Secondary schools: Comparison of responses in London and elsewhere to 'How much has the use of support staff to supervise classes increased in the light of the National Agreement on workforce reform?' (N = 535)

Secondary schools …		no change	slight increase	large increase
… in London	%	70	13	17
… in the rest of the country	%	51	21	28

Significance (chi-squared): p = 0.002

However, a lower proportion of London (compared with non-London) secondary schools said they would be willing to use support staff, even if they were appropriately trained (Table 4.24); this is statistically significant.

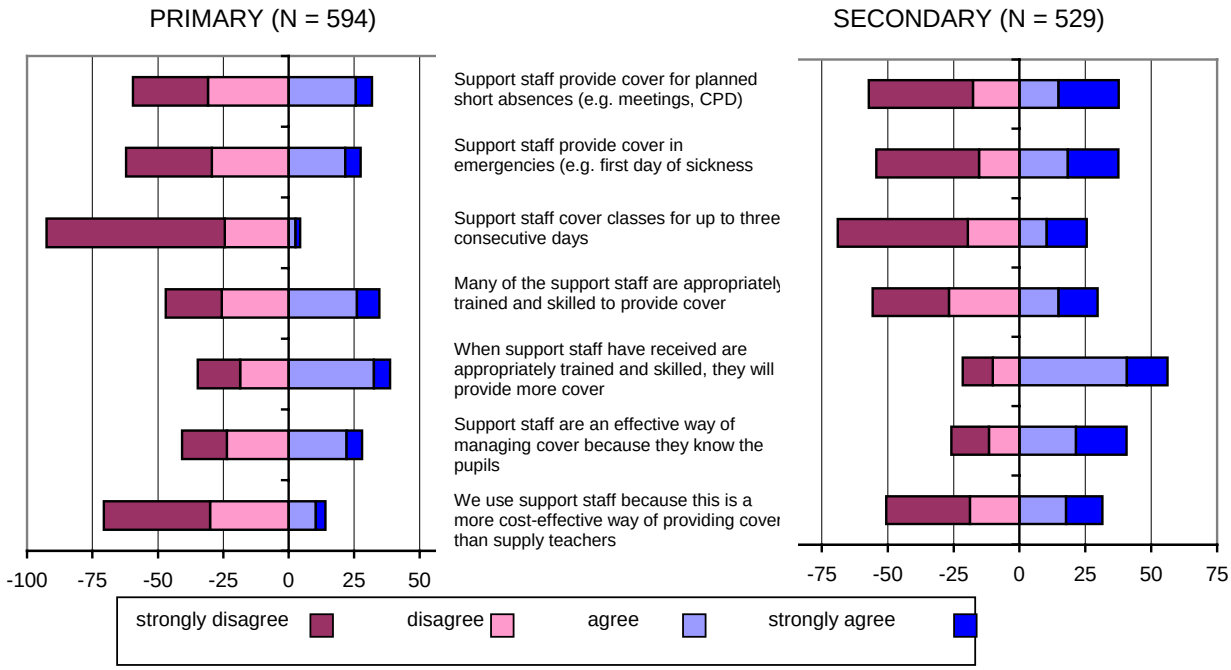
Table 4.24: Secondary schools: Comparison of responses in London and elsewhere to statement 'We will make more use of support staff to provide cover when more of the support staff have received appropriate training' (N=520)

		agree	neutral	disagree	*N*
London	%	41	30	30	*101*
Not London	%	57	23	19	*419*

Significance (chi-squared): p = 0.008

The range of practices and attitudes to the use of support staff were further explored through a list of statements which respondents were asked to rate on a five-point scale from 'strongly agree' to 'strongly disagree', with the mid-point as neutral. Primary and secondary responses are shown on Figure 4.6. Neutral responses are omitted.

Figure 4.6: Using support staff to provide cover: how far do you agree or disagree with each statement? (weighted data)



In every case fewer primary than secondary respondents indicated that they agreed or strongly agreed. While between 14% and 20% of secondary respondents strongly agreed with each statement, fewer than 10% of primary respondents did so. Similarly, more primary respondents disagreed with most statements. The only exception was the statement, 'Many of the support staff in this school are appropriately trained and skilled to provide cover', where a slightly higher percentage of primary respondents indicated agreement (and slightly fewer disagreement) in comparison with secondary. This indicates that in comparison with secondary, slightly more primary respondents believe that their support staff have the skills and training to provide cover, but that in general they are less prepared for support staff to do so.

Among the secondary schools, 32% indicated that they use support staff to provide cover because this is more cost-effective. A third of these schools indicated that their support staff were not appropriately skilled and trained to provide cover, but they were nevertheless using them.

At the end of the school questionnaire schools were asked to comment on ways in which the DfES or LEA could improve arrangements for cover. More than half the respondents wrote comments; many of which related to the various different ways in which cover can be provided. More than a fifth of those who wrote comments argued that the best way to provide cover was by using 'floating teachers', as advocated in the DfES guidance (2002a); they argued that additional funds would be needed to do this:

> *Definitely needs to be funding for a teacher employed by school, who knows the children who can cover for sickness and more importantly now PPA time!*
>
> *Supply schools with funds to employ non-classroom based teacher (FTE).*
>
> *DfES could fund school to employ a full time member of staff to provide cover for colleagues re sickness absence. This would improve pupil attainment.*
>
> *Provide primary schools with funding to employ at least one extra teacher – non class based – on a permanent basis.*

Only a tiny minority of schools noted that they had been able to employ additional teachers, but those that had done so stated that this was effective:

> *Our school has used LIG grant to employ two full time (qualified) teachers to cover the majority of planned/and unplanned staff absence. This system has been amazingly effective and greatly appreciated in the school.*

Several schools argued that the best solution would be to share 'floating teachers' between a group of schools (rather like the system in some Scottish education authorities of using supply teachers on permanent contracts within a cluster of schools, Hutchings *et al.*, 2006). Again, they stated that they would need additional funding to do this:

> *Provide schools with enough finance to enable them to maintain 'Supply Staff' in school network groups.*

Others argued that supply teacher cover was preferable to support staff cover:

> *Give extra money to cover with teachers. I have enough contact with regular supply teachers and teachers that work part-time (job-share) in my school which would enable me to do this if I had the money.*

A much smaller group (less than 1% of all comments) advocated improving arrangements for cover supervisors:

> *Clarify the pay for cover supervisors. Encourage the training of cover supervisors. Encourage schools to adopt cover supervisors.*

Views about the use of support staff to provide cover were further explored in the school case studies. One of the eight primary heads interviewed was enthusiastic about workforce reform. She said:

> *I was just appalled at the cost of cover for INSET and sickness, the actual cash cost was out of all proportion. And managerially when I stop to think about it, all my academic and behaviour issues arose out of paying this huge amount of money to people to come in that really rocked the boat, … not that there was any fault on their part.* (E Midlands primary)

Another headteacher had one particular member of support staff who was deployed for cover because she was capable, and volunteered to do it, and was familiar with the children:

> *I do have an extremely good nursery nurse who is quite capable and quite confident, depending on the subject, of teaching up to Year 6. So recently where I have had teachers who have needed to be released or have needed a supply teacher, I have spoken to her and she has covered in nursery, reception and Year 1. So that is like the short term. I would rather do that because the children know her.* (North East primary)

The other six headteachers all indicated that they did not use support staff to provide cover, and that they were opposed in principle to doing so. An infant school head, who said that she would never use support staff, saw this as an issue of '*protection of the profession*' (South East infants). Another saw it as an issue of teaching and learning:

> *I do feel quite strongly about watering down the standard I think. I think it is a very different set of skills involved in teaching, a very different set of skills required for minding a class and if we are not careful we are going to have a lot of minding going on and the quality of teaching and learning is going to be impaired.* (London infants)

A third explained that the school's support staff were not willing to supervise classes, and that even where support staff had suitable qualifications, they were not willing to take classes in PPA time:

> *No we don't use support staff, my support staff were absolutely adamant that they were not going to be used for that. … Politically it is a very hot potato in* [named city] *and my support staff, who are excellent support staff, they want to be classroom support staff. They want to be special needs support staff. One of them is qualified as a teacher and she chose not to be, and so they were adamant that they were not going to get involved in that, and so I don't even use them for PPA or anything.* (Yorkshire and the Humber junior)

Another headteacher explained that, rather than use support staff, the school had employed a part-time 'floating teacher' who could both provide cover and teach classes during the regular teachers' PPA time:

> *With workforce reform, and the implementation of PPA time, and not wanting to have cover supervision arrangements, we decided to go down the route of the employment of a part-time teacher.* (West Midlands primary)

One head explained that she had consulted the staff about the use of support staff both to provide and to take classes during PPA time:

> *Now the government is expecting us to ask teaching assistants to teach. How do we all feel about it? And the whole of the staff said no. We have our teaching assistants*

> *supporting a teacher. Why should we expect them to teach without the teacher? And the staff absolutely unanimously said no. Well there are budget difficulties because PPA time has not been funded; well it's not been fully funded. I haven't got an answer to how I'm going to do it yet, but not with teaching assistants taking classes of the size that we've got. … And the governors will back that up, yes.* (North West primary)

In contrast, two of the seven secondary schools interviewed were intending to start using cover supervisors in the autumn term 2005, and two had already done so; in each case budgetary reasons were cited as the main reason for doing this. One deputy head explained:

> *We're looking to employ our own cover assistants, staff who will do cover, and we've got a couple of people on board at the moment who are looking to top up their HND to get a degree, and they need a year to do it, and then they want to enrol with us on the GTP programme. We offer anybody who is employed in the school a career route of some sort.* (East secondary)

Many secondary interviewees expressed some anxieties about how using cover supervisors would work out. Only two of the secondary schools in the case study sample already had experience of this. One had appointed a cover supervisor from existing support staff, and found this was effective (‘*the boys recognise her’*), and had also occasionally used cover supervisors from agencies rather than supply teachers. However, this had not worked well: ‘*the couple we've had we haven't been overly impressed’* (South West secondary). The other school had had to advertise for cover supervisors a second time because they did not consider any of the original applicants suitable. Even the second group were not strong: they had therefore been through a prolonged induction period working as teaching assistants with the ‘best’ teachers:

> *They had two to three weeks of* [induction] *and then we thought it was time to let them loose and I never gave them more than three* [lessons] *out of five in a day. And in two days the person looking after them said, 'It's terrible, out of control, out of depth'. And so we went back to square one again and they have been in lessons with experienced staff doing a cover, being in lessons with my best supply teachers and at the minute they are working in pairs but never more than three* [lessons] *a day so they are not cost effective at all – they cost around 18K … And so these are very luxurious covers.* [Int: When you say they are working in pairs?] *They are working both in the classroom on their own with no other adults there. It's getting a bit better and they are feeling a bit better about it and the kids are getting more used to them and all that. And the other thing is, they never get anything tricky, it's always straightforward stuff and I have heavily concentrated on Year 7. So they have had a really protected time in a way.* (Yorkshire and the Humber secondary)

Two of the LEA interviewees made similar comments about the difficulty of finding cover supervisors of a suitable quality.

Those schools employing or intending to employ cover supervisors talked about the complexity of deciding how many to appoint. In September and October there was little cover to be done, so although the cover supervisors could be used in other ways, their salaries would be a drain on resources. But when demand for cover was high, there would still sometimes be a need for supply teachers, who would also be needed to cover longer-term absences. Schools generally expected to appoint two or three, who could be fairly fully deployed providing cover.

Three secondary school interviewees indicated that their schools would not be using support staff to provide cover. A London deputy head was the only interviewee to mention pressure from teacher unions:

> *I can't see it in this school because it is heavily unionised with NUT I would say 99.5% are NUT or UNISON and basically they don't agree, you know, with that principle. … I am sure that there are in some schools, you know, higher level teacher assistants who have got their qualification who would be capable of doing that, but I feel that to teach children on the cheap, so to speak, is completely wrong. Yes, let's have more teaching assistants, but I personally, for the ones that I have seen, I can't see any of them handling classes on their own even with teachers providing the lesson plan or whatever. And I know the ones here wouldn't want to. They wouldn't want to (a) because of the pay (b) because they don't feel trained enough to do that and (c) they don't feel academically trained enough to do it.* (London secondary girls)

Another saw it as largely impractical for any support staff to take classes, even if they had the qualifications of an HLTA:

> *First of all they are not qualified to do it, secondly it would be unfair to ask them to stand in front of a class and teach. It is not their role and nor do we feel that they should be asked to do that. Now I do know that higher skills level learning support staff are paid a different rate do teach maybe in some primary schools. You have got health and safety, they couldn't do it in design and technology, they couldn't do it in science, they couldn't do it in food and I don't think they can do it in PE or art.* [Even if we had qualified HLTAs] *I think we would have to think about that very, very carefully. They would have to be exceptional, and we would have to know them before we even considered it, and we would have to look at the implications of that. At the moment it is not a route that we are looking at. … I think it is an issue about behaviour, behavioural issues.* (London secondary mixed)

Similarly the middle school headteacher said that he did not intend to use support staff to cover:

> *We have resisted that because we have taken the view that even with stretched budgets we want to put teachers in front of classrooms. There is an issue for us about quality because in this institution I have some very very good support staff and I have even got support staff who are qualified teachers, but for me there is a situation where one professionally wants to do the best for children and I wonder what a parent would say if they found out instead of giving the children an entitlement of a teacher that you were employing someone at £8000 to instruct. There is the issue to me about child minding.* (North East middle school)

The special schools tended to use support staff more often because they knew the pupils, and this is crucial in a special school setting.

> *What we prefer to do is if the classroom assistants are happy we will sometimes use classroom assistants. The fact is that the classroom assistants often have more knowledge and experience of what goes on in the classroom … And the fact that we have four classroom assistants in a class, the class team is quite strong and so in some cases it is more productive to get a classroom assistant to go in to boost up the number than necessarily put a teacher in. If we can put a teacher in and it's feasible, fine. But we won't phone up an agency to get a supply teacher in to cover a class where they won't actually be able to do any good.* (London special school)

Nevertheless, there was a concern in both special schools interviewed that the support staff role is an important one, and that they were needed in these roles; therefore it was desirable to find another adult to supervise. The school quoted above sometimes relied on specialists such as the speech therapist or the art technician to supervise the class. The deputy head argued that using a member of the management team or a supply teacher to cover when such people were present would be a waste of time

because they '*wouldn't be able to improve on what* [the pupils] *are getting*'. In this particular school there is also a certain amount of flexibility because classes are small:

> *The way I generally do it is I look to see what staff are out and then when the buses come in I see what pupils are off. And so sometimes I know I have got to get somebody in because things are so bad but other times I know I don't have to do that and you know there is no point in spending money if you don't have to.* (London special school)

The other special school interviewee explained how efforts were made to provide internal cover before seeking a supply teacher:

> *How it works is I will look around the school and if children are off we can swap staff around from class to class and that is our first point of call, because obviously the people within school are familiar with all of the pupils even though they may not know them as well as they do the pupils in their class. Then I will look at some teachers who … work with us part time and they do extra hours for us. Again they are people who are familiar with the school. Then I have a bank of people who I am familiar with, and who I know, and who I know have some experience with this school, and then finally I ring the agencies*. (North East special school)

But many special schools felt that it was essential to have a qualified teacher supervising the pupils:

> *The complex needs of our children (particularly challenging/extreme behaviour) necessitates presence/supervision of qualified teacher in class.* (Comment on questionnaire)

The two nurseries interviewed both generally used supply teachers to provide cover, but one said that on occasion they ask a nursery nurse who regularly provides cover for absent nursery nurses to cover when teachers attended professional development courses.

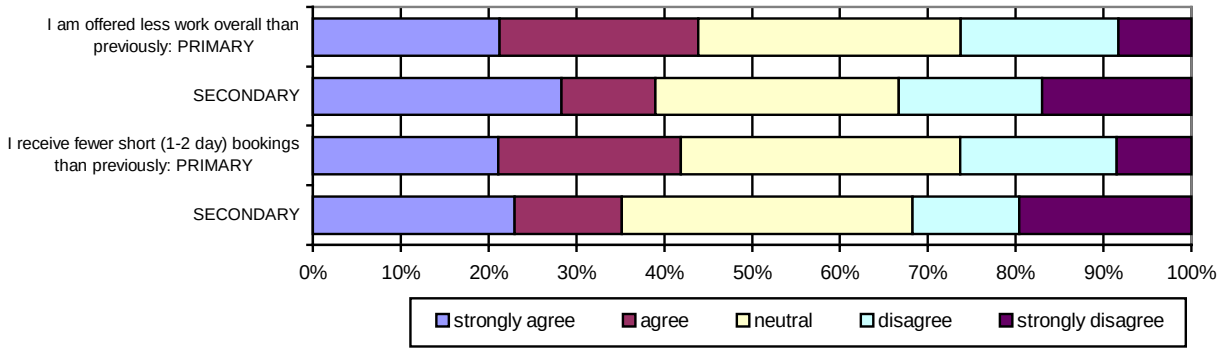
> *We also ask her if a teacher is away on a course or something and so she may supply cover in addition to the teachers. … In nursery you only have to have supervision of a teacher, nursery nurses can run a class if they are under the guidance of a teacher. …We would ask her because of course money, there is a heck of a difference.* (East nursery)

Supply teachers' reports of the impact of remodelling

In addition to exploring the impact of remodelling by asking schools about changes in use of support staff to provide cover, we asked supply teachers to indicate whether they had noticed a change in the amount of work they were offered. The questionnaire asked whether teachers were offered less work than previously, and whether they received fewer short (one to two day) bookings – cover that might now be being provided by cover supervisors or higher level teaching assistants. Responses shown on Figure 4.7 are from those with at least four years' experience as supply teachers – that is, those who have been supply teaching long enough to notice such changes.

Overall, more teachers agreed than disagreed, but this does not indicate an overwhelming feeling that there is less work. Slightly more primary teachers agreed with both statements, indicating that some of them are experiencing less work. However, this was not necessarily seen only as a consequence of workforce remodelling; respondents also referred to the buoyant supply of primary teachers, which has resulted in large numbers of NQTs entering the supply market in some parts of the country (especially the North West).

Figure 4.7: What impact has the remodelling agenda and use of support staff to cover classes had on your work? Responses from teachers with at least four years experience as supply teachers (Primary: N=278; secondary: N = 159)



These data were collected in the spring term 2004. The qualitative data collected in summer and autumn 2004 indicated that concern about lack of work was more widespread among supply teachers; this was partly because the effect of remodelling had become more marked, and partly because in some parts of the country there were many more primary NQTs than could find jobs: one agency in the north of England commented:

> *I find now that we have an awful lot of newly qualified primary school teachers that don't have jobs.* (Local agency)

Two of those supply teachers we spoke to were applying for support staff jobs. One of these had discovered that the primary school she usually worked in was going to be using higher level teaching assistants (HLTAs) to do the work she had been doing on a regular basis; she had decided to apply for an HLTA post so that she could continue her current level of work commitment. Similarly, one of the focus groups included a secondary supply teacher who was at that time applying for the role of cover supervisor. She had trained in 1999-2000 and had completed her induction year in a permanent teaching post in a secondary school, but had found the pressure of full-time teaching was simply too much. She had moved into supply teaching to reduce her workload. This had worked well for several years, but she was aware that the schools she worked in were appointing cover supervisors and believed that this was likely to impact on the amount of work she was offered in the future.

One headteacher suggested that this might be a trend:

> *Older teachers, I would almost see them phasing out if you like. I wonder whether there's not a role for a qualified teacher, supply teacher, to be an HLTA on the grounds that they want to do all the things that professional teachers do but they don't normally want the commitment to the extended day, the wider professional end, and I think there's a definite role for people, very good, I mean, I suppose working mothers, that just don't want all the work.* (East Midlands primary)

4.5 Summary: The supply teacher market

Schools' use of supply teachers

Drawing on data provided by schools, it is estimated that there are over 40,000 teachers who do supply teaching at some point in a year.

There are differences between school sectors in the extent to which supply teachers are used (mean number of supply teacher days used in a year: primary, 82; secondary, 295). There is also a considerable range of use within each sector. The number of supply days used is positively, though not strongly, correlated with size of school. It is also related to percentage of pupils eligible for free school meals in primary schools (the schools with the highest percentage use more supply teachers) and to GCSE results in secondary schools (schools with over 65% 5A*-C grades use fewer supply teachers).

The reasons why schools use supply teachers

In nursery and primary schools, 42% of supply days used are to cover short-term sickness. In secondary and special schools this is 54% / 50%. The variation in mean sickness absence days across regions appears to contribute to the range of supply day use across regions. Professional development accounts for 40% of supply day use in primary schools, but only 17% in secondary.

Schools that use a high proportion of supply teacher days to cover unfilled vacancies and long-term teacher sickness generally use more supply days altogether. In contrast, schools that use a large proportion of supply days to cover short-term sickness generally use a smaller proportion to cover professional development, and vice versa.

There were some suggestions in the qualitative data that some schools were using supply teachers to cover for PPA time in September 2005, but this did not appear to be a widespread practice.

The various options for providing cover and the impact of the remodelling agenda

The chapter examined data relating to different ways of providing cover. Secondary schools reported the greatest use of all forms of cover, with 95% of schools using internal regular teachers at least once a week, 86% using supply teachers and 33% using support staff. Comparable figures for primary schools were 24%, 45% and 10%. Primary schools made less use of support staff than other sectors. Nursery schools reported the lowest use of both supply teachers and regular teachers to provide cover (less than 20% used either at least once a week).

Less than half the schools in the survey reported any increase in the use of support staff to provide cover following the National Agreement on workforce reform (DfES, 2003a). Fewer schools in London reported any increase, and this appeared to be partly related to their view that their support staff are not currently sufficiently skilled or trained. Almost a third of secondary schools were using support staff to provide cover because this was more cost-effective, although a third of these did not consider their support staff to be adequately trained or skilled for this role. The questionnaire and school case studies indicated that many headteachers / deputy heads (and particularly those in primary schools) did not want to support staff to provide cover, and that many headteachers believed that the best solution would be for schools to have sufficient funding to employ floating teachers to provide cover, rather than using support staff.

There was some evidence that some supply teachers are finding less work than previously; this evidence was strongest in the focus groups, which were conducted in July and September, 2005.

5 Organisations that provide supply teachers

5.1 Introduction

The previous chapter focused on the supply market by considering the extent of schools' use of supply teachers, the reasons why they need them, and the alternative possibilities for providing cover. This chapter continues to focus on the supply market by introducing the organisations involved in providing supply teachers: private sector companies and local authorities.

It is important to recognise that these organisations cater for only about half the total market. Most schools have a list of local supply teachers whom they contact directly; in our surveys, this was the first strategy used to obtain a supply teacher by 72% of primary schools and 64% of secondary schools, and the main way of obtaining work for 56% of supply teachers. However, most of these schools also used private supply agencies or local authority supply services as a fall-back position, and other schools used these organisations as their first or only strategy. Contacting a private supply agency was the first strategy used by 17% of primary and 31% of secondary schools, and the main way of obtaining work for 31% of supply teachers. Local authority supply services were the first strategy for 11% of primary and 6% of secondary schools, and the main way of obtaining work for 9% of supply teachers. These data suggest that local authority supply services have only a small share of the market; this is true nationally, but because some local authorities make no provision at all, it should be recognised that in local authorities that have supply services, these can have a substantial share of the market.

Chapter 6 considers in more detail the ways that supply teachers obtain work, and Chapter 9, focusing on deployment of teachers, supplies more details of schools' strategies to obtain teachers. This chapter aims to give an overview of private supply agencies, local authority supply services, and partnerships between local authorities and private supply agencies.

One of the difficulties of providing precise data about the way that schools obtain teachers and the way that teachers obtain work is that the various categories – direct contact between school and teacher, through a private supply agency and through a local authority supply service – are not entirely clear-cut. There is, for example, a grey area in the divide between teachers working directly for schools and teachers working though local authority supply services. The majority of the schools interviewed had lists of up to half a dozen supply teachers who worked regularly in the school, and the first strategy when a supply teacher was needed was to contact these people. But while schools and supply teachers referred to such people as distinct from the local authority provision, these sources are not necessarily different. In some cases the name of the teacher may originally have been obtained from the local authority list. Moreover, the supply teacher is often paid through the local authority payroll, and so becomes part of their list. This is not necessarily the case, as payrolls for authorities and individual schools may be contracted out, and so schools may employ supply

teachers without any local authority involvement[5]. This raises issues about who is responsible for ensuring, for example, that such teachers have their CRB checks updated if they do not work for three months. In one local authority we were told that no teacher could be paid if their CRB check was not up to date – but if the school does not use the local authority payroll, this would not apply.

Similarly, schools and teachers were not always clear about the dividing line between local authority supply services and private supply agencies. This is because many local authorities have arrangements or partnerships with private supply agencies. In some cases the partnership has created an agency with a clear local authority identity (often evident in its name), and sets up an office specifically for this local authority agency. In other cases the local authority supply service is run by a private agency on call-centre lines, and teachers may not be aware that the agency staff are based some distance away. But sometimes the arrangement is much more explicitly under the name of the agency, and some teachers felt that the local authority had almost forced them to work through the agency when they would have preferred not to do so:

> *Instruction to do so by* [named] *LEA or threat of no work if we refused to sign up, provide photos for ID card etc.*
>
> *I was working for* [named] *LEA when they outsourced supply service to the agency.*

In some partnership arrangements the teachers are paid by the agency rather than the local authority, and their pay rates and conditions change. This will be discussed in more detail below.

But the point that we are making here is that a seemingly simple question like 'do you obtain your supply teachers / obtain work from a private agency, a local authority supply service or directly?' may not be straightforward to answer.

The next three sections deal with private supply agencies, local authority provision, and partnerships between local authorities and private sector businesses. We discuss the scale and range of their operations; their pay and charging arrangements; and quality issues. However, provision for professional development, which is obviously a quality issue, is discussed more fully in Chapter 11.

5.2 Private supply agencies

There are currently well over a hundred private supply agencies operating in England. In November 2005, 68 were listed as members of the education section of the Recruitment and Employment Confederation (REC), but many are not members. Numbers change quite rapidly; in the course of this research we contacted several agencies that were listed as REC members, and in several cases found that they were no longer engaged in teacher supply. (These were generally agencies whose main focus was recruitment in other fields.) It is relatively easy to start up a new agency, or for an existing business to move into the supply teacher market.

[5] One local authority interviewee explained that, even where schools contracted their payrolls out to the same private sector company that the local authority itself used, a supply teacher working directly for several different schools would receive a separate pay slip in relation to the work for each school. This resulted in considerable confusion over national insurance payments and tax.

Some agencies are dedicated to provision of supply teachers; others have been formed as new ventures within companies engaged mainly in recruitment in other sectors or in companies engaged in other aspects of educational resourcing.

Some of the companies involved in supply teacher provision are not technically agencies because they do not employ or pay the teachers; they only work with local authorities who are responsible for that, and the role of the company is limited to deployment. In this report all private sector businesses are labelled as agencies except where we are making a specific point about the nature of their business. This is because there are fewer of the companies that are not agencies, and their anonymity would be compromised if we differentiated.

Scale of operation

The agencies vary enormously in size, from large national or international businesses to those that work only in one area, or with one type of school, or focus on recruitment of supply teachers from a particular country. In terms of scale of operation, some (usually smaller) agencies referred to the number of supply teachers working in any week, while other (usually larger) agencies referred to the number of supply days per week. Thus there were estimates ranging from 30 to 180 teachers working in a week, and from just 30 supply days per week to more than 5000. One disadvantage of being small is that it becomes difficult to meet demands for specific secondary subjects. The smaller agencies we interviewed generally focused mainly on primary supply. There were differences in ways of operating between larger and smaller agencies; many of the large ones talked about paying staff bonuses for placing teachers, in the way described by Grimshaw *et al.* (2004), while the smallest ones were run by owner-managers, who personally put in long hours and a great deal of effort.

Almost all the agencies interviewed supply support staff as well as teachers; this is a growth area, and now includes a whole range of specialist support staff, business managers, secretaries and clerical staff, caretakers, IT technicians, and so on, as well as learning support assistants, nursery nurses and teaching assistants.

Pay and charging arrangements

Some of the agencies interviewed reported that in some parts of the country they pay to national scales, while in other areas (particularly London) they do not:

> *There is a lot more pressure to pay to scale out of London. … Paying to scale or not is not – we don't really care whether we pay to scale or not. The problem is that the agencies all have to do the same thing, teachers in London do not want to be paid to scale. If I change now and said, right, I am going to pay to scale, some of my teachers would be worse off and they would then go to the agency that was paying them the flat rate depending on their experience, location and everything else.* (National agency)

The 'market' rates that the agencies pay is not simply a flat rate for all teachers; it can vary with the teacher's experience, the area, the length of the placement and sometimes the degree of challenge of the school:

> *Well, what we'll have is, it's in essence a wholesale selling price if you like. We'll say to schools right, there you go, that's the price for the teacher, and to the teachers we'll be saying this is what your pay rate is. Now on some occasions we allow flexibility because there are some teachers that are more experienced, that we know we'll have to*

> *pay a little bit more. Schools understand that to get a teacher of that calibre and so on they're going to have to pay that little bit more.* (National agency)

The agencies interviewed raised some issues around the legality of the various ways in which supply teachers are paid. At the time of our research, some agencies offered teachers the option of being paid as a limited company. This involved the teacher working through an umbrella limited company. The arrangement is financially advantageous to the teachers because they pay less tax, and financially advantageous to the agency because they do not pay employer's national insurance contributions, and may also be advantageous for schools because it may be possible to offer them a cheaper price. One agency supply teacher reported to us that when she asked for a pay rise she was told by her agency that she could only be paid more if she became a limited company. However, an agency explained to us that:

> *In November 2004 the Inland Revenue issued a directive saying … teachers were not in a position where they could be working on that basis in a school because the nature of their work was not that of a self-employed contractor. They based that on some 1978 legislation. That directive was issued by the Inland Revenue and most companies that were providing that payroll service pulled out of the market. All except one … and three of the major education companies have continued to operate paying teachers on that basis. And so therefore potentially in breach of this Inland Revenue directive. At the moment however we do not know what the Inland Revenue are doing about it. The DfES as far as I know hasn't really taken a stance on it. And so you had a situation where some agencies have decided not to do it, but others do.* (National agency)

Just as the rates that teachers are paid vary, so do those that schools are charged. For example, some agencies have loyalty schemes whereby those schools that use them regularly are charged less. If a teacher is being paid more, for example, because s/he is more experienced, then the school will pay more. It seems that a fairly typical 'mark-up' might be £40 per day; this has to cover agency costs as well as profit.

We asked the agency interviewees whether they had any provision for teachers' pensions, for example, through a stakeholder pension scheme. Responses varied; one national agency said they did have a scheme:

> *We offer stakeholder pensions, the take-up is very minimal.* (National agency)

Another said that the Inland Revenue do not allow this:

> [Int: Do you have a pension scheme?] *No, no we're not allowed to.* [Int: Not a stakeholder one or anything?] *We don't run stakeholder at the moment, no. We can't because we're not the employer and we've approached the Inland Revenue because we thought it would be a nice recruitment advantage, but no, we can't do that.* (National agency)

And a third said that teachers were not interested:

> *We have looked at it. We did a little survey of our teachers to see whether they were interested in it and they weren't. The only scheme that is going to work is if they can carry on with the Teachers Pension Scheme, which they are not allowed to, which I think it is outrageous. They don't want to start a new little pension when they don't know what they are going to be doing and they don't know where they are going to be going. If they could just carry on contributing, absolutely great. I think it is disgraceful that they are not allowed to.* (National agency)

The data collected on supply teachers' pay and pensions is discussed in Chapter 6; issues around deployment of supply teachers in challenging schools, and charges for this, are discussed in Chapter 9.

Quality issues

Quality is obviously very important to agencies because their income depends on it. When there was a teacher shortage in 2000-01, it was acknowledged by interviewees that some agencies took short cuts in relation to quality because schools were desperate; they argued that this is no longer the case. Here one agency interviewee sets out the very comprehensive view of quality that underpins that agency's work:

> *It is so many things. It is that a safe, qualified and suitably experienced teacher is in front of a class of children, and that those children are safe and will learn something. But then it is also that the teachers feel supported, both on an emotional level as well on a practical level on the training side of things, and are paid properly and on time. That is one bit of it that always worries me about some of the fly-by-night agencies because you know people's rent and food depend on that. So from a quality point of view I actually see it quite high. Then I think beyond that it is that schools feel they are getting value for money, they are getting someone that fits in with their ethos, that teachers are – not from CPD training alone – but are developing and learning and enjoying the experience of teaching, and that children get to see a variety of qualified adults with different experiences that can enrich their educational experience.* (National agency)

Another agency interviewee described quality in more procedural terms:

> *We have a quality manager whose role is to ensure that standards are being met and kept and procedures are being, procedures in relation to recruitment, procedures in relation to clearance, procedures in relation to placement are being followed all the way through*

In relation to deployment of teachers, quality was discussed by agencies in two main ways. Most agencies regarded good personal relationships as a key aspect of success. This is one of the reasons that small agencies are able to flourish in a very competitive market. Because they are small, they develop personal relationships with schools and supply teachers, and all our data suggested that these are very much appreciated. The agencies that operate nationally have generally developed local offices, and each school is allocated a consultant who gets to know key school staff through visits and phone calls. Even where agencies operate on call-centre lines, interviewees saw it as important that each consultant dealt with a particular group of schools and teachers, and built up a relationship with them. These relationships are often fostered by small presents: company mugs or pens, or '*bottles of wine and Easter eggs*' (local agency).

The second main way in which agencies talked about quality related to their IT systems. For the larger agencies, the need for efficiency has led to the development of complex databases and software packages:

> *The systems, all the data is on the systems, you can see all the recent conversations we've had, who all the people are, what teachers are doing, what the school thought of them, so what the computer does is a fantastic thing but handling information so that you can be incredibly well informed when you speak to the schools. Absolutely astoundingly well informed. And we're very significantly better than a lot of competitors in this area.* (National agency)

Some have developed along call-centre lines, relying on their computer systems to make the best matches of teacher and placement:

> *We rank teachers in three ways. One is the teacher has to have a clean bill of health in terms of, if we get complaints on teachers then it's marked on the data base, not the actual detail of the complaint, but we've had a strike. … We rank for quality from the feedback, we rank for continuity, and so that means that if a teacher has been at your*

> *school more than once before and all the remarks are positive, that will have a high ranking and will come up the top of the search. And then we rank for geographical location so we do that much faster than a human being. That works as quick as that, and it will rank in, the data base is built to find, the best thing for a school is the teacher's been there before and was successful. So that's a number one priority. Number two is the quality control, 'A star' teacher, teachers that we know have strikes against their names, and obviously the geography, … some schools say well I don't want a teacher that's more than 25 miles away, further out in the country, and so we rank in those, and we can do it much faster than a consultant can flick through a Rolex, we can do it much faster.* (National agency)

All the large agencies spoke of the importance of both personal relationships and IT systems, but it was clear from their descriptions of their operations that some tended to focus more on one than the other.

Another aspect of quality stressed by some agencies was having a good understanding of schools and their needs. This was emphasised, for example, by an agency with a special needs focus:

> *We very much sort of sell ourselves on being SEN specialists, having SEN knowledge, good, deep SEN knowledge and the fact that if we're going to send them somebody, that person is going to have that knowledge and is going to be able to cope with the task as being the job that's been asked for. We keep in close contact with schools, again we're on first name terms with many of the SENCOs that we work with because I've had long conversations with them about requirements and this and that. And so we keep them close to us on a personal level. We set out our fees at a level which we feel is attractive. So the schools want to come back to us. That's part of the strategy as well I would say.* (Local agency)

Quality was also defined in terms of reliability of service, and quality of teacher supplied. For schools these are generally the key issues; the factors that schools look for in an agency are discussed in Chapter 9.

Most agencies monitor their service by telephoning schools or sending out feedback forms:

> *We have a variety of different checks in place. We have your first day check so that at the end of each day you'll phone up and see how they went. Obviously if they're on a long-term supply you're not going to phone and ask every single day so you'll have first day, one week checks and the checks at periods after that. We also have an ongoing process of evaluation of service and teacher evaluation of performance which will, which is designed to ascertain both about the service we're providing and how well we're matching and how well we're doing on the various administrative parts of teacher supply, but also how well the teacher is doing in their placement.* (National agency)

Such monitoring is not always welcomed by schools:

> *They send me a monitoring form saying how is the quality of our service, what is the quality of our staff, and I don't respond to it because I'm not paid to do that. I pay them to provide me a service and if they want me to do it, they can come and pay me. They won't! … Where* [supply teachers] *are not very good we look at what it is that is not making them very good … then I ring the agency and tell them this is what we feel.* (London secondary mixed)

None of the agencies interviewed saw the Quality Mark as an important indicator of quality, though most felt that they needed to have it. One small agency commented that that the process of getting the Quality Mark had been a useful one:

> *I actually think the Quality Mark, for a small starting up organisation like us, it's actually been a really steep learning curve, … But I would say in giving us an absolute defined minimum set of requirements, the Quality Mark was very useful. And although I would say that we had the flavour of all of it, it helped us to really sharpen our practice. Mostly in terms of paperwork you know what I mean, making sure that when we said certain things had been done they definitely had been done.* (Local agency)

However, another small agency had been deterred by the cost involved in an application for the Quality Mark. While the fee is only £250 plus VAT, agencies also pay expenses for the audit. In addition, REC offer a consultancy service prior to a new application, designed to help applicants reach the required standard; this costs £750 plus VAT plus expenses. Agencies also have to take into account the time they spent preparing the application.

None of the agencies felt that schools saw the Quality Mark as important, and none had ever been asked about it by a school, though all used it on their websites and promotional material. One agency interviewee who was asked if having the Quality Mark made a difference in recruitment of schools said:

> *I think it is beginning to, it is a slow process. I am continually sending things for schools out saying, 'Have you noticed that we have the Quality Mark as well as quality of service?', sort of trying to promote ourselves a little bit myself, because I don't think it* [the Quality Mark] *was really promoted very much when it was first awarded.* (Local agency)

Another interviewee expressed a concern that schools might start relying on it:

> *I think schools will notice if someone has or hasn't got it. I worry that schools will stop taking as much responsibility for their choices of agency because they see the symbol because I personally don't feel the Quality Mark is worth the paper it is written on.* (National agency)

Several agencies expressed concerns that the Quality Mark is not rigorous enough. Most welcomed the increased rigour of the process that was introduced in January 2005, but several of the larger agencies said they would welcome a greater degree of regulation and inspection:

> *I know that there are agencies … that have major gaps in what the Quality Mark says but they employed someone to write some pretty documents … and when the inspector arrives they will just roll their documents again and it will be fine. So as far as I am concerned it is paper exercise. No one can afford to go in and inspect properly. I don't want an inspection date, and someone coming down and sitting with us for hours and watching an interview. I want someone turning up unannounced and walking in and saying, 'I want to see that file and I am going into that interview that is halfway.' I would be open and happy with that, and I think if someone fails it they should be off the list, now apparently that is not going to happen.* (National agency)

One agency said that they thought the Quality Mark was so lacking in rigour that they did not want to be involved:

> *We looked at it, and we looked at it quite seriously. I will be cynical if I may. When I looked at it and I saw the companies getting it and I knew their practices, I just turned round and said this is half baked. I knew damn well that a couple of agencies have got the Quality Mark and they weren't interviewing people and they weren't doing the checks in the way that is prescribed by the DfES in the circulars. For example, medical fitness. DfES circular, it is always quite clear that the employer had to clear the teacher and that there should be, the decision should be taken by a medical advisor. … I know that some agencies say to supply teachers, here is a sheet of paper with ten*

> *medical questions on, tick the boxes. Yes, fine, you are clear. It is a mockery and I couldn't sign up for anything like that. It is our professionalism at stake and I knew that there are people doing this, and I thought who is checking it, who is policing it, and I am not prepared to sign up to it.* (Local agency)

There was also diversity of opinion about being on a preferred supplier list. Some agencies felt that it was good publicity, others were not concerned either way, and one had chosen *not* to be on the list explaining that '*Our view is that we're better than the others on that list and we want to keep our service distinct and sell directly to schools*' (National agency).

Another quality issue of concern to agencies was the time taken for CRB and List 99 checks to be carried out, and the fact that there is no clear regulation that says they have to be completed before a teacher starts work:

> *The whole CRB checking and List 99's fraught with problems because they still can't offer to us as a package, they still can't do them quick enough, so you have to put teachers in school with a List 99 check and no CRB check. And again, unless the government legislates and says no-one is allowed in the school without a CRB check, I can't not do that, because all my competitors would put all those teachers in that I have interviewed, so that bugs me because List 99s never are up to date.* (National agency)

This interviewee also talked of the unofficial networks through which some individuals in LEAs and agencies alert each other to teachers who may be problematic in relation to the checks.

5.3 Local authority supply services

There is a very wide range of provision under the broad heading of local authority supply services. Table 5.1 shows the provision made by the 82 local authorities that responded to our survey.

Table 5.1: Provision relating to supply teachers made by local authorities (N = 82)

	number	%
No service	27	33
List provided by schools who contact teachers themselves	7	9
Service run by the LEA	15.5*	19
Service in partnership with other LEAs	5	6
Service in partnership with private sector organisation	27.5*	34

* One LEA ran its own primary supply service but had a partnership with a private sector organisation for secondary supply provision

Approximately a third had no provision, a third had some sort of supply service within the LEA or run jointly with other LEAs, and a third had arrangements with private sector organisations. In most sections of this report we refer to supply services provide by LEAs, either independently or in partnership with private sector organisations as 'local authority supply services'; this is to differentiate them clearly from 'private supply agencies'. However, many of these supply services are identified within their LEAs as 'supply agencies' and operated in similar ways to private supply agencies; in this section we have indicated whether interviewees were from supply services or local authority supply agencies.

Of the 27 local authorities that had no provision, 13 circulated preferred supplier lists (of which eight were the Government Office of London list). Six of these authorities were considering setting up some sort of supply service, either within the authority, or linked with other local authorities, or with a private sector partner.

Public-private partnership arrangements are discussed in the next section; this section focuses mainly on the range of supply services run by one or more LEAs. These include issuing a list, running a supply service or agency usually within the HR department of the LEA, and running a service or agency in partnership with other LEAs.

The lists of supply teachers issued by local authorities were generally regarded by schools as unhelpful because they are rarely sufficiently up-to-date to be useful, and because finding a supply teacher from a list can be very time-consuming for the school. A number of the authorities we interviewed had issued lists in the past, but had abandoned them because school responses were negative and the effort did not seem worthwhile.

Supply services or agencies within local authorities were much more highly valued by schools than the issuing of a list. The questionnaire and LEA interviews demonstrated that there is an enormous variety of provision made. In a few cases, including two LEAs where we conducted interviews, the service has been continually in existence since the 1980s, but more often the LEA service had been abolished in the 1990s as agencies became more widespread, and was re-established in its current form in the years since 2000. Following the teacher shortage in 2001 when private agencies found it hard to cope with the scale of demand, and concerns about quality were publicly expressed, headteachers in many authorities asked the LEAs to make some provision:

> *Our schools were very much saying to us we would like the LEA to establish a supply agency which is run on an ethical basis, teachers are paid appropriately for the work that they do and that they're well trained and supported, and that the schools are getting the right sort of person for their context.* (Local authority supply agency)

> [We had] *a number of secondary schools in challenging circumstances and we were working very closely with them at the time and we particularly wanted to be able to address the issues for them because they were having extreme difficulties with unfilled vacancies but more so getting appropriate supply staff.* (Local authority supply agency)

There is a spectrum in the extent to which local authority supply services are separate units within the authority. At one extreme is the small-scale supply service run within the HR department that is not separately financed or financially accountable, and is staffed by people within HR who also have other roles. One LEA policy officer told us:

> *We do a survey* [of schools] *every year and say do you want us to continue and 90% or more say yes. And it is something that Jenny enjoys doing, it is not a huge cost to the schools but the amount of time that Jenny spends on it, that is recouped from schools and the admin. charges …* [The budget] *doesn't have to balance but as long as all the money from schools pays for 60% of the total salaries that is okay.* (Local authority supply service)

At the other extreme is the agency within the LEA (or partnership of LEAs) that is entirely self-financing (though obviously non-profit making). One of those we interviewed has to pay all its costs including rent, IT systems, telephone bills and salaries.

On of the advantages of having a supply service within the LEA might be expected to be a sharing of information about schools and their staffing, so that, for example, there is communication between those responsible for supporting schools that are having difficulties, and those that are aware of their supply teacher needs. The interviews indicated that this sort of communication was not routinely happening. Where interviewees had a wider role than supply teachers, or some wider involvement, this tended to be in relationship to staff recruitment and retention:

> *On a day-to-day basis probably not a great deal* [of communication] *but when particular projects come up such as the workforce reforms and looking at recruiting different categories or different types of people in to try and work to cover PPA time and that kind of stuff, you know, we are working very closely with the Recruiting Advisers, we are working closely with the headteacher groups and some of the other colleagues in the Education HR Department.* (Local authority supply agency)

Scale of operation

The figures in our survey showed that local authority supply services vary enormously in size; their provision ranged from 25 to 1400 supply days per week. One of the limitations of a local authority supply service is that it can be too small to meet subject-specific demands from secondary schools. For example, one supply service which does about 175-200 supply days a week, and has over a hundred secondary teachers on the database, acknowledged that this is not enough to ensure that they can make a subject match:

> *It's not always possible because it's a small pool of people that we have registered for secondary work. … We don't always have the people at the right time available to do that particular subject and if we don't, you know, if the schools ask us for a particular subject, if they want a scientist or whatever and we haven't got someone we will go back and say, 'We haven't got that person but we can provide general cover or a closely related subject or something on those lines, is that okay for you or do you want to look elsewhere?'* (Local authority supply agency)

This is one reason why it may be more effective for small LEAs to group together. However, the partnerships between LEAs that we investigated generally seem to have arisen as a result of a pre-existing collaborative arrangement, rather than specifically for supply teacher provision.

Like private agencies, local authority supply services have generally started supplying support staff.

Pay and charging arrangements

One of the attractions of working through a local authority is that the supply teacher is paid on national pay scales, and can contribute to the Teachers Pension Scheme. One LEA interviewee described the system for paying teachers:

> *National rates are paid and pensions, the option to pay a pension. Obviously the pay is dependent on the qualification and experience there, and obviously if they have gone through the threshold as well, they are paid on threshold money. The schools have the supply claim forms, they hold them in the school, and it is not for the supply teacher to carry around. But for each individual school they fill out a new form, they would sign it, leave it with the school and it is the school's responsibility to get the form to us. They all have the deadlines, the supply teachers have been given deadlines and so have the schools, so they know payroll deadline and they are committed to us, as soon as we get them in here we deal with them, we don't hang on to them, they are dealt with, so*

> *there is no hold up, they are paid monthly and they are paid on the last Thursday of every month, so it is a six-week turnaround.* (Local authority supply service)

This description raises several issues; one is that the interviewee refers to 'the option to pay a pension', but as Chapter 6 shows, a surprising proportion of teachers do not take up the option despite this being an obvious advantage of working through an LEA. The second issue relates to the system for payment, which is fairly typical of local authorities. The teacher may have to wait up to six weeks to receive payment for work done. Most private supply agencies pay very much more rapidly, generally running the payroll every week. However, those local authority supply services that operate more on agency lines generally pay on a weekly basis.

A third issue relates to the pay threshold. Several local authorities acknowledged that it is difficult for a teacher to move through the threshold while working as a supply teacher (despite this being a Quality Mark requirement), though those who are already on the Upper Pay Spine (UPS) are paid at that level:

> *We previously worked with an education consultant who provided us with a kind of outsource service to come in and assess and do a lot of classroom monitoring. He has moved on to other things and is now no longer able to work with us, and since that time we have not really promoted the whole kind of threshold issue … having promoted it very heavily in the first place, and we had one person who was interested, and she was successful in doing it because she had a lot of commitment to get it done, but it was a lot of work for the agency to support that, to assess it and to back it all up.* (Local authority supply agency)

Local authorities generally charge schools the cost of that particular teachers' daily pay (annual salary divided by 195), together with on-costs (including employers' pension contributions) and a booking fee. In some cases this is an annual subscription to the service. For example, one authority interviewed charges a £300 annual subscription, regardless of the size of the school. Those schools which have not subscribed are charged a £20 booking fee. In some other authorities the annual subscription is on a sliding scale depending on school size.

The disadvantage of basing the charge to schools on that particular teacher's daily pay is that this means that some experienced teachers are very expensive. One LEA estimated that most supply teachers on their list are on M4 or above, including quite a number on UPS.

A different approach that has been adopted by two local authorities in our survey is to pay teachers to scale, as described above, but charge schools a flat rate that is carefully calculated to cover all the agency costs. This has the advantage that while teachers are paid to scale, those on UPS have as much chance of getting work as others, and the schools know exactly what they will have to pay for a supply teacher.

Some local authorities pay teachers an hourly rate; this is generally because schools argue that they only want the teacher for five or five and a half hours, but that the daily pay is based on 6.48 hours. This means that the supply teacher paid an hourly rate receives less pay for their day's work than they would if they were paid a daily rate. However, this practice may have ceased following a court case brought by the NASUWT in November 2005 in which it was established that a teacher working for a school day should be paid the daily rate, not an hourly rate (NASUWT website).

One local authority that we interviewed has some supply teachers employed on permanent contracts, rather than on a daily rate. This is the way all supply teachers in

that authority were employed back in the 1980s, and while no new staff have been employed on this basis for several years, a small group remain. The advantage of such an arrangement is that these teachers do not have a choice about where or when to work, and so can be assigned to more challenging schools that have difficulty obtaining supply teachers.

Quality issues

Quality was a major concern for most LEA supply services that we interviewed; indeed, it was the reason many of them were established:

> *The quality and the quantity of the teachers was a problem to us and has been since the late 90s … And part of the quality issue was supply teachers and the fact that we didn't feel that (a) there were enough and (b) the quality was there through all of our schools …. And so as part of the raising standards agenda it was decided at CEO level they would look into making a service … from which our schools could access supply teachers. … And so that is what we did … As to the pay and conditions because we wanted the best for our teachers, therefore we would get the quality we hoped by paying them teachers' pay and conditions. We would give them support, mentoring, professional development etc. And so we set up the supply service on the highest quality lines and therefore hope that we could guarantee to our schools a quality supply teacher whenever they needed it so that they could never say that they couldn't raise standards because they hadn't got somebody good in front of their class. … And so really it comes back to you know the quality of standards in the classroom and that is really all we are interested in. As long as we can be self financing that is our top and bottom.* (Supply agency run by a group of local authorities)

Like private agencies, LEAs generally monitor provision in some way. In some cases this is restricted to new supply teachers:

> *We have a probation system set up for any new members of staff, and on their first assignment we would send out feedback from the headteachers to comment on their ability, and if they are satisfactory they are recorded and that is fine. That is it. Obviously if you have an adverse report, we have to do a follow up on that and we would then enter the next booking, we would get a report on the next booking. Unfortunately if it goes beyond that then obviously we have to take some sort of action. It has resulted in one person being removed from the agency in the years I have been here.* (Local authority supply service)

An LEA supply agency indicated that they would collect written feedback on the first two or three placements, and subsequently would collect informal feedback from both schools and supply teachers; this was all recorded on file. In addition, a specific link was made between monitoring and training that was provided for supply teachers.

> *If there is something that is highlighted as, you know, a training need we will feed that through to the training that we offer to say, you know, this course is going to be coming up in three months, we think it will be useful for you to go on that and book some placements on it and get that looked at.* (Local authority supply agency)

Only a small number of LEA supply services have the Quality Mark; the REC website indicates that there were three in November 2005, though other applications were being processed. Some of the local authorities that responded to the survey or were interviewed said they had not realised that local authority supply services can apply. Others indicated that their service was too small, that the cost of applying for the Quality Mark was too great, or simply that they did not meet the standards required.

> *I think we did look at the* [Quality Mark] *form, probably about two years ago and we didn't meet some of the criteria and I haven't looked at it again since then.* [Interviewer: Do you think that it would make any difference to schools if you had the Quality Mark?] *It would be difficult to say really. I don't know whether they are aware of it to be honest.* (Local authority supply service)

5.4 Partnerships between local authorities and private sector businesses

Many local authorities have entered into arrangements with private sector organisations to run LEA supply services. The motivations for entering into such arrangements varied. In some cases it was to meet the need of schools for supply teachers without creating extra work for the LEA:

> *There seemed to be an increasing need … that the schools weren't able to find people themselves. It was decided about three years ago to work with the agency because it is quite a big area and it can be quite a headache to operate if I was trying to do it myself or as an LEA.* (Local authority in partnership with a private agency)

For other local authorities the high prices charged by private agencies were a concern:

> *We realised that some schools and many supply teachers felts that they were being ripped off by some of the supply teacher agencies that weren't paying national pay rates and effectively were also charging schools significant amounts of money for the privilege. And so we thought well if we could find somebody that appears to offer something that is more balanced as an arrangement, and so integrity reasonably high although it was a commercial arrangement, we would do something to work with them.* (Local authority in partnership with a private agency)

For some local authorities the main motivation was quality of provision:

> *We simply had a list of supply teachers that schools could call on as and when they needed to, but there was no external moderation of those. The teachers were not receiving any professional development and actually it became a quality issue for us that we had people teaching in our schools that we knew nothing about. We had no way of checking that they were up to the job, that they had relevant experience in the job so schools simply looked at a name on a register and chose somebody. … So we felt as a County Council that it was a necessity to ensure that we were placing high quality teachers into schools to teach children across the county.* (Local authority in partnership with a private agency)

For the agencies, the motivation is that the arrangement should bring in a large volume of work, particularly in large authorities. This has been a key way in which some large recruitment companies have entered the education market.

We interviewed staff in six local authorities that had arrangements with private sector companies, and we also interviewed their private sector partners; sometimes these were separate interviews, but in two cases joint interviews were held. Of the arrangements we explored, two were actually being terminated at the end of the academic year, and one LEA had negotiated a new partner between the date of the questionnaire and the date of the interview. These rapid changes seemed to reflect the fact that only in a minority of cases was either partner totally satisfied with arrangement. In this section, we therefore review the different types of arrangement and the advantages and disadvantages of each.

The variety of local authority / private agency arrangements

The most common arrangements are with private sector companies that are not agencies, but involve themselves only in the deployment of the supply teachers. Such arrangements can take a variety of forms. For example, the authority can take out a software license so that schools have access to a sophisticated online booking system. Alternatively, the arrangement can also include a telephone booking system through a call centre. In this case schools are charged a booking fee. The local authority is responsible for recruiting and paying supply teachers and for their professional development, and the supply teachers are paid to scale and can contribute to the Teachers Pension Scheme.

Companies involved in such arrangements are not eligible for the Quality Mark because they do not employ the teachers, and do not attempt to carry out some of the requirements of the Mark (e.g. in relation to selection and development of teachers); they find this unsatisfactory as their deployment can be of high quality.

We interviewed only one local authority involved in such an arrangement, and they were not particularly satisfied. Feedback from schools suggested that many would rather phone an agency than book on-line. The remoteness of the call centre was seen as a problem by the LEA and some schools; they felt that they did not know who they were dealing with. However, the fact that this is a popular type of arrangement (adopted by over a third of the LEAs that had arrangements with private sector providers in our survey) suggests that it is proving effective in some areas.

The other arrangements we investigated were with private supply agencies. Some of these were very similar to the arrangement described above in that the agency's role was limited to deployment:

> [The agency] *were basically the call centre. We actually did the valuing of teachers, scanning checks, reference checks, all that sort of thing, health checks, in the borough HR, and gave a list of people to* [the agency] *and schools would call if they had a vacancy.* [The agency] *would find a person and send them back and also did the work with the school on the evaluation of the teacher.* (LEA in partnership with private supply agency)

In this case CPD for supply teachers was also provided by the LEA. The schools were aware that they were using an agency which charged a special (cheaper) rate to schools in the authority.

An alternative arrangement is where the agency runs the LEA's supply service, generally creating a new organisation called 'Local Authority Name Supply Agency'. In one arrangement we investigated, this agency existed simply as a telephone number; when schools dialled the number they were greeted 'Local Authority Name Supply Agency'. However, the person they were speaking to was in the main office of the private agency many miles away from the local authority, and was also engaged in deployment of supply teachers outside the local authority. Part of the problem of such arrangements is that schools and teachers are in some cases unsure whether they are dealing with the local authority or a private agency, and there is limited opportunity to develop a personal relationship.

In another such arrangement the agency had established offices within the local authority for the newly formed agency, which has a clear identity which is different from that of the private supply agency:

> *I think at the beginning it was there's* [Name] *Council, and then there's* [Named agency] *and I think now it's, there's the* [newly formed agency], *and the* [newly formed agency] *is now the separate brand rather than it's the Council and it's another group.* (Local authority in partnership with private supply agency)

We held a focus group for supply teachers who worked for this agency, and they referred only to the newly formed agency, and never mentioned the name of the private supply agency. The private agency interviewee saw having a local office as very important:

> *With recruitment, any recruitment is always more successful when you have a local presence. It's almost you can buy in, it shows a commitment to the people.* (Private agency interviewee in local authority partnership)

The details of arrangements vary: the agency is normally responsible for deployment to schools. But responsibility for recruiting teachers, ensuring that checks are carried out, and professional development may sit with either party. Several agencies explained that when they have taken over a local authority list they have spent a large amount of time interviewing and checking all the teachers, both to ensure quality, and so that they had more information about the people that they would be placing in schools.

One of the difficulties of any partnership arrangement is knowing exactly where responsibility lies in any eventuality: One interviewee acknowledged that this had taken time to work out, despite the very careful drawing up of the contract:

> [Int: Essentially you've got two teams of people administering the scheme; private agency people, and local authority people. There potentially could be repetition and duplication or there could be gaps. How have you managed to ensure such a good fit?] *I think as things have arisen … we've sort of done it after the horse has bolted. … The idea is that we know now what each other does and we can communicate much more frequently and* [the private agency manager] *ensures that his team are well aware of what we are doing and we're aware of what* [they] a*re doing and so the idea is that we don't overlap and … we know who is responsible for which element now. Before it was rather, well is it them or is it us, and then we made sure it was very much clearer.* (Local authority interviewee in partnership arrangement)

Pay and charging arrangements

In most cases the local authority pays the teachers, so that they can contribute to the Teachers Pension Scheme. However, in some cases the agency runs the payroll, so even though the teachers are being paid to scale, they are not able to contribute to the Pension Scheme.

> *They were quite clear that they used national pay rates. Clearly they couldn't offer the full package because if you are employed by a high street agency you can't continue with Teachers Pensions and that is probably the most critical term and condition issue in all this. Their mark-up rate was modest because they were looking for volume.* (Local authority in partnership with private agency)

In one case that we investigated, the contract specifies that the highest pay grade will be M6: i.e. no teacher can be paid above the threshold. In another case, we were told that it is theoretically possible for a supply teacher to pass through the threshold, but that it is not easy:

> *As far as we concerned it would be down to the supply teacher to contact the school with which they are familiar and get the school to support them through the process. It*

> *happens but I am not going to kid anybody that I give supply teachers the best deal on the threshold.* (Local authority in partnership with private agency)

Another partnership was at pains to say that supply teacher could be paid on the Upper Pay Scale, but acknowledged that concerns had been expressed in the press that schools may prefer to employ cheaper teachers, and that this has in some cases had a negative impact on the amount of work that supply teachers on UPS are offered:

> *In fact there was an article in the Times Ed about three months ago of a teacher … saying I have actually priced myself out of the market in supply work terms, because I've gone through the threshold in school and then left, and she was saying, well I've got no work because nobody wants to employ me. … In fact some schools say we want somebody who's really qualified, and in fact also we provide supply teachers to the centrally managed services which is the medical service, so the idea is that they will often want more experienced teachers. … Sometimes we do get people saying, 'I am too expensive', and what we say is, 'Well actually you're too expensive, but also you are maintaining your pension payments', because they can stay in the Teachers Pension Scheme, and the idea is that we're one of the few agencies that will do that, and we will performance manage you. We do that as part of the fee that we charge.* (Local authority in partnership with private agency)

It does not seem very helpful to know that you are maintaining pension payments if your pay is limited by lack of work. This issue is further discussed in Chapter 6.

Generally the booking fee for schools, or agency mark-up, is considerably less than it is through in normal agency operation: for example, £20 instead of £40. The agency is able to reduce the rate because it expects to achieve volume of bookings. But schools do not necessarily pay less in such cases than they would if they booked the supply teacher though an agency directly, because paying teachers to scale generally results in a higher overall price. Consequently, some schools prefer to ask the agency for a teacher on agency rates rather than local authority rates.

The system for charging the schools often involves the local authority paying the teacher from the school's budget, but the agency sending a separate invoice for the booking fee. In some arrangements schools subscribe to the service on an annual basis, as was described above in relation to local authorities.

In some cases, agencies were charging schools very little (for example, a £30 annual subscription and a booking fee of £9 or less) but then were doing correspondingly less than those that charged more. For example, in one local authority we investigated, the agency was not involved in recruitment or checks or professional development; it did not have the Quality Mark and had in fact sub-contracted the work to another agency. Supply teachers were not interviewed by anybody; if they had QTS and a CRB check they were assumed to be good enough.

One agency and LEA have set up a sole preferred supplier arrangement which has unusual financial arrangements. Teachers can either be paid on national scales (with pension rights) or they can opt to be paid a 'market rate'. Those who were on the original LEA list are mostly paid to scale, while those recruited since the arrangement has been in place are generally paid a market rate. Schools pay the cost of the teacher plus £18 a day booking fee and a further £1 CPD charge. Under this arrangement, teachers may be paid to scale in some schools where they have worked for a long time, but accept a market rate in others.

Strengths and limitations of LEA / private agency partnerships

We have already indicated that some of the partnerships formed have not lasted. This is because a variety of problems can occur. One problem for the private supply agencies is that the expected volume of work may not be achieved. A private supply agency interviewee explained that schools are not obliged to use the service provided, and may choose not to:

> *The schools … don't have to buy that because obviously they can say, well, actually I have got a great relationship with so and so who provides me with an even better service than that, and you know it is also cost competitive.* (Private agency in partnership with LEA)

While one partnership arrangement we were told about supplies up to 550 days a week, another achieved less than 20 days. An additional difficulty in achieving the forecast volume is that schools tend to book the teacher once through the agency, and on subsequent occasions to approach the teacher directly, thus avoiding the booking fee. One agency described how they tackled this:

> *Inevitably if we put a supply teacher in today, you could guarantee the head would say 'give us your phone number, I will phone you direct next time', and of course we* [the agency] *are not getting the money. So there is a clause in there* [the contract] *that if you re-engage within thirty days, you are billed. A system was put in place whereby at the end of each month, we would have all the time sheets for the supply teachers to cross check against the bookings.* (Local agency in partnership with LEA)

This was a very time-consuming process, but did result in extra income. Another agency described the same problem, but had not resolved it. However, we were told that another LEA-agency arrangement had successfully tackled this:

> *The advantage I think* [agency name] *have got is the* [local authority name] *agreement whereby they've got access to the black book teachers, and so in other words if the school buys in, then because they're doing the payroll, they're seeing everybody that's being payrolled. So anyone that schools are approaching directly gets a nominal charge set against them.* (National agency)

In another arrangement we investigated we were told that the agreement with the LEA does enable the agency to charge a fee even where teachers have long-standing arrangements made directly with particular schools; however, in such cases the agency charges a smaller booking fee than it otherwise would (£5).

Another concern about LEA partnerships is that the pool of teachers in a small LEA may not be enough to meet specific subject demands, as discussed earlier. This has left some agencies which have entered such partnerships seeking back-up from other agencies, and interviewees spoke of resulting confusion about who is taking responsibility for the quality of the service provided.

In some cases there was a lack of clarity about where responsibility lay for the overall quality of the service. While the majority of the private agencies involved had achieved the Quality Mark, this was not necessarily the case. In a few instances interviewees suggested that the jointly run agency might apply for the Quality Mark in its own right, but this had not happened so far.

The best partnerships, however, appeared to offer a very good quality of service to both schools and teachers. The authority felt that they were buying in expertise in recruitment, and gaining access to IT systems that they could not have otherwise afforded, and the resulting service combined the best qualities of private agency and

local authority provision. This was generally the case where the prime motivation had been to improve quality, rather than simply to get supply teachers into schools. One of the local authority interviewees who had recently changed the agency worked with explained that the motivation had been to improve the quality of the service:

> [Named agency] *did a really good solid job for us as a local agency, but the reason why I probably changed it or went to tender … was because they were quite a small agency offering a very basic service and I wanted to expand the pool … which I didn't think had been happening, and I also wanted to make sure I got more CPD for the supply teachers.* (Local authority in partnership with private agency)

5.5 Summary: Organisations that provide supply teachers

Private supply agencies

There is no definitive list of private supply agencies; there appear to be well over a hundred in operation but the list is constantly changing. There is considerable variation in the scale of operation, with a few large companies operating nationally and dominating the market, and a large number of smaller local and specialist companies. Agencies generally pay teachers at a 'market rate' and charge schools that rate plus about £40 mark-up. Teachers paid by agencies are not eligible to pay into the Teachers Pension Scheme; a few agencies offer stakeholder schemes but take-up is limited. The provision of a quality service is a major concern for agencies, and they offered wide-ranging definitions of what they saw as quality provision. In relation to quality of deployment, some agencies laid greater emphasis on personal relationships while others emphasised effective IT systems that can select the most appropriate supply teacher based on their skills, previous experience in the school, and schools feedback. The Quality Mark was seen as a minimum definition of quality that was useful as a guide for new agencies, but was not seen to be of major concern for schools. Many agencies would welcome a more rigorous process of quality assurance.

Local authority supply services

Our survey of local authorities suggested that approximately one third of local authorities have no provision; one third have some sort of provision within the LEA or with other LEAs, and approximately one third make some provision through an arrangement with a private supply agency; the latter group are discussed below. Half those with no provision circulate a preferred supplier list to schools. Local authority provision varies immensely; some local authorities simply offer lists of supply teachers, which schools generally find unhelpful; others run services ranging from small-scale operations within HR to self-financing services run on the same lines as private supply agencies. There is in some cases an aim to provide an 'ethical' service that pays teachers on national scales, and meets the needs of challenging schools. The limited size of LEAs can make it difficult to meet schools' requirements, particularly for secondary subject teachers. While teachers are paid on national pay scales, it is generally agreed that it is difficult to pass the pay threshold while working as a supply teacher. Relatively few local authority supply agencies have been awarded the Quality Mark; some were not aware that they were eligible, and some felt that their small-scale service would not meet the criteria.

Local authority / private agency partnerships

There are a wide variety of arrangements between local authorities and private sector companies. These include, for example:

- private sector companies managing deployment of supply teachers, or providing software through which schools can book online, while the local authority manages other aspects;
- arrangements in which schools and supply teachers are encouraged to use a preferred supplier, which charges schools a lower mark-up than agencies normally do; and
- arrangements in which a new agency is formed with a separate identity from that of the private agency or the local authority.

Many of these have proved unsatisfactory, and several of those existing at the time of our survey were being terminated by the time we arranged the interviews. A variety of limitations were identified; these do not apply to all arrangements, but represent some of the potential pitfalls:

- agencies not achieving the volume of bookings that would make the arrangement cost-effective because schools contact the teachers directly;
- the private sector company not having a local office, and operating entirely along call-centre lines;
- lack of clarity in the arrangements about who was responsible for what;
- where the pool of teachers was small, agencies seeking back-up from other agencies, and resultant lack of clarity about responsibility for quality;
- teachers in some cases not having access to the Teachers Pension Scheme, and in some cases not being paid on UPS.

However, the most effective arrangements offer a high quality service that combines the strengths of local authority and private agency provision, and have a strong focus on raising standards of provision.

6 Supply teachers: characteristics and patterns of work

6.1 Introduction

This chapter sets out the characteristics (age, gender, ethnicity and qualifications) and the patterns of work of supply teachers in the survey sample. It draws mainly on quantitative data from the supply teacher questionnaire, but also refers to some qualitative data from focus groups and interviews with supply teachers.

Chapter 3 explained that, since there is no national data on supply teachers, it is difficult to tell how far our survey sample is representative. We aimed for an achieved sample that had approximately equal numbers of responses from primary and secondary supply teachers. The DfES data on occasional teachers (see Figure 2.1) suggests that more supply teachers work in primary schools than secondary, and so we may slightly over-represent secondary supply teachers here.

We have used 'primary' and 'secondary' as broad groupings of supply teachers throughout this chapter. We asked supply teachers what types of schools they normally work in, offering a choice (nursery, primary, middle, secondary and special); 18% of respondents ticked more than one option, including some who ticked both primary and secondary. We have grouped these teachers as shown below (Table 6.1).

Table 6.1: The sample of supply teachers by the sector they normally work in, showing how teachers have been grouped

		count	% of sample
NURSERY and PRIMARY	primary only	599	38.9
	primary and middle	30	1.9
	nursery and primary	94	6.1
	primary and special	15	1.0
	nursery	14	0.9
	Total 'nursery and primary'	**752**	**48.9**
SECONDARY	secondary only	544	35.3
	secondary and special	14	0.9
	middle and special	55	3.6
	middle only	71	4.6
	Total 'secondary'	**684**	**44.4**
SPECIAL ONLY	special only	34	2.2
	Total 'special only'	**34**	**2.2**
MULTIPLE	Three or more sectors	37	2.4
	primary and secondary	32	2.1
	Total 'multiple sectors'	**69**	**4.5**
missing		15	1.0
TOTAL		**1554**	**100%**

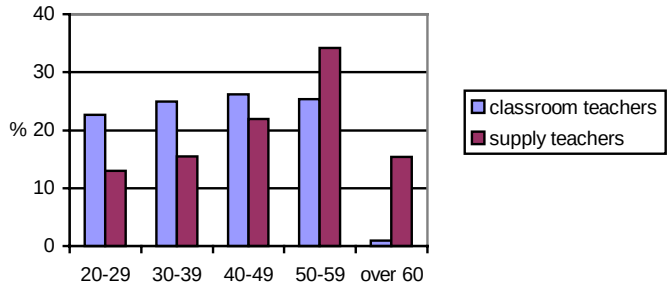
Middle school teachers have been included with secondary unless they specified primary and middle; this is because the vast majority of middle schools are middle deemed secondary. Nursery and primary have been grouped together because this is the practice in national statistics, and the number of supply teachers who said that they worked in nursery only was very small. For simplicity, this group has been referred to as primary throughout. Just 34 respondents indicated that they work only in special schools; they are considered as a separate group here because their responses were in many ways distinctive. Some respondents indicated that they worked in both primary and secondary, or in more than two sectors. These have been grouped separately as 'multiple sectors'.

This chapter is divided into four main sections: the personal characteristics of supply teachers (age, gender, ethnicity); their qualifications; their patterns of work (including how they obtain work; days and hours worked; the number of different schools they work in; and the lengths of placements); and their pay and pension arrangements.

6.2 Personal characteristics

We have compared the supply teachers in the sample with the DfES figures for full-time regular classroom teachers nationally (DfES, 2005a). This group has been chosen because supply teachers are essentially classroom teachers with no other responsibilities. Comparable data for part-time teachers are not available. The age profile is rather different from that of regular classroom teachers nationally, with significantly more supply teachers in their fifties and sixties (Figure 6.1).

Figure 6.1 Age profile of supply teachers (N=1543) compared with that of full-time regular classroom teachers

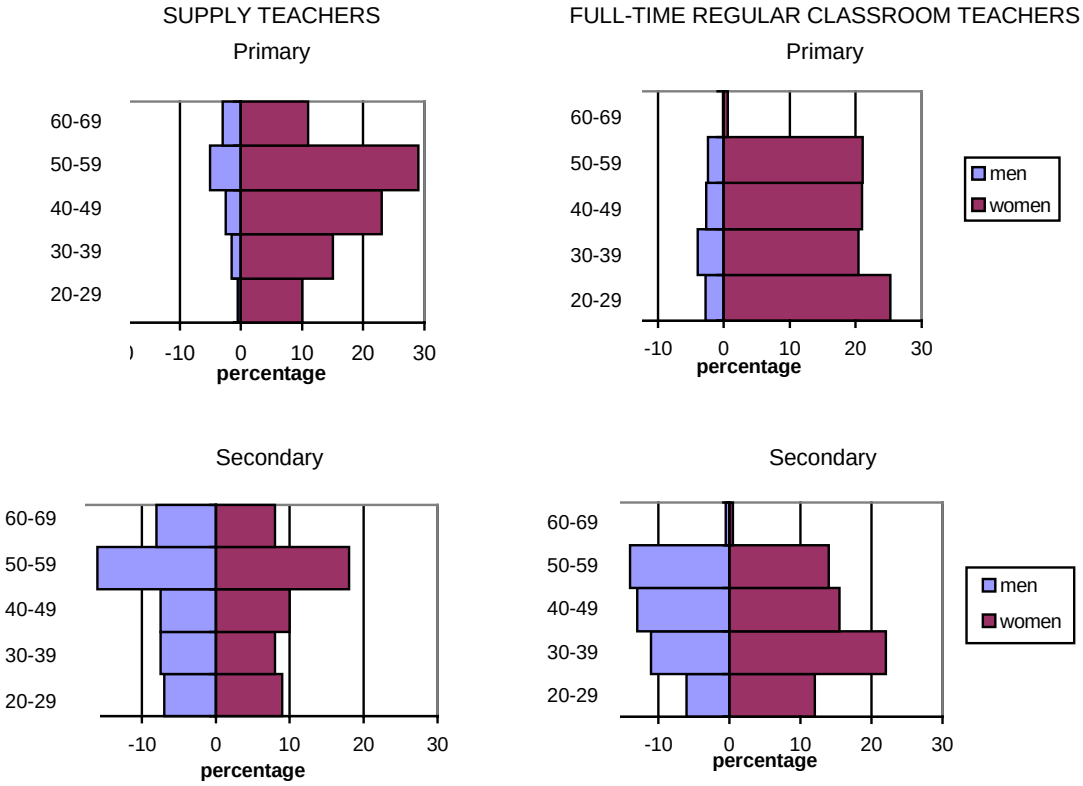


National data source: DfES, 2005a, Table 23.

The proportion of women in supply teaching is very similar to the proportion nationally[6] (71.2% compared to 70.8%). The age-sex pyramids in Figure 6.2 show how this age distribution related to gender and sector, in comparison with national figures.

[6] DfES, 2005b, Table 23

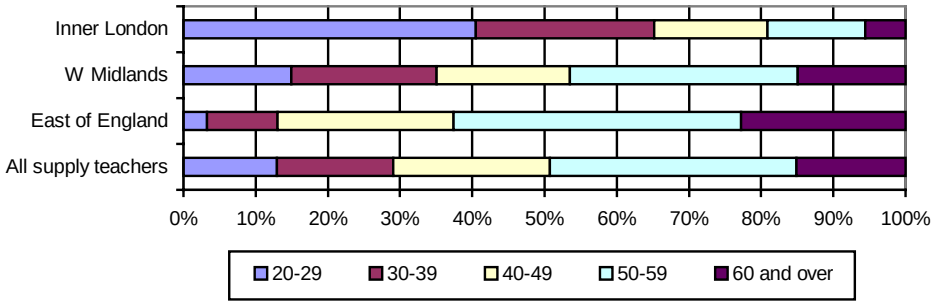
Figure 6.2: Age and gender distribution for primary and secondary supply teachers compared with classroom teachers nationally



National data source: DfES, 2005a, Table 23.

There were some differences in age profile of the sample across the regions: Figure 6.3 illustrates this variation. Inner London's supply teachers were significantly younger than those in other regions ($p = .000$), and those in the East of England significantly older ($p = .002$); West Midlands, like most other regions, more or less matched the national profile.

Figure 6.3: Age profile of supply teachers across selected regions (N = 1543)



The questionnaire asked respondents to indicate the most appropriate description of the neighbourhoods of the schools that they work in; those working in inner city

schools were significantly younger, with 50% in their twenties and thirties, compared with just 29% overall.

Of the respondents, 98.5% provided ethnicity data; this is therefore more complete than the national data, which covers only 82.3% of teachers. The supply teacher sample was more ethnically diverse than the full-time workforce (85.5% White British in our sample, compared with 90.6% nationally: DfES, 2005a, Table A7).

Table 6.2: Minority ethnic groups (summarised) as percentage of supply teacher sample (N = 1531) and nationally

	Supply teachers	National data
	%	%
White Irish	1.5	1.1
Any other white background	**8.2**	**3.6**
Visible minority ethnic groups	4.6	4.2
Black Caribbean	0.3	0.8
Black African	**1.6**	**0.5**
All mixed backgrounds	0.5	0.3
All Asian	1.8	2.0
Chinese	0.1	0.1
Other ethnic background	0.3	0.5
All minority ethnic groups as a percentage of the population	14.3	8.9

National data source: DfES, 2005a, Table A7, Teacher Ethnicity: LEA and Government Office region: January 2004

The two groups in which there is a very much higher proportion of supply teachers than of teachers nationally, 'Any other White background', and 'Black African', each included a high proportion of overseas-trained supply teachers (in each case about 70% of the group).

One third of all those of ethnicities other than White British were teaching in London.

6.3 Qualifications

The qualifications of the supply teacher sample have been compared with those of regular teachers nationally (Table 6.3).

Here we have used national data for all regular teachers because comparable data for classroom teachers was not available. In comparison with regular teachers, the supply teacher sample includes a higher proportion of teachers without QTS and not on a route to QTS (7.8% of supply teachers; 2.8% of regular teachers).

Table 6.3: Teaching qualifications held by supply teachers in sample, compared with national data

	Supply teachers %	Summarised data: supply teachers	%	National data %
QTS in England and Wales, completed induction year	82.3			
Newly Qualified Teacher, not completed induction year	7.3	With QTS	90.6	95.7
Teacher trained in European Economic Area	1.1			
Overseas (not EEA) teaching qualification, currently on route leading to QTS	1.5	Employment-based route	1.5	1.5
Overseas (not EEA) teaching qualification, not on route leading to QTS	5.4	Without QTS	7.8	2.8
No teaching qualification relating to schools	2.4			
N	*1489*			

National data source: DfES, 2005b: Table 1, Teachers in service in the maintained sector by type of contract.

There is also a higher proportion of NQTs in the supply sample: nationally, newly qualified entrants to teaching form 3.9%[7] of all those with QTS; in the supply teacher sample, the proportion was 8.1%. Previous research (e.g. Bird, 2002, Hutchings, 2002) has suggested that mature NQTs are more likely to become supply teachers. The age distribution of the NQTs in the supply sample bears this out; a higher proportion of the NQTs who qualified in 2003 or 2004 in the supply sample are in their thirties and forties (Table 6.4).

Table 6.4: Ages of Newly Qualified Teachers: supply teachers who qualified in 2003 or 2004 compared with national data

	supply teachers	national data
20 - 29	49	73
30 - 39	29	18
40 - 49	21	8
50 - 59	1	1
N	*84*	*17,580*

Source for national data: DfES, 2005a, Table 8(iii), newly qualified entrants to teaching in full-time or part-time service in maintained schools

In the focus groups, those who were newly qualified teachers expressed considerable frustration about the difficulty of passing induction while supply teaching. In the survey, a fifth of the NQTs said they had completed more than a year and a half of supply teaching, and a third said they had completed more than two years teaching in total (including temporary contracts) without passing their induction. Eight individuals had completed their teacher training between 1976 and 1999, and had been supply teachers ever since.

[7] DfES, 2005b. The national proportion of NQTs has been calculated as the number of newly qualified entrants to teaching in full-time or part-time service in March 2003 (Table 8iii) in relation to the total headcount of full-time and part-time teachers in January 2004 (Tables 16 and 17).

The current induction regulations specify that NQTs can undertake short-term supply teaching (i.e. posts of less than a term's duration) for four terms from the date that they started supply work, and in specified circumstances, local authorities can agree a second term of 12 months' short-term supply work. Otherwise NQTs can work in the maintained sector in England only if they are in posts lasting a term or more which provide them with an induction programme. Having started an induction programme, they are normally expected to complete it within five years, though this can be extended in certain circumstances. However, these regulations do not apply to those who qualified before May 1999 (DfES, 2003b).

The proportion of overseas-trained teachers (which is used in this report to include all those who trained outside the UK, including those who trained in the European Union) and of unqualified supply teachers was significantly higher among those who teach in secondary schools (Table 6.5); 28 of the 32 respondents who said they had 'no qualifications relating to teaching in schools' were doing supply in the secondary sector. Overseas-trained teachers and NQTs are more likely than others to teach in multiple sectors; this suggests that they are anxious to take whatever work is going.

Table 6.5: Teaching qualifications of supply teachers by school sector taught in

	primary	secondary	special	multiple sectors
QTS in England and Wales, completed induction year	86.4	78.3	93.8	74.6
Newly Qualified teacher, not completed induction	8.0	6.5	0.0	11.1
Other qualifications	5.6	15.2	6.2	14.3
Teacher trained in European Economic Area	0.5	1.7	0.0	3.2
Overseas (not EEA) teaching qualification, on a route to QTS	0.7	2.3	0.0	4.8
Overseas (not EEA) teaching qualification, not on QTS route	4.1	7.0	3.1	4.8
No teaching qualification relating to teaching in schools	0.3	4.2	3.1	1.6
N	*729*	*659*	*32*	63

Significance (chi-squared): p = .000

The proportion of UK-trained supply teachers with QTS was lowest in Inner and Outer London (69%, compared to 90% overall). This is because the proportion of overseas-trained teachers was highest in London (26% of all supply teachers). The proportion with QTS was particularly high among the small number of supply teachers who said that they teach only in special schools (30 of 32 respondents).

Twenty-three out of the 32 teachers who only teach in special schools said they had had specific training to teach pupils with specific special educational needs (72%). Of the total who said that they ever do supply teaching in special schools, 43% said they had relevant training, as had 27% of those who do not teach in special schools. The additional details written in indicated a very wide variety of training ranging from degrees in teaching pupils with special educational needs through one-year diploma courses focusing on specific needs to one-day in-service courses or in some cases a single lecture on the PGCE. It is not always possible to tell from the written details what level the training was; however, if only those who specified a special needs course leading to a qualification or who said that they had taught in special schools for much of their careers are included, 50% of the supply teachers who teach only in special schools (and 7% of those who do not) have special needs training / experience.

Some previous research (e.g. Hutchings, 2002; Hutchings *et al.*, 2006) has shown that one reason for entering supply teaching is to change sectors. For example, secondary teachers who wish to move into primary teaching use supply teaching to gain experience in primary schools. We therefore checked the data about age phase of qualifications against the sectors that the supply teachers said they normally work in. Respondents were asked to indicate which age ranges they were trained to teach on a list including each Key Stage (with the age range), together with Foundation, post-16 and middle school. Responses were then categorised as 3-5 only, primary, cross-phase (including middle, KS2-3, and any combination across primary and secondary), secondary, and post-16 only. Of those who said that they work in primary schools, 12% had not trained to teach this age group – their training was secondary or post-16 only. Of those teaching in secondary schools, only 3% lacked relevant age phase training.

In the sample as a whole 35 supply teachers indicated that they had no teaching qualification relating to teaching in schools. Of these, only nine are included in the data relating to school sector above (all with post-16 teaching qualifications, eight teaching in secondary schools and one in primary). However, the remaining 26 have not indicated which sector they teach in.

Secondary supply teachers were asked to name the subjects that they were qualified to teach or experienced in teaching. The rationale for including both training and experience was that for many, training would be a long time ago and experience might be the more pertinent factor. Including both was perhaps a mistake; secondary supply teachers often do 'general cover', and many of them wrote in long lists of subjects:

> *PE, Geography, History, Science, English, Maths, Learning support, Art.*
>
> *History, PE, RE, English: French, Maths, PSHE, Geography.*
>
> *Qualified in History and English, but also experienced in RE, Music, Geography and some I.T.*

Two wrote in 'all', and others specified in their lists that they could provide general cover, and in some cases preferred to do so:

> *Chemistry, physics, maths, biology (and now to GCSE most subjects except German).*
>
> *Food and textiles technology but I no longer wish to teach these subjects unless the work is theory. General Subjects.*

Table 6.6 shows the subject first mentioned, on the assumption that people generally write the most important item on a list first, as well as the percentage mentioning the subject at all. Both secondary and 'multiple sector' teachers are included.

Some respondents gave very precise details of the levels to which they could teach the different subjects:

> *ICT to 'A' level, History to KS3, Biology to KS4.*

Some said they were not qualified:

> *Not qualified. Experience in PE, English and History.*
>
> *None – former University Professor*

In a small minority of cases the subject labels used were so outdated as to bring into question the respondent's familiarity with secondary schools today, for example:

> *Home Economics – needlecraft.*

Table 6.6: The first subject listed by each secondary supply teacher in relation to their training and experience

	Number of teachers including as first subject listed	Percentage of teachers including as first subject listed	Percentage that included the subject on their list
English	90	13	28
Modern Foreign Languages	85	13	19
Science	84	13	21
Maths	71	11	21
PE	69	10	15
Design and technology	62	9	12
Art	51	8	11
History	39	6	16
Geography	38	6	14
ICT	18	3	8
Music	16	2	5
RE	16	2	9
Business studies	15	3	6
Other	18	2	not calculated
N	*672*	*100*	*100*

Notes: 'Other' includes EAL, citizenship, dance, drama, humanities, sociology, psychology, politics, economics. When drama and media studies were mentioned, they were almost always listed with English, and in the final column are included with English. All mentions of specific languages have been included as Modern Foreign Languages. All aspects of design and technology have been included under the broad heading.

Thirteen teachers categorised as 'primary' also listed subjects: one noted, '*I qualified as secondary teacher in Science*', but is now teaching in primary schools; some others did some work in middle schools. Eight of the small group who only teach in special schools also identified subject specialisms.

6.4 Patterns of work

How teachers obtain work

As Chapter 4 has explained, supply teachers work in three ways: through private agencies, through local authority supply services, and directly for schools. The questionnaire asked respondents to indicate all the ways that they had worked as supply teachers in the previous year[8], and to indicate which of these was the main way. Responses are shown on Table 6.7.

Table 6.7: Percentage of supply teachers obtaining work in different ways in the last year (N = 1554)

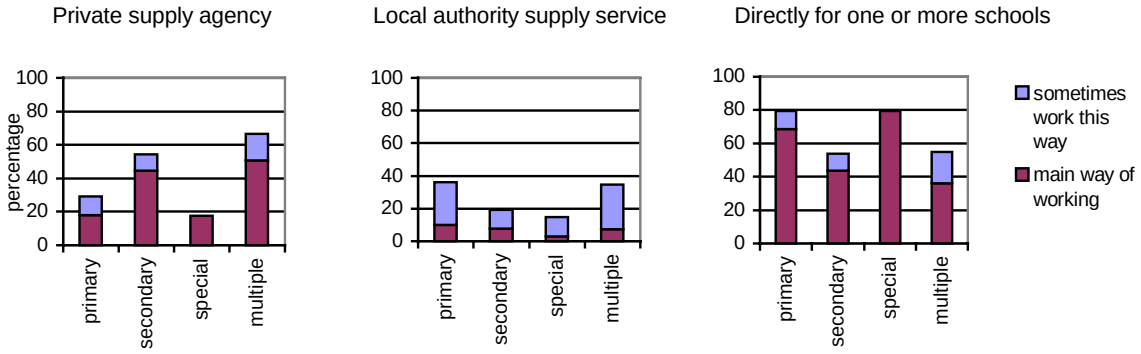
		Private supply teacher agency	Local authority supply service	Directly from one or more schools
I have worked this way in the last 12 months	%	42	27	67
This is the main way I work	%	31	9	56

Note: Some teachers did not indicate a main way of working; therefore figures in that row do not total 100%.

[8] The questionnaire was sent out in January 2005. Many questions asked about work in the period since January 2004. For those who responded straight away, this would have been one year. However, the final cut-off date for return of questionnaires was Easter 2005, and so some respondents may have been referring to four terms.

The teachers in the sample most often worked directly for schools. However, there were considerable differences by school sector, shown on Figure 6.4.

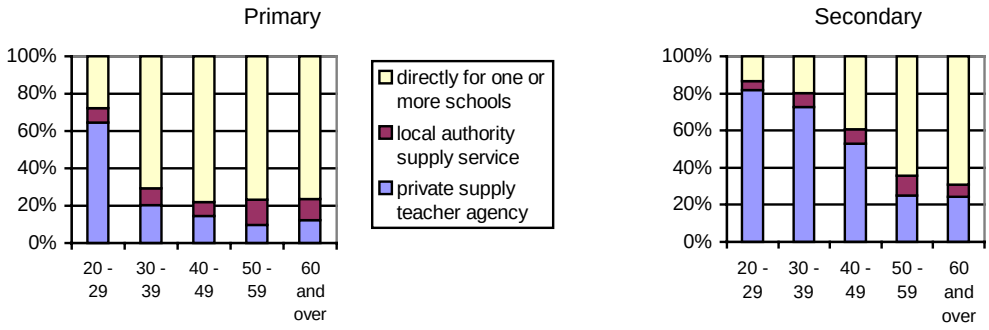
Figure 6.4: The ways in which supply teachers have worked in the last 12 months by sector worked in



The majority of those in the special and primary sectors work directly for schools, while secondary supply teachers are fairly evenly divided between those working through agencies and those working directly for schools. Those who work in several sectors, taking whatever work they can find, are the most likely to work through agencies. Only 9% of teachers in the sample work mainly through local authority supply services; where these were listed, they were more often included as an additional way of working rather than the main way. This is the same across all sectors.

There were also significant differences in ways of working related to gender, with 48% of the men, but only 26% of the women, working mainly through agencies; this relates to the trend for secondary teachers to work through agencies. Age-related differences are shown on Figure 6.5. Responses showed 'working directly for schools' to be the established route for all age groups among primary supply teachers except those in their twenties. Among secondary supply teachers, agencies were an important and continuing source of work, though again, the older teachers were the least likely to use them.

Figure 6.5: The main way primary and secondary supply teachers work, by age



A number of other groups made statistically significantly higher use of agencies: those who wanted the most work; and those who worked in inner-city neighbourhoods; newly qualified teachers; overseas-trained teachers; and those with no teaching qualification relating to schools (Table 6.8).

Table 6.8: Teaching qualification by main way of working

	Main way of working		
Teaching qualification	private supply teacher agency %	local authority supply service %	directly for one or more schools %
QTS in England and Wales, completed induction year	59	90	93
Newly Qualified teacher, not completed induction	13	7	5
Teacher trained in European Economic Area	2	0	1
Overseas (not EEA) teaching qualification, on a route to QTS	5	2	0
Overseas (not EEA) teaching qualification, not on QTS route	15	1	1
No teaching qualification relating to teaching in schools	6	1	1
N	*458*	*130*	*850*

Respondents were asked to list all the supply agencies and local authority supply services that they were registered with. Those who work directly for schools varied in whether they wrote in the local authority, which was generally responsible for paying them. Thus the overall mean figure is not very useful. The mean number of agencies or supply services for those who mainly work through them is about two (see Table 6.9); this does not vary by age. The maximum number was 12; this included both local authorities and private agencies.

Table 6.9: Mean number of private supply agencies and local authority supply services that supply teachers are registered with, by main way of working

Which of these is the main way you work?	Mean no. of agencies / supply services	Standard deviation
private supply teacher agency	2.07	1.296
local authority supply service	1.90	1.767
directly for one or more schools	0.84	1.035

Less than a fifth of those who use agencies were guided by the DfES/REC Quality Mark, and more than half said that they were not aware of it (Table 6.10). A slightly larger proportion had heard of Investors in People, but fewer said they were guided by it. ISO 9000 was the least familiar, and was hardly used in choosing agencies / supply services. Nineteen percent of those who work mainly though agencies said they ‘often’ used recommendations from other supply teachers, and a further 27% had ‘occasionally’ done so. They were much less often used by those who worked mainly through local authority supply services (4% ‘often’ and 17% ‘occasionally’), presumably because most teachers will choose the local authority supply service where they live.

Table 6.10: 'Is your choice of supply agencies and local authority supply services influenced by the DfES/REC Quality Mark?' by main way of working (N = 1171)

	Main way of working			
	private supply teacher agency %	local authority supply service %	directly for one or more schools %	Total %
Yes	19	14	5	11
No	29	33	39	35
I am not aware of this indicator	52	52	56	54

Respondents were invited to write in other reasons for choosing to work for particular agencies or supply services. Only about half of those working in these ways did so (Table 6.11).

For those working through private agencies the main considerations were availability and regularity of work, and the professionalism of the staff.

> *The staff at* [named agency] *are the most helpful and best organized of the agencies, I work for. They also provide me with by far the most work.*
>
> *They are the only agency that get me work every day.*

Those who work through local authorities most often referred to location ('*It's where I live*'). A small minority referred to national pay scales and the Teachers Pension Scheme.

> [Named agency] *pay proper daily rate (but no pension contributions), I prefer to work for my old school – proper rate and pension contribution.*

Table 6.11: Coded additional reasons for choosing to work for particular agencies/supply services

	private supply teacher agency %	local authority supply service %
Availability of work, quality of work, regularity of work	26.5	6.2
Professionalism (helpfulness, reliability etc)	24.5	7.7
Pay good or pay on national scales	19.2	13.8
Advertising, word of mouth, reputation, previous contact	19.2	6.2
Location	14.3	23.1
I use the agency/service to access certain schools	2.4	9.2
LEA changed/pressured/recommended to work with this agency or service	1.6	7.7
Pension availability	1.2	7.7
Already in contact with LEA	0.4	6.2
N	*245*	*65*

How many days a week do supply teachers work?

Supply teachers were asked how many days a week they teach. The overall mean was 2.92 days. Mean responses for different groups are shown on Table 6.12. The differences across groups shown are all statistically significant (p = .000) using T-test or Anova.

Table 6.12: Mean number of days supply teachers work a week

AGE		ORIGIN		SECTOR		WAY OF WORKING	
20-29	4.0	overseas-trained	4.1	secondary	3.2	Private agency	3.7
30-39	3.1	UK-trained	2.8	multiple sectors	3.1	Local authority service	2.9
40-49	3.0			special	2.6	Directly for schools	2.4
59-59	2.7	GENDER		primary	2.6		
60 and over	2.2	male	3.3			LOCATION	
		female	2.8			London (Inner & Outer)	3.6
						Outside London	2.8

Responses here follow the pattern found in the ways supply teachers obtain work: younger supply teachers, those trained overseas, secondary teachers, those who work through agencies, and those in London all work statistically significantly more days a week.

The questionnaire also asked supply teachers how many days they would like to teach in a week. Fourteen percent of the sample said they would like to teach fewer days than they currently do; 43% gave the same number of days as they currently teach, indicating contentment; and 44% said they would like to teach more than they currently do. The group that would like to teach fewer days were working on average 2.7 days a week, whereas those who would like to teach more days were working on average 3.4 days.

Across the whole sample, the teachers would like to work 0.36 days more than they were actually working. The amount more they would like to work has some similarities to the pattern above: that is, the young teachers and those trained overseas wanted to work 0.5 of a day more than they did, while those in their sixties and those who teach in special schools were relatively satisfied with the amount of work they get. However, there are also some differences from the pattern above: most notably, those who worked through local authorities reported one of the highest mean differences, wanting to work 0.5 days a week more than they did. The group who were most anxious to obtain more work were those who had qualified since 2000 and had not obtained regular teaching posts; they wanted to work 0.75 days a week more than they were currently working.

The relationship between the amount of work that teachers would like to do and the amount that they actually do was also reviewed by asking how many days in the last year the teacher was not offered work when they would like to have been working, and how many days they turned down work. The average number of days that respondents would have liked to be working but were not was 19. The patterns found are similar to those described above; there is no clear age-related pattern; those working through local authority supply services reported an above average shortfall (23 days); as did the NQTs (26 days).

There was no evidence that those on the Upper Pay Scale (N = 221) were being offered less work (in relation to the amount they wanted to do) than other supply teachers. In fact, they were generally more content with the amount of work they had (shortfall 14 days, compared with 20 for those on the Main Pay Scale, N = 781). This pattern is statistically significant ($p = .018$). The pattern was the same in relation to the days per week that they worked: those in UPS wanted to work 0.16 days a week more than they already did, while those on the main pay scale wanted to work 0.39 days more ($p = .009$). Nevertheless, there was qualitative evidence that some schools

do not employ the higher paid teachers, for example, one teacher reported: '*I've been asked* [by a school] *what point I was on the scale and when I said I'm on M6 the voice dropped, 'oh' – and I haven't been back this year.'*

In this data it is possible to pick out some specific groups who obtain almost as much work as they would like (for example, supply teachers under 30 years old in London – 9 days shortfall) and some groups who obtain very much less than they would like. These include NQTs, who are trying to establish careers and gain experience (26 days shortfall; those with QTS, 19 days), and respondents choosing supply because 'I cannot get a full-time job in my area' (28 days shortfall). Overseas-trained teachers generally reported a below average shortfall (14 days). However, there was considerable variation across this group: 26 respondents trained in Australia and New Zealand averaged an 8 day shortfall, compared with 45 days from nine teachers trained in Africa (other than S. Africa). The reasons for this variation are broad-ranging. In our focus groups, teachers from Australia and New Zealand perceived that their flexible teacher training meant they were effective and valued as supply teachers, and interviews with staff in London schools confirmed this. One school interviewee also referred to the importance of having clear spoken English:

> *We can get people from all sorts of countries around the world who are highly educated and knowledgeable about the language and can know the words but they can't articulate them in a clear way. And that makes it incredibly difficult where a huge proportion of our kids here are EAL and do actually need to have the English language spoken quite clearly.* (London secondary girls)

What hours do supply teachers work?

The supply teachers were asked to indicate what time they arrived at the school they were currently working in, and what time they left. They were also asked whether they spent time in the evenings doing school work, and if they did, how many hours they normally spent in a week (Table 6.13)

The major differences (all of which are statistically significant) are between those working in primary schools and those working in secondary.

Table 6.13: Times of arriving at and leaving school: primary and secondary teachers (N = 1375)

ARRIVE	primary %	secondary %
before 8.00	4	3
8.00-8.29	66	46
8.30-8.59	28	48
9.00 and after	2	3
Significance (chi-squared): p = .000		

LEAVE	primary %	secondary %
At lunchtime	3	4
15.00-15.29	2	29
15.30-15.59	29	44
16.00-16.59	57	21
After 17.00	9	2
Significance (chi-squared): p = .000		

Table 6.14: School work done in the evening

	primary	secondary
Percent who normally spend time doing school work in the evening at home (N = 1356)	46%	27%
Number of hours a week on average: mean responses (responses from those who do work at home) (N = 504) Significance (T-test): p= .000	3.3	4.9

These responses are very clearly related to the expectations that primary and secondary schools have of supply teachers; these will be explored in the next chapter.

Responses from those who teach only in special schools have not been included because there were so few of them; their responses reflect the rather different hours that special schools often work; thus they arrived later in the morning than either of the other groups, and their leaving time fell between secondary and primary.

If school sector is controlled for, then there are no differences in hours of work that relate to the way of working: that is, those primary teachers who work through agencies or local authorities, or directly for schools, all report similar hours – as do secondary teachers. Similarly there are no differences that relate to age.

Number of schools worked in

The average number of schools worked in over the past year was 5.95, and the median 4.00. These figures conceal considerable variation. Almost a quarter of the sample had worked in only one school. We asked such teachers to write in how they first got into contact with the school. Half of this group had previously taught in the school; many of their comments indicated the pleasure of maintaining this association.

> *Taught these children for 40 years, so indicated that I would like to do supply.*
>
> *I taught there full-time until July '97 when I took early retirement. Still enjoy teaching so am on call for years 2-3 generally, also take reception, year1, occasionally year 4.*

Others indicated a variety of personal links with the school, as a parent, a student in teacher training, a part-time member of staff or a friend of someone on the staff:

> *I work in one school for two days a week in a job share and sometimes do supply for this school too.*
>
> *Parental contact through my children attending the school.*

Some of those who worked only in a small number of schools had contacted the schools by sending out their CV, or telephoning or visiting to say that they were available to do supply work. This was not something we specifically asked about so we cannot say how common this was.

Those working directly for schools worked in significantly fewer schools than those working though agencies or local authority supply services.

Table 6.15: 'Approximately how many different schools have you worked in since January 2004?' by main way of working (N = 1477)

Main way of working	mean	median	standard deviation
private supply teacher agency	10.4	8	13.63
local authority supply service	7.0	5	7.46
directly for one or more schools	3.3	2	3.27
All	5.9	4	9.04

Significance (Anova): p = .0000

There is also an age-related pattern that is statistically significant (Anova: p = .000): younger teachers work in more different schools than older ones (20-29 year olds worked in an average of 8.1 schools, whereas those aged 60 and over worked in an average of 4.1 schools). On average primary supply teachers work in more different schools than secondary (6.4 compared with 5.4). Those who work only in special schools work in an average of 2.4 schools.

Length of placements

We have considered how teachers obtain work, how many days a week different groups work; and how many different schools they work in. We now consider the length of the placements. The questionnaire asked how many days respondents expected to be in their current placement, and how many days the longest and shortest placement in the last year had been.

The qualitative data indicates that this is not a straightforward question. Some supply teachers work on a regular pattern, of, say, two days a week in a particular school. This is equivalent to a part-time post, but they are paid as supply teachers. A further complication is that some teachers who do have part-time posts also work as supply teachers in the same school. This may mean they actually work full-time in the school. In each of these scenarios, it is not easy to respond to a question about the length of your current placement. The questionnaire design did not allow us to get at this level of complexity, so we cannot say how frequent such patterns of working are. However, it is perhaps significant that over 30% of respondents did not answer the questions about length of placement.

A second issue here is that, as Chapter 2 indicated, supply teachers may combine long and short-term placements. Thus the longest placement undertaken in the last year, or the current placement, might exclude the teacher from the definition of supply teacher provided for this project – those working for one term or less in a school. This data was examined carefully, and any who did not appear to meet that definition in the last year were completely removed from the database.

The mean and median lengths of placements are shown on Table 6.16. It is clear that the distributions are very skewed, and the median is perhaps a more useful figure here than the mean. Almost two-thirds of those responding indicated that their present placement would be less than a week, with one third indicating that it was only one day. For over 90% the shortest placement was one day or less.

Table 6.16: Length of current, longest and shortest placements

	How many days do you expect to be in your current placement?	How many days was your longest placement since January 2004?	How many days was your shortest placement since January 2004?
Mean	14.47	27.50	1.68
Median	2	10	1
Std. Deviation	29.50	40.75	6.97
N	*899*	*1161*	*1141*

Placements in secondary schools are significantly longer than those in primary schools (days in current placement, p = .045, T-test; days in longest placement, p =

.000, T-test) (Table 6.17). This is presumably because short absences are frequently covered by internal staff in secondary schools.

Table 6.17: Length of current and longest placement by school sector

		How many days do you expect to be in your current placement?	How many days was your longest placement since January 2004?
Primary	Mean	12.75	20.83
	Median	2	5
	Std. Deviation	29.52	34.58
Secondary	Mean	16.93	34.72
	Median	3.5	18
	Std. Deviation	30.45	44.13
Special only	Mean	7.97	26.02
	Median	3.5	7
	Std. Deviation	10.02	39.41

We also reviewed the length of placements in relation to the main way of obtaining work. The lengths of placements undertaken by private agency and local authority teachers are broadly similar (Table 6.18). However, those working directly for schools have the shortest placements, with many of them saying that their longest placement in the last year was five days or less. This is presumably because many of the teachers undertaking such work only want to work two or three days a week, and are not prepared to stay longer in a school.

Table 6.18: Length of current and longest placement by way of working

Main way of working		How many days do you expect to be in your current placement?	How many days was your longest placement since January 2004?
private supply teacher agency	Mean	19.09	35.16
	Median	4	15
	Std. Deviation	35.44	45.40
local authority supply service	Mean	17.55	30.09
	Median	3	15
	Std. Deviation	35.83	40.04
directly for one or more schools	Mean	9.72	20.76
	Median	2	5
	Std. Deviation	20.23	34.70
Significance (Anova)		p = .000	p = .000

How and when are bookings made?

The final element that makes up the pattern of work for any individual is the amount of advance warning that they get of when they will be working. In the focus groups, there were some vivid descriptions of having to be awake and alert at 7.30 a.m. every day in case the agency phoned. Some teachers enjoyed the interest of the last-minute

call and relished the gratitude of schools when they arrived to provide cover in an emergency; others disliked the tension and the inability to plan, and felt that it had an impact on their effectiveness.

The questionnaire asked teachers to estimate the proportion of their work booked more than two weeks in advance, booked between two days and two weeks in advance, and booked on the previous day or the morning when cover was needed.

Table 6.19: The percentage of work that teachers estimate is booked at different points in time, by the main way they work: mean responses

	Main way of working			All supply teachers
	private supply agency	local authority supply service	directly for schools	
booked more than two weeks in advance	16%	23%	35%	28%
booked between two days and two weeks in advance	37%	39%	39%	39%
booked on the day or the evening before	48%	39%	25%	33&

Table 6.19 shows the responses for groups who work through agencies, local authority supply services and directly for schools. Responses from teachers working through private supply agencies indicated that they are the most likely to receive last-minute bookings – almost half their work is booked on the day or on the evening before, and a quarter of agency teachers indicated that almost all their work is last-minute bookings. They are also very much the least likely to have work booked more than two weeks in advance, with half indicating that they *never* had work booked more than two weeks in advance.

Those who work directly for schools are the most likely to have work booked in advance, presumably covering attendance at courses or other planned absence, and as indicated above, often with a regular pattern of providing cover on certain days every week. A fifth of those working directly for schools said that they never have last-minute bookings.

6.5 Pay and pension arrangements

The questionnaire asked respondents whether their pay was based on national teachers' pay scales. As Table 6.20 shows, 17% of respondents said they did not know. Of this group, 40% had overseas teaching qualifications or no teaching qualification, and a further 16% were NQTs, who may not be familiar with the national pay scales. But 45% (108 teachers) were UK-trained with QTS, and might have been expected to be more aware of pay issues.

Table 6.20: Teachers' responses to 'Is your pay based on national scales?' by way of working

	Main way of working			
	private supply teacher agency	local authority supply service	directly for one or more schools	All supply teachers
	%	%	%	%
Yes	32	87	93	73
No	28	1	2	10
don't know	41	13	5	17
N	*469*	*134*	*850*	*1453*

Significance (chi-squared): p = .000

Table 6.20 also shows that a small minority (17 teachers) of those working through local authority supply services or directly for schools said they were not being paid to scale, when they surely should have been. Further evidence of confusion comes when data relating to pensions is considered: 32 supply teachers who believed they were not paid on national pay scales or were uncertain about this also stated that they were paying contributions into the Teachers Pension Scheme; this would not be possible.

The main issues around supply teachers' pay relate to concerns about the 'market rates' that are often paid by private supply agencies. The data collected in this research enables us to see how these compare with national rates. Those working through private agencies reported an average daily rate of £115, while those working through local authorities reported £130, and those working directly for schools said they earned an average of £134 a day. However, as this chapter has shown, those working though agencies are on average much younger than those using other ways of working. Table 6.21 compares the mean daily pay reported by teachers in different age groups.

Table 6.21: Average daily pay reported by age group and way of working: data from supply teacher survey conducted February – March 2005

	Main way of working				
Age group	Private supply teacher agency	Local authority supply service	Working directly for schools	Significance (Anova)	*N*
20-29	£111	£99	£106	.026	*178*
30-39	£115	£125	£126	.000	*193*
40-49	£116	£130	£133	.000	*245*
50-59	£120	£135	£137	.000	*388*
60-69	£121	£145	£143	.000	*159*

Teachers in their twenties earn more working though agencies, but for all other age groups, pay is higher through local authorities / schools. The figures given for local authority supply services and working directly for schools are very similar, suggesting that all these teachers are paid on national pay scales. This also suggests, of course, that despite the references to this in interviews with agency managers, agencies very rarely pay on national scales, or certainly not to older teachers. It also suggests that those who were uncertain whether or not they were paid on national scales were in fact paid a 'market rate' if they worked through an agency, and on national scales if they worked in any other way.

Those who said that they were paid on national scales were asked which scale they were paid on (Table 6.22). These figures represent payment on U1, M3-4 in London and M4-5 outside, and towards the top of the unqualified scale.

Table 6.22: Average daily pay for those on different pay spines, Inner and Outer London compared to outside London: data from supply teacher survey Feb – March 2005

	Mean daily pay		
	London	outside London	*N*
Upper pay scale	£159	£147	*158*
Main scale	£134	£128	*630*
Unqualified scale	£116	£108	*7*
All	£140	£132	*795*

Those paid on national scales earned an average of £8 per day more in London than those outside (£132, £140) while those working through agencies earned an average of £5 more per day working in London (£114, £ 119). However, those in London were significantly younger than those elsewhere, so the differential is not as great as might be predicted from the pay scales.

In the focus groups, supply teachers commented on the difficulty of going through the pay threshold while working as a supply teacher; they said it was difficult if not impossible to demonstrate pupil progress or involvement in extra-curricular activities while doing short placements: *'The hurdles are totally inappropriate for supply teaching'*. They felt that this disadvantaged supply teachers who wished to move back into permanent teaching.

Primary and secondary supply teachers reported the same mean daily rate when they worked through private supply agencies (£115), but secondary supply teachers working through schools earned slightly more than primary (£136 compared with £133). This is a very small difference; however, for NQTs the difference was greater (Table 6.23).

Table 6.23: Mean daily pay rate reported by primary and secondary NQTs by way of working: data from supply teacher survey conducted February – March 2005

	Primary	Secondary	Significance (T-test)	N
Private supply teacher agency	£101	£109	p = .034	56
Working directly for schools	£94	£98		28

Secondary NQTs may earn more through agencies because demand for them is greater than for their primary counterparts; in focus groups the effects of the buoyant state of primary teacher supply (or over-supply) were evident in the difficulty obtaining work reported by some primary NQTs.

The questionnaire asked about pension contributions. Overall, more than half the respondents stated that they do not pay contributions into any pension fund; however, this clearly includes some who have already retired and are drawing a pension; only 18% of those aged 60 and over said they contribute to a pension fund. But rather more worryingly, only 13% of those in their twenties were making any provision for their pension, and only around half in the other age groups (Table 6.24).

Table 6.24: Pensions: percentage agreeing with statements about pension arrangements by age group

I pay into ...	20 – 29 %	30 – 39 %	40 – 49 %	50 – 59 %	60 and over %	Total %
… the Teachers Pension Scheme	9	40	51	42	12	35
… a stakeholder pension fund through supply agency	1	0	0	0	1	0
… a pension fund I arrange personally	4	7	9	7	5	7
I do not pay into a pension fund	87	53	40	51	82	58
N	*186*	*221*	*312*	*485*	*207*	*1411*

While some agencies offer stakeholder pensions, these data suggest that they have very limited uptake.

A few supply teachers noted that they prefer to work through the local authority or directly for schools because this means that they are able to contribute to the Teachers Pensions Scheme. However, more than a third of those who work mainly though local authorities or directly for schools are not contributing to a pension fund. Table 6.25 excludes those in their sixties, who might have good reason not to contribute.

Table 6.25: Pension arrangements of teachers under 60 years old by main way of working

	Main way of working			All aged under 60
I pay into …	private supply teacher agency %	local authority supply service %	directly for one or more schools %	%
… the Teachers Pension Scheme	7	57	54	38
… a pension fund I arrange personally	11	5	4	7
I do not pay into a pension fund	81	38	41	55
N	*402*	*111*	*650*	*1163*

As Chapter 4 showed, some local authority supply services that work in partnership with private agencies do pay to national scales, but do not allow teachers to contribute to the Teachers Pension Scheme. This may be part of the explanation.

6.6 Summary: Characteristics of supply teachers

Personal characteristics

In comparison with regular classroom teachers, supply teachers are older (50% aged 50 and over, compared with 26% of classroom teachers, DfES, 2005a). Supply teachers in Inner London are significantly younger than those elsewhere, and those in the East of England significantly older. The proportions of men and women are similar to the proportions nationally. A higher proportion of supply teachers than of regular teachers come from minority ethnic groups (14.3% compared with 8.9%); this is mainly accounted for by the number of overseas-trained white supply teachers.

Qualifications

In comparison with teachers nationally, the supply teacher sample includes a higher proportion of teachers without QTS and not on a route to QTS (7.8% compared to 2.8% nationally). This includes both overseas-trained teachers not on a route to QTS (5.4%) and those with no teaching qualification related to school (2.4%). Both groups are found in secondary schools more than primary, and a third of the overseas-trained teachers work in London. The supply teacher sample also included a higher proportion of NQTs than nationally (8.1% compared with 3.9%). NQTs in supply teaching are significantly older than NQTs nationally.

Of those working in primary schools, 12% had qualified to teach in secondary or post-16. Secondary teachers were qualified and experienced in a wide range of subjects, with the highest numbers in English, Modern Foreign Languages and Science. The majority (72%) of those working only in special schools have some relevant training.

Patterns of work

Of the supply teachers in the sample, 56% said their main way of obtaining work was directly from schools, 31% through private supply agencies, and 9% through local

authority supply services. Several groups made significantly more use of agencies: secondary teachers, those working in inner city neighbourhoods, NQTs, overseas-trained teachers and those with no teaching qualification relating to schools. One fifth of those working through agencies were influenced by whether the agency had the Quality Mark, but availability of work and helpfulness and reliability were seen as more important factors.

The supply teachers in the sample worked an average of 2.9 days a week; this was significantly higher for younger teachers, those working through private supply agencies, secondary teachers, overseas-trained teachers and those in London. Primary supply teachers worked longer hours than secondary, and were more likely to work at home in the evenings.

On average, supply teachers had worked in six different schools in the last year; however, a quarter of the sample had worked in only one school (often one where they had previously been employed). Those who worked through agencies, and the younger teachers, worked in more schools. Most placements lasted less than a week.

Pay and pension arrangements

Average daily pay for those working through private supply agencies was £114 outside London and £119 in London, and for those working through local authorities or directly for schools, £132 outside London and £140 in London. The teachers in their twenties earned more working through private supply agencies than through local authorities or directly for schools, whereas all other age groups earned less through agencies then through other channels of work. Only half the respondents aged under 60 stated that they paid into any pension fund, and only 13% of those in their twenties. Around 40% of those aged under 60 working through local authorities or directly for schools (who were presumably eligible to pay into the Teachers Pension Fund) said that they did not do so.

7 Supply teachers' career patterns, motivations and aspirations

7.1 Introduction

This chapter reviews the varying career patterns found in the survey sample of supply teachers. It considers the different motivations to undertake supply teaching, the extent to which supply teachers achieve job satisfaction, and how this varies across different groups, and their aspirations for the future. The final section reviews the factors that supply teachers indicated might encourage them to join or return to the permanent sector. The chapter draws on quantitative data from the supply teacher survey, and on qualitative data from focus groups and individual interviews with supply teachers.

7.2 Career patterns

Teaching experience

The questionnaire asked respondents how many years teaching experience they had in various categories: daily-paid supply, temporary or fixed term contracts; permanent full-time and part-time; and teaching overseas. In addition they were asked to indicate years in employment other than teaching. They were asked to supply dates as well as total number of years, which hopefully encouraged them to work out accurate responses rather than to estimate. Mean responses are shown by age group on Table 7.1. Only UK-trained teachers have been included, since the 'teaching overseas' category is somewhat skewed by the overseas-trained teachers.

Table 7.1: Mean number of years teaching experience in different types of work, by age group (UK-trained teachers only)

	Daily paid supply	Fixed term contract	Permanent full time work in one school	Permanent part-time or job share in one school	Teaching overseas	**Total teaching experience**	Employment other than teaching	**Total work experience**
20 - 29	0.8	0.4	1.0	0.0	0.1	**2.4**	0.8	**3.2**
30 - 39	2.1	0.6	3.5	0.5	0.3	**7.0**	2.3	**9.3**
40 - 49	4.5	1.1	6.1	0.8	0.3	**12.9**	4.5	**17.3**
50 - 59	5.3	1.0	12.3	1.4	0.3	**20.4**	3.0	**23.4**
60 and over	4.9	0.9	15.3	1.5	0.5	**23.1**	4.4	**27.5**
All	4.2	0.9	9.1	1.1	0.4	**15.6**	3.3	**18.9**

From Table 7.1, it appears that the teachers in the sample have had quite varied careers, often including periods of work on fixed term contracts, part-time work or work outside teaching. On average, they have had permanent full-time teaching jobs for only about half their years in employment.

In the whole sample, it appears that 123 teachers (8%) had no teaching experience other than supply teaching. Half of this group these had qualified before 2000; 10% of them had more than ten years' experience as supply teachers.

As Chapter 1 explained, much of the literature about supply teachers identifies three main groups of people who take up supply teaching: recently qualified teachers, those combining supply teaching with another occupation (including caring for their own children); and those approaching retirement or already retired. The literature also identifies overseas-trained teachers. To analyse career patterns we have identified these groups within our sample. Some supply teachers fitted in more than one group: for example, a supply teacher in his fifties had gained QTS in 2002 (following 18 years in farm management), and was now supply teaching to supplement his pension. In order to make comparisons clearer we have assigned each respondent to one group only, using the following criteria.

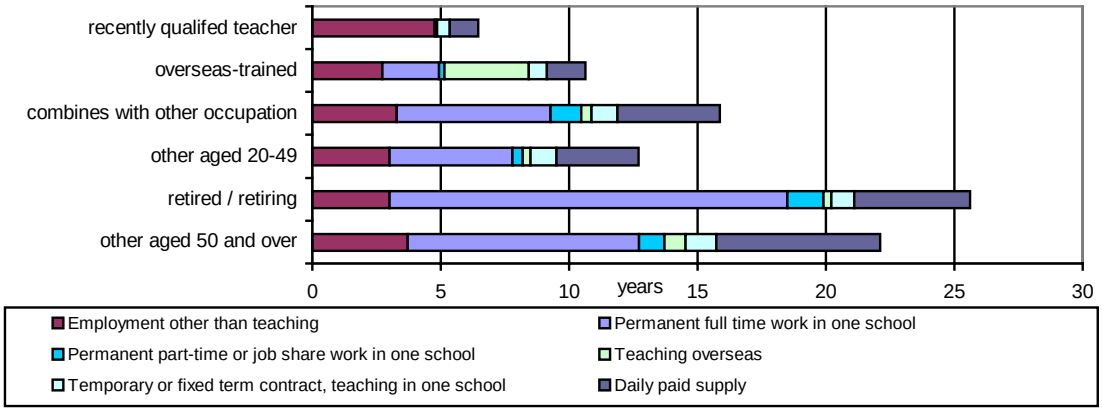
- Recently qualified: qualified in or after 2000 and have done less than 0.5 years regular teaching; overseas-trained teachers are not included in this group.
- Overseas-trained: gained teaching qualification in a country other than the UK. Teachers trained in Europe are included here.
- Combines with another occupation: all those who combine supply teaching with any of the following: a part-time teaching job in one school; other employment or self-employment; caring for own children or for other dependants; or studying. This category excludes those who are in the recently qualified or overseas-trained groups, and those in the retired or retiring group.
- Retired or retiring: those aged 50 or more who intend to retire within the next five years, or are supply teaching to supplement their pensions. Overseas trained teachers are not included.

These four groups accounted for almost three-quarters of the sample. The two largest groups are those who are retired or retiring (32% of the sample) and those who combine supply teaching with another occupation (27%). The 404 teachers who did not fit into any of these groups have been divided into two further groups by age, on the basis that age is inevitably a salient factor in career pattern (Table 7.2).

Table 7.2: Supply teachers grouped by career patterns

	number	%
recently qualified teacher	119	8
overseas-trained	126	8
combines with other occupation	423	27
other, aged 20-49	236	15
retired / retiring	482	32
other, aged 50 and over	168	11
N	*1554*	*100*

Figure 7.1: Teaching and other experience of employment by supply teacher group



Note: Respondents were asked to record only periods of a year or more of employment / self-employment other than teaching.

Figure 7.1 shows the mean teaching experience of the members of each of these groups. The recently qualified teachers had the longest experience of work outside teaching: 4.8 years. The age distribution (Table 7.3) shows that around half of them must have trained for teaching as mature students.

Table 7.3: Age by supply teacher career group (N = 1543)

	recently qualified teacher %	overseas trained %	combines with other occupation %	other, aged 20-49 %	retired / retiring %	other, aged 50 and over %
20 - 29	49	55	6	20	0	0
30 - 39	27	21	28	27	0	0
40 - 49	21	10	44	53	0	0
50 - 59	3	10	23	0	57	89
60 and over	0	6	1	0	43	11
N	*119*	*126*	*420*	*236*	*478*	*164*

The overseas-trained teachers also have a wider age range than might have been expected from the prevalent stereotype. A third of this group met our criterion for recently qualified teachers, that is, they had completed their training in or after 2000, and had less than 0.5 years of regular teaching. Just eight of them met the criteria for the 'retiring/retired' group.

In reviewing the age profile of those combining teaching with another occupation it should be remembered that a criterion was that those in the retired/retiring, recently qualified teacher and overseas-trained group should not be included in this group even if they were eligible.

The questionnaire asked what the respondents were doing before they started supply teaching (Table 7.4).

Table 7.4: 'What were you doing immediately before you started supply teaching?' by supply teacher career group

	recently qualified teacher	overseas trained	combines with other occupation	other, aged 20-49	retired / retiring	other, aged 50 and over
	%	%	%	%	%	%
initial teacher training	66	15	4	9	1	6
fixed-term teaching post in one school	17	6	6	7	6	5
permanent teaching post in one school	3	40	42	42	71	42
career break	3	16	28	25	10	24
unemployed and seeking work	1	2	2	1	1	2
other employment/self-employment	5	13	11	9	6	13
missing	5	9	6	6	5	7
N	*119*	*126*	*423*	*236*	*482*	*168*

The recently qualified teachers had generally come from initial teacher training or fixed-term posts in one school. The overseas-trained teachers had a wide range of backgrounds, but half had been in permanent or fixed-term teaching; however, this may have been in another country. Of the 16% of overseas-trained teachers who had come into supply teaching following a career break, half specified that this was a break for travel, and a third for study. Those who combine supply teaching with another occupation were the most likely to have come from a career break (28%), and in 82% of cases this was caring for dependants. Those in the retired/retiring group were very much the most likely to have previously been in a permanent teaching post immediately before entering supply teaching (71%); Table 7.4 indicates how this group differs from the 'other aged 50 and over' group, who in comparison more often entered supply teaching from a career break (24%), initial teacher training (6%), or other employment (13%).

Another factor that differed across these career groups was the sector in which they taught (Table 7.5).

Table 7.5: Main school sector taught in by career group

	Recently qualified teacher %	Overseas-trained %	Combines with other occupation %	Other aged 20-49 %	Retired / retiring %	Other aged 50 and over %	All %
Primary	47	31	53	54	46	56	50
Secondary	48	59	40	41	49	35	44
Special only	0	1	2	1	3	4	2
Multiple sectors	5	10	5	5	3	4	5
N	*119*	*126*	*418*	*235*	*477*	*164*	*1539*

The overseas-trained teachers were more likely to be in secondary or multiple sectors, while those that combine with another occupation and those in the groups 'other aged 20-49 and 'other aged 50 and over' were more likely to be in primary.

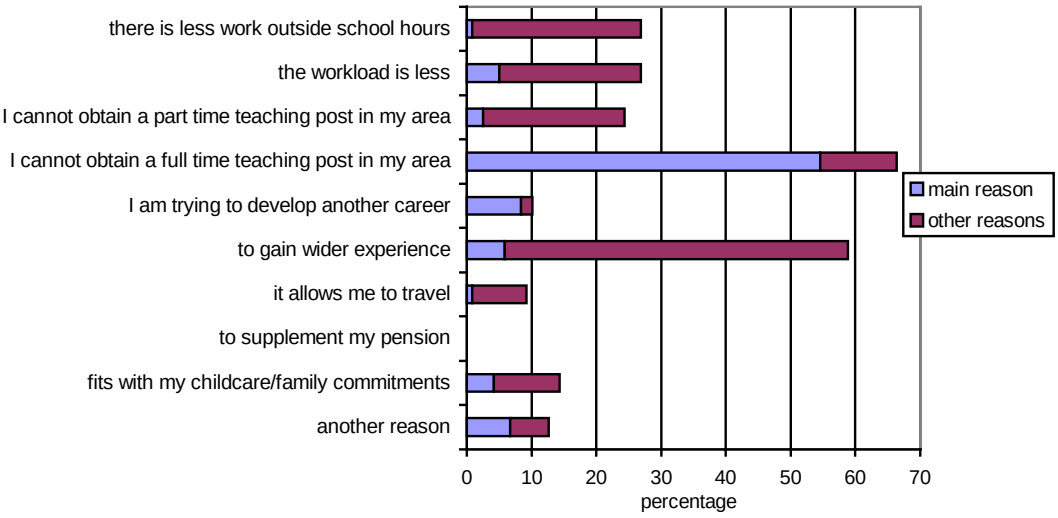
7.3 Motivations for supply teaching

Respondents were asked about their reasons for doing supply teaching. They were asked to indicate all relevant reasons on a list, and then were asked to say which of these was the most important reason. Those who had moved from permanent teaching posts were also asked to comment on dissatisfactions with those posts and the attractions of supply teaching. Responses to these questions are considered for each career group in turn.

Recently qualified teachers

Among the recently qualified teachers the most common reason for supply teaching was the inability to obtain a permanent post (Figure 7.2).

Figure 7.2: Recently qualified teachers: reasons for doing supply teaching (N = 119)



Many recently qualified teachers combined this with a more positive gloss of gaining wider experience, and finding out about schools in a new area:

> *I don't know the locality at all, or what the schools would be like etc. so I thought maybe doing supply and getting an overview of new land, so to speak. … I wanted to gain a variety of experiences because I was two years a teaching assistant before I did the training and it has always struck me how different each school is with their approaches to everything.* (Primary supply teacher)

Among this group a small number were considering careers outside teaching because they were disillusioned by the difficulty of getting permanent posts.

Overseas-trained supply teachers

Overseas-trained teachers were not the main focus of the research, and so the questionnaire did not ask how long these teachers had been in England, or what sorts of visas or work permits they had. Table 7.6 shows the overseas-trained supply teachers by country or region of training and by age group; half of them were in their twenties. Table 7.7 shows the amount of experience of teaching overseas that this group had.

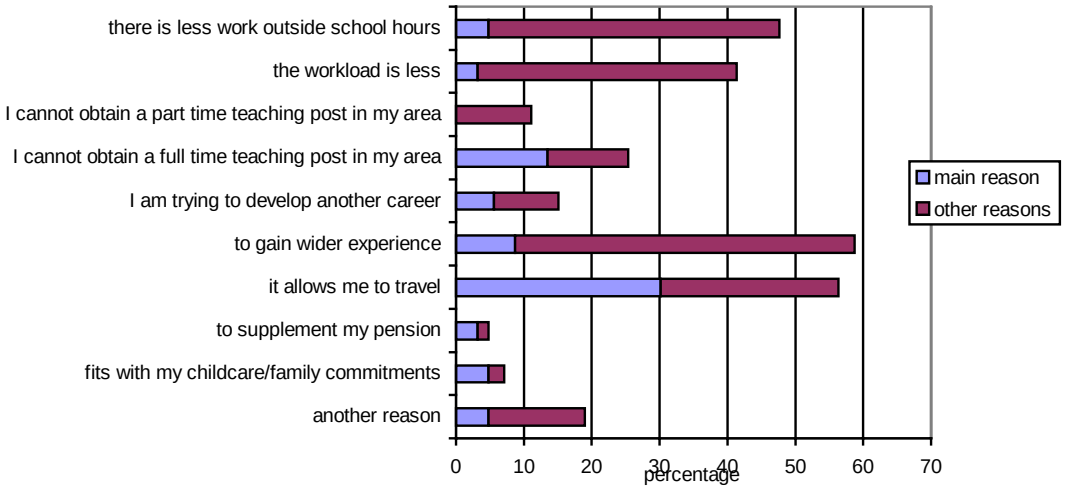
Table 7.6: Number of overseas-trained supply teachers by country or region of training and by age group

	20 – 29	30 - 39	40 - 49	50 - 59	60 and over	*total*
Australia and New Zealand	24	7	3	2	0	*36*
USA and Canada	26	3	3	3	1	*36*
South Africa	10	6	2	3	2	*23*
Africa (not South Africa)	2	6	1	2	1	*12*
Europe	6	3	0	2	1	*12*
Central and South America	0	1	3	0	0	*4*
Asia	1	0	0	0	2	*3*
N	*69*	*26*	*12*	*12*	*7*	*126*

Table 7.7: Length of teaching experience overseas

	Number of teachers	%
none	42	33.6
less than a year	12	9.6
1 – 2.9 years	32	25.6
3 – 4.9 years	15	12
5 – 9.9 years	10	8
10 – 19.9 years	11	8.8
20 years and over	3	2.4
N	*125*	*100*

Figure 7.3: Overseas-trained supply teachers: reasons for doing supply teaching (N = 126)



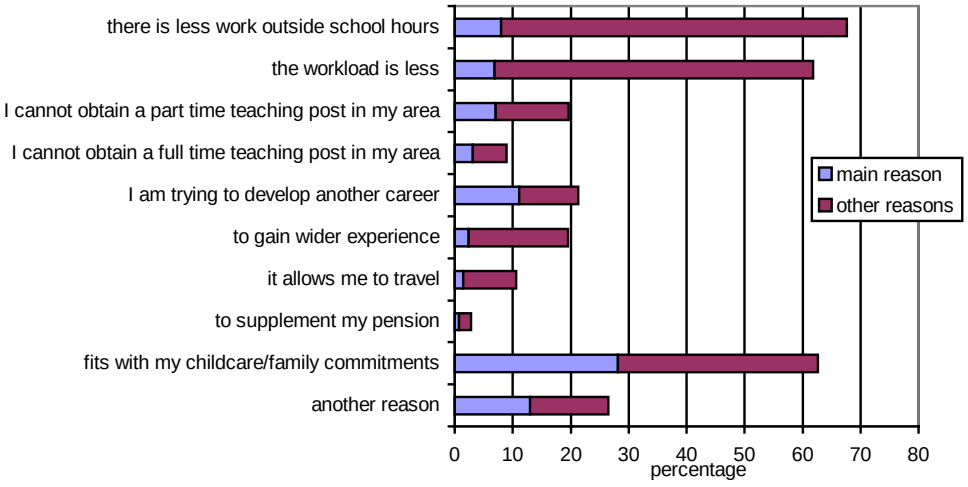
Forty-two percent were teaching in London, and approximately 10% in each of the South East, the South West and the West Midlands. Very few worked in rural areas.

The potential for travel was the most frequently selected main reason for doing supply (30% selected this as the main reason, and a further 26% as a supplementary reason). This was selected by an even higher percentage of those in their twenties (58% as main reason, and a further 22% as another reason). The second most important main reason for supply teaching among this group was inability to obtain a full-time post. In the focus groups several overseas-trained teachers explained that they could not get work in their home towns, and that supply teaching in England offered an opportunity to gain experience which they hoped would help them to achieve a job on their return. Figure 7.3 shows that overseas-trained teachers had also been attracted into supply teaching by the lower workload, and the potential to gain wide experience.

Those combining supply teaching with another occupation

Figure 7.4 shows the main reasons those combining supply teaching with another occupation gave for supply teaching. Note that those who said they were supply teaching to supplement their pension were aged under 50, and were therefore not included in the retired / retiring group.

Figure 7.4: Those combining supply teaching with another occupation: reasons for doing supply teaching (N = 423)



These reasons reflect the fact that they are combining it with other occupations, with 'fits in with childcare and family commitments' as the most frequently selected main reason, and 'I am trying to develop another career' the second most frequently selected. Table 7.8 shows the various occupations this group combined with supply teaching. Occupations listed under 'other' were very wide ranging, and included exam marking, teaching in non-school settings, and careers in the arts.

One supply teacher explained:

> *When I started having a family, and then you sort of say well, I would rather not have a full-time salary so I can spend some time with my children and be flexible in case of illness. That was my reason I didn't want to feel guilty about being home if my kids had Chickenpox or something*. (Primary and nursery supply teacher)

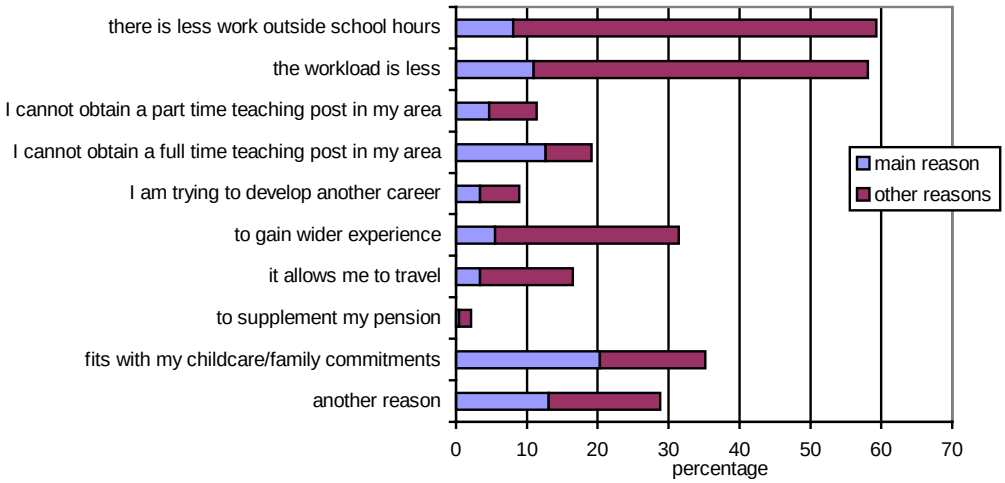
Table 7.8: Teachers combining supply teaching with another occupation: the other occupations

	number	%
A part-time regular teaching job	73	18
Other employment	90	22
Self-employment	96	24
Child-care (own children)	162	40
Caring for other dependants	45	11
Studying	45	11
Other	45	11

Workload was an important factor in the decision to do supply work for this group. In particular, around two-thirds identified the fact that there is less work outside school hours among the reasons for doing supply teaching.

Other supply teachers aged 20-49

Figure 7.5: Other supply teachers aged 20-49: reasons for doing supply teaching (N = 236)



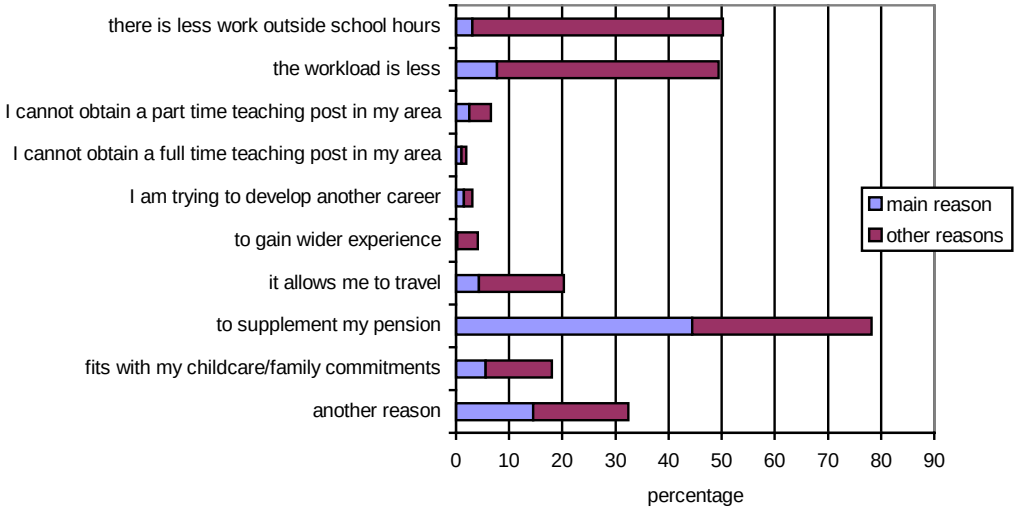
The supply teachers aged 20-49 who did not fit in the other groups show a generally similar pattern of response to those combining with another occupation. Indeed, child-care and family responsibilities was the category most often identified as a main reason for supply teaching, but in contrast to those who combined supply teaching with another occupation, the second most frequently selected main reason for supply teaching was inability to obtain a full-time teaching post. For this group too workload was an important factor, and some were supply teaching because they preferred the more limited commitment:

> *But I do know that I don't want to take on Monday to Friday fulltime working in a classroom you know setting homework and marking. Its marking, planning, report writing, parents evening it just takes up too much time and energy it really does. I don't see myself as ever doing that again unless there are extreme circumstances its too much pressure*. (Supply teacher in focus group, late twenties, no family commitments)

Retired and moving towards retirement

The main reason the retiring and retired group identified for supply teaching was to supplement their pension.

Figure 7.6: Retired and moving towards retirement: reasons for supply teaching (N = 482)

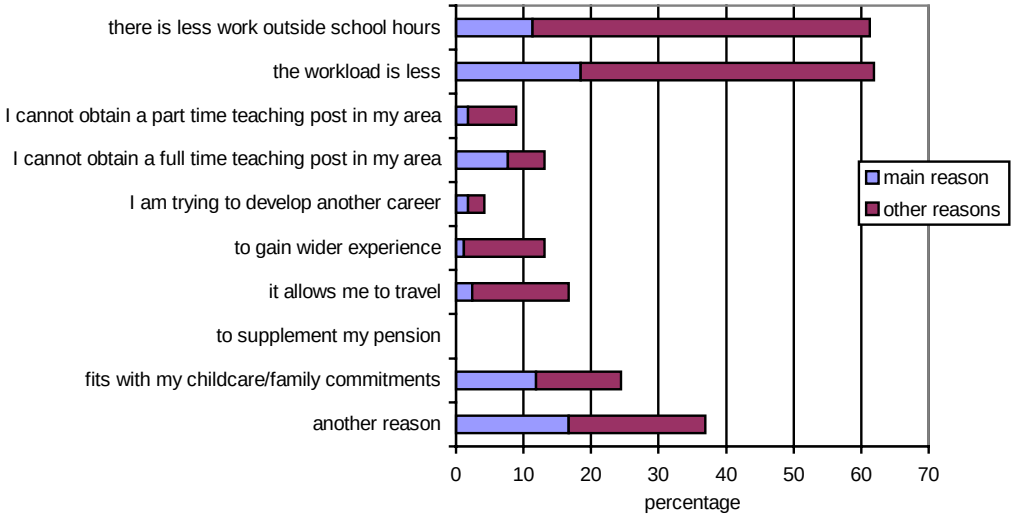


Some 30% of this group had also indicated that they combine supply teaching with another regular occupation: for 7% this was a part-time teaching post, for 10% with other employment, and for 8% with caring for dependants. Sixteen per cent indicated that they combined supply teaching with something else; this included retirement, pleasure, hobbies, caring for grandchildren, and a wide range of voluntary and community activities.

Other supply teachers aged 50 and over

The 'other' group aged 50 and over showed a rather different pattern of reasons from the retired and retiring group (Figure 7.7).

Figure 7.7: Other supply teachers aged 50 and over: reasons for supply teaching (N = 168)



Workload was more often selected as a main and subsidiary reason; and over a third of this group ticked 'another reason'; a wide variety of reasons were added. Most of these related to positive aspects of supply teaching when compared with regular teaching. These included freedom when to work, enjoyment of supply teaching, being able to teach and use classroom skills, the variety and interest of supply teaching; and the lack of responsibility and stress. There was a real sense, then, that they were supply teaching because they preferred this to regular teaching.

7.4 Job satisfaction

Respondents were asked to rate a number of aspects of the supply teacher's day-to-day work on a scale from 1 (very satisfied) to 5 (very dissatisfied) (Table 7.9). What is most striking here is that more than half of each group indicated that they were fairly or very satisfied in relation to almost every factor listed. The schools they were placed in, and workload and hours of work were the most positively rated factor overall and by most groups.

The recently qualified teachers and the overseas-trained teachers were the groups that most often expressed dissatisfaction with their opportunities to form relationships with pupils and to contribute to their education. One of those combining supply teaching with another occupation commented, in relation to this:

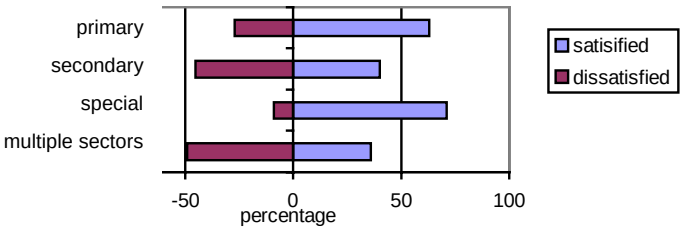
> *I don't mind not having a long-term relationship I think that is what some people would miss doing supply you don't have your own classroom and your own stuff you know your own place and almost the status. And that has never bothered me I have been quite happy not to have all that responsibility. But especially now I feel like I can fill in a gap you know doing something really useful and so that's good.* (Special school supply teacher)

Table 7.9: Job satisfaction: percentage of each supply teacher group indicating 'satisfied' or 'very satisfied'

	Recently qualified teacher %	Overseas trained %	Combines with other occupation %	Other, aged 20-49 %	Retired / retiring %	Other, aged 50 and over %	All %
the schools you are placed in	82	73	89	86	85	87	85
workload and hours of work	79	81	81	85	83	80	82
the classes you are placed in	80	63	83	81	84	80	81
the degree of choice about when you work	73	77	77	78	79	75	77
the amount of work you are offered	71	83	76	78	78	71	77
conditions of employment	67	71	74	76	80	72	75
opportunities to contribute to pupils' education	56	56	69	64	78	69	69
opportunities to develop relationships with pupils	55	48	67	63	73	61	65
the degree of choice about where you work	63	56	64	66	67	72	65
opportunities to develop relationships with teachers	50	48	60	60	68	49	59
pay levels	64	47	63	65	73	61	65
pupil behaviour in the classes you teach	43	27	54	51	60	48	52
	119	*126*	*423*	*236*	*482*	*168*	*1554*

The lowest rated aspect was pupil behaviour, but even here half indicated satisfaction, and only in the overseas-trained teacher groups did a majority indicate dissatisfaction (which appears to reflect both the urban areas where they mainly teach, and the clash between their expectations of pupil behaviour developed in their own countries and the reality found in England). There is unsurprisingly a clear divide between primary and secondary teachers in relation to pupil behaviour, but even so, less than half indicated dissatisfaction (Figure 7.8).

Figure 7.8: Percentage of supply teachers in different sectors who are satisfied / dissatisfied with pupil behaviour in the classes they teach



Supply teachers recognised that the limited time they spend in schools makes it harder to manage pupils' behaviour:

> *It is just that they are seen as easier prey because they might only be there for a day, so the kids don't really care, so the comeback isn't going to be as great as if it is a permanent member of staff.*

Overall, the satisfaction levels were highest among those who are retired or retiring, and lowest among the overseas-trained and recently qualified teachers. The older teachers tended to compare supply teaching favourably with their previous teaching posts:

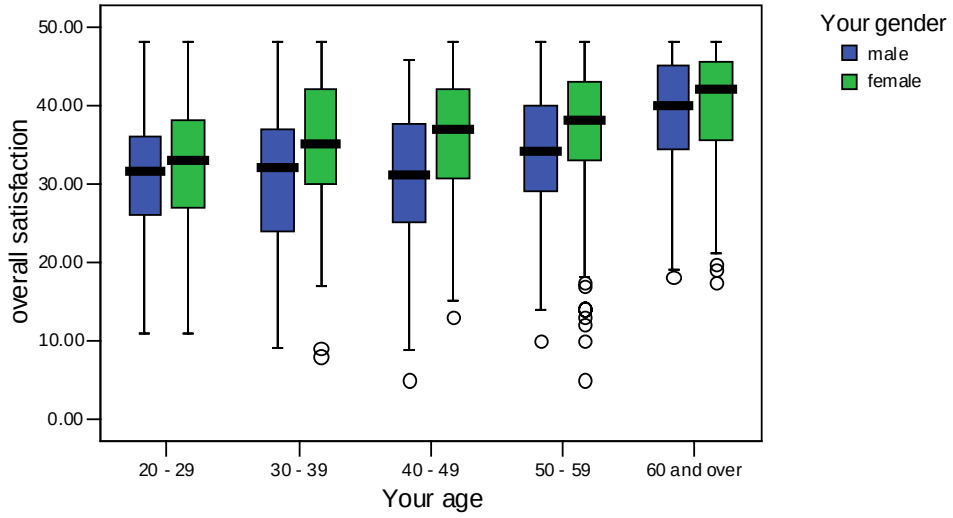
> *You have this element of choice. You don't have to go in if you don't want to. You don't have to go to a school, you can say no.* (Retired teacher in focus group)

> *It's the joy of supply teaching I think, that you don't have to go to meetings its wonderful* (focus group)

We have calculated an overall score for satisfaction for each teacher based on the ratings for the factors shown above; this ranges from 0 (which would indicate that every item was rated 'very dissatisfied') to 48 (which would indicate that every item was rated 'very satisfied'). Using this overall score, there is a statistically significant relationship between satisfaction and age, with the older teachers being more satisfied. Men are statistically significantly less satisfied than women, particularly in the 30-59 age group ($p = .000$) (see Figure 7.9).

Similarly, secondary supply teachers are significantly less satisfied overall than primary supply teachers ($p = .000$). This is so even if we control for gender: male primary supply teachers are significantly less satisfied than their female counterparts, as are male secondary supply teachers. Again, these effects are strongest in the 30-59 age group; older supply teachers tend to be the most satisfied whatever their gender or school sector, and those in their twenties are on average then least satisfied.

Figure 7.9: Overall satisfaction of supply teachers by age and gender (0 = very dissatisfied; 48 = very satisfied)



One of the concerns that makes supply teachers less satisfied relates to status. They feel that pupils see them as '*not proper teachers'* or '*not as good as real teachers'*. But they also feel that other teachers can regard them negatively. Sometimes there appears to be a perception that '*you can't get a job, or you're not good enough for it'*.

This can be reflected in the work that they are given to do, particularly in secondary schools:

> *At one school we were used as a dustbin for the pupils no-one else wanted because a supply is presumably in some people's eyes not really a proper qualified teacher, and I resent that.*

This perception was to some extent supported by some school interviewees who argued that they did not give supply teachers the exam pupils, but rather used them to fill in where it mattered less. Some secondary supply teachers also felt that the expectation that they would simply supervise work set rather than teach (which is discussed in Chapter 9) automatically gave them lower status:

> *You are not given the chance to be a good teacher. It is almost as though they expect you to sit there with a piece of paper in front of you. Say to the children, this is what you are going to do and basically let them get on with it. No teacher wants to do that.*

However, supply teachers argued that the status they were given varied considerably in different schools. It related to the support they were offered (which will be discussed ion Chapter 10), and to their own efforts to gain respect and status by being positive and working hard. They also indicated that the longer you are in a school, the more status you have, both with teachers and pupils.

7.5 Ideal employment and the future

This section reviews the teachers current and future aspirations, by focusing on answers to two questions: 'In your current circumstances, what would be your ideal employment?', and 'What do you expect to be doing in the future?'.

In relation to ideal employment, a list of options was presented. About 5% of the respondents did not answer, and 13% made multiple selections; these were in the vast majority of cases, daily-paid supply teaching combined with employment or self-employment outside teaching. It is noticeable that the group most frequently making multiple selections are those who were already combining supply teaching with another occupation. One of the options offered may not have been clearly understood; by 'permanent supply teaching' we meant supply teaching on a permanent contract, which is the practice in a few local authorities. Responses are shown on Table 7.10.

Table 7.10: In your current circumstances, what would be your ideal employment? Responses by supply teacher career group

	Recently qualified teacher %	Overseas-trained %	Combines with other occupation %	Other, aged 20-49 %	Retired / retiring %	Other, aged 50 and over %
Daily-paid supply teaching	8	22	23	29	57	46
Full-time teaching in one school	65	29	6	22	2	8
Part-time or job-share teaching in one school	8	8	29	15	12	13
Permanent supply teaching	6	13	7	10	5	10
Employment/ self –employment outside teaching	6	12	13	8	6	5
Missing or multiple responses	8	16	22	15	18	18
N	*119*	*126*	*404*	*232*	*505*	*168*

The pattern within this data is related to that for job satisfaction shown above. The younger supply teachers are more likely to see their ideal employment as full-time teaching in one school, while those in their sixties are more contented with supply teaching. Similarly, men are less likely than women to see supply teaching as ideal. Men doing supply teaching in secondary schools are more likely than those in primary schools to see their ideal as employment outside teaching. Obviously we cannot say whether it is their lack of job satisfaction that leads them to want to work outside teaching, or their aspiration that leads them to be dissatisfied.

The data about future occupations are also is limited because a number of people selected more than one option for each time period. There were also some missing responses. These are both indications that supply teachers are often following uncertain and ad hoc career paths. In the tables that follow the percentages shown are of the whole group, to reflect this uncertainty.

It is clear from Table 7.10 that the vast majority of the recently qualified teachers do not see daily-paid supply teaching as their ideal occupation. Most of them would rather be teaching on a regular basis in one school.

Table 7.11: Expected occupations in ONE year's time by supply teacher career group

	Recently qualified teacher %	Overseas-trained %	Combines with other occupation %	Other, aged 20-49 %	Retired / retiring %	Other, aged 50 and over %	All %
Daily-paid supply teaching	15	29	42	46	56	60	46
Permanent full-time teaching	59	22	5	18	1	5	11
Part-time / job-share teaching	5	4	10	4	2	1	5
Leadership in UK school	0	0	0.5	1	0	0	0.5
Teaching / leadership in school in another country	0	15	1	2	0.5	0	2
Retirement	0	2	0	0	11	0	3
Career break	0	1	0.5	1	0	0	0
Other employment	2	1	5	3	0.5	2	2
Other	2	4	3	2	3	1	2
No response or multiple responses	18	23	34	24	27	31	28
N	*119*	*126*	*423*	*236*	*482*	*168*	*1554*

Table 7.12: Expected occupations in FIVE year's time by supply teacher career group

	Recently qualified teacher %	Overseas-trained %	Combines with other occupation %	Other, aged 20-49 %	Retired / retiring %	Other, aged 50 and over %	All %
Daily-paid supply teaching	0	4	16	16	13	44	16
Permanent full-time teaching	21	6	7	16	0	3	7
Part-time / job-share teaching	4	1	15	10	2	1	7
Leadership in UK school	11	4	0.5	3	0	1	2
Teaching / leadership in school in another country	7	21	1	4	0	1	3
Retirement	1	1	0	0	47	0	15
Career break	4	2	1	1	0	1	1
Other employment	3	9	11	5	1	4	6
Other	3	6	1	2	2	1	2
No response or multiple responses	45	47	46	43	36	46	42
N	*119*	*126*	*423*	*236*	*482*	*168*	*1554*

In one year's time a majority of the recently qualified teachers hope to be in permanent teaching jobs, and only 15% expect to be in supply teaching. This group were the most likely of all the groups to plan to stay in teaching; many expressed frustration that they had been unable to obtain a permanent job so far. Almost all those who responded expected to be in teaching in one years' time. Of those who indicated what they hoped to be doing in five years time, around 80% hoped to be teaching, with a quarter of these indicating that they hoped to have moved into a leadership role.

A number of focus group members fitted this group. One had started work in child-care and as a nanny, had progressed to being a learning support worker in a primary school for six years, had been encouraged by her school to do teacher training as a mature student; she was the first member of her family to go to university. She had

graduated with large debts, and found that no primary jobs were available. At the time we spoke with her she had had a two-term placement, and was very anxious to do a further term so that she could pass induction. She was extremely determined to continue in teaching after the long struggle she had had to become a teacher.

> *I went to uni and then qualified which was great and then I couldn't get a job, which was very, very depressing last year. I ended up ringing my old school in London and said 'Can I have my old job back just for a term until I find something?' The thing is you know, just go and get a job in Tescos, and I just said, no sorry I haven't just done three years at uni to then just get a job in Tescos. And so I couldn't find a job last September and so I got that one back and then luckily in January I found a temporary contract for two terms, it was a new intake of reception. I knew I had found my niche, I loved the job. And then it came to July and I applied for six jobs and I didn't get any of them, which really took me down again, because I thought, what is wrong with me? Why haven't I got these jobs?* (Primary supply teacher)

The overseas-trained teachers generally see supply teaching as a way of making money while they travel; it is not what they most want to be doing, but is the best option at the moment. Many of them hope to be in permanent teaching in one year's time, though in some cases in another country; just 29% of them anticipate still being in supply teaching. In five years' time very few anticipate being in supply teaching, though two-thirds of those who responded expect to be teaching somewhere.

Of those who combine supply teaching with another occupation, 29% indicated that their ideal employment would be a part-time or job-share teaching post. But a quarter are contented to be supply teaching, because any regular work would make too many demands on their time:

> *All the time that my children have been at primary school I wanted to be at home for them so I've been doing supply work. Now they're becoming a little bit more independent but I still want to be at home in the evening to help them with homework and get them their tea and so on. And I just feel that as a teacher with all the planning and all the extra work that's required I think it would be too much to take on, certainly to do a full time job and even to do a part time.*

Twelve percent of this group said their ideal work would be in employment outside teaching; this generally referred to the occupation that they combined with supply teaching. A very wide range of specific occupations were mentioned: in the arts (e.g. theatre director, singing); in personal care (e.g. podiatrist, holistic therapist, nail technician); in education (e.g. higher education, TESL, teacher training, musical education projects); and a number of self-employment / small business initiatives. One wrote:

> *Doing what I am good at, what I am in control of, and where I have the choice who to work with and how I am doing it – i.e. managing my own business.*

The majority of this group who responded in relation to future expectations anticipate that they will still be in supply teaching in a year's time, though some hope to have moved into part-time teaching posts. In five year's time more than half those that responded anticipate that they will be in supply teaching or a part-time post. However, the non-response and multiple response rates for this group were particularly high, suggesting a greater than average degree of uncertainty.

The 'other aged 20-49' group are in many ways similar to the group who combine with another occupation. A substantial number anticipate remaining in supply

teaching, but in comparison with the previous group, a higher proportion hope that they will be in a full-time teaching post both in one year and five years' time.

The older teachers, both 'retired / retiring' and 'other aged 50 and over' were the groups most contented to be supply teachers, though again, some saw part-time work as their ideal at this point in time. Many of the retired / retiring group anticipate remaining in supply teaching for another year, but in five years' time more than half of those who responded expect to have retired.

The 'other, aged 50 and over' group is particularly distinctive in the number who intend to stay in daily-paid supply teaching: 80% of those who responded predicted that this is what they would be doing this in both one and five years' time. As we pointed out above, in this group many teachers positively enjoyed supply teaching, rather than simply finding that it fitted in with their life-style.

7.6 Factors that would encourage supply teachers to join or return to the permanent sector

The questionnaire asked directly, 'If you are not intending to move into a permanent teaching post in the future, is there anything that might persuade you to do so?' Supply teachers were offered a list of factors to rate as 'a major incentive', 'a minor incentive' or 'not an incentive' (Table 7.13); 785 respondents completed this section. This seems low, given that only around a quarter of the sample in total indicated that they might return to the permanent sector. However, it appears that many of those who were already retired or about to retire ignored the question. The total number used to calculate the percentages was the highest number of that group that responded to any part of this question.

Table 7.13: If you are not intending to move into a permanent teaching post in the future, is there anything that might persuade you to do so? Percentage identifying each factor as a major incentive

	primary %	secondary %	all %
a reduction in workload	70	60	69
better behaviour management in schools	43	74	61
greater availability of part-time / job-share posts	46	30	40
an increase in pay	30	36	35
increased autonomy for teachers	28	25	29
better child-care facilities	9	4	7
a return to teaching course	5	6	6
N	*402*	*363*	*785*

A reduction in workload was the most frequently selected factor overall. Supply teachers in focus groups referred to '*too much paperwork'*, and said there were

> *… too many demands. You can't have a normal life when you're having to give up your weekends as well as your weekdays working.*

Among secondary teachers the most frequently selected factor was better behaviour management in schools. Workload and behaviour management were the most frequently selected factors across all the supply teacher career groups, though behaviour management was seen as most important by the recently qualified teachers

and the overseas-trained teachers, and workload by the recently qualified teachers and the 'other aged 20-49' group. Pay was also important for recently qualified teachers, selected by 70%. However, it should be remembered that a majority of the recently qualified teachers are in any case hoping to get permanent jobs, so their responses are of limited interest.

Among those in groups where the majority intend to stay in supply teaching, workload and behaviour were also seen as important. However, availability of part-time and job-share posts was identified as a major incentive by 59% of the 'combined with another occupation group', and by almost half of the two 'other' groups. This was selected by more a higher percentage of the primary supply teachers (46%, secondary 30%). Presumably this was seen as one way of reducing workload. There was very little support for return to teaching courses or better child-care facilities as incentives to return to or move into permanent teaching.

The two older groups, 'retired and retiring' and 'other over 50' generally gave lower ratings or did not respond; they are not likely to be encouraged back into permanent teaching.

Other comments reiterated a number of the points above, but also included a number of negative reflections on the curriculum, paperwork, Ofsted and so on, for example:

> *Being able to teach biology as a subject, I don't like the science that is done now.*
>
> *A full-time Art position (rather than having to teach a mix of creative subjects).*
>
> *Abolition of Ofsted (Yes, I am making a serious point).*

Some teachers commented about the difficulty of getting a permanent post, and noted that they felt disadvantaged by their age.

> *After 14 years of not getting a permanent contract I am very disillusioned about teaching as a career.*

A number wrote comments to the effect that no inducement would persuade them to return:

> *Having moved out, why would I move back? On supply I make the decisions.*
>
> *Nothing on God's earth and could induce me!!*
>
> *I love being a daily supply teacher. I can work largely autonomously I am in control of my life. Work politics involving personalities are never a factor in my day. I experience little stress.*

Those teaching secondary shortage subjects were no more likely than other groups to anticipate moving into permanent posts.

7.7 Summary: Career patterns, motivations and aspirations

Career patterns

The supply teachers in the sample have had quite varied careers, often including periods of fixed-term and part-time teaching, and employment outside teaching. On average they have been in permanent full-time teaching posts for less than half their years of employment. We have divided the sample into 'career groups', based on previous literature about supply teachers' careers. A third of the sample were retired or approaching retirement; a quarter combine supply teaching with another occupation; 8% were recently qualified (since 2000) and had not worked in a

permanent teaching post for more than 6 months; and 8% of the sample were overseas trained teachers. The remaining quarter of the sample did not fall into any of these categories, and were divided into two career groups based on age. These groups are used in the analysis throughout this chapter.

Motivations for supply teaching

This section examined the motivations for supply teaching of the teachers in the various career groups. These fitted closely with the career groups they were in. The majority of the recently qualified teachers, and some of the overseas-trained teachers, were motivated by inability to get a full-time teaching post. The overseas-trained group emphasised the opportunity to travel and gain experience. Those combining with another occupation most often said they were supply teaching because it fits with childcare and family commitments, but some indicated that they were trying to develop other careers. The majority of the retired and retiring were supply teaching to supplement their pensions. All groups indicated that the lower workload was an important supplementary reason; this was more important as a main reason for the 'other' groups. The 'other aged 50 and over' group were the most likely to identify positive aspects of supply teaching that they particularly enjoyed: variety, flexibility, a focus on teaching and learning, less stress.

Job satisfaction

Overall, supply teachers indicated a high level of satisfaction with their work. More than three-quarters indicated that they were very or fairly satisfied with the schools and classes they were placed in; their workload, hours of work and conditions of employment, the degree of choice they had about when they worked and the amount of work they were offered. The lowest levels of satisfaction were with opportunities to develop relationships with other teachers, and pupil behaviour. Of the career groups, the overseas-trained teachers and the recently qualified teachers were the least satisfied, while the retired and retiring were the most satisfied. Overall satisfaction increased with age. Women indicated higher levels of satisfaction than men, and primary supply teachers than secondary (especially in the 30-59 age group); the latter was the case even when we control for gender. Supply teachers had some concerns about the status accorded to them by pupils and teachers in some schools, especially when on short-term placements.

Ideal employment and the future

The recently qualified and younger supply teachers see their ideal employment and their expected future occupation as permanent full-time teaching. The overseas-trained teachers also generally expect to move out of supply teaching into permanent teaching, though often not in this country. Those who combine supply teaching with other occupations see their ideal as part-time teaching jobs or supply teaching, but generally anticipate that they will be doing the latter; this group were the most uncertain about their future employment. The retired and retiring teachers expect to continue in supply teaching until they retire.

Factors that would encourage supply teachers to join/return to the permanent sector

Fourteen percent of supply teachers would prefer to be in permanent full-time teaching posts, and 17% in part-time permanent posts. For the remainder (excluding those who are retired), the main factors that might encourage them to join or return to the permanent sector were a reduction in workload (70%, 60% secondary) and better

behaviour management in schools (43% primary, 74% secondary). Greater availability of part-time or job-share posts was seen as a major incentive by those who combine supply teaching with another occupation, and by a higher proportion of primary teachers (46%) than secondary (30%). Those teaching secondary shortage subjects were no more likely than other groups to anticipate moving into permanent posts.

8 Recruitment of supply teachers

8.1 Introduction

This chapter focuses on the initial recruitment of supply teachers by agencies, local authorities and schools. The first section reviews data from the supply teacher questionnaire about how the teachers first got into supply teaching. The second section draws on the LEA survey and on interviews with staff in local authorities and private supply agencies about how they recruit supply teachers. It also reviews how they attract schools, an equally necessary aspect of their business. The final section investigates how some schools attract supply teachers who work directly for them.

8.2 How teachers entered supply teaching

The supply teacher questionnaire asked teachers to indicate, from a list of options, how they first got into supply teaching (Table 8.1). Many respondents made multiple responses, indicating, for example, that they had applied to an agency but had also obtained work directly from schools through word of mouth. The main ways that supply teachers said they had been recruited were by approaching a private agency or LEA directly (45%), through personal contact (29%), and by resigning from a permanent job and continuing to work in the same authority (or more often, the same school) as a supply teacher (29%).

Table 8.1: Supply teachers responses to 'How did you first get into supply teaching?' by main way of working

	%
approached an agency / LEA directly	45
answered an advert placed by an agency / LEA supply service	10
resigned from permanent job in same LEA and moved to supply	29
applied for post I did not get and was offered supply	2
at an HE recruitment fair	1
through personal contact / word of mouth	29
other* of which	17
contacted schools directly	4
retired and did supply in same school	4
worked part-time, do supply in same school	1
did teaching practice in the school	1
approached by a school	1
N	*1554*

Multiple responses were made; thus figures do not add up to 100%

* Entries under 'other' apart from those listed were reasons for doing supply rather than how they entered supply teaching.

The majority of those who worked through agencies said that they had approached the agency directly (68%) or had been attracted by an advertisement (23%). A few gave additional details of why they had approached that particular agency, indicating, for example, that when they were working full-time they had used that agency to find teachers, or the school that they had approached to find work used that agency. Others

had had recommendations from other teachers. Some of those in the focus groups indicated that in their area, one or two agencies dominated the market, so they had little choice of agency. A few said they had contacted the local authority, who had recommended that agency as one that worked in local schools. Overseas-trained teachers indicated that this was the agency that had done a presentation in their university, or that had an office in their town. Others had used an agency that their friends worked for.

Those working mainly through local authority supply services had generally approached them directly (66%), or had retired from a school in the LEA (24%).

For those working mainly through schools, the main channels were resigning from permanent work in the same authority or school (39%) and through personal contact or word of mouth (37%). The categories offered on the questionnaire were not well designed for this group, but many wrote in additional details, indicating, for example, that they had been approached by (or had themselves approached) the headteacher of a school where they were a parent or volunteer, or had done a teaching practice. Some 6% of those who mainly worked directly for schools wrote that they had approached a number of schools directly, either sending a CV, or 'cold-calling'. It would have been useful to have included this as a category on the questionnaire to gain a fuller view of the frequency of this practice.

> *I visited the 12 closest schools to my house with a stack of CVs and asked to see the headteachers.*
>
> *Wrote letters to eight local schools. All my work came from this not LEA list.*
>
> *I resigned from a permanent job and sent my details to 70 schools in three LEAs (including LEA where I had my permanent job).*

The next section reviews the perspectives of the various providers.

8.3 The perspectives of private agencies and LEAs

Attracting teachers

All the private supply agencies and local authority supply services said that they used a range of strategies to attract teachers. Private supply agencies advertise for teachers both in the national and local press, and on the internet. Most agencies talked about advertising:

> *Well we advertise obviously and we advertise in the local press. … it is a huge investment. … Advertise, advertise, advertise. The bigger the company the bigger the furnace that needs feeding and so for every branch office … we will advertise locally, in addition to that, advertising in the usual suspects*. (National agency)

Local authority supply services also advertised, but did not consider this their main way of attracting supply teachers.

> *We've got a joint advert out at the moment which runs for a year in train stations and outside hospitals and that's got* [named agency] *and* [named local authority] *on and it's specifically aimed at supply teachers so and then we're going to run an ad. in local papers once a term. We can't do masses because really our main aim, for me anyway, is to recruit permanent teachers but I didn't want to ignore the supply side of things either*. (Local authority working in partnership with private agency)

Agencies managers also talked about recruiting through universities and attending HE recruitment fairs:

> *We do university visits where we are allowed to, because the universities aren't that keen obviously … We will go to recruitment fairs but I have to say not many of those now. We tend to find we get a lot of names but not much follow up.* (National agency)

For local authority supply services, there are opportunities to link with other aspects of the local authority:

> *We get a lot of people come through to us on recommendation from other people that are registered or from schools or from other parts of the LEA to be honest, the HR officers and that kind of thing but equally we advertise every weekend in the Job Shop, with the city council teachers vacancy list … so a lot of people will see information from there and although for us it's free or very, very cheap advertising, we get most of our people through there.* (Local authority supply service)

> *We attract through the LEAs obviously as partners, we contact all their leaving teachers and offer them the chance to join so we don't lose anyone out of the school workforce who is just discontented and wants a change. We would rather they come to us than go to an agency obviously.* (Supply agency run jointly by local authorities)

A number of agencies talked about overseas recruitment. This is still being done; several agencies have offices in different Commonwealth countries, or make recruitment tours. However, interviewees suggested that the volume is decreasing, partly as a result of changes to visa and work permit regulations:

> *I can see the reliance of overseas teachers certainly decreasing … there are also lots of changes to immigration rules and to clearance procedures and so on, that actually have an impact on the volume that can come into the country and work. They've just changed the whole working holidaymaker scheme rules in February which limits once again, you know, the person on a working holidaymaker visa.* (National agency)

It was suggested that the main current efforts in overseas recruitment are to recruit for specific shortage subjects and longer-term work, and to recruit more experienced and skilled teachers:

> *The interesting trend I think with overseas-trained teachers is the fact that the highly skilled migrant programme which is an issue with work permits UK will increase and we've already noted the effects of that in the recruitment of a much more highly skilled, highly experienced group of teachers as opposed to the 20/30 year old.* (National agency)

Some private supply agencies said that they did not themselves undertake overseas recruitment because it is expensive, and involves more work in relation to visas and work permits, but that they do take on a lot of overseas-trained teachers brought into the country by other agencies.

> *We do not bring large scale numbers into the UK. We've not over-reliant, and that's for a good reason. It is a more difficult recruitment process, certainly more costly from our point of view but in addition as well it's, you have also got the knowledge and experience gap between the product that you're providing and the requirement and you need to think, right, OK, well how do you fill that gap. … However, we do get a lot of overseas teachers who have been brought in by other agencies, coming in and registering with us after a period of time.* (National agency)

There was also a concern that the government has changed (and may change again) regulations relating to working holiday visas and work permits, and that it would be risky to rely too much on overseas-trained teachers:

> *The thinking is that we don't want to be reliant on a flow of candidates that could, at a whim of government or whatever else be turned off.* (National agency)

All the local authority and private supply agency interviewees stressed that the majority of their supply teachers came to them through personal recommendation:

> *With I would say about 70% personal recommendation, it is much more making sure the teachers we have got now like us and they are happy and spread the word.* (National agency)

> *Word of mouth and meeting other teachers who'd started, then heads recommending us and heads moving from one school to another and them telling their people, local authority actually recommending us over the telephone when people enquired and giving us access to their bulletin board.* (Local agency)

> *We do realise that our best sales people in the company are the teachers, so we rely heavily upon good press from them and we did an analysis of where we're getting our teachers from and how we get them and 70% of teachers were by referral.* (Local agency)

Some agencies emphasised the importance of developing a personal relationship right from the start:

> *Recruitment is about relationships. It's about confidence, you know, your customer must have confidence that you can deal with his supply. Your candidate must have confidence that you can find him work, or her work, you know, and that very much comes down to that personal relationship.* (National agency)

Selection and checks

Private supply agencies generally emphasise the rigour of their recruitment and selection strategies; the description below clearly represents good practice in this respect, and was typical of many private supply agencies:

> *Each of our consultants is fully trained so they have an induction course which they go onto straight away, which involves education scenarios, and it's looking into the type of questions that a head teacher or a teacher may ask somebody if they're looking to recruit a teacher to their role. … The interview is about an hour so we have a series of questions that we ask the individual. How they would relate to certain situations within a school. We also go through their CV and the work history so we question them in detail about previous experiences, how they want to use those experiences and the skills they've gained in order to move into the next role. We find out everything about them so even little things like which geographical areas do they want to work in. … At the end of that hour, we obviously brief them on our expectations of them and then as soon as the CRB and references are back we're in a position to actually place them then.* (Private agency in local authority partnership)

However, a minority of smaller agencies do not interview face to face:

> *We used to. But the money wasted on that, seeing people who never worked and then trying to get people to actually come in for interview as well. … We felt a better way forward on it was to be as rigorous as possible with the applications, references and obtain all the other information and where needs be, a telephone interview and that worked. That may not be considered good practice in some quarters but I think it is a case of when you know your locality, know your beast, people in* [named county] *don't like travelling. … I have to say it has worked for us; we haven't had any major disasters. Anywhere you go you are bound to get the odd teacher who has come into a bit of difficulty but no real catastrophes.* (Local agency)

Other agencies insisted on the importance of actually meeting the teachers that they would be placing in schools:

> *My ethos is that you should have a human contact. You are sending people to work with children. If they have a strange manner, if they have a particular way that you think would not be suitable for a reception child, you know I would have an conscience about placing someone in a school that could be totally inappropriate in a role which is totally unobserved and to me that is very important. To me, how these electronic systems can justify this not having interviewed or checked them is something I have concerns over.* (Local agency)

As Chapter 4 explained, while some local authority supply services have been recently set up as agencies or partnerships with agencies, a few have remained essentially the same over the last fifteen years or more. An interviewee in one such local authority supply service explained that they had gradually developed their selection processes:

> *I think we are much more selective about how we recruit supply teachers than in the past I think. … I don't think we used to interview them at all. The very large majority of supply teachers, certainly as far as* [local authority name] *were concerned were people who had taken early retirement … they almost automatically came onto the list. So that is more selective now.* (Local authority supply service)

Attracting and retaining schools

As well as recruiting teachers, any agency or supply service has to attract schools. In interview, we asked which was the bigger issue at that time, attracting teachers or attracting schools:

> *It does vary in parts of the country and I think it's a double-edged sword, we've just got to do both, it's as simple as that. For us to continue to maintain our market share and to stay ahead of competition, from a commercial perspective we have got to ensure we continue to increase client base. In order to maintain our client base as we go we've got to have a flow of candidates to put out there. So we do have to do both.* (National agency)

However, the balance between attracting schools and attracting teachers varied in different parts of the country:

> *For example in the North West we are not putting much effort into recruiting primary teachers whereas in London there is a shortage of primary teachers. That's the most clear cut example but you know there is variation across that theme. I suspect the nearer to London, the more acute the shortage.* (National agency)

A variety of strategies are used to attract schools, of which cold-calling was generally described as the most important:

> [Int: So in terms of attracting and retaining schools, what strategies do you use for that?] *Telephone calls.* [Int: Cold calling?] *Yeah, in essence. We obviously try to warm it up as much as we can, with something to talk about, not just, have you got any needs at the moment. Generally speaking we'll use somebody we think that they might be able to benefit from, if we've got one. A lot of the time we want to introduce them to* [this agency's full range of services for schools]. … *We try to attract their attention with some mailshots and that side of things. But nothing beats really the recommendation from other schools. Getting together with networks of heads and that sort of stuff and getting introductions that way and so on. So we do everything we possibly can to try to increase our client base.* (National agency)

However, just as word of mouth was important in attracting teachers, so it was in attracting schools: indeed, a local supply agency told us that '*all schools are by referral, we don't have any cold calling*'. All the agencies emphasised the importance of understanding schools' needs and of personal contact in retaining schools:

> *The number one thing to keep schools on board is the quality of the teacher that you provide … it is the quality of the teacher and the quality of the service delivery number one. Price is not a big issue in secondary, it is always a bigger issue in primary … Because secondary I think are more driven by subject specific demands and the quality of teachers to deliver that subject. And primary there is greater flexibility of a primary teacher to move across the year groups so they tend to be, 'we know we can get a supply teacher from somewhere and so what is the price going to be?' Secondary is more about, 'have you got somebody who can actually do this job?' rather than somebody who can just come in and cover.* (National agency)

8.4 Direct recruitment of supply teachers by schools

We have shown in previous chapters that the majority of schools prefer to have their own lists of supply teachers, and that more than half of the supply teachers work directly for schools. The questionnaire asked schools how they had recruited such teachers. More than two-thirds of schools in the sample responded, indicating that some of their supply teachers were in this group (Table 8.2).

More than half the primary, secondary and special schools responding had recruited former or retired teachers:

> [Int: What are the advantages of having supply teachers who have retired from the school?] *Because they are known to the children, … because their discipline is good. So we don't have problems with the behaviour of the children.* (North East primary)

Similarly, a fifth of the primary and nursery schools that responded said that they used parents of pupils or ex-pupils, and a fifth that they had used word of mouth or recommendation. One nursery head explained in interview that if her regular supply teachers were unavailable, she would ring round nearby nursery schools, rather than approaching an agency or the LEA. When teachers have previously taught in the school, or have personal links, there are generally no formal selection procedures.

Table 8.2: Groups of supply teachers recruited directly by schools, by school sectors

	Nursery	Primary	Secondary	Special
	%	%	%	%
Categories listed in the question				
Retired members of staff	28	56	74	53
Former members of staff	37	60	68	57
Parents of pupils or ex-pupils	19	20	6	2
Teachers who answered an advertisement placed by the school	2	9	13	10
Additional comments made by respondents				
Word of mouth, recommendation, known personally	37	19	11	22
Part-time members of staff	14	7	8	12
Ex-teaching practice students	3	3	1	0
Teachers who apply directly to school	4	9	13	8
N	*36*	*407*	*417*	*87*

Some supply teachers send their CVs to schools, or call on them. The qualitative data suggests that this happens more frequently than indicated here: it would have been helpful to have this as a category in the question. In such cases, the selection procedure may be informal:

> *I had a very good girl that I used this year actually, who had sent her CV to us and I asked her to come in and she came in with her portfolio and it was a very informal interview. I just asked if she would come down and speak to me and after I had spoken to her it was obvious that she would fit in the school and we did use her for a while.* (North East Primary)

A tenth of the schools responding had advertised for supply teachers. On the questionnaire, a nursery school headteacher indicated that the school has clear strategies to recruit and train supply teachers to meet the specific needs of the school:

> *We train our own supply teachers. We advertise, offering ongoing professional development including all in-service training.*

This response indicates that the school aims to use the same supply teachers on a regular basis. One of the special schools described a complex process to find supply teachers who were able to cope with the needs of their pupils and who would have an ongoing commitment to the school:

> *The way we do our selection is we have open days, and then if people are interested we ask them to do four days voluntary work across the school so that we find out if they are actually up to it here and what they are like as part of a team, you know if they are too withdrawn or they are just off the wall or they are actually quite good. And they get a chance to find out what they are actually jumping into because if you haven't worked in special schools you don't know what is going to happen. And so that is our sort of selection criteria with people. We say they have got to be able to work as a team, you know it is no good being a shrinking wall violet and we can't have people coming in who expect the assistants to do it all. And so I will say to them that I am going to get feedback from people you have been in the classroom with about how you are, and it also gives them the opportunity to see whether that is what they really want to do.* (London special school)

While schools described how they selected the teacher, it was less clear from the data how they ensured that CRB checks had been done, though this was not something we asked about directly. In that many schools recruited ex-members of staff or other known teachers, they generally seemed to assume that checks must have previously been carried out. When we asked local authorities about this, one interviewee explained that no-one could be paid through the local authority payroll unless they had an up-to-date CRB check; however, where payrolls are outsourced, this may not be the case. And where teachers have breaks in service of three months or more and should therefore have a new CRB check, we were not able to find out whether payrolls would pick this up.

Some schools find it a lot easier to recruit directly than others. More of the higher-achieving primary and secondary schools had recruited from retired and former staff. But some challenging schools commented that it would not be possible for them to build up their own lists of supply teachers in this way:

> [Int: You know some schools have former members of staff who are always willing to come in?] *Most of the people here don't want to come back* (London secondary school, mixed)

The location of the school is a key factor in its ability to build up a list of regular supply teachers. Of supply teachers in inner cities, only 25% work directly for schools, while in urban areas 45% do so, and in suburban areas 59% and in rural areas, 71%. In Inner London, only 12% of the supply teachers work directly for schools, but in the South West and the East of England, 75% do so. This is further discussed in the next chapter.

8. 5 Summary: The recruitment of supply teachers

How teachers entered supply teaching

Most supply teachers had approached an agency, LEA or school directly to obtain supply work. Their choice of which organisation(s) to approach were often constrained by their knowledge of which organisations supplied local schools. Those working through agencies had in some cases responded to advertisements. Many of those working through local authorities or directly for schools had retired from permanent work and continued in the same school (or a small number of local schools) as a supply teacher.

The perspectives of private agencies and local authorities

Both private supply agencies and local authorities recognised that word of mouth was probably the most important way in which they attracted supply teachers, and that providing a good service to those teachers already registered is crucial to increasing numbers. Local authorities undertook some advertising to ensure that prospective supply teachers were aware of their existence. Agencies stressed that in a competitive market is important to attract both teachers and schools; advertising is used to attract supply teachers, and cold-calling to increase business among schools. The larger companies indicated that making schools aware of the whole range of services they could offer was an important aspect of this strategy.

Direct recruitment of supply teachers by schools

More than two-thirds of the schools in the sample had recruited supply teachers directly, including former members of staff (in 63% of schools), and parents (in 20% of nursery and primary schools). Word of mouth and recommendation had been used by a fifth of the schools, and a tenth had advertised for supply teachers. These strategies indicate the importance that schools accord to building up a group of supply teachers who can be used in the school on a regular basis. However, this is much more feasible for rural and suburban schools, and for those outside London.

9 Deployment to schools

9.1 Introduction

This chapter deals with the deployment of supply teachers to schools. It describes the ways in which schools obtain supply teachers on a daily basis. It starts by considering who takes responsibility for cover within schools, and how this is changing. Schools' strategies to obtain supply teachers are then discussed: these include directly contacting known supply teachers, and the use of agencies and supply services. We consider the pattern of strategies used by different types of schools. Schools' perceptions of the effectiveness of these methods are considered, including their evaluation of agencies and of supply services, and of supply teachers.

9.2 Management of cover within schools

Who in schools is responsible for cover?

In the questionnaire, schools were asked to indicate the post held by the person with overall responsibility for cover, and the person making the practical arrangements for booking supply teachers (Tables 9.1 and 9.2).

Table 9.1: Responses to 'What post is held by the person who has overall responsibility for cover?'

	Nursery	Primary	Secondary	Special
	%	%	%	%
Headteacher	94	65	2	14
Deputy head, assistant head etc.	6	24	63	71
Other teachers	0	1	6	3
Admin. staff (secretary, office manager, Head's PA etc.)	0	9	10	7
Cover manager, or Examination and cover officer	0	0	7	0
School business manager	0	0.2	4	2
Bursar/finance manager	0	3	2	2
Other	0	1	6	2
N	*50*	*588*	*550*	*119*

Table 9.1 shows that in almost all nursery schools, and more than 60% of primary schools, headteachers had overall responsibility for cover. In the majority of secondary and special schools deputy heads or assistant heads had overall responsibility. One deputy head explained that she now spent less time on cover but retained overall responsibility:

> *Well I think because I have managed it* [cover] *for the last six years,* [I spend] *progressively less time because I have got more effective at training other people and more effective at delegating the budget for cover to a bursar. And so now I just have an overview of what goes on. Somebody has to be in charge of it in terms of when you do an analysis of the figures of how much cover has cost you, how much staff sickness and absence there has been and how much training there has been, are we using the most cost effective supply agency, what rates are they charging as an introduction fee if we*

buy somebody out of the agency, all those sorts of things. And so it is incredibly important and affects the school budget massively. (London secondary girls)

But, while headteachers and deputy heads most often carry this responsibility, in almost a quarter of secondary schools and just over 10% of primary and special schools, the responsibility lies with support staff.

Table 9.2: Responses to 'What post is held by the person who makes the practical arrangements for booking supply teachers?'

	Nursery	Primary	Secondary	Special
	%	%	%	%
Headteacher	40	21	1	3
Deputy Head	4	15	32	52
Administrative staff	50	57	35	32
Other teachers	2	1	4	3
Cover manager or Examination/cover officer	0	0	12	0
Bursar/finance manager	2	5	4	6
School business manager	2	0.2	3	2
Other including: CPD coordinator, school manager, personnel officer, curriculum manager, SIMS/Timetable manager, librarian, classroom assistant, learning mentor	0	1	10	4
N	*52*	*583*	*541*	*118*

A third of primary and secondary headteachers / deputy heads and 55% of special school headteachers / deputy heads also made the practical arrangements for booking supply teachers (Table 9.2), but this was more often done by administrative staff. The posts held by the administrative or support staff involved with supply cover were very varied, and included office managers, school business managers, cover managers, timetable managers, librarians, ICT technicians and teaching assistants. The use of administrative or other support staff to manage or arrange cover seemed to be an increasing trend: in the school case studies we found that support staff with responsibility for cover had generally taken this role on comparatively recently.

My title is teaching resource assistant. Since September I've taken on the role of doing cover, and then the rest of my time is doing resources for the teachers, preparing photocopies etc. (West Midlands secondary)

In some schools it was clear that taking on this responsibility was one of the ways in which the skills and careers of support staff were being developed:

I've been doing that for about three years. I originally came here as an IT technician working 12 hours a week which then snowballed and I eventually became the network manager. … I got interested in doing the data as well as the network manager, … and I moved over to become data manager, and with the cover moving more on to non-teaching staff, Dave organises the actual cover, Janet does most of the calling, phoning for, but we work as a team, we work next to each other, supply agencies will ring either of us and either of us will ring. (South West secondary)

In interviewing the various people involved in managing supply cover, and in reading their questionnaire returns, it was clear that some of the support staff in secondary schools saw making the daily arrangements for cover very much as a data exercise. In

contrast, the deputy heads who had the role saw it as an exercise in ensuring the most appropriate teacher was in each class to promote teaching and learning.

The use of support staff to manage supply cover also raised issues about who had responsibility for the supply teachers once they were working in school. In one challenging secondary school, we were told that a high proportion of supply teachers had told the agency that they did not want to work in that school again. The business manager had worked hard to make the school welcoming, producing an information pack for supply teachers, and meeting and greeting each new teacher when they first arrived. But she was aware that there was considerable variation among the heads of department in the way they managed and supported supply teachers, and this was reflected in the number of supply teachers who did not want to return to certain departments. But as business manager, it was not her role to manage heads of department.

School staff in secondary schools spent a significantly longer time organising supply cover during an average week than did staff in other types of schools (Table 9.3). In the case studies it was clear that this was because the organisation of internal cover in secondary schools is such a large task.

Table 9.3: Estimate the total number of hours spent by school staff arranging supply teacher cover in an average week

	Mean hours	Median	N
Nursery	0.79	0.5	35
Primary	1.22	1	500
Secondary	6.22	5	479
Special	1.88	1	100

Weighted data. Significance (T-test): secondary spend more time than non-secondary, p = .000

Where absences are planned (for professional development, jury service etc.) the vast majority of schools book supply teachers, and said they do so on average ten days before the absence. In cases of sickness absence, two-thirds of primary schools and nurseries aim to get a supply teacher on the first day of the absence, but secondary schools said they more often wait until the third or fourth day, and rely on internal cover in the first instance. Nevertheless, in all the secondary schools we visited, staff described the regular morning task of going through the cover schedule that had already been drawn up, rearranging it in the light of new absences, and contacting supply teachers and agencies before 8 a.m:

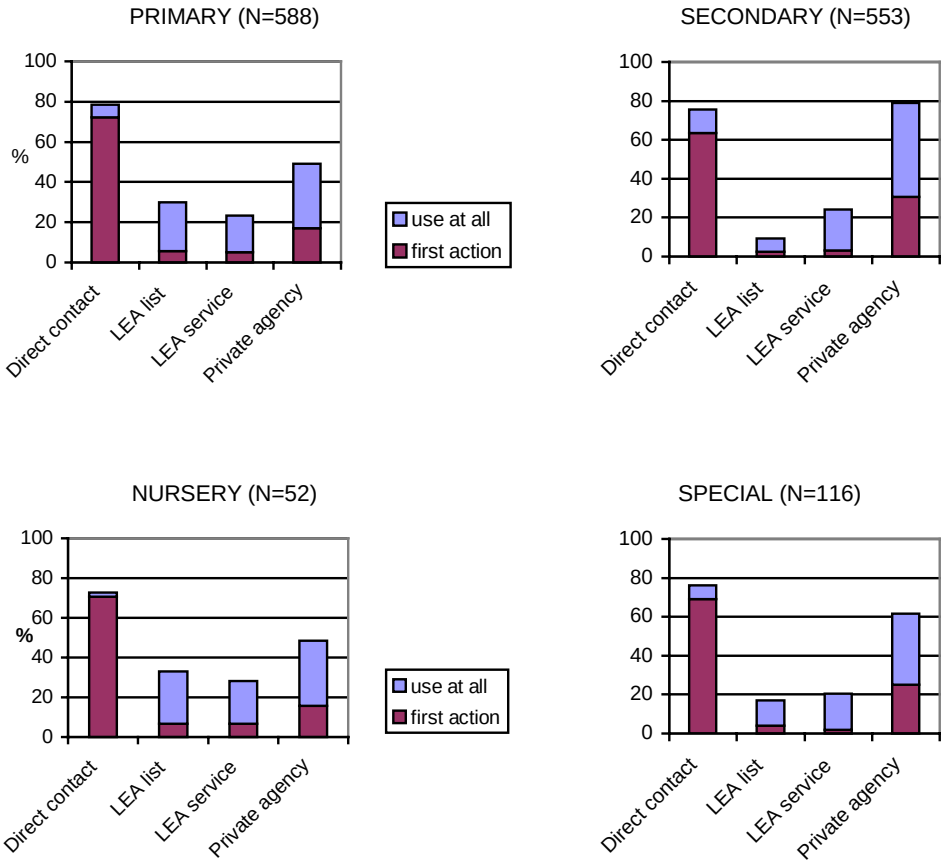
> *Because we now have an effective support staff that does the data inputting I would think they spend about half an hour in the morning and about half an hour in the evening before they go home just checking that everything is set up for the day. When the data in-putter is absent you have to be here by about 7.15 in the morning and so you would be spending about an hour and a quarter in the morning doing it and then at least another hour in the evening doing it.* (London secondary girls)

Managing cover is not a popular responsibility, and in some schools only one person has the knowledge, so they cannot be absent. One business manager explained that even when she has to attend an INSET day in a different town, she first has to come to school and spend an hour from 7.00-8.00 a.m. arranging cover because no other member of staff understands the system.

9.3 How school obtain supply teachers

Chapter 4 explained that the first strategy to obtain a supply teacher for the majority of schools is to contact supply teachers that they know; this was used by 72% of primary and 64% of secondary schools. More secondary than primary schools start by contacting a private supply teacher agency (17% of primary and 31% of secondary schools). Local authority supply services or teachers on the local authority supply list are the first strategy for just 11% of primary and 6% of secondary schools. Clearly these figures partly reflect the availability of any local authority supply service; the percentage of schools using them in the 55% of local authorities that provide such services would be higher. We also asked schools about the strategies that they use if their first attempt is unsuccessful. Figure 9.1 shows the first action and other strategies used.

Figure 9.1: How schools obtain supply teachers by school sector



Because of the range of combinations of strategies used by some schools, in subsequent analysis we have grouped various ways of obtaining a supply teacher. Schools contacting only an agency/LEA service are grouped together (in that they ask someone else to locate a teacher) and schools using only direct contact or the LEA list are grouped together (in that they then contact teachers directly). The third group contains schools which combine these methods, as shown in Table 9.4.

Table 9.4: Grouped actions taken when a supply teacher is required by school sector

		Agency or LEA service **only**	Direct contact **and/or** LEA list	Two or three of LEA service, direct contact and private agency	*N*
Nursery	%	9	43	48	*52*
Primary	%	10	32	59	*588*
Secondary	%	14	12	74	*553*
Special	%	17	36	47	*116*

Weighted data

A key factor in deciding how to obtain a supply teacher for most schools is the preference for a familiar teacher. The questionnaire offered three statements about use of familiar supply teachers and asked schools to select the one that best represents the situation in their school (Table 9.5).

Table 9.5: Familiarity of supply teachers used: which statement best represents the situation in your school? Responses by school sector

	nursery	primary	secondary	special
	%	%	%	%
We generally use the same supply teacher(s) who are familiar with the school and its pupils	71	65	42	70
We use some regular and familiar supply teachers, but also some unfamiliar ones	27	33	57	29
The majority of our supply teachers are unfamiliar with the school	2	2	1	1
N	*53*	*591*	*549*	*119*

Weighted data

Over two-thirds of nursery, primary and special schools generally use familiar supply teachers, but only 42% of secondary schools do so. This presumably relates partly to the subject demands of secondary schools of secondary schools; it would be difficult to build a list of reliable local teachers to cover every subject. Interviewees made it clear that there is a balance to be struck between subject expertise and familiarity with the school and pupils:

> [Three local supply teachers] *are people who have built up a relationship over the years with the school so that I know they are tried and trusted and because they're a familiar face, when they come in they are familiar, whereas somebody from an agency it could be the first time they have come to the school and are very unfamiliar. That familiarity helps in terms of pupil management and the fact that they know the school system.* [Int: So those local ones, do you expect them to cover any subject?] *I know what their strengths are, whether they're a humanity or a maths or science. That would influence which one I called first, but if needs be I would call one of them in to do any subject.* (East secondary school)

The more challenging schools are less likely to use familiar supply teachers: Tables 9.6 and 9.7 show that the lower the free school meals eligibility, the greater the likelihood of using a familiar supply teacher.

Table 9.6: PRIMARY schools: Familiarity of supply teachers used: which statement best represents the situation in your school? Responses by free school meals status

Percentage of pupils eligible for free school meals		Uses only supply teachers who are familiar with the school	Uses some supply teachers who are not familiar with the school	*N*
0 –7.99	%	78	22	*230*
8 – 19.99	%	68	32	*164*
20 – 34.99	%	51	49	*109*
35 and over	%	33	68	*83*

Significance (chi-squared): p = .000

Table 9.7: SECONDARY schools: Familiarity of supply teachers used: which statement best represents the situation in your school? Responses by free school meals status

Percentage of pupils eligible for free school meals		Uses only supply teachers who are familiar with the school	Uses some supply teachers who are not familiar with the school	*N*
0 – 4.99	%	67	33	*90*
5 – 8.99	%	51	49	*108*
9 – 12.99	%	39	61	*93*
13 – 20.99	%	29	71	*106*
21 – 34.99	%	28	72	*87*
35 and over	%	32	68	*62*

Significance (chi-squared): p = .000

Schools were asked to estimate the number of different supply teachers that they had used in the last week, and in the last year. In primary schools this was moderately and significantly correlated with school size, and also with the level of free school meals (shown in Table 9.8). The relationship is less clear in secondary schools.

Table 9.8: PRIMARY schools: Number of different supply teachers used in the last year: Responses by free school meals status

Percentage of pupils eligible for free school meals	Number of different supply teachers worked in the school in the last year (2004)	*N*
0 – 7.99	9	*202*
8 – 19.99	11	*153*
20 –34.99	15	*101*
35 and over	21	*71*

Significance (Anova): p = .000

In an effort to obtain familiar supply teachers, many schools that use private supply agencies or local authority supply services ask for a specific teacher by name (Table 9.9). This is particularly common practice for nursery and special schools.

Table 9.9: If you use a private supply agency or LEA supply service, do you normally ask for a preferred teacher by name?

	yes %	*N*
Secondary	73	*434*
Primary	72	*396*
Nursery	88	*24*
Special	90	*78*

In the school case studies, interviewees explained:

> *We would rather have somebody that we know and who knows us.* (London infants)

> *It is very much a community school and our parents do know us and we do know our staff, and they do like to see their children in the hands of the same people.* (North East primary)

> *We are a boys' secondary modern school, they don't like change, they respond very badly to new teachers, even new established teachers, it takes a while to get your feet under the table, so even a good supply teacher is going to struggle to get a good quality lesson.* (South West secondary)

It is this preference for a familiar supply teacher that is the main reason why schools prefer to build up their own lists of local teachers, and to contact them directly.

A second advantage of a school using teachers from its own list is that they are likely to be able to get to the school quickly in an emergency; this is particularly the case for rural schools:

> *The most important thing is whether I have sufficient internal availability to cover a member of staff. If I don't I would then go to my first port of call, which is the local supply teachers that are available almost instantly, if they're available. Then I would go probably to the agencies first because they're quicker to respond than the county.* (East secondary school)

Direct contact

While direct contact is the first strategy across all school sectors, only a minority of schools (approximately one-third of primary and special schools and just over one-tenth of secondary schools) are able to meet all their cover needs from supply teachers they have contacted directly. Relying on direct contact is more frequent for primary and special schools outside London and in rural areas, and for small primary schools. For example, primary schools in urban areas outside London are four times more likely to use only direct contact than primary schools in London, and primary schools in rural areas are nine times as likely to use only direct contact as primary schools in London. Smaller urban primary schools are more likely to contact directly recruited supply teachers as their first action than are the larger urban schools.

Primary and secondary schools with high levels of free school meals are less likely to use directly contacted supply teachers, and more likely to use agencies (Table 9.10 and 9.11).

Table 9.10: What is the first action taken when a supply teacher is required? PRIMARY schools by percentage of pupils eligible for free school meals (N = 583)

Percentage of pupils eligible for free school meals (primary)		contact a private supply teacher agency	contact the LEA supply service	contact supply teachers on list provided by LEA	contact supply teachers recruited directly by the school
0 – 7.99	%	4	3	5	88
8 – 19.99	%	14	7	7	72
20 –34.99	%	35	5	6	55
35 and over	%	64	5	4	28

Significance (chi-squared), excluding LEA categories: p = .000. Cells highlighted are significantly different from independence (adjusted residual more than 3)

Table 9.11: What is the first action taken when a supply teacher is required? SECONDARY schools by percentage of pupils eligible for free school meals (N = 551)

Percentage of pupils eligible for free school meals (secondary)		contact a private supply teacher agency	contact the LEA supply service	contact supply teachers on list provided by LEA	contact supply teachers recruited directly by the school
0 – 4.99	%	10	4	2	84
5 – 8.99	%	13	2	5	81
9 – 12.99	%	24	5	4	66
13 – 20.99	%	43	4	2	51
21 – 34.99	%	51	2	2	44
35 and over	%	69	3	2	26

Significance (chi-squared), excluding LEA categories: p = .000. Cells highlighted are significantly different from independence (adjusted residual more than 3)

Similarly, those secondary schools with low pupil attainment are less likely to use directly recruited teachers (Table 9.12). As we argued earlier, the more challenging schools find it difficult to build up lists of their 'own' supply teachers because they are not seen as attractive places to work.

Table 9.12: What is the first action taken when a supply teacher is required? SECONDARY schools by percentage of pupils achieving 5 A*-C GCSEs (N = 437)

% achieving 5 A*-C		contact a private supply teacher agency	contact the LEA supply service	contact supply teachers on list provided by LEA	contact supply teachers recruited directly by the school
0 - 34	%	59	3	3	35
35 - 39	%	40	4	2	54
40 64	%	28	4	2	66
65 and over	%	17	3	4	77

Significance (chi-squared), excluding LEA categories: p = .000. Cells highlighted are significantly different from independence (adjusted residual more than 3).

There is no clear relationship between the number of supply teacher days used by a school (primary or secondary) and their method of obtaining supply teachers. However, schools that use below average numbers of supply teachers are more likely to obtain these supply teachers by direct contact. This is especially marked in primary schools, where 47% of the schools in the lowest quarter of supply-teacher-use, but

only 13% of schools in the top quarter of supply-teacher-use rely solely on direct contact to recruit supply teachers.

Private supply teacher agencies and local authority supply services

Contacting a private supply agency or local authority supply service is generally an efficient and rapid way to get a teacher in place. Most schools reported that if they phoned before 8.00 a.m., a supply teacher would be there for the start of the school day. In interview, private supply agencies explained how they had improved their communications and deployment processes. In some cases schools are able to book teachers on-line. This can be useful for advance bookings, but emergency bookings are generally made by telephone as the schools need a quick response. Similarly, there are now systems for emailing and texting supply teachers, but again, telephone calls are the main form of communication.

Supply agencies see it as very important to make the best possible match between the teacher and the requirements of the school. As Chapter 5 described, they use both sophisticated IT systems and personal knowledge of schools and teachers to achieve the best possible match.

Figure 9.1 showed that secondary schools are most likely to contact a private supply agency as their first action, and primary and nursery schools least likely. But agencies are used when directly contacted supply teachers are not available by about 80% of secondary schools, and around half of those in other sectors.

Private supply agency use is highest among London schools. Primary schools in London are 15 times more likely to use a supply agency than primary schools outside London, a special school in London is five times more likely to use an agency than a special school outside London, and a secondary school in London is four and a half times more likely to use a private supply agency than a secondary school outside London. Among primary schools there is an additional difference between London, non-London urban schools and rural schools. Non-London urban primary schools are 15 times more likely to use an agency than rural primary schools, but a London primary school is 136 times more likely to use an agency than a rural primary school. A higher proportion of large (in comparison with small) urban primary schools contact an agency as their first action and use only an agency. Secondary schools with lower attainment are more likely to use agencies (Table 9.12).

Primary and secondary schools with high levels of free school meals are also more likely to use agencies. Only 4% of primary schools with less than 8% of pupils eligible for free schools meals will contact a private supply agency as their first action, but 64% of schools with more than 35% of pupils eligible for free school meals will do this. There is a similar pattern in secondary schools.

The primary and secondary schools that use the highest number of supply teachers are statistically significantly more likely to contact an agency as their first action and to use solely an agency or solely an LEA service. The highest teacher-using quarter of primary schools are almost seven times more likely to contact an agency than the lowest-using quarter, and the highest-using secondary schools are four times more likely to use an agency than the lowest quarter.

We have shown that the more challenging schools are less able to build up their own lists of familiar teachers that they can contact directly, are likely to use far more different supply teachers than less challenging schools, and far more often use

agencies than the less challenging schools. However, they may also be disadvantaged in obtaining teachers from agencies. Some agencies argued that while certain schools may be more difficult to recruit for, it was always possible to find a teacher. Other agencies found that they had to recruit more experienced teachers, who were often higher up the pay scale and thus had to be paid more, for challenging schools:

> *A lot of the times what tends to happen is to get somebody worth their salt that can cope with the school, they're having to be an experienced teacher, they're already commanding a higher level of pay rate and therefore you have to get the on cost to the school. So it just happens as a matter of course, it's just natural market forces really.* (National agency)

Other agencies used a different version of the market forces argument to explain that the 'better' teachers were able to refuse offers of work in challenging schools because they knew they would get other offers, while the less good teachers could not afford to do so:

> *The teachers know, and they start to think, well, 'I am going to say no to this one because another agency is going to ring me in ten minutes time, another school, and I might accept that one'. So it has become a bit of a game really. … If they are not a very good teacher I have to say it seems to me that they are going to end up in more of the sink schools.* (Local agency)

Others acknowledged that they paid teachers more to persuade them to work in challenging schools. This generally (but not always) resulted in charging the schools more:

> *Well on some occasions that does happen, whereby the only way you can get teachers into that school is if you're paying them danger money, you know, because it is highly challenging.* (National agency)

> *It would be a matter of paying the teacher more or paying travelling expenses.* (National agency)

> [Int: Your challenging schools, do you ever pay people more to go into them?] *Yes. You've got to duck and dive.* [And the school would be charged more?] *Oh absolutely. Absolutely.* (National agency)

> *I would pay teachers more to try and get them there.* (Local agency)

9.4 Evaluation of private supply agencies, local authority services and supply teachers

How schools choose between agencies and supply services

The questionnaire asked those schools that use private supply agencies or local authority supply services how important various factors are in their decision about which agency or service to use.

Like the supply teachers, the schools we interviewed did not necessarily feel that they had much choice. Sometimes this was a matter of location: the agency or service contacted would be the one that has local supply teachers – but often it was because the agency or service that they generally use proved totally satisfactory:

> *We would ring* [the local authority agency] *and basically we don't ring anybody else. All sorts of reasons really. I trust them, they have never ever let us down. OK there has been a very rare occasion when they have not been able to find anybody but I know*

> *they have worked their socks off to try and get somebody. The quality of the staff that we have had coming in has been excellent every time. There are some slightly weaker than others but generally speaking, you know, they really are good quality supply teachers. They come in with back-up work to do if we haven't set work. We generally do set work. If a teacher has been off for a length of time they have happily taken over and joined in with the team planning and produced their own planning and done all the marking and that sort of thing. And any time that we have been disappointed at the quality of anybody coming in we have contacted* [the local authority agency] *and you know it's quite clear that they have dealt with it.* (Yorkshire and the Humber junior)

Several schools talked about the relationship that they had developed with their usual agency. This was often particularly effective aspect of small agencies, and is perhaps why they continue to survive in such a competitive market:

> *I only use one agency if they can accommodate me and they normally can.* [Int: How did you come across them?] *They belong to a – it was a splinter groups. There was a problem. I dealt with the bloke and his company was taken over by a bigger company and everybody lost their jobs so they went off and set up their own company and I followed them because they knew the school, they knew what my needs are. It's not just about – you know, when I phoned the big company that had taken over from them they were a bit off-hand and a bit rude and I said, 'Don't you want my ...?' so I decided to go with the cut-off. They're small but they'll make it and they have now actually regained all the ground. But they knew the needs, they know me, they know the kids. I know a lot of their supply staff who went with them and to be honest with you that's what I wanted.* (London primary)

These comments were echoed in the questionnaire responses shown on Table 9.13; schools were asked to indicate how important each of the listed factors is in their decision about which supply agency or service to use.

Table 9.13: Schools' rating of factors in deciding which agency / supply service to use: mean rating on a scale from 1 (very important) to 4 (unimportant), and percentage of schools in each sector rating factors 'very important' (N=1094)

	Mean rating	% rating 'very important'				
		nursery	primary	secondary	special	
Reliable service (based on previous experience)	1.03	100	97	98	99	
Quality of teacher provided	1.06	96	97	93	98	
Positive relationship with staff in agency / supply service	1.59	37	50	59	48	*
Whether the service / agency monitors teachers in post	1.75	70	52	42	44	*
Lower price to schools than other agencies	2.31	7	17	14	16	
Provision of effective CPD for supply teachers	2.44	36	20	15	15	**
Whether they are paid on national scales	2.52	42	18	8	8	***
Appearing on a preferred supplier list	2.64	33	16	10	22	***
Whether supply teachers are well paid	2.65	16	9	3	4	***
Having been awarded the Quality Mark	2.90	7	6	8	5	
Having another mark of quality (Investors in People, ISO)	2.99	12	3	2	4	
Loyalty schemes, financial & other incentives for schools	3.03	0	5	5	3	
Preference for public sector rather than private sector	3.33	16	8	4	0	**
Preference for private sector rather than public sector	3.57	0	1	2	0	

Significance (chi-squared): *** $p < 0.001$; ** $p < 0.01$; * $p < 0.05$

Reliable service and quality of teacher provided were rated 'very important' by 98% and 95% of respondents respectively. A positive relationship with agency staff was the third most important factor (rated very important by 54% overall), reflecting agencies' focus on developing a personal relationship with school staff. Monitoring the quality of the teachers in post was also valued.

However, most other factors were rated as very much less important than those four. The Quality Mark was seen as 'fairly unimportant' or 'unimportant' by two-thirds of those responding, and 'fairly important' by a quarter. The 8% of respondents who rated the Quality Mark as 'very important' were also likely to rate other marks of quality and appearing on a preferred supplier list as very important.

There were some differences by school sector: Table 9.13 shows the percentage of each sector rating each factor as 'very important', and indicates which differences are statistically significant. The nursery respondents seemed to have the greatest concern for the teachers, rating use of national pay scales, being well paid and provision of CPD more highly than did respondents in other sectors.

Secondary schools gave lower ratings to being on a preferred supplier list. In interviews, London schools commented negatively on the London preferred suppler list:

> *Well they have their preferred list I believe and agencies phone up and say they are on it but basically we ignore it and stick to our own.* (London secondary girls)

> *No. I don't know who put* [the London preferred supplier list] *together and I'm not interested. I mean, it's daft. What the government does is they privatise everything so if it's private it's a free market. And then they start dictating that free market and telling us who we have to go with. And actually some of the ones they've said, I wouldn't touch with a barge pole. I have used them and I'm not keen on their judgment necessarily.* (London primary)

It seemed that most schools prefer to make their decisions based on their own experience. If they have identified a satisfactory way of finding supply teachers, they see no reason to take the views of a committee as more valid than their own. Some schools also commented that the large number of agencies on the London list made it of limited value.

In addition to asking schools what they look for in a supply agency or service, we asked schools to rate the agency or service they most often use against a list of factors (Table 9.14).

Table 9.14: Schools' ratings of the supply service/agency that they most often use (N = 1028)

		excellent	good	fair	poor
efficiency of booking system	%	36	54	9	1
ability to provide supply cover when needed	%	32	52	13	2
match of teacher to school need	%	14	51	32	4
quality of supply teachers	%	13	60	25	2
monitoring of service provided	%	12	42	38	8
value for money	%	7	39	43	11

Most schools considered their agency / service to be excellent or good in terms of providing cover and the booking system; secondary schools gave even higher ratings in these respects, but nursery and special schools considerably lower ($p = .001$ in both cases). Ratings for other aspects were lower; however, the smaller number of 'poor' ratings partly reflects the potential for schools to move to another agency if they are dissatisfied. Special and nursery schools were the least happy about the match to school need.

How satisfactory did schools find the supply teachers they used?

Schools were asked how accurately the supply teachers that they used matched the school's needs in terms of being qualified and /or experienced to teach the age group, the subject and children with special needs. They were asked to record their responses on a 4 point scale from 'usually' to 'never'. Table 9.15 shows the proportion in each sector responding 'usually'.

Table 9.15: School responses to 'How accurately do the supply teachers you use meet the needs of your school?

	nursery	primary	secondary	special
qualified and/or experienced to teach …	%	%	%	%
… the age group	84	83	74	62
… the subject	73	72	25	34
,…children with special needs	34	37	7	56
N	*48*	*590*	*550*	*106*

Schools in each sector were also asked whether there were any groups of pupils for whom it was particularly hard to obtain supply cover

Some nursery schools felt that they were generally able to obtain the teachers they needed; one said that when they could not, they used nursery nurses:

> *I will only use qualified and experienced nursery teachers and do not find this a problem with the agency or LEA list.*
>
> *Often have to use nursery nurses when supply teachers unavailable.*

A third of primary schools noted that there were some groups it was hard to obtain cover for: the most frequently mentioned group was Year 6, and the next most frequent reception or foundation stage classes.

For secondary schools the greatest issues were around subject specialisms. These are considered in Chapter 10 where we discuss the work that supply teachers do in schools.

More than half the special schools said they were usually able to obtain supply teachers who could meet the needs of their pupils, but 13% said this was rare.

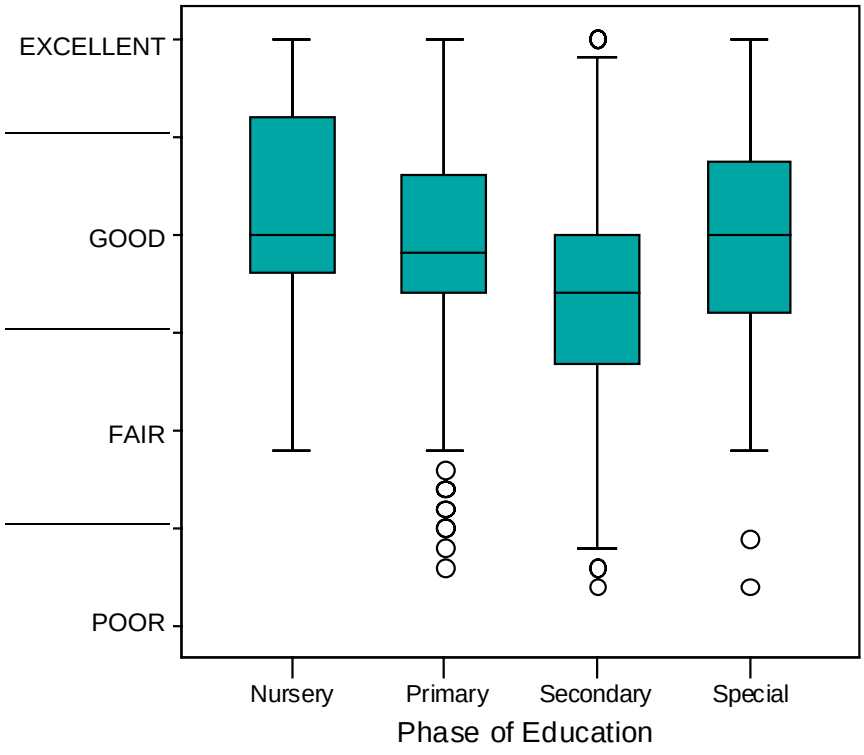
> *Special needs supply cover is exceptionally limited. We often 'train' / give induction to supply 'regulars' to enhance their SEN knowledge.*
>
> *We are a school for pupils with severe learning difficulties / on the autistic spectrum and challenging behaviour. We rarely get teachers with challenging behaviour experience.*
>
> *Supply agencies often do not understand SLD / PMLD.*

Very difficult to get teachers, qualified to teach SLD, PMLD but especially ASD groups of pupils/ students.

Experience with SLD is rare.

As well as investigating how well the teacher matched the school needs, the questionnaire asked about the quality of the supply teachers used. Schools were asked to rate the supply teachers that they had used in the last year against a list of factors. We combined these into a single score to review the differences across sectors (Figure 9.2).

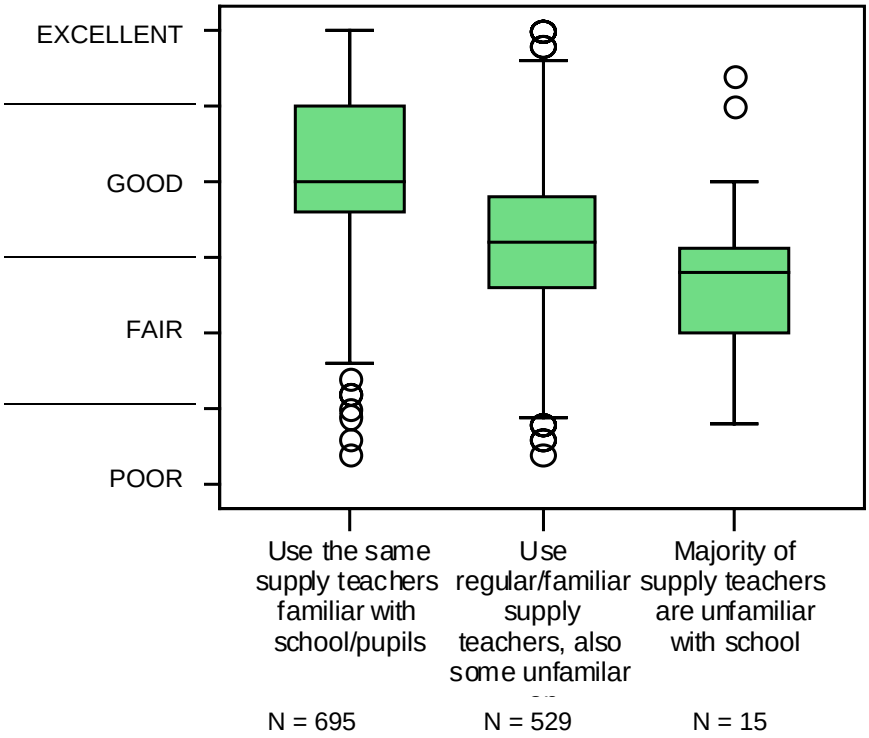
Figure 9.2: Boxplot showing overall school levels of satisfaction with supply teachers by sector



This shows that there is a wide range of views within each sector (particularly secondary, where ratings range from excellent on all counts to only just above poor. Mean ratings of excellent or good were given by the vast majority of nursery (94%), primary (87%) and special (84%) schools, and by 67% of secondary schools.

These ratings reflect the different ways in which schools obtain supply teachers. Figure 9.3 shows that the schools that are able to use only familiar supply teachers are the most satisfied overall, and those that use mainly unfamiliar supply teachers are the least satisfied overall (though it should be noted that only a very small proportion of schools used *only* unfamiliar teachers). As we have shown earlier, secondary schools are less likely to be able to be able to rely entirely on familiar supply teachers, and so this finding offers some explanation of their lower ratings of the supply teachers they use.

Figure 9.3: Boxplot showing levels of satisfaction by familiarity of supply teachers used



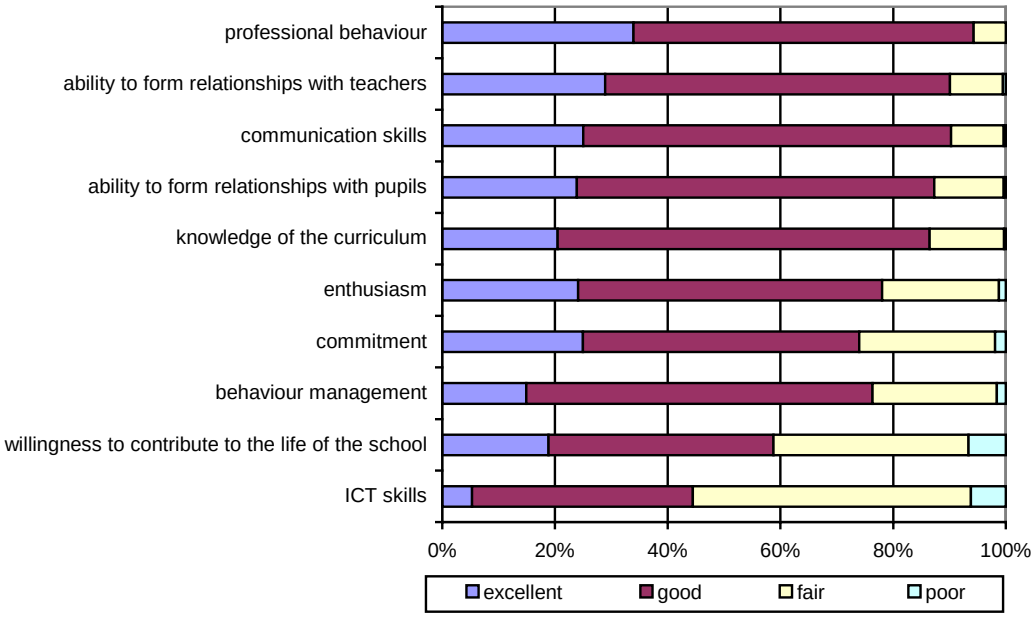
In the same way, the ratings show that schools that depend on agency supply teachers (who are likely to be unfamiliar) are generally less satisfied that those that use directly employed supply teachers. However, in considering these data it should be remembered that Chapter 5 showed supply teachers working directly for schools were generally older, more experienced, more contented to be working as supply teachers, and were often people who had a long-standing relationship with the school through previous work or current part-time work. It is hardly surprising that they were considered more effective. In contrast, the teachers working through agencies are more likely to be young, have less experience, and are less likely to see supply teaching as a satisfactory way of working. They are also more likely to be working in schools with lower attainment and with a high percentage of pupils eligible for free school meals, schools with challenging behaviour, and in secondary schools. Thus the ratings reflect the more challenging school context and the supply teachers' unfamiliarity with it, rather than the supply teachers themselves or the use of agencies. Lower overall satisfaction with supply teachers is associated with high free school meals, low academic and attainment, and urban schools.

Ofsted (2002) suggested that one of the reasons that temporary and supply teachers teach more unsatisfactory lesson than regular teachers is that they are not routinely given information about pupils. We therefore examined whether there was a relationship between overall satisfaction with supply teachers, and provision of information about pupils' attainment and about their behaviour, medical needs etc. We found that those schools that routinely provide new supply teachers with information about pupil attainment gave significantly higher ratings for satisfaction with supply teachers. This difference was statistically significant within the sample of secondary schools (t-test, $p = .001$) and within the sample of primary schools ($p =$

.047). Similarly, those schools that routinely provide new supply teachers with information about pupils' medical and behavioural needs gave significantly higher ratings for overall satisfaction (secondary p = .002, primary p = .039). We examined further to see whether the schools providing pupil information have higher attainment, lower free school meals etc., and so might in any case be more likely to be satisfied with their supply teachers, but this was not the case. the provision of other forms of support for supply teachers (e.g. handbooks, behaviour policies, having an individual with responsibility for supply teachers' induction and supervision) did not have any significant relationship with overall satisfaction.

Figure 9.4 shows the ratings given by primary schools for each of the components of the satisfaction rating.

Figure 9.4: PRIMARY SCHOOLS: How would you rate the supply teachers you have used in the last year in relation to each listed factor? (1 = excellent, 4 = poor)



Around 90% of primary school respondents indicated that their supply teachers were 'good' or 'excellent' in their professional behaviour, ability to form relationships with teachers and pupils, communication skills and knowledge of the curriculum. The lowest rated factors were willingness to contribute to the life of the school (which is hardly surprising in a supply teacher) and ICT skills. However, even in these two lowest rated factors, less than 7% rated supply teachers as 'poor'.

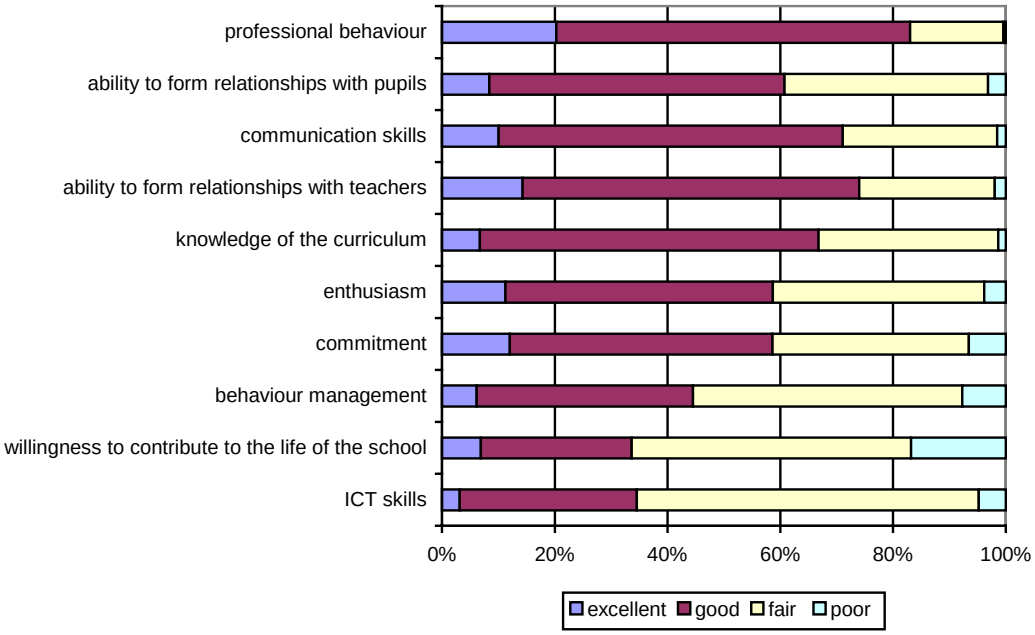
While ICT skills were rated lower than other factors, some schools commented very positively about supply teachers' ICT skills:

> *That is something that I have been quite impressed with. Yes, often the supply teachers are often going in and saying, 'oh good I've got an interactive whiteboard', because they know about other resources that are on there too. And also they come up and use the ICT suite, which you know in the early days with us getting to grips with it we didn't used to ask, we never dreamed of asking a supply teacher to come up. But now you know it is quite common for a supply teacher to be bringing the children up to the ICT suite.* (Yorkshire and the Humber junior)

This school used supply teachers from an LEA supply service with particularly effective CPD arrangements for supply teachers.

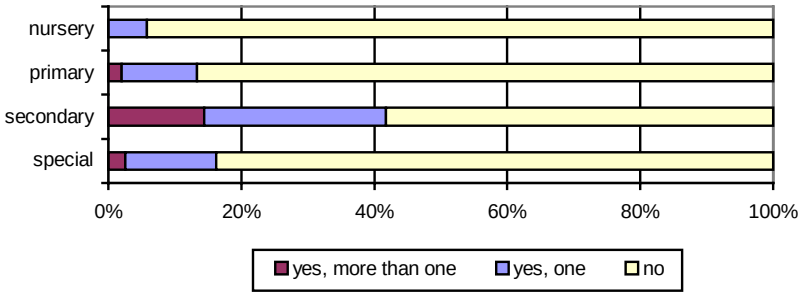
Secondary schools gave lower ratings than primary (Figure 9.5), particularly in relation to behaviour management, but even so the majority rated their supply teachers as excellent, good or fair, with only a very small minority rating them as 'poor' for any of the factors listed. As in primary schools, ICT skills were given less high ratings, as was behaviour management.

Figure 9.5: SECONDARY SCHOOLS: How would you rate the supply teachers you have used in the last year in relation to each listed factor? (1 = excellent, 4 = poor)



School respondents were also asked on the questionnaire whether, in the last year, they had asked any supply teacher to leave before the end of the planned placement on the grounds of competence or conduct. Figure 9.6 shows that a far larger proportion of secondary schools (compared with those in other sectors) had asked teachers to leave.

Figure 9.6: School responses to 'In the last year, have you asked any supply teacher to leave before the end of the planned placement on the grounds of competence or conduct? (N = 1310)



The secondary schools that had done so were more often urban, large, with poor GCSE results, and higher percentages of pupils with special educational needs or eligible for free school meals. All of these factors are statistically significant.

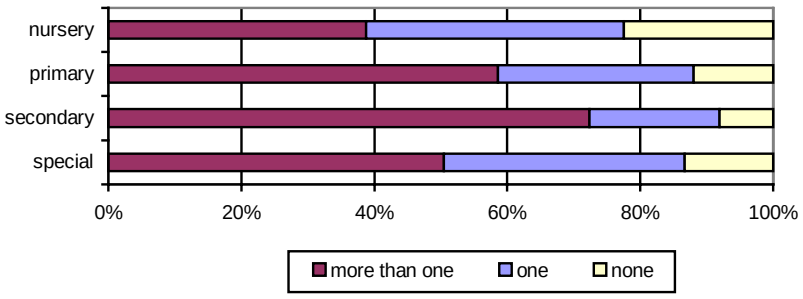
Respondents were asked to write in the reason the teacher was asked to leave. The most frequent comments referred to inappropriate conduct and poor behaviour management.

> *Inappropriate handling of child. Verbal aggression to parent of that child.*
>
> *Not convinced of ability to teach. Late arrival, no preparation, unresponsive, unfamiliar with children. in general.*
>
> *Supply teacher could not manage the behaviour of a challenging class.*
>
> *Inability to enable learning to take place because of poor behaviour management skills.*
>
> *Teacher's ability to communicate; English very limited, (Teacher was Spanish).*
>
> *Unreliable - failure to turn up - at one point, went home at lunch, without notifying anybody. This was very much the exception.*
>
> *Inappropriate comments/physical contact with pupils. Lateness. Arrived smelling strongly of alcohol, not turning up - sick at regular intervals.*

Some other schools commented that, while they had not asked teachers to leave, they had asked agencies not to send particular teachers to their school again.

The questionnaire also asked how many of the supply teachers that worked in the school in the past year would have been welcomed as permanent members of staff (Figure 9.7).

Figure 9.7: School responses to 'How many (if any) of the supply teachers who worked in your school would have welcomed as permanent members of staff, had a vacancy arisen?' (N = 1310)



Far more schools responded that there were teachers in this category than had asked supply teachers to leave the school before the end of the placement. Around 90% of both primary and secondary schools said there had been at least one in this category, and more than half the schools responded that more than one teacher would have been welcomed as a member of staff.

Supply teachers' choices about where to work

The deployment of supply teachers to schools is not simply a question of directing a teacher from the list to go to a particular school: one of the attractions of supply teaching is being able to decide where and when to work, and being able to turn down work. We conclude this section with a review of the reasons why supply teachers turn

down work (Table 9.16). Percentages are in each case of the whole sample, not simply those who turned down work.

Table 9.16: Reasons supply teachers had turn down work in the last year

	Primary	Secondary
	%	%
I had already accepted work in another school	66	44
I did not want to work that particular day	46	46
I did not want to work in that school	23	33
The placement was not in a subject / age group I am qualified to teach	9	6
Other	21	18
N	*752*	*684*

Those who had turned down work because they did not want to work in a particular school were asked more about their reasons (Table 9.17).

Table 9.17: If you did not want to work in that school what were your feelings based on?

	Primary	Secondary
	%	%
Previous experience in this school	18	24
Reputation of school	4	11
School location: difficult or expensive journey	9	14
N	*752*	*684*

Those who had turned down work because of their previous experiences were asked for more details (Table 9.18). However, it should be noted that this was answered by some who had not responded to the previous question. This table shows that the main reason for not wanting to work in a particular school was poor pupil behaviour; 18% of all primary supply teachers and 29% of all secondary supply teachers had turned down work because of their previous experiences of poor behaviour in particular schools. This reinforces the data showing that challenging schools have more difficulty in obtaining supply teachers. The other main reasons for turning down work related to poor school management and lack of support. Support is discussed in Chapter 11.

Table 9.18: If you turned down work because of previous experience in the school, what was the nature of that experience? Percentage of whole sample indicating various reasons

	Primary	Secondary
	%	%
Poor resources	2	5
Lack of support in the school	8	16
Poor pupil behaviour	18	29
Poor management / leadership	7	12
Unfriendly staff	5	8
N	*752*	*684*

9.5 Summary: Deployment to schools

Management of cover within the school

Overall responsibility for cover in a school normally rests with a member of the management team (generally the headteacher in a primary school and an assistant or deputy head in a secondary school), but this is not always the case. The practical arrangements are most often made by support staff. The role of support staff in both managing and arranging cover appear to be increasing with workforce reform. There were some tensions between the notion of arranging cover as essentially a data exercise, and the idea that deciding who teaches which class is an important aspect of teaching and learning, and should therefore be managed by a senior member of teaching staff.

How schools obtain supply teachers

About two-thirds of all schools said their first strategy to obtain a supply teacher is to make direct contact with a supply teacher who is familiar with the school. However, around half the primary, special and nursery schools turn to agencies if their first contact is unsuccessful, as do almost 80% of secondary schools. Where agencies and local authority supply services are used, over 70% of schools say they ask for a preferred teacher by name.

The use of local authority supply services is generally much lower than of agencies, but this is partly accounted for by the patchy provision. Where local authorities run supply services or agencies they are often very well used.

Some schools are less able to obtain supply teachers through direct contact; this includes the following groups: schools in urban areas, particularly London; schools that are larger; schools with lower attainment; and schools with high free school meals eligibility. Such schools are more likely to use private supply agencies and to use more different and less familiar supply teachers. In contrast smaller schools in rural areas or outside London; schools with high attainment; and schools with low free school meals eligibility are more likely to obtain supply teachers through direct contact, and to use more familiar supply teachers.

The most challenging schools are likely to have to pay more for their supply teachers. Around 30% of teachers (more secondary than primary) had turned down work in particular schools, most often because of poor pupil behaviour and lack of support.

Evaluation of private supply agencies, local authority services and supply teachers

Schools consider that very much the most important factors in any agency or supply service are reliability of service and quality of teacher provided (each rated very important by more than 95% of respondents). Positive relationships with agency staff and monitoring of teachers in post were also seen as important (rated very important by around 50%). The Quality Mark was rated as very important by only 8% of respondents, and appearing on a preferred supplier list by 14%.

The majority of schools rated the agencies or supply services they used as good or excellent in relation to efficiency of booking (90%), providing cover when needed (84%), and quality of teacher provided (73%). Secondary schools gave higher ratings and special and nursery lower in relation to the first two of these.

Schools also rated their supply teachers on against a list of qualities. Overall mean ratings of excellent or good were given by the vast majority of nursery (94%), primary

(87%) and special (84%) schools, and by 67% of secondary schools. Less than 1% of schools gave an overall rating of poor. The schools that were able to use directly contacted teachers (generally suburban or rural, with low free school meals eligibility and good attainment) rated these as significantly more effective than did the schools that relied used many unfamiliar teachers (more often urban, high free school meals eligibility, poor attainment, secondary). Schools that provided supply teachers with pupil information gave significantly higher ratings for overall satisfaction.

10 Deployment within schools

10.1 Introduction

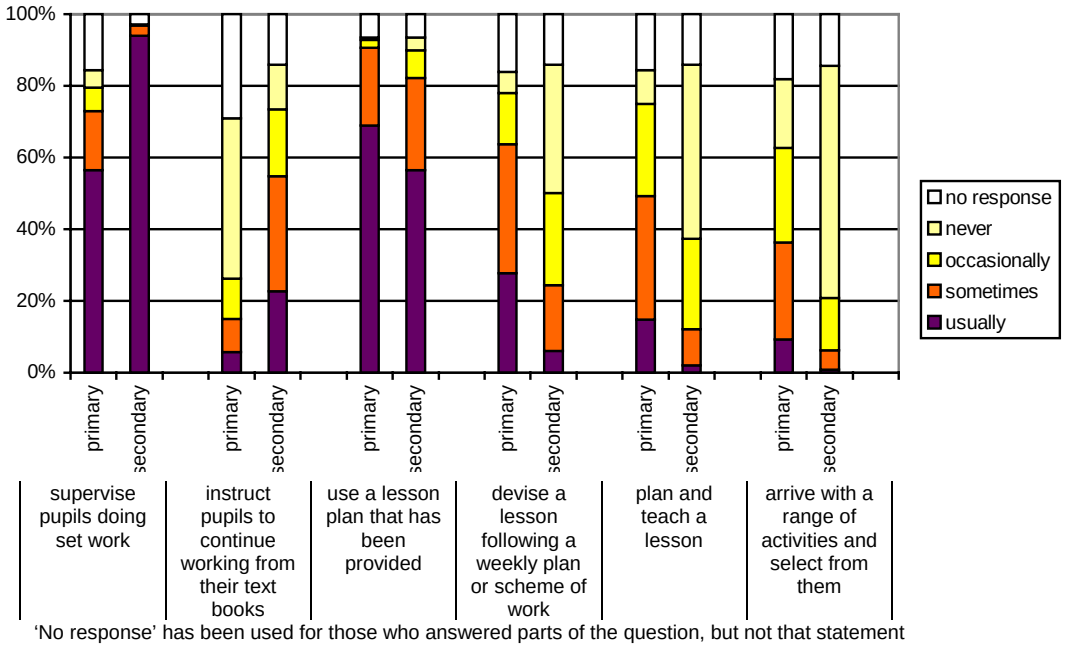
This chapter describes how supply teachers are deployed in schools: the nature of their teaching (including the extent to which secondary supply teachers teach their specialist subjects) and the range of work they are asked to do. We consider how this varies across sectors and with length of placement. The focus is mainly on shorter placements: a one-day placement is more likely to involve supervising pupils doing set work, doing 'general cover' in a secondary school, and no expectation that they will update records, attend meetings etc. At the opposite end of the scale, a supply teacher working in a school for a term is expected to do the full range of work of the teacher they are replacing.

10.2 Supply teachers' work in schools

Schools' expectations of supply teachers' lessons

In this section we consider the nature of the teaching that supply teachers do. The questionnaire asked schools to indicate what expectations they had of supply teachers who were on placements of less than a week (Figure 10.1). In devising the question, we tried to define ways of providing cover that ranged from simply supervising pupils doing set work to having to plan from scratch.

Figure 10.1: Schools' responses to 'How often do you expect supply teachers on short placements (a week or less) to do the following? (N = 1166)



'No response' has been used for those who answered parts of the question, but not that statement

In primary schools the most frequent response was that the supply teacher was asked to follow a lesson plan that had been provided. In interviews it was explained that in larger primary schools where there are parallel classes, the planning is done jointly,

and so the 'partner' of the absent teacher would supply the plans and the necessary resources. Similarly, in a planned absence, the class teacher would be expected to leave plans:

> *If it's a planned absence the work is always left totally and there are always phone conversations beforehand so they know what they're coming in to. If it's an emergency sick cover, which doesn't happen that often, usually the pair, the opposite number (because we've got parallel classes) would support that teacher but we would have to have a look to see how complicated it was. For example, if it was a papier maché of African masks or whatever it might be too much for somebody to take on so we would adapt and obviously the supply teacher would be allowed to use their own discretion.* (South East infants)

One headteacher explained that if the lesson plans were not available, then they would resort to the medium term plans that the teacher had handed in previously:

> *When a supply teacher arrives in school, I will go down with them to the classroom. We look to see if first of all, if we find the teacher's plans, then I check with the teacher that the resources are at hand and then basically they get on with it. If the planning isn't there then what I would do is come back, because I keep everybody's medium term plans in here, I would come back and get medium term plans out, we would look at the books and try to see from the books where the children are at and then we would try and find the appropriate place.* (North East primary)

The second most frequent response in primary schools was 'supervise set work'. Some headteachers explained that in an emergency, worksheets were photocopied and the supply teacher was simply supervising. However, in interviews in primary schools, this did not seem to be as common a practice as it appears from the questionnaire responses. Possibly this is because the reality with younger pupils is that a teacher cannot simply sit back and supervise, because the pupils will require active support to complete the task.

A number of primary headteachers were quite explicit that supply teachers have changed, and nowadays create much less disruption to pupils' learning than they used to, because schools have clear plans in place to ensure curriculum continuity, and supply teachers follow these plans, teaching the appropriate content:

> *A few years ago there was an old school of thinking that when a supply teacher came in they ought to bring their own work and do their own thing and the teacher ought to just be able to go off and do their course and whatever and come back. It has just changed so much, because the teachers found that when they came back they didn't know what the children had done, they would end up with loads of worksheets all over the place and didn't really know where they had come from. And what we have got to teach, the content, at the moment is so tightly packed that you can't risk leaving out a chunk and so you do need the supply teacher to teach what you were going to teach. Teachers will re-jiggle it so the supply teacher will sometimes have a slightly different timetable or will be given a one-off piece of work to do with the children which is on the same lines but it means the teacher can keep a handle on what the class has done as a whole. That is something again that my teachers don't complain about now, but yes I remember them saying, you know, 'I would come back and the work isn't marked and the stuff was everywhere'. That is not the case now, supply teachers come in and they do it. They leave … notes related to that. The teachers will often say, 'Oh it looks like the supply teacher had a really good day yesterday with my class', which is great.* (Yorkshire and the Humber junior)

One headteacher explained that the supply teachers from the local authority supply agency come in '*knowing what a year group is probably going to be doing in that*

term or in that week even in the maths'. Supply teachers also tend to feed back to the absent teacher about what they have done. In one school this was specifically encouraged because the information sheet about school routines etc. that was handed to supply teachers on arrival had a space for them to write a note at the end of the day:

> *If they look at a teacher's work that they have left them and they can't get their head round it they have often, you know, taken on board what the learning objective is and then taught their own lesson and then just left a note for the teacher to say that they have done that.* (Yorkshire and Humber junior)

The expectations of supply teachers in secondary schools are very different. Figure 10.1 showed that almost all the secondary respondents indicated that normal practice is for supply teachers to supervise set work. Alternatives were to instruct pupils to continue working from textbooks, or for the supply teacher to teach from a lesson plan.

In interviewing the schools, the first two of these options seemed to be by far the most common practice. For example, in a London secondary school, the absent teacher (in a planned absence) or the head of department (for an unplanned absence) had to leave the work for the class to be covered in a specific pigeonhole in the office, and it was handed to the supply teacher on their arrival. At another school, the absent teacher has to phone the head of faculty with the work:

> *Every teacher organises their own work and so even if you are sick you have to phone the school by 7.30 every day first of all to say you are going to be absent and you have to give the reason. But you also have to phone your head of faculty or an agreed person with the work set for the day. If they don't, which is very unusual here because it is just one of those things that we are very strict about, the head of faculty or the second in charge of the faculty has to set the work for the class.* (London secondary girls)

Another school expected the sick teacher to email work for each of their classes:

> *Generally speaking, if people are off sick and they phone in sick in the morning, they will email cover work in. We've got a system where people can email stuff in from home. We've got an email address called 'coverwork' so all staff can get it, they all know what the password is. Some of us have had to take dictation down over the phone and you can't hear what they're saying.* [Int: So it's the sick teacher and not the head of department who sets the work?] *It's the teacher that sets the work and that is then taken by their head of department and it's their responsibility then to speak to the covering teacher to make sure that they've got the work.* (South West secondary)

The role of the head of department was crucial:

> *It's up to the head of department to actually make sure that the appropriate work is set … by and large they're setting work for them so they're just supervising.* (East secondary)

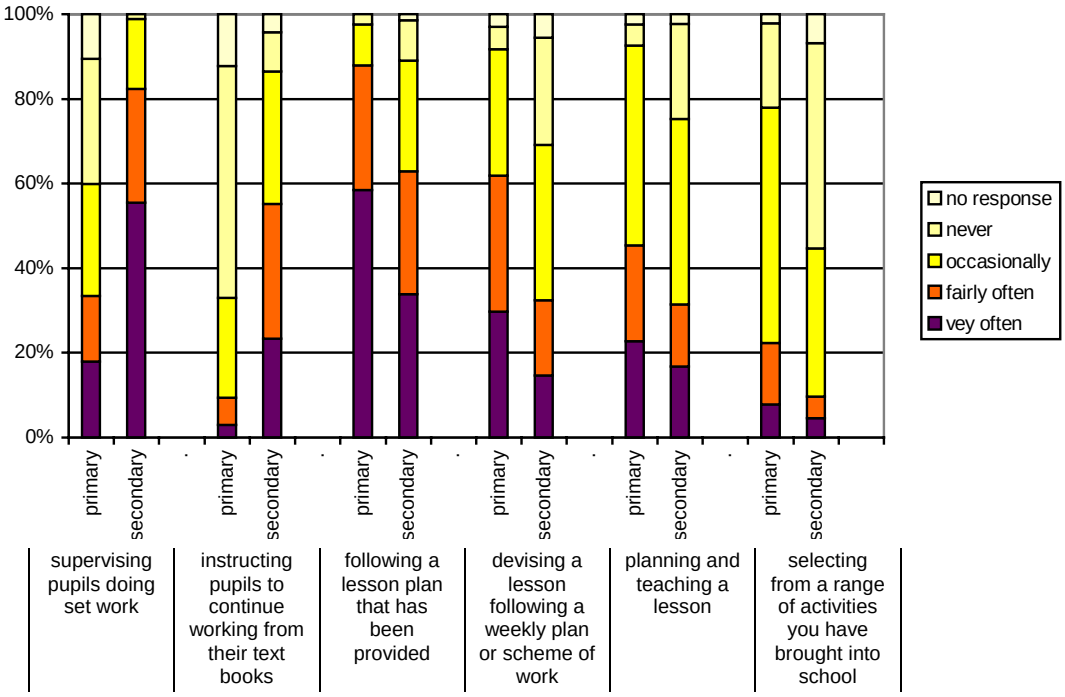
In each of these cases the expectation of the supply teacher was simply to supervise.

Supply teachers' accounts of schools' expectations

These accounts generally match the supply teachers' perceptions of the work they do. On the supply teacher questionnaire we included a question very similar to the one for schools, but in this case referring to the work the teacher had done over the past year, rather than specifying short placements only, thus the data is not strictly comparable with Figure 10.1, which showed school expectations in relation to placements of a

week or less. Figure 10.2 shows the teachers' responses, a rather more varied range of ways of working than the school responses shown on Figure 10.1. But a similar pattern emerges, in which primary supply teachers are more likely than secondary to teach from plans that are provided, while secondary supply teachers are more likely than primary to supervise set work.

Figure 10.2: SUPPLY TEACHERS' responses to 'How often over the past year has your work taken the following forms?' (N = 1378)



'No response' has been used for those who answered parts of the question, but not that statement.

We interviewed a primary supply teacher who had arrived in the school that morning; she explained what she had taught so far:

> *There was an LSA* [Learning Support Assistant] *in there and they told me briefly what they had to do for English. I took the idea, developed it and made it my own. Then I, then during assembly time the other Year 3 teacher went over what they were doing in maths, and when this interview is over I'm going upstairs to check the science … I always bring a doggy bag of lots of year groups. But I have a fair amount of experience and hopefully I can cope with whatever comes my way.* (Primary supply teacher)

This teacher was clearly devising activities and teaching with limited plans. In focus groups primary teachers argued that the mornings were straightforward because of the numeracy and literacy requirements:

> *In most schools, because they are following the National Literacy and Numeracy strategies they are all planned well in advance. … All the photocopying was done by the assistant and no problems. That's how you can get on and teach the children.* (Primary supply teacher)

Another primary teacher described doing a greater degree of planning:

> *If someone has gone off sick and you go in on the Monday, you just do whatever you have got in your bag with them, but then you can plan the rest of the week and find out*

> *what they are doing and what they should be doing and then plan the lessons. I quite enjoy that actually.* (Primary supply teacher)

While most schools provided plans of some sort, some primary supply teachers reported that they had been expected to teach specific topics at very short notice:

> *I am not particularly knowledgeable of RE, and I was just told as I was going out to do my break duty, this is what we want you to do for RE. It was basically getting them to build a storyboard about the way that God created the earth and so on in Genesis. I said, 'Well I am not actually familiar with that, when do you want me to do it so that I can have a quick look at the Bible to find out what I'm doing?' She went, 'after break' and I said, 'well I've got break duty', and so, you know, do you want me to come straight in and teach the children something I don't know a thing about? And so I had to do my break duty walking around holding a copy of the Good News Bible reading Genesis so I could find out what I needed to know to teach them when I got back in.* (Primary supply teacher)

This illustrates the rather unrealistic expectations that supply teachers occasionally experience.

In contrast, a secondary teacher described supervising pupils doing set work. She chose to make the lessons more interesting, but as she says, anybody could have taught the cover lesson:

> *Generally the cover work was set and so there could have been any other teacher teaching it. … they set cover which generally anybody can teach. I just got stuck into it and devised the lesson. … A lot of cover lessons are very boring and very prescriptive. It's read this page and answer a few questions and in science lessons it's difficult to put any other activity in. So there were a couple of activities you could use in any lesson. … If you could think of a quick game with the information in front of you that really picks it up for the kids. They obviously struggle writing for a whole hour.* (Secondary supply teacher)

Another secondary teacher similarly wanted to teach rather than supervise:

> *I don't like just sitting there at the front and just saying 'get on with the work' I'd rather involve them and teach them properly because then you get more out of them as well and they behave better.* (Secondary supply teacher)

The questionnaire asked supply teachers how useful they have found the various plans they have been given. Table 10.1 shows that most teachers found any sort of plans very useful or fairly useful, but that detailed lesson plans were the most useful.

This perception was reinforced in the focus groups. One focus group reported back on their discussion:

> *It is a difficulty we have all faced, sometimes you can go into a school and not have any planning, any lesson plans ready for you, possibly because it is very short notice. We think that lesson plans and resources are very important, the more time you've got with them the better job you are going to do in teaching the lesson.* (Primary supply teacher)

While neither schools nor teachers suggested that extensive use was made by supply teachers of a range of activities that they had brought with them, teachers in focus groups referred to the need to have such activities. For example, a secondary teacher said: '*But make sure you have that magic bag with you, just in case there's no work there*'. A primary supply teacher explained that a potential placement school had wanted him to bring in some resources:

There was another [booking] *that I turned down because they wanted me to bring resources to the school, and the way that I just finished my training, I don't actually have very much in the way of resources and so I need to build that up first. I don't want to get a bad reputation like early on for turning up and not having the goods so to speak*. (Primary supply teacher)

Table 10.1: Supply teachers' responses to 'When you are given plans or schemes of work to follow, how useful have you found them?' by school sector

		Primary	Secondary	Special
		%	%	%
Detailed lesson plan	Very useful	71	63	60
	Fairly useful	25	25	25
	Not useful	1	3	2
	Not applicable	3	9	6
Weekly plan	Very useful	53	27	53
	Fairly useful	42	38	33
	Not useful	2	6	3
	Not applicable	3	29	10
Schemes of work	Very useful	33	33	23
	Fairly useful	48	44	65
	Not useful	11	8	3
	Not applicable	9	15	10
N		*729*	*645*	*31*

Supply teachers were also asked about the limitations of any plans they were given (Table 10.2). The most frequently selected response was that they did not know enough about the work previously covered or the pupils. This fits very clearly with the findings of the Ofsted report on temporary teachers (Ofsted, 2002).

Table 10.2: Supply teachers' responses to 'What are the main limitations, if any, of plans or schemes of work you have been given to use?' by school sector

	Primary	Secondary	Special
	%	%	%
Lack of knowledge of what has already been covered	54	50	32
Lack of information regarding pupil levels	53	48	18
Resources not available	42	31	38
Insufficient detail	28	28	24
Resources not specified	25	16	12
Other	11	9	6
N	*752*	*684*	*34*

When we asked schools about the information that they made available about pupils and previous work, most indicated that it was not practicable to provide this for emergency cover:

[Int: How do they know things like the pupils' names or anything about the pupils?] *They don't. No. From 8 o'clock you are asked to assign somebody there and make sure the head of department has got cover work for the classes and it would be impossible to*

> *tell them anything about the classes. They don't even know anything about the school, they don't know where the sites are, they don't know where the classrooms are and to give them that information as well, it wouldn't work.* (London secondary mixed)

But this same interviewee went on to say:

> *We inform the supply teachers far more, we give them packs. We employ structures that have worked for our ordinary classroom teachers like out of lesson passes and so we introduce them into that. We have cut down on the amount of information we are trying to give them but have just given them enough to be able to cope. It is basically enough for you to be able to cope.*

There is clearly a careful balance to be struck between providing enough information and offering so much that it is not read. A limitation of plans identified in interviews was too much detail:

> *Plans are good but they can sometimes be very long, and you don't always have a lot of time to read them if you don't get much notice that you are going, and you get in at 8.30 or 8.45 and the children are coming in at 8.50. That is the worst situation when you have only got ten minutes to read a complicated plan.* (Nursery supply teacher)

As well as asking about lesson plans, we supply teachers whether they had about access to the necessary resources (Table 10.3). One of the findings of the Ofsted report (203) was that supply teachers did not always have such access.

Table 10.3: Supply teachers' responses to: 'How often are you provided with access to the teaching resources you need?'

	primary %	secondary %
almost always	46	41
sometimes	35	33
occasionally	16	20
never	3	6
N	*672*	*595*

There was little difference between responses in from primary and secondary supply teachers. Their responses indicated that around half had sometimes not had appropriate access to resources, and that a fifth of primary and a quarter of secondary generally experienced lack of resources.

Wider issues of support and provision of information are discussed in the next chapter.

Secondary subjects

Secondary teachers say they spend on average 43% of their working time teaching only the subject(s) they are qualified and experienced in teaching – and that similarly 42% of their placements are to teach only that subject (or subjects). However, there were a very wide range of responses: 30% said they have less than 10% of time teaching specialist subject, while a few said that they *only* taught the subject(s) in which they were qualified or experienced. As Chapter 5 explained, some supply teachers indicated that they had qualifications or experience in a wide range of subjects, so it is perhaps hardly surprising that some of them only teach those subjects.

It appeared that the extent to which secondary teachers taught their specialist subjects depended to some extent on their personal preferences and how much work they wanted. For example, it was obvious that art is not a subject much in demand by schools, and many of the art specialists said that they only taught art for 10% or less of their working time. But one had spent 60% of his working time teaching art, presumably by being very selective about placements.

We asked the secondary teachers how they felt about teaching outside their subjects. Again, there was a great variety of responses ranging from discontent to acceptance to positive enjoyment:

> *Not happy even if work set.*
>
> *It's inevitable in supply work.*
>
> *Fine – It's part of the job - but there often could be better work set - differentiated and more info supplied - when it is a planned absence. You feel not very confident about the content and sometimes pupils can see that and play up.*
>
> *If there is work set then you can teach anything.*
>
> *Provided the school provides resources, I'll have a go, as I'm comfortable with all subjects except Modern Languages.*

Some commented that they did a less good job when teaching other subjects:

> *I find other subjects interesting, but I need time to read up what the pupils are doing, so I can answer questions and help them when needed. They get very frustrated if the teacher cannot help and behaviour will deteriorate. I do not cover practical sessions unless a qualified member of staff is with me.*
>
> *Sometimes you can't help students much. You feel like you are going to waste not teaching your subject. Pupils do not fully respect you.*
>
> *I am happy to do so, but am conscious that the students concerned are not receiving the teaching that they should be.*
>
> *I don't mind for single cover days but I do not feel qualified to teach these subjects for longer spells.*

Some secondary supply teachers also felt that the expectation that they would simply supervise work set rather than teach automatically gave them lower status:

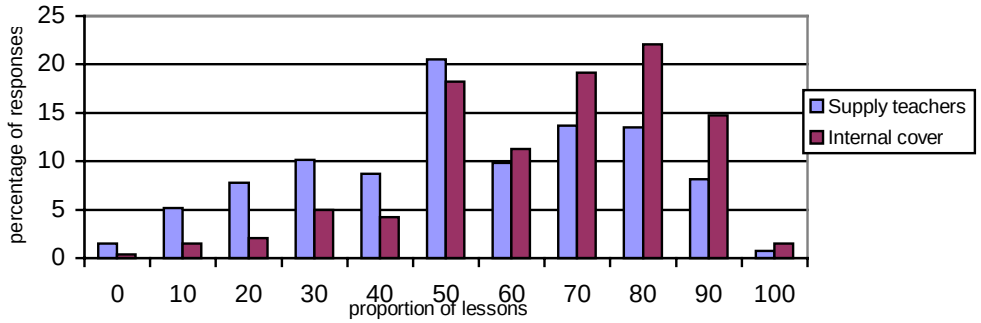
> *You are not given the chance to be a good teacher. It is almost as though they expect you to sit there with a piece of paper in front of you. Say to the children, this is what you are going to do and basically let them get on with it. No teacher wants to do that.*

The secondary schools generally accept that most short-term cover is general cover. The questionnaire asked secondary school respondents whether they *routinely* expected supply teachers to provide 'general cover (i.e. issue a timetable that involves covering lessons in different subjects on the same day)'; 75% said they routinely did, and 23% said they sometimes did. Many schools added comments: the three main arguments were that having good teaching skills is more important than having subject knowledge; that it is hard to find subject specialists; and that it is more convenient to timetable a supply teacher to cover for different teachers within the day.

Respondents were asked to estimate on a scale (0%, 10%, 20% etc.) what proportion of lessons taught by supply teachers working for short periods (where the absence was not expected to last for more than a week) were taught by teachers who were not specialists in the subject. They were also asked what proportion of internal cover

lessons were taught by non-specialists (Figure 10.3). This was to try and ascertain the extent to which schools seek supply teachers, as opposed to internal cover, to provide cover by a specialist subject teacher.

Figure 10.3: Secondary schools: Estimate the proportion of cases where teachers providing internal cover lessons/supply teachers working for a short period of time are NOT specialists in the relevant subject (N=543)



Overall, respondents indicated that internal cover was more likely to be provided by a non-specialist than supply teacher cover. However, half the schools responding gave the same estimate (plus or minus 10%) in both cases.

We also asked schools to list the subjects for which it is most difficult to obtain supply cover (Table 10.4). Twelve percent said they did not have problems with any particular subject. PE was the subject most frequently mentioned; one reason for this seemed to be that schools wanted supply teachers for girls' PE and boys' PE. In technology, too, the issue was finding a teacher who could teach a specific aspect of technology. Both these subjects involve practical activities, and are less easily catered for by the type of supervision provide by general cover teachers.

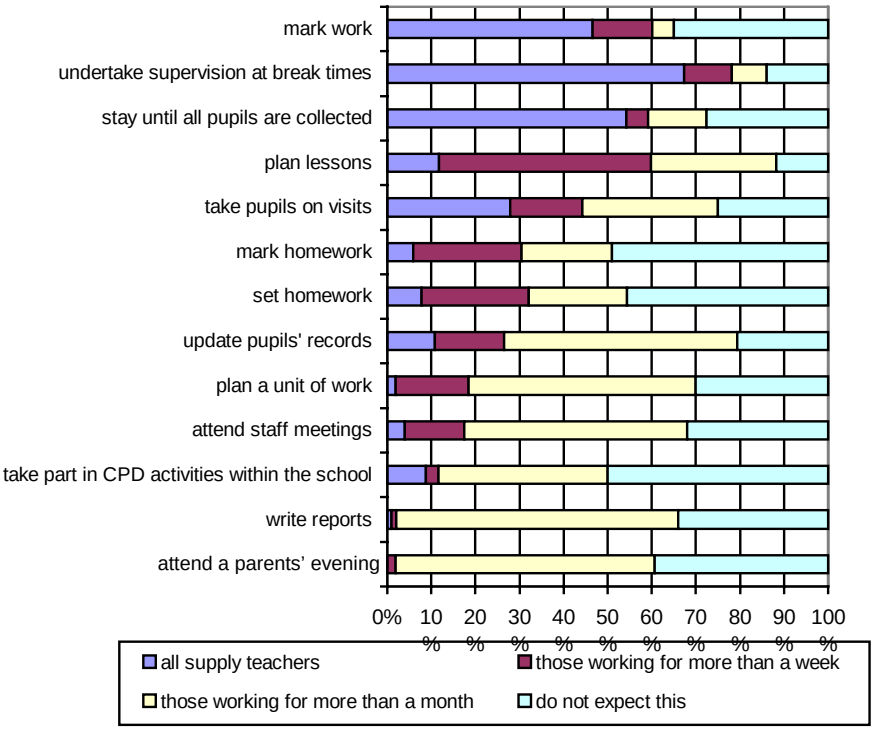
Table 10.4: Subjects for which it is most difficult to obtain supply cover (N=566)

	% mentioning subject		% mentioning subject
PE	36	MFL	26
Technology	36	Music	21
Science	34	ICT	13
Maths	33	English	10

Involvement in other aspects of work

The questionnaire asked schools to indicate what their expectations were of supply teachers working in the school for different periods of time. Responses from primary, secondary, special and nursery schools are shown in Figures 10.4 – 10.7. The option 'do not expect supply teachers to do this' was not included on the questionnaire, but where respondents have given responses in relation to some of the activities listed, we have inferred that they have left other activities blank because they do not expect supply teachers to routinely undertake them.

Figure 10.4: Primary schools' expectations of supply teachers (N = 594)



There are considerable differences across the sectors. For primary schools, supervision of pupils (at break time and after school) is of central importance whatever the length of the placement. About half the primary schools expect that even on a placement of less than a week supply teachers will mark pupils' work. More than a quarter of schools expect that they will take pupils on arranged visits.

When supply teachers are in the school for more than a week, most schools expect them to plan lessons. Tasks such as updating records, planning a unit of work, attending staff meetings and parents' meetings would only be expected for those working more than a month in a school.

In contrast in secondary schools (Figure 10.5) very little is expected of those who are there for less than a week, with less than 10% of schools expecting even that work will be marked. Those working for between a week and a month are expected by around 40% of schools to plan lessons and set and mark homework, and by about half to mark work.

In special and nursery schools (Figures 10.6 and 10.7), the expectations are similar to those of primary schools. Nursery schools are the most likely to expect even short-term supply teacher to update pupils' records and attend staff meetings.

However, what is perhaps most surprising is the number of schools in all sectors that do not expect supply teachers to undertake many of the listed tasks, even when they are on placements longer than a week or a month.

Figure 10.5: SECONDARY schools' expectations of supply teachers (N = 531)

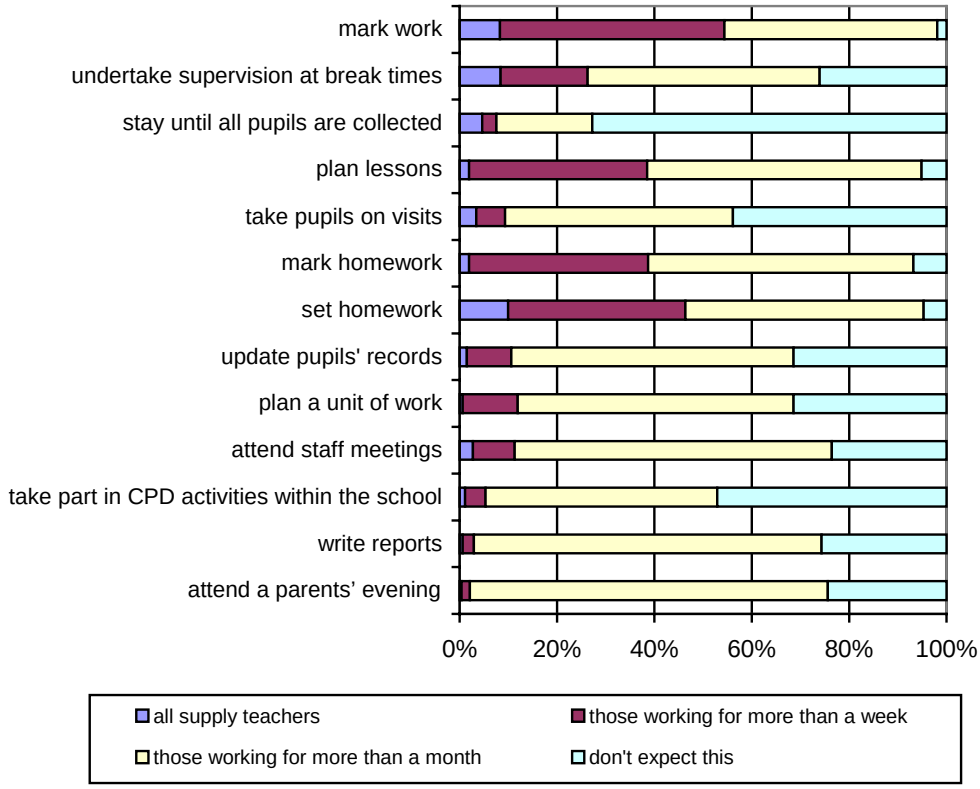


Figure 10.6 SPECIAL schools' expectations of supply teachers (N=116)

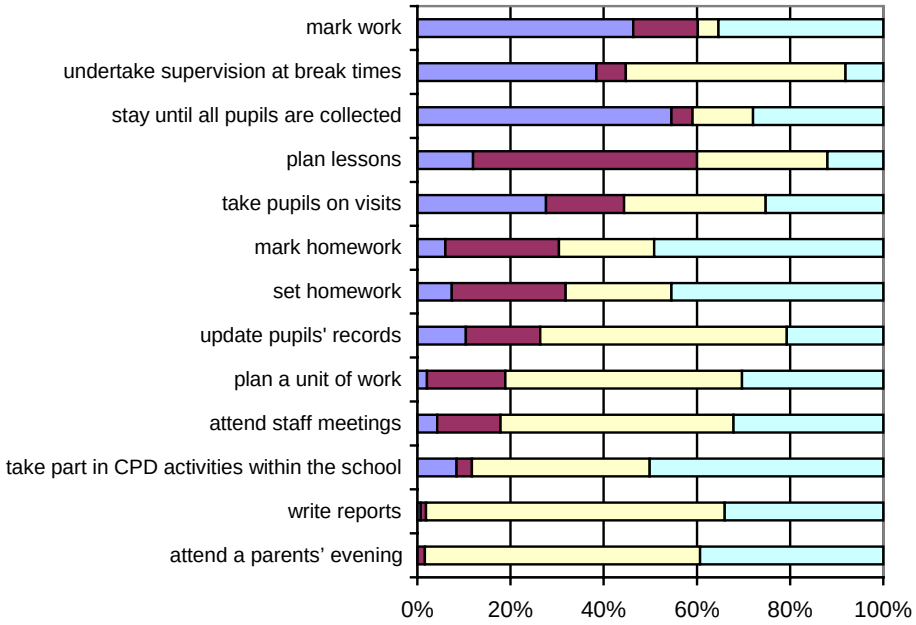
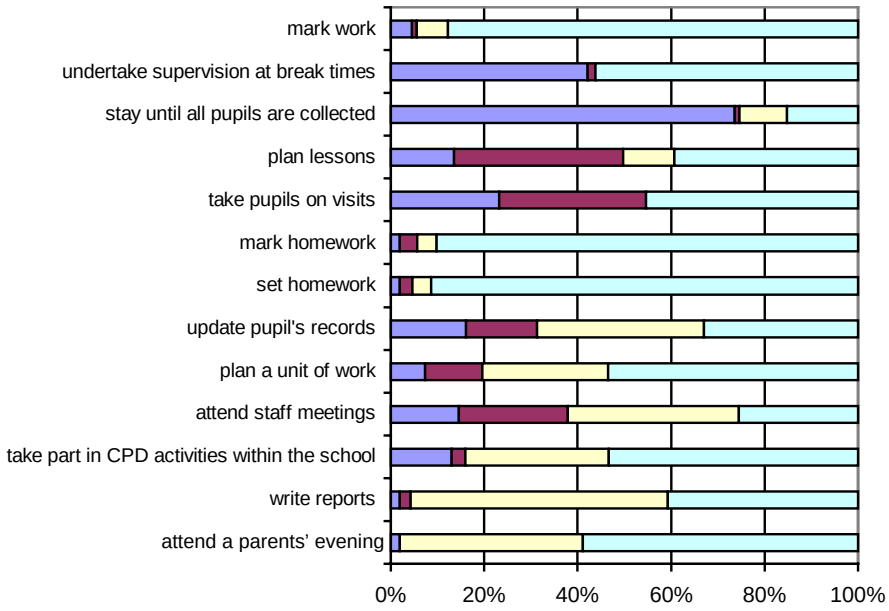


Figure 10.7: NURSERY schools' expectations of supply teachers (N=51)



Supply teachers commented that the varied expectations of different schools could be a problem; they were not expected to mark in one school, but it was assumed that they would do so in the next. These expectations were not always made explicit.

While school expectations are often limited, some supply teachers have developed unrealistically low expectations of the work they should do. One supply teacher, in spite of having been in the same setting for three weeks, clearly felt that his or her responsibilities should be limited entirely to the actual contact time with the class and that all preparation should be undertaken by regular school staff:

> *I quite often find in a particular school that I will come in at 8 o'clock and I will find all the photocopying has been left for me to do, all the resources that have to be found from various cupboards for me to do. I have to sharpen all the pencils because I hate children sitting down with no lead in their pencil. And I think that is totally disrespectful they expect you to teach your class but they don't have anything ready for you. And I think when you have had this state for three weeks it is just a disgusting way to treat a supply.* (Supply teacher in focus group)

Many supply teachers talked about marking in their lunch hours, but a minority argued that if they undertook marking they should be paid more; these were teachers on 'market' rates of pay who were earning less than they would have on national scales, so considered it reasonable to do less:

> *I mean you do sort of negotiate that money wise planning lessons and marking books again you sort of negotiate a deal. I won't get paid supply rate if you expect me to plan lessons and mark books.*

They pointed out that agency supply teachers usually receive a higher rate of pay for longer placements where they are expected to do a wider range of work. It would be helpful if there could be a shared understanding of the appropriate expectations for supply teachers' responsibilities.

Schools' views of the use of supply teachers

The questionnaire asked school respondents to indicate how far they agreed or disagreed with a number of general statements about the impact of supply teachers in the school.

Table 10.5 shows that there is a wide range of views.

Table 10.5: Schools' views about the use of supply teachers by school sector (1294)

			strongly agree	agree	neutral	disagree	strongly disagree
The use of supply teachers is a positive in that a change of teacher stimulates pupils	Nursery	%	2	7	44	39	7
	Primary	%	1	15	40	35	10
	Secondary	%	1	1	18	47	34
	Special	%	0	6	34	41	19
Pupils' behaviour is generally worse with supply teachers	Nursery	%	7	31	33	24	5
	Primary	%	16	47	22	13	2
	Secondary	%	36	47	12	4	1
	Special	%	18	49	23	11	0
Short term pupil achievement is negatively affected by the use of supply teachers	Nursery	%	10	29	24	34	2
	Primary	%	8	36	30	24	2
	Secondary	%	20	47	23	10	0
	Special	%	7	43	31	19	0
Supply teachers can supervise pupils but little is learnt	Nursery	%	3	8	23	56	10
	Primary	%	4	13	24	54	6
	Secondary	%	8	38	26	27	1
	Special	%	4	14	35	43	4
Long-term pupil achievement is lower when they are regularly taught by supply teachers	Nursery	%	12	40	33	16	0
	Primary	%	18	44	18	19	1
	Secondary	%	31	50	11	9	0
	Special	%	11	45	25	18	1
Supply teachers introduce the staff to new ideas	Nursery	%	2	38	43	14	2
	Primary	%	1	26	42	27	4
	Secondary	%	0	7	42	35	15
	Special	%	0	37	42	17	5

The overall picture is that schools believe pupil behaviour is worse with supply teachers, and long-term achievement is lower when supply teachers regularly teach a group. Secondary schools are the most negative abut the impact of supply teachers, mainly because of the impact on pupil behaviour. A higher proportion of the more challenging schools indicate that supply teachers have a negative impact in all aspects.

The schools most likely to identify positive impacts of using supply teachers are primary schools, rural schools, those that use familiar teachers, those with higher achievement, and schools outside London.

Secondary schools were significantly more negative than the other sectors about supply teachers in all their responses (chi-squared: $p = .000$). However, this varied across secondary schools. For example, those with a low percentage achieving 5 A*-C were significantly more likely to agree that 'pupils' behaviour is worse with supply

teachers' (chi squared, p = .000), as were those with a high percentage eligible for free school meals (p = .000), and those with a high percentage with special needs (p = .003). The same groups, together with urban schools, were also significantly more likely to agree that 'short-term achievement is negatively affected by the use of supply teachers', and the urban and low-achieving schools were significantly more likely to agree that 'supply teachers can supervise pupils but little is learnt'. The patterns found among the primary schools are very similar.

10.3 Summary: deployment within schools

There is a considerable difference between the expectations that primary and secondary schools have of supply teachers on short placements. The vast majority of secondary schools (97%) 'usually' expect supply teachers to supervise pupils doing set work, and 75% do not aim to achieve a subject match on short placements. On average secondary supply teachers spent only 40% of their time teaching subjects in which they had qualifications and experience. Primary schools usually expect supply teachers to teach, following the absent teacher's plans (74%). This difference contributes to the greater job satisfaction indicated by primary teachers (see Chapter 7).

Secondary schools experience the greatest difficulty in obtaining supply teachers to teach practical subjects such as PE and technology, and primary schools, Year 6 and Foundation Stage classes.

Schools have limited expectations of the tasks that supply teachers on short (less than a week) placements will undertake, and some schools also have very limited expectations of those working for longer periods.

11 Supporting supply teachers

11.1 Introduction

In Chapter 2, it was noted that there have been concerns expressed in earlier studies about the lack of support and professional development opportunities for supply teachers. In this chapter we examine the range of support that is offered or provided to supply teachers, focusing mainly on the support provided in school for those on short placements. Those on long placements are eventually seen as to some extent part of the staff, and so while they still need support, their problems are less acute then those of teachers arriving for the first time in an unfamiliar school. Without appropriate support, supply teachers are not able to contribute effectively to teaching and learning; Ofsted (2002) pointed out that this was all too often the case.

One aspect of supporting teachers appropriately is providing for their professional development; this is discussed in the next chapter; here we are only concerned with their day-to-day needs: for example, in finding their way round a new school, locating the resources they need, and being supported in behaviour management. Some aspects of support have already been discussed in Chapter 10, where we reviewed what sort of teaching schools expect of supply teachers, and whether they provide, for example, lesson plans, weekly plans or set work.

The chapter draws on data from the school and teacher surveys, and from interviews and focus groups.

11.2 Support within schools

DfES Guidance: Using Supply Teachers to Cover Short Term absences

In 2002 the DfES issued guidance for schools which included suggestions about school policies on supply teachers; supply teacher induction; handouts to give new supply teachers when they arrive in school; and feedback forms to enable supply teachers to report back on what had happened while they were covering. This guidance provided a very clear view of good practice in relation to supporting supply teachers. The school questionnaire therefore asked whether schools were familiar with this guidance (Table 11.1).

Table 11.1: Are you familiar with the DfES Guidance *Using Supply Teachers to Cover Short-term Absences*?

	Nursery	Primary	Secondary	Special
	%	%	%	%
yes	9	18	36	26
not in detail	58	52	44	48
no	33	30	20	27
N	*52*	*581*	*542*	*113*

Weighted data

The highest proportion of schools indicating they were familiar with this was in the secondary sector, and the lowest in the nursery sector. But 30% of primary and 20% of secondary schools indicated that they were not familiar with the guidance, and only 18% of primary and 36% of secondary schools felt able to say that they were familiar with it. The largest group of schools opted for 'not in detail'.

Lack of familiarity with the guidance would not be a problem if schools were in fact supporting supply teachers in the ways suggested. This chapter examines the evidence.

We asked schools to indicate from a list the three factors that they thought were the most important for schools in maximising the effectiveness of supply teachers Table 11.2).

Table 11.2: Which three factors do you consider to be most important in maximising the effectiveness of supply teachers? Responses by school sector

	Nursery	Primary	Secondary	Special
Developing a pool of supply teachers who are familiar with the school	79	82	83	80
Provision of detailed lesson plans	21	54	64	37
A named individual to provide support and supervision	58	45	56	63
Thorough induction	67	35	44	44
Provision of schemes of work	25	41	16	31
Provision of school policies	10	7	21	4
Provision of information about pupil attainment	17	20	5	25
Ensuring that supply teachers are included in professional development activity	23	10	5	11
N	*52*	*592*	*554*	*117*

Weighted data. Shading indicates the three most frequently identified factors in each sector.

Obviously the demand to identify only three factors means that some of the factors listed were selected by only a small proportion of respondents; it should not be assumed that they considered these to be *un*important, rather, they were seen as less important than the factors most frequently selected.

The factor most frequently identified by schools in all sectors was 'developing a pool of supply teachers who are familiar with the school'. This was discussed in Chapter 9, where we showed that while schools seek to do this, those in London and other inner-city areas, and the more challenging schools, have not usually succeeded in doing so, and they are forced to use unfamiliar supply teachers on a regular basis. In this situation, induction to the school becomes even more important.

The next most frequently identified factor for primary and secondary schools was 'provision of detailed lesson plans'. This was discussed in Chapter 10, where we showed that around two-thirds of supply teachers consider these to be very useful.

The third most frequently identified factor was 'a named individual to provide support and supervision'. Thorough induction was also frequently selected as one of the top three factors, and was seen as more important by nursery schools than by schools in other sectors. In this chapter we will review how often schools and supply teachers considered that such support, supervision and induction actually takes place.

Schemes of work, school polices and information about pupil attainment were all regarded as less important than the above factors, as was 'ensuring that supply teachers are included in professional development activity'.

Information supply teachers are given before a new placement

The first information a supply teacher receives about a school is at the time the booking is arranged. The questionnaire asked supply teachers what information is routinely made available before they start a new placement. The responses presented in Table 11.3 are only from those who had worked in more than five schools in the last year, as they would be the only ones with much experience of new placements. This would be information provided by the agency or supply service, or by the school itself before the teacher actually arrived.

Table 11.3: Teachers' responses to the question When you are sent to a new placement, what information is usually made available to you beforehand? Responses from those who have worked in more than five schools in the last year.

	%		%
Address	97	School reputation	16
Contact details	82	A sheet of information about the school	13
Name of contact person	80		
Details of cover needed	73	Feedback from previous supply teachers	3
Transport details / parking	26		

It is clear that in most cases supply teachers know what age group or subject they are expected to teach, and where the school is, but not much else. Even this minimum did not always happen. One teacher commented:

> *It would be nice if someone told you, if they could find out, exactly what you were covering that day, because I've got a lot of resources, but you don't take everything with you.* (Supply teacher in focus group)

Another focus group spoke at length about the inaccurate and inadequate address details they were given by their agency. A small number of teachers in interviews and focus groups said that they were sometimes able to visit the school before a placement. Obviously this could happen only where the booking was made in advance. Teachers found it very helpful to meet the teacher they would be replacing, and find out in advance what they would be teaching. However, such an arrangement depends on the goodwill and availability of the supply teacher, as they are not paid for such visits.

Arrangements for induction

The questionnaire asked schools what information they provide for supply teachers on their arrival, and also asked supply teachers what information they normally receive. Unsurprisingly there were some differences between the two: schools thought they provided far more than supply teachers reported receiving. Schools were simply asked to tick if an item is provided (Table 11.4).

Responses indicated that the most common items given to supply teachers are a handbook and a timetable. We found that almost all the case study schools had handbooks for supply teachers (for examples see Appendices D-G). They varied in

length and amount of detail, but most presented very clear summaries of the timetable, what to do in emergency, how to deal with bad behaviour, and so on.

Table 11.4: SCHOOL QUESTIONNAIRE: When a new supply teacher arrives in your school, what documentation are they given?

	nursery	primary	secondary	special
	%	%	%	%
A handbook designed for supply teachers	79	81	93	75
Timetable	70	87	94	20
Behaviour policy	49	36	60	47
Information about pupil attainment	20	28	7	54
Other information about specific pupils (e.g. special needs, medical or behavioural information)	79	76	23	4

Weighted data.

One handbook that seemed to be particularly useful summarized all this information on one side of a sheet of A4, and on the other side had a proforma for the teacher (in a planned absence) or a member of the management team, to summarise the plans for the day (see Appendix F). While fewer schools indicated that they give supply teachers the school behaviour policy, there is usually some information about behaviour in the handbook.

The responses indicated that information about the pupils is much more patchy; three-quarters of primary and nursery schools reported that they provide information about special needs or medical or behavioural issues, but this was less common in secondary (23%) and special (4%) schools. The latter seems surprising, but note that information about pupil attainment was provided by 54% of special schools, higher than other sectors (primary 28%, secondary only 7%).

Other information provided by some schools included a map (8% of secondary schools); health and safety information; a class list or photo (9% of secondary schools); lesson plans and contact details.

Schools in London were less likely to say that they provided supply teachers with a behaviour policy (primary, 26% in London, 37% elsewhere; secondary, 50% London, 61% elsewhere). This seems perverse when the schools in London more frequently use unfamiliar supply teachers. However, a higher percentage of the primary schools where the greatest number of supply days are worked provide supply teachers with a handbook.

The smallest secondary schools (less than 700 pupils) are more likely than average to provide supply teachers with information about attainment (15% in smallest schools compared to 9% average for all schools) and other information about specific pupils (39% in the smallest schools compared to all schools average of 27%). Schools that do not use private supply agencies more often provide teachers with additional information on specific pupils (41% of schools not using agencies, and 22% of schools using agencies). However, as we have shown earlier, it is the smaller and less challenging schools that do not use agencies, and in these circumstances it is perhaps easier to pass on information than in the context of a large urban challenging school. But in the large and challenging schools, the information is perhaps most needed. In

the previous chapter we quoted the deputy head a London secondary school explaining that in the context of her school, it would be impossible to provide more information.

Supply teachers were asked to indicate how often they received each type of information (Table 11.5 and Table 11.6).

Table 11.5: SECONDARY SUPPLY TEACHERS: How often are you provided with the following by schools?

	almost always %	sometimes %	occasionally %	never %
A handbook designed for supply teachers	37	31	18	15
Timetable	79	13	6	2
Behaviour policy	33	31	23	13
Information about pupil attainment	6	17	32	45
Other information about specific pupils (e.g. special needs, medical or behavioural information)	10	20	36	35
Access to the teaching resources you need	41	33	20	6
A feedback sheet	7	12	24	58

Table 11.6: PRIMARY SUPPLY TEACHERS: How often are you provided with the following by schools?

	almost always %	sometimes %	occasionally %	never %
A handbook designed for supply teachers	9	24	31	36
Timetable	44	30	20	6
Behaviour policy	9	19	30	42
Information about pupil attainment	7	22	36	35
Other information about specific pupils (e.g. special needs, medical or behavioural information)	28	32	31	9
Access to the teaching resources you need	46	35	16	3
A feedback sheet	3	8	15	74

Tables 11.5 and 11.6, like Table 11.4, show that secondary schools generally provide more information than primary, except in relation to pupil attainment. There is an obvious contrast between the supply teachers' responses and those of the schools. While more than 93% of secondary and 81% of primary schools said that they provide a handbook of information, only 68% of secondary and 33% of primary supply teachers said that they had received such documents 'almost always' or 'sometimes'. Where such documents were received they were very much appreciated. In the extract below, a nursery supply teacher in one of the case study schools argues that what she really appreciated in the sheet of paper she was given on its arrival was its summary of the philosophy of the school (Appendix D):

> *They gave me an A4 sheet. And they did, they didn't insist, but they did encourage that I read that before I go out to be with the children and that was fine, I just kind of skimmed it and I had a little look when I was out there as well. And this is brilliant, lots of schools don't give you anything, some do, but this is actually probably the most I have been given. And it's not information that says, oh this is when we have lunch or*

> *you know, this is where this is, or anything like that. They did show me around this is the staffroom, this is the toilet if you need it. Some schools don't do that its straight to your classroom. But this is brilliant! To know the philosophy of the school is great because it is so much easier to slot in when you are understanding.* [Int: And it is also short enough to read isn't it?] *You can skim it over and you can get an idea of what is going on.* (Supply teacher on her first day in a working in nursery school)

Similarly, a supply teacher interviewed on her first day in a London primary schools said that when she arrived she was given a sheet of information:

> *I was welcomed by the school secretary, and as it was after the bell had gone, I was given a prompts sheet, I was very nicely and politely looked after and taken upstairs.* [Int: When you say prompt, sheet what is that?] *All about the school. The school routines and things I needed to know.*

In focus groups many supply teachers reported positive experiences:

> *The majority of my experiences are good. I mean, the first one is obviously you go to the reception or office and they greet you. I have been in lots of situations where I get introduced to the teacher who is actually doing the same year group and so they give me all the information I need for that particular day and show me around.*

> *When you go into a school you need to be guided towards where you are going. What you are doing, be introduced to the headteacher, just a quick familiarization of the school. I personally get that at seventy to eighty percent of my schools, they are quite good – and this is working in London.*

In some schools however, even the proposed deployment of the supply teacher within the school can be something of a mystery when he or she first arrives, as one focus group participant explained:

> *But a lot of schools I have found that you walk in and either (a) no-one knows why you are there or (b) you float around for half an hour because no-one can remember where you are supposed to be. I mean I have been to a lot of schools where* [they say] *'Oh the secretary hasn't arrived yet, we don't know where you are supposed to be'. You know, there is just no cohesion, there is no working together. You get in late and the kids look at you, have you got fresh meat written across your forehead?, especially if you are teaching Year 4 or older and they just think 'Oh whoopee!'*

Not being greeted was reported by several focus group members:

> *At a particular school I've never gone back to and it was just total lack of organisation. There was no member of staff that was introduced to you as your backup if you have a problem,. I was just given a timetable at the reception desk and no plan of the school. I'd never been there before – or since – and the children were obviously used to having a succession of different supply teachers and they flew in and said 'Oh, who are you?, where have you come from?' and they obviously hadn't done any work for a long while and the notes on the desk were just useless. They just said what topic to do, no reference to any books or anything that the class were using, so basically that day, I've just blotted it out of my mind.*

Supply teachers said that schools often fail to give them basic information:

> *Quite often you can go into a school and they never tell you when playtime and dinner time is. Simple things like that. The good schools have sheets that they give you, or something that is laminated in the register for supply teachers. A lot of them don't. And you are saying to the children, 'What time is playtime then?' and asking them lots of things.*

They argued that this undermines them, and leads to less respect from pupils and teachers:

> *If you are standing there giving them a lesson, and they say, well actually it is a quarter past and we are meant to be going to break, or we are missing assembly, you know there is nothing worse than walking in five minutes late, and the whole school is in there, and you are walking in with the class. And the kids all turn and look at you, and all the staff are like, hmmm, supply! But if you aren't told, you can't, really.*

The questionnaire asked schools whether there was an individual responsible for induction of supply teachers. Around half the schools had identified this as one of the most important three factors in maximising the effectiveness of supply teachers, and even more said that there was an individual with this role (Table 11.7). However, again the school responses did not fit with supply teacher perceptions.

Table 11.7: Is there a named individual responsible for supply teacher induction? Comparison of school and teacher responses

		School response	Supply teacher response 'almost always' or 'sometimes'
Nursery	%	84	
Primary	%	74	30
Secondary	%	87	53
Special	%	92	

Weighted school data. Special school responses are not included because most special school supply teachers consistently work in the same schools.

One secondary school deputy head with responsibility for supply teachers described the normal process when a new supply teacher arrived in the school:

> *Assuming it's a new supply teacher, the first time at the school, I will meet them. I always meet them and go to the supply pack, show them where the loos are, where the staffroom is, go through their programme for the day, where they're going to be based and what lessons they've got. I'll introduce them to the head of department and usually that's when I back out, I leave them with the head of department who will go through the nitty gritty bits with them. The head of department goes through the classes and the work they have to do. … He gives them the class lists and the work set at least for the first lesson.* [Int: To what extent do they get information about things like pupil attainment or special needs?] *That will come with the class lists. I'll show you. Let's take ... I teach science so if I go off on a course then I teach 7Y2 so I would have printed this information. This isn't a very good example. Here is one. This also shows any special needs or anything like that, they're just pop-ups and I would print them out.* (East secondary)

In this case the supply teachers were apparently given information about pupils. Some other schools explained that while it was available on their management information system, supply teachers did not have access to the system. This meant they could not even obtain class lists.

In secondary schools there are generally two people involved in induction, the person who meets the supply teacher (who is often an administrative member of staff) and the head of department, rather than a single named person. The same can be true in primary schools:

> *Usually they are dealt with by one of the admin staff who will then take them and introduce them to another teacher in the year group. That teacher will go through what is being covered in the year group and will show them where everything is around the building and will just keep an eye to make sure that teacher is ok. And then the deputy and I are around and about the building so that we also get a feel for how a supply teacher is doing you know so that we are satisfied that the class is in order.* (London infants)

The difficulty with arrangements of this sort is that there is no single person responsible, so if some part of the induction process does not happen, no-one may be aware of this. Moreover, there is usually very little time between the teachers' arrival and the start of the school day, and this is a time of day when everyone is busy. A flavour of the reality of providing induction and support for a new supply teacher is revealed by the deputy head of a secondary school in inner city London. Having explained the difficulty of reaching the school on public transport, she explained:

> *Known supply teachers, obviously they know the school but for one or two unknowns they get here a bit late and you direct them to the 1st, 2nd, 3rd or 4th floors and say read this, turn right when you get to the first floor and it's along the corridor. But at least they have a booklet to read.* … [Int: Are there things like class lists or a seating plan?] *Sometimes teachers will give them a class list or a seating plan. Some of them will get the class in, and then quickly do a rough seating plan as the class sits down in their normal place. But it would only be for a known absence that class lists are given really.* [Int: And what about things like behaviour or medical information about pupils?] *No they wouldn't get that.* (London secondary girls)

Schools' arrangements for ongoing support

The supply teachers reported that the extent to which they felt supported in their work varied enormously across schools. In some schools they were not supported:

> *I had a really bad day, every time I was going to lessons and I was finding it very tough to keep the class settled, couldn't get them into their seats even, and there was kind of no support at all really, there was no-one to ask, no-one told me what the structure was, how the rules* [operated], *so it was down to like me to just try and control them, and I found that every single lesson I had was like that and there were lessons where the work set was too easy. The kids had done it. Or there wasn't any work set. Or they didn't understand and it just meant that every lesson was a battle.* (Supply teacher in focus group)

In others, the support was there:

> *She said I'll pop in from time to time … Just as it seemed like things were getting a bit upset she would come in. She came in they settled down and she'd say something to me, or say something to the class. Great, OK, thank you very much. She came in I think four times the whole lesson. And I felt so supported you know what I mean. It made the world of difference because I know the way they were going, it would have been a nightmare. I think as a general thing too, when I feel support from other teachers, you know even the smallest thing, the tiniest little thing, it makes such a big difference.* (Supply teacher in focus group)

The questionnaire asked if there was a named individual responsible for supporting the supply teacher (Table 11.8); again, while most schools reported that there was an individual responsible for support, less than half the supply teachers felt that this 'almost always' or 'sometimes' happened.

Table 11.8: Is there a named individual responsible for supporting supply teachers? Comparison of school and teacher responses

		School response	Supply teacher response 'almost always' or 'sometimes'
Nursery	%	75	
Primary	%	79	38
Secondary	%	87	53
Special	%	97	

Weighted school data

Around a fifth of primary schools did not indicate that there was an individual responsible for support, though in practice in all the schools we visited the headteachers saw themselves as having that role. Almost all special schools said they had a named individual responsible for support; two thirds had identified this as a key factor for maximising the effectiveness of supply teachers (Table 11.1).

Schools were also asked if they had a named individual responsible for supervision or monitoring of supply teachers (Table 11.9).

Table 11.9: School questionnaire: Is there a named individual responsible for supervision and monitoring

		supervision	monitoring
Nursery	%	78	76
Primary	%	73	74
Secondary	%	81	81
Special	%	89	87

Weighted school data

The figures here are again broadly consistent with those for supply teacher induction and also support, broadly ranging from 70 to 90 per cent. The question that this raises is about the identification of induction, support, supervision and monitoring of supply teachers in the remaining 10 to 30 per cent of schools. One possible explanation is that the schools without anyone responsible for supporting supply teachers might be schools that use very few new supply teachers. This was not the case for primary schools. However, primary schools with higher eligibility for free school meals were more likely to have a teacher responsible for supporting supply teachers ($p = .014$). In secondary schools, there was a significant relationship between number of different supply teachers used in the year and provision of an individual responsible for support (Anova: $p = .003$).

The questionnaire asked how effective schools considered their arrangements for induction, support, supervision and monitoring. While a third considered they were 'very effective', the majority saw them as 'fairly effective', and only a minority considered that arrangements for induction and support needed to be developed. A higher percentage of schools felt that supervision and monitoring needed to be developed. A higher proportion of secondary schools answered that supervision needed to be developed (24%) than other sectors, and fewer secondary schools rated their supervision arrangements as very effective compared to the other sectors (22%).

Table 11.10: School questionnaire: 'How effective do you consider the arrangements you have for induction, support supervision and monitoring to be?'

	very effective	fairly effective	needs to be developed
Induction	31	53	15
Support	38	50	12
Supervision	26	54	20
Monitoring	23	48	29

Weighted data

The schools that use the largest umbers of supply teachers and those that use the most different supply teachers were the least likely to consider their arrangements to be effective.

Comments made on the questionnaire illustrate the wide variety of arrangements, and very different levels of satisfaction with these arrangements. A number of all types of schools commented that they try to reduce or eliminate the need for induction /support/supervision by using only familiar supply teachers. Nurseries commented either that close contact and collaborative working between staff allows for informal induction/support/monitoring, or that they find they lack the time and staff to do any more. Among primary schools there were differences between relating to school size. While some small schools suggested that it is easier for them to provide informal support, others reported that the pressures on staff in a small school make it harder. Larger primary schools commented that the effectiveness of procedures depends on which member of staff is absent. Many primary schools commented on informal 'buddy' arrangements, or obtaining feedback from teaching assistants (also noted as key in special schools).

In secondary schools both formal monitoring procedures ('*HOD completes evaluation form, supply teacher completes exit questionnaire*') and informal procedures ('*Apart from, induction these tend to be fairly ad hoc arrangements, but they do take place*') were reported. There was a range of opinions in both primary and secondary schools about these procedures; some considered them to be satisfactory ('*Good systems in place*', '*All supply teacher evaluate their experience in our school*'; some reported that they are currently under development ('*Our new CPD policy will include these aspects*'); but others recognise problems ('*We are very aware that supervision and monitoring are large gaps'*, '*Whole process needs to be developed*'). A middle school respondent with no arrangements for support, supervision or monitoring commented: '*Useful idea – shall put this to senior leaders meeting*' and a respondent from a special school wrote that: '*We are not happy with what we are doing and need to do more. This form has prompted me to do just that*'.

Secondary schools often identified the heads of department as responsible for induction/support/supervision. Having a head of department who does this role well was included in a list of ways to improve a supply teacher's experience:

> *At the beginning of the lesson, where the people from the department introduce you to the class and set clearly the work to be done. When they make it clear that they are there is there are any problems, and they can't get away with that nonsense. The support of the people in the department, often the teacher working next door to you.* (Supply teacher in focus group)

Interviews and focus groups with supply teachers indicated that one of the key areas where support is required, and is certainly appreciated when it is given effectively, is

that of the management of children's behaviour. Whether a supply teacher can cope with disruptive behaviour or with 'difficult' classes is often seen as a test of whether they are dependable or not. However, success in this area is often perceived by the teachers themselves to be as much a question of the support they are given within the school as rather than their own teaching skills. The following extract from a focus group discussion with overseas trained teachers illustrates the worst kind of experience that was reported:

> *Everything eventually went horribly wrong, a bad school. I had no idea who the headmaster was for the first two or three weeks. I saw this guy every now and again just hanging out in one of the rooms with a moustache and I didn't know who he was. He was the headmaster. But I think what happened in this case was I had come in, they had already had six supply teachers before me and so I was number seven, you know I think in my first week one of them said lets see how quickly we can break you. … and so I was pretty wound up. I went into this one class, they were just a pain in the arse and it finally got to the point where I couldn't deal with them any more. There was no one specific student, I didn't pick up a chair and chuck it or anything, but it was just the continual amount of talking in the background and not listening and not getting on with the work and talking back. And trying to get the support and not getting it, and finally it just got the point where I just snapped and I had never, ever done that in a classroom before. But I just suddenly found myself, not just speaking loudly, but genuinely yelling at the top of my voice. I think, and this is the one thing I am really ashamed of, I even punched the table. And I saw myself doing it, going, what the hell am I doing?* (Supply teacher in focus group)

When we asked supply teachers to describe their worst day, they often referred to pupil behaviour:

> *I was sworn at, spat on, downright verbal abuse actually. I just wanted to cry, by half nine I had had enough.* (Supply teacher in focus group)

The head of a primary school described the system through which supply teachers in her school are supported in dealing with challenging behaviour:

> *In the case of a supply teacher initially assuming that only one of the year team is out, then it would be the other person in the year team. We are a very open plan school and so you know when somebody next door is having problems, and experienced teachers would get in there and help out. … And then it would be me, send a runner to me. At the bottom of that sheet* [A4 information sheet] *we ask the staff to make a note of any special needs children who the teacher might need to be aware of. And as I say an example of that a Year 4 class that we had last year, it was a case of, if this, this or this child acts up, just send a runner to one of the senior managers straight away. Because we knew that any supply teacher, however good they were, once that sort of child decided to act up there was no point in trying intermediate measures.* (Yorkshire and the Humber junior)

When school managers were asked about their provision of support for supply teachers, many of them also raised the question of monitoring of performance. Some schools are very systematic about this and organise a rota of observation that can sometimes lead to further support for individual teaches or can lead to them not being reemployed in the school. The head of a middle school describes the approach used in his school:

> *Our system of teachers dropping in on classrooms is the first, if you like, thermometer. It will go up in our staff room if there is a supply in, what lesson that supply teacher is taking. Next to that will go the name and initials of the member of staff who is expected to be on call and a drop in. The expectation, and we do check on this, is that that*

> *person will drop in at least once in the initial part of the lesson. Because that is the time when the teacher is delivering and the time when you see they have group control. If there are any concerns about that person that will be passed on to one of the senior teachers in the school, that may be a year leader, deputy head or myself. … We run systems such as this within our performance management, we run buddy systems, so teachers are used to watching each other. All the staff have undergone some quality assurance work with each other and we have done that with outside advisers as well to make sure we know what we are talking about in terms of what constitutes good quality in a classroom … My style is to encourage people to be empowered. These people, if they are not working well in my school, they are going to go and work not so well in another school as well so its about assisting them as professionals.* (North East middle school)

This extract provides an indication that the way in which supply teachers are received, treated and supported is likely to reflect a broader pattern of the leadership and management ethos of any school.

But for supply teachers, perhaps the most important thing is the attitude of other teachers, and this was generally described as positive:

> *If there is anything you can't find, most teachers are very helpful and you can always get help from next door.* (Supply teacher in focus group)

At a very personal level, small acts of recognition can have a very powerful effect, as 'Greta Jones' said:

> *I went into a school I'd not been into before. They were very, very friendly. It was very well organised. There were some difficult children but everything was in place so that I knew what to expect and the piece de resistance was when I went into the staff room at break and it said on the notice board 'Welcome to Greta Jones' and that made my day. I've had lots and lots of really positive experiences over the years with different children but that's the most recent one really. I thought yeah, that was really great. They didn't need to do that.*

11.3 Summary: Supporting supply teachers

The DfES guidance, *Using Supply Teachers to Cover Short-term Absences*, sets out very clearly what is good practice in relation to supporting supply teachers. Only 36% of secondary schools and 18% of primary schools indicated that they were familiar with this document. Schools considered supply teacher induction and the provision of a named individual to support and supervise supply teachers to be important in maximising the effectiveness of supply teachers. Most schools (81% primary and 93% secondary) reported that they provide supply teachers with a brief handbook of information. However, only 33% of primary and 68% of secondary supply teachers reported that they were 'almost always' or 'sometimes' given such a handbook. Those who had experienced this reported that such information was very useful. In the same way far more schools reported that a named individual was responsible for supporting supply teachers than supply teachers reported having such support. It is thus very difficult to assess the extent of good practice in this respect. In many schools more than one person shares responsibility for supporting the supply teacher, and while in this may be very effective, it can also leave the supply teacher with no support at all, and nobody aware of their needs.

Supply teachers reported some experiences of very inadequate support, in terms of not being given information, and not supported in relation to pupil behaviour. But many

also reported positive experiences and supportive teachers in the schools they worked in.

It appears from both school responses and supply teachers' accounts that secondary schools generally provide more systematic information and support than primary schools, but this is by no means universal. However, those supply teachers in primary schools generally felt that they were well supported by the neighbouring teachers even when systematic information and support was not provided. The worst experiences of lack of support reported were all in secondary schools.

12 Professional development of supply teachers

12.1 Introduction

This chapter starts by reviewing the provision made by agencies, local authorities and schools for professional development of supply teachers. It then presents supply teachers' responses in relation to the professional development activities that they have been involved in during the last year, and what they would like to undertake in the future. Finally it considers the responses of agencies, LEAs, schools and supply teachers in relation to the self-study materials for supply teachers provided by the DfES.

12.2 Provision for professional development of supply teachers

The provision made for continuing professional development (CPD) by local authorities, local authorities in partnership with private sector companies, and by private supply agencies varied enormously. In each of these groups there was very good practice, but also some less good practice. The majority of the private supply agencies and local authority supply services interviewed offered some CPD (though the questionnaire showed that many local authorities do not).

Several of interviewees commented that supply teachers are not all enthusiastic to attend courses, and that the lack of take-up limits the provision made. One LEA representative wrote on the questionnaire:

> *There is a lack of positive response to professional development by supply teachers. We have tried to offer a wide range of development provision, but little response.* (LEA running own supply service)

Agencies expressed similar sentiments:

> *This was another thing about supply teachers coming on to courses. 'If I come on a course for a day I am missing an opportunity for work. I don't want to come in the evening, I am tired. Saturdays, they are mine. Half terms, they are mine.' There is a mentality from some supply teachers. 'I love training but can't do it this time, can't do it that time.'* (Local agency)

There are a number of obvious reasons for this: we have shown that some supply teachers have already retired, and others are supply teaching because they do not want to work long hours or have out of school commitments. Nevertheless, some training initiatives have worked well, and private supply agencies and some local authorities have made ongoing efforts to find ways to persuade supply teachers to participate. This section outlines the various provision made.

Local authority provision

The LEA questionnaire asked whether the LEA provided professional development specifically designed to meet the needs of supply teachers, and whether supply teachers had access to the full range of LEA-provided CPD. Ten LEAs did not respond to one or other of these questions, or said that they did not know. The interviews with LEA staff indicated that there are not necessarily any links between the section of the LEA that deploys supply teachers (often part of Human Resources) and the section that runs professional development courses; this may be a reason for

non-response. Altogether 17% of the LEA respondents indicated that the LEA offered no professional development to supply teachers in either category (specifically tailored to their needs or access to LEA courses).

Table 12.1 shows responses to the first question, whether the LEA provides professional development specifically designed to meet the needs of supply teachers. Overall, 43% of LEAs responded that special provision was made for supply teachers. Those least likely to do so are the LEAs with no arrangement for the deployment of supply teachers (30%), and the most likely, those that run their own supply services (60%).

Table 12.1: Does the LEA provide professional development specifically designed to meet the needs of supply teachers?

	number	%
Yes	35	43
No	36	44
Currently being developed	3	4
Don't know	1	1
No response	7	9
N	*82*	*100*

The best practice was generally found in LEAs that run a service on agency lines (either for that LEA alone or working across a group of LEAs). One explained that the LEA has a professional development team for supply teachers made up of experienced teachers who teach part of the week, and work with supply teachers on the other days. They run a training day each term (on the day that is an INSET day for most of the authority's schools):

> *We have the training days on the first day of term and we have three. The courses that we put on are all accredited by the College of Teachers, and they can get a College of Teachers award. … It is quite popular with some teachers.* (LEA-run agency)

The professional development team also performance manage the supply teachers on permanent contracts, and are responsible for monitoring the effectiveness of supply teachers in school, both through questionnaires and visits. They identify development needs, which are then catered for through twilight courses. Questionnaires are subsequently sent to supply teachers asking how they have made use of what they learned.

Another interviewee explained that that the LEA-run agency provides an induction day for all new supply teachers, and then provides three days training each year for every supply teacher on its list. These days are generally held during half terms so that the teachers do not lose opportunities to work. Normally they would be expected to have worked for about ten days as a supply teacher to have access to this training, but in reality if someone is keen to attend, and the course is happening, they are encouraged to go along. The days are specifically geared to the needs of supply teachers: for example, behaviour management and SEN. However, if supply teachers prefer to attend other courses run by the LEA they can attend those instead as part of their entitlement. Training needs are identified from feedback from schools, and where appropriate supply teachers are steered towards particular courses.

We interviewed a primary school that regularly uses this LEA supply service, and the headteacher spoke very positively of the supply teachers' level of professional development, their understanding of the curriculum and current initiatives, and in particular their ability to use interactive whiteboards.

Another example of good practice was a supply service run on agency lines by a partnership of LEAs. They explained their view of their role in providing for professional development:

> *Our role is to provide an update facility to keep teachers in training. We need to provide the professional development that it is continuing in their working lifetime as part of their portfolios to support their practice. And it is also to pinpoint areas of need, their own personal need, and to facilitate that need really, isn't it? And also there is the quality aspect and maybe the teachers feel confident and able to deliver and so it is the only way that we can ensure that we have good quality supply teachers is to take ownership of their training*. (LEA partnership running supply agency)

The provision made in this partnership was in the form of monthly after-school meetings where a variety of different training was provided. A similar arrangement in another LEA was described as a supply teachers' club; in this case it took place once a week, and supply teachers could drop into sessions that appealed to them.

This sort of provision was welcomed: supply teachers generally commented more favourably on provision designed specifically to meet their needs. The questionnaire also asked LEA respondents whether supply teachers had access to the full range of LEA-provided professional development activities (Table 12.2).

Table 12.2: Do supply teachers have access to the full range of LEA-provided professional development activities?

	Number	%
Yes	34	41
Some but not all	2	2
If school sends / funds	12	15
If supply teacher pays	5	6
If places available	1	1
No	19	23
Don't know	2	2
No response	7	9
N	*81*	*100%*

Again, those LEAs that run their own supply service or agency were the most likely to indicate that supply teachers had access to the full range of CPD activities, in some cases offering open access to twilight courses:

> *We offer them training. They can attend any courses they wish to and that is updated termly and if there are any updates on our training development they would be sent out. We are encouraging them all the time.* [Int: Do you know how much the uptake is?] *It is fairly good. You have got those that are not interested, those that are just bumping their pensions up and they are not interested, but those on their career breaks and the younger certainly do actually attend. I know one lady who actually, there are several courses she has been on and they are quite encouraged by these courses.*

The LEAs with no supply service, or that simply issue a list, were the most likely to respond that supply teachers could attend professional development courses only if a school or the supply teacher pays (33%):

> *They are not employees of the LEA. They could however, choose to buy into the activities or a school who uses them regularly could choose to send them.*
>
> *Currently it would be the school where the supply teacher is based which would pay. Schools are advised to include supply teachers in CPD and to treat them the same as regular members of staff.*
>
> *Depends on whether school send them on courses*

It simply does not seem to have occurred to some LEA staff that schools are unlikely to see it as their role to send supply teachers on courses or pay for them to attend. However, where this does happen, the supply teachers involved are likely to be those working long-term in schools or those who work regularly in the same schools. The supply teacher who does short-term work in different schools is the least likely to have access to LEA professional development opportunities in such LEAs.

Provision by local authorities in partnership with private sector providers

Those LEAs that run supply services in partnership with private sector organisations presented a very mixed picture in terms of CPD availability. In the less well set-up arrangements, professional development seems to be effectively catered for neither by the LEA nor by the agency; one LEA interviewee explained that supply teachers *'don't currently have an entitlement to professional development'*. In another case, the LEA had recently negotiated a different private sector contract, mainly because the previous one had not included any CPD provision.

Where the private sector partner is responsible for deployment only, one might assume that the local authority should provide professional development, but this does not always happen. This frustrated one private sector company, which received feedback from schools identifying training needs, and passed these on to the LEA:

> [Int: So the LEA is entirely responsible for the CPD aspects?] *Yes, as the employers. Some do it, some do it very well, some do nothing at all. Even though we feed back and say this teacher needs help, 'Oh I'll pass it onto somebody who does that in our sort of organisation' and it goes on and then we talk to the teacher in a couple of weeks and say, 'Oh did they get back to you?' ' No they haven't.'* (Private sector company)

But while some partnerships were not effective in terms of CPD, others were excellent. In one instance, the partnership included a higher education institution. The charge made to schools for each supply day included £5 that is added to ensure that provision is made for professional development. The managers of the agency were very enthusiastic about this approach, which they saw as part of their clear commitment to ensuring that supply teachers were of the highest possible quality.

> *When we began the agency, we provide all our supply teachers with a training analysis form which they complete at interview … so we can get a general picture, and when we first set up the agency we found that a lot of people had not undertaken the training around the national strategies, so for two years our key aim was national strategy training on literacy and numeracy, ICT. In the secondary phase we were looking at assessment for learning, the teaching and learning in secondary schools materials around things like group working* [inaudible] *which a lot of the supply teachers never come across because they used to go in and not really teach to be quite honest. So basically we did a lot of sessions where it was a very quick cramming session, this is*

> *what it's about as well as bringing in professionals from schools to talk about basic behaviour management techniques because one of the issues that came through when we were looking at setting up the* [agency] *was behaviour management for a supply teacher is actually very difficult.*

This training analysis now focuses more on specific areas such as phonics. Training is provided as full day and twilight sessions. In the first instance courses were specifically targeted at supply teachers, but more recently they '*actually have teachers and supply teachers together and they learn from each other'*. The partnership has also created a framework through which it was possible for supply teachers to work towards a Master's qualification awarded by the higher education partner of the consortium. In some cases, the agency interviewees told us that supply teachers are advised, or even required to undertake CPD:

> *We will work with the individual and say actually you've been in teaching in a primary school and actually you've done very little numeracy, very little literacy so we'll arrange for them to go and work with leading literacy teachers, leading numeracy teachers or specialist teachers in secondary phase so that they can begin to understand the basis of what's being required. In certain circumstances also, if it is a case where actually they have not understood what was required of them in cases of things like the curriculum, we actually require people to undertake refresher courses, twelve week refresher courses* (Local authority and agency partnership)

Teachers working through this agency were aware of the professional development opportunities, and saw these as positive, but few of them were really enthusiastic. Like many other supply teachers they raised the question of pay: '*Personally I've never been on any of the courses and one of the reasons is it's a day's pay you're losing';* this was challenged by another focus group member who pointed out that there were also evening courses available. They felt that the Master's course would not necessarily help with supply work:

> *I'm not convinced that those courses are really tailored to help you with supply. I think they're more tailored to people already in permanent posts.* (Supply teacher in focus group)

An agency involved in another partnership had suggested a similar approach to the financing of professional development, though in this case had only aimed to charge an additional 50 pence on each booking fee; however, the LEA had rejected this idea:

> *We came up with a scheme which we thought was good, the officers thought good, but we couldn't get it past the various powers that be, the authority, whereby, if you worked out how many day's supply worked, in the authority in a year, and just applied a 50p surcharge to every day worked, you would generate a huge fund to offer supply teachers courses.* (Local agency in partnership with LEA)

Provision by private supply agencies

The larger private supply agencies all provide CPD, and often combine it with social events because they are very aware of the lack of support that supply teachers experience:

> *The other thing about supply teachers is that they were not supported in any way. Forget sort of professional development, but actually not supported in any way by the system. I mean they come into the school, and they will quite often leave the school, they were not part of the school, they were kind of freelance people just appearing and going away. And so they never really had a chance to become part of a school or part of a system.* (National agency)

This sort of support is very much welcomed by some supply teachers, particularly those trained overseas:

> *When you first arrive in London, particularly from Australia, it is such a shock, and I was really unhappy, and I just went in one day and just blurted it all out and they sat and listened. And so there is a great deal of emotional support as far as the work situation goes which has really made a difference.* (Australian supply teacher)

One strategy to counteract this is to provide social networks. This is particularly common among the agencies with offices in London, where many of the supply teachers are overseas-trained teachers and NQTs. Thus CPD is combined with a social event:

> *In London I have more turn out for our courses, because the overseas guys and NQT guys will see it as a bit of a social event as well you know. We always have wine and cheese afterwards, and because they are in a strange country with a completely different education system, and they want support and they want help, and generally your average overseas holiday visa teacher is conscientious, … so we have a good pick up of it in London. NQTs out of London will go along but it is not a huge take up.* (National agency)

This notion of social events being important also applies more widely:

> *We've recently set up teachers' forums because we found our best teachers wouldn't come to any of our CPDs. They thought teaching was like suck eggs. We adjusted them, we now have teachers' forums whereby we see conversation but we set up the forum between the teachers. So they discuss you know what are they finding, how are they dealing with this. What are their experiences? So you get good teachers and new teachers and they chat, so it's a sort of club of people who are the same as them, because they can be slightly outsiders in the staff room. And so we're creating an environment where they can have open and useful conversations.* (National agency)

Similarly a private supply agency based in a rural county explained that the day courses held each term are also social events for their teachers, many of whom are combining supply teaching with childcare. The courses are held on working days because the teachers would not be able to attend evening or twilight courses. Obviously this means teachers who attend lose a day's pay (and less cover is available to schools that day), but because the day is also a social event, and generally held at an attractive venue, take-up is high.

> *Yes, our last course was in January and it was on interactive whiteboards and we had a course for about fifty teachers. We tend to run on average two or three a year, usually one per term, and they tend to be new curriculum issues like interactive whiteboards which supply teachers don't have any training on because they're not attached to a school, yet they're expected to be able to use them, so we'll offer it free of charge to everybody on our books. We tend to spend a day there and it'll be a good chance for all the teachers to have a social chat as well as actually what the academic input is.* (Local agency)

It is quite difficult for very small agencies to provide courses; one told us that '*because we're in the early days of setting this up we're not able at the moment to contribute to the training*.' Nevertheless, they encouraged supply teachers to undertake CPD. They produce a monthly newsletter about training for special needs (their focus) that is available through the private sector, and they monitor participation in professional development activity:

> *We ask them to fill in a professional development form when they join us so we know where they're at. And that means that when I come across specific professional*

> *development which I think might be in certain person's or people's interests I'll get on the phone or get in contact with them and let them know, you know that they may be, this vacancy is interesting to them. And we regularly … write to all of our teachers just to see a) whether they're still on board if we haven't used them recently. But b) for them to have an opportunity to update us and know what professional developments they have been able to do and also for them to let us know what professional development we could advise on.* (Local agency)

In view of the reluctance of many supply teachers to attend courses, one national agency is setting up on-line learning to run in addition to face-to-face courses:

> *We need to provide continued professional development, and they* [auditors for Quality Mark and Preferred Supplier lists] *are asking us, what do you do with a teacher who won't come? Well, I can't afford to pay those teachers to come, so we run twilight and weekends, and a teacher who has had a long day in a school is not particularly going to want to come if they don't feel they need that input of an evening, and they certainly wouldn't want to give their weekend up. So in order to try and deal with those that we are not reaching at the moment we are looking at an e-learning system where we can upload activities and information, and people can dip in and out of that, and it will all be recorded what they have actually done in their own little folders – they get a professional development folder – without coming necessarily along to the meetings. … What we hope it will mean is that those who don't want to do that and who are not turning up at least have got access to something.* (National agency)

Another agency had set up a certificate course in supply teaching, which ran over a year. It was funded from a government source. The idea was that teachers could accumulate credits towards a Masters degree. This was a positive development, and was well attended. It was a model that could have been widely adopted. However, the funding was cut off, and although still 'on the books', it has not been held again.

One agency interviewee felt that if professional development of supply teachers is to be really effective, the government would have to make it mandatory:

> *What you want to do is give them as much resource and help as they can possibly get but you don't want to put restrictions on them. Your retired ex deputy heads who has been going along to his local school and having input, so knows what is going on and knows what changes are happening, what am I going to do? Say to him, 'Well I am sorry you have not come to any of our training courses so you can't teach any more'?, If it became mandatory that teachers couldn't do supply teaching unless they had a certain input I would love that, I would be 100% for that, but unfortunately it is just one of the many things that it seems to be that they want agencies to regulate the industry rather than the government do it.* (National agency)

Provision by schools

Supply teachers who spend extended periods of time in the same setting are often offered the opportunity to take part in school-based training activities,

> *Certainly the ones that I have longer term, they come to training here, they attend the Monday evening staff meetings, all of them are training sessions.* (London infants)

However, schools do not necessarily see it as their responsibility to cater for the training of those on short placements:

> [Int: How long would a supply teacher have to be here before you included them into any professional development activity?] *Well for example INSETs if they were here on maternity leave or a long-term sick we would include them and we would be willing to*

> *pay for that no problem at all. But otherwise no, because a lot of the agencies do their own INSETs.* (London secondary girls)

Some case study schools indicated that their regular supply teachers who work directly for the school were invited to INSET days:

> *Yes, the regular ones are all invited to our INSET days and I would say the take-up is about fifty percent. They will all be invited to that CPD programme of twilight sessions.* (East secondary)

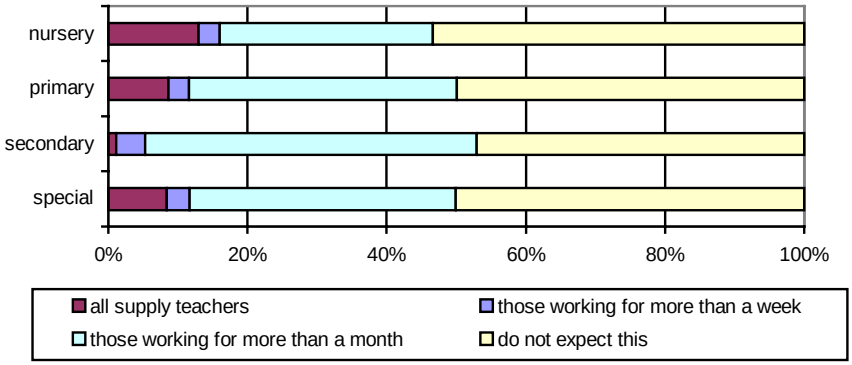
One school even indicated that supply teachers were paid for attending school INSET days:

> *Our supply teachers, our known ones, we pay extra to have them to come into our in service days and they are quite willing to do that.* (North East middle school)

When schools were asked to indicate which three factors from a list provided were the most important for schools in maximising the effectiveness of supply teachers (see Chapter 11 for full details), only 5% of secondary and 10% of primary schools selected 'ensuring that supply teachers are included in professional development activity' among their three factors; it was one of the lowest-rated two factors in primary, secondary and special schools, but was rated more highly in nursery schools.

The questionnaire also asked schools to indicate what their expectations were of supply teachers working in the school for different periods of time; responses were fully reported in Chapter 10 (Figures 10.4-10.7). The list included 'take part in CPD activities within the school. The responses in relation to CPD are repeated on Figure 12.1, and show that only a minority of schools expect any supply teacher to take part in CPD activities, and in most cases this would only be a supply teacher who was in the school on a long-term placement[9].

Figure 12.1: On what length of placement would you expect supply teachers to take part in CPD activities?



London secondary schools were more likely to expect supply teachers on any placement to take part in CPD than schools outside London (71% of schools in

[9] As we explained in Chapter 10, the option 'do not expect any supply teachers to do this' was not included on the questionnaire. However, where respondents had given responses in relation to some of the activities listed but not all, we have inferred that this is because no supply teachers are routinely expected to undertake that activity.

indicated that supply teachers take part in CPD, compared with 50% of schools elsewhere). This was because more London schools said that those on placements over a month would do so, and one explanation for this could be that London schools make more use of supply teachers and have more on such placements.

Those schools that indicated that they did expect supply teachers to take part in CPD activities were asked whether the supply teachers were paid for doing so; 44% of primary schools and 70% of secondary schools indicated that they were. Interviews suggested that when schools said they would pay teachers to attend CPD they generally meant that those on long-term placements were included in INSET sessions that took place during the placement; they did not mean, for example, that their regular supply teachers who were invited to INSET days or twilight sessions were paid for attending.

In situations where supply teachers are working through agencies, some school managers take the view that provision of professional development should be part of the responsibilities of the agency:

> [Int: What about professional development for supply teachers, do you see that as partly your responsibility in the school? Or do you see it as the agency's responsibility?] *I see it as the agency responsibility. If someone is with us long term we do encourage them to join any training that we have. We think that is really important.* … [Int: And do you think they should be paid; the supply teachers should be paid for doing their CPD?] *I am not really sure how I stand on that. I mean from a personal point of view I would say the benefit of going out and enjoying and getting more training. I don't know how I feel about that. I mean teachers, when we send teachers on courses; they are in effect being paid while they are being trained, but whose responsibility is it? I think the agency's, … yes it should be the agency's because they can then give a quality service, it is all part of the quality of their service, training their people.* (North East special school)

Fifty-seven percent of schools identified provision of effective CPD for supply teachers as a 'very important' or 'fairly important' factor in selecting a private agency or LEA supply service. However, while suggesting that agencies were responsible for providing CPD for supply teachers, two case study school interviewees had no idea whether this was in fact happening:

> [Int: And do you have any idea to what extent the teachers you use are getting any INSET?] *I don't know but I haven't found the time perhaps or I've never thought of asking but it's a good point.* (London secondary girls)

> *No, I've no idea. Actually I think they are because I've seen programmes set up by the agencies themselves; it's the agencies that set them up.* (London primary)

Another school had complained to the agency they used that the inexperienced teachers did not seem to be getting any CPD:

> [Int: Does the agency that you use, to your knowledge provide any CPD?] *I have spoken to them about this because when we have had young teachers in they have not appeared to be supported. The school has had to provide the support for that person. My point of view is this, if they are employing a young teacher, they are giving them a very low rate of pay and they are still charging us the same rate for a fairly experienced teacher and they will be putting out newly qualified teachers to us yet doing nothing for their development.* (North East middle school)

Another school suggested that some agency supply teachers were not accessing appropriate CPD in relation to ICT:

I think it is possibly … that they are not getting the professional development because they are not able to access whatever the LEA offers or whatever the school sets up for its own staff external to the LEA. And also I think because they are going from school to school every school has a different [ICT] *set up and it must be just impossible.* (London infants)

12.3 Supply teachers' responses about professional development activity

Supply teachers were asked to give brief details of professional development activities they had been involved in during 2004 under three headings: provided by a supply agency, provided by an LEA, and provided by schools. About ten pointed out that they were engaged in professional development or other study that did not fit these categories: for example, attending a self-funded Masters course, or a part-time degree; we did not specifically ask about such activities.

First we consider whether supply teachers had engaged in any professional development at all, from any provider. A number of respondents pointed out that they had been in regular posts in 2004, and provided details of their CPD in that context; for this reason only those who had been supply teachers for the whole of the year 2004 are included in the analysis (1058 supply teachers). Of this group, 34% indicated that they had undertaken some professional development activity in the last year.

Figure 12.2: Percentage of various groups who had engaged in CPD in the last year (only those who have been supply teaching for more than a year, N = 1058))

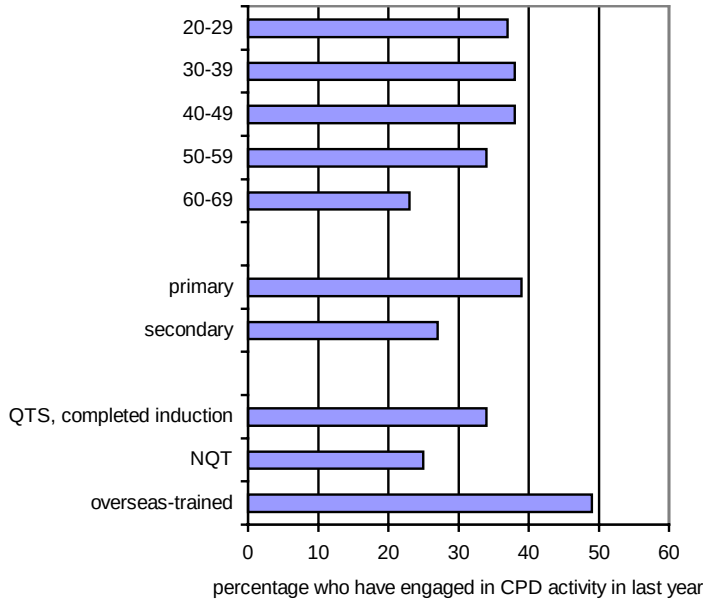


Figure 12.2 shows the proportion of various groups who had done so. Primary supply teachers were significantly more likely to have engaged in CPD than secondary (39% compared to 27%, p=.001). Only 23% of those over 60 had engaged in CPD; some of these wrote in explanations:

None, not required, retired.

At my age this is a waste of money.

Does not apply: retired.

Apart from this there were no differences related to age. Of the career groups of supply teachers identified in Chapter 7, the retired and retiring teachers were the least likely to have undertaken any professional development activity. Only 31% of the recently qualified teachers (those who qualified in or after 2000 and have had permanent posts for less than 0.5 years) had engaged in any professional development, and only 25% of those with QTS who had not completed induction (identified on Figure 12.2 as NQTs, though as Chapter 6 showed, some of them had qualified many years ago). One supply teacher commented in a focus group that private supply agencies make little provision for CPD for NQTs, either to support their teaching, or to help them get permanent posts:

> *Agencies always put 'NQTs welcome', but they don't provide that sort of support for them, and perhaps that is something … that there needs to be more NQT support to help you get through the interview, because more and more NQTs are having… well more and more everybody is having a problem getting a job.*

The overseas-trained teachers were very much the most likely to have undertaken professional development activity (49%). Some reported attending agency induction courses that introduced them to the National Curriculum and to legal issues in supply teaching. In focus groups they argued that a longer induction would have been helpful, with more information about the curriculum, and the language and acronyms used in English schools (e.g. break time, SATs, PSHE etc.) Focus groups suggested that overseas-trained supply teachers often want training that will help them adapt their skills and experience to the English situation. Some thought there should also be greater recognition that many overseas-trained teachers are very inexperienced, and have in many cases come to England because they could not get jobs in their home countries. As one Canadian trained supply teacher put it:

> *I came here to get teaching experience and when I show up I am basically an NQT. I need the same support that an NQT would get, but of course, because you are supply they can't be bothered and so you don't get it. That is something I think supply agencies and schools have to recognise – that not all supply teachers know what they are doing, that they are still learning themselves.* (Canadian supply teacher)

Another overseas-trained supply teacher commented favourably on agency provision:

> *I think* [named agency] *has one* [CPD session] *a month and some of it was like special needs curriculum, literacy hour, numeracy hour, white boards and that sort of thing. I mean I had never seen a white board before I had got to this country we write with chalk. We still had chalk boards in South Africa. And so the agencies are really quite good at that they offer it. And the thing is if you do, I mean my flatmate did one, and she came back with a certificate as part of her qualification.* (S. African supply teacher)

The questionnaire did not specifically ask supply teachers who had not engaged in professional development activity why they had not done so; this would have been useful information. However, some wrote in their reasons. Some said they had not been offered training.

> *I was unaware that there were professional development activities available for supply teachers! Who funds them?*
>
> *I have worked in five different LEAs during past 12 years. I have been offered only one course, Return to teaching course, 2001.*
>
> *None! Although I did ask on numerous occasions.* (Supply teacher who works directly for schools)

> *Schools aim to employ cover every lesson, no time for training development. Never known any to be available.*

> *I work directly for two schools. Training is not offered. I cannot miss work through training as I am paid only when I am there.*

Some, like the last one quoted above, referred to the cost of training or of missing work opportunities:

> *No, because they* [the private supply agency] *charge a fee for course. I decline to go. I am not available for work when training and I would lose a considerable amount in 1 day.*

Overall, just 8% of those who had engaged in CPD said that they had had to pay for it, but a number of those who had not engaged in CPD cited having to pay as a reason for not doing any. But the more serious concern identified was the fact that when CPD took place in school hours, attendance involved losing a day's pay.

> *LEA offer a course, then I apply and am accepted. Then a school asks you to work and I can't afford to lose a day's pay. If the LEA are serious about training they could pay us.*

Others referred to the timing or location of courses:

> *Invited to but I was unable to attend because time of course and venue made travelling difficult.* (Agency supply teacher)

> *None, because they changed course times to twilight just when I need to be at home with my children.* (Agency supply teacher)

In a focus group one supply teacher explained that the national agency she works through only offered CPD courses on Saturdays, and in a city 50 miles away. She considered the cost of the train fare to be prohibitive. Similarly another complained:

> *You get the odd letter saying we are organising this training day, and you think, oh brilliant that is something I really want to learn about. Oh it's in London, why isn't there anything in* [named city over 100 miles from London]?

Internet courses were not necessarily seen as a satisfactory answer to the problem, because many supply teachers lack internet access at home:

> *I do want to do more like postgraduate learning or even just professional development stuff. They are only offering via, … like an internet learning course, an online course that's all. I don't have the net at home and I am not in a school every day. Like there are internets at the* [agency] *offices, two computers where you can go and use the internet and it's got a little sign saying half an hour maximum. But you want to do it from the comfort of your own home, you know, you want to be able sit at 9 o'clock at night and do it.* (Australian supply teacher)

While some supply teachers gave reasons for not taking up offers of CPD, others indicated that provision was available, and it was perhaps a matter of preference that they had not attended:

> *None, though I am invited to any INSET days I care to attend.* (Supply teacher working directly for a school)

Under the present arrangements, the decision as to whether to undertake particular elements of professional development lies entirely with the supply teacher herself or himself. As one supply teacher put it, during a focus group discussion:

> *I think there is also the fact that we are supply teachers, and part of the reason many of us are in supply is for the flexibility, and there will be days that we will choose not to work. There may be INSET days and we still choose not to work them. And so it still has to up to a point be a choice whether we take the days or not for training. .*

But for other supply teachers, the lack of performance management and professional development was disconcerting; this was particularly the case for those recently qualified teachers looking for permanent work:

> *I haven't once been asked for my profile or professional development portfolio either which I find quite worrying sometimes. Like in my last school I had to say here is my professional development, 'oh are you doing that?' Now I would have thought the agency would want to do that as well.* (Supply teacher working through agency)

We turn, then, to those who have been engaged in CPD. Those supply teachers who mainly work through local authority supply services were the most likely to have done CPD (Table 12.3).

Table 12.3: Supply teachers' responses: Professional development activity by main way of working (including only those who had been working as supply teachers for more than a year)

	Private supply agency	Local authority supply service	Directly for schools
Identified any professional development activity	36%	46%	32%
N	*287*	*90*	*647*

At first sight this would suggest that LEAs are more efficient in providing CPD for the supply teachers who work through them. Several focus groups spoke very positively of the provision that their LEAs make specifically for supply teachers:

> *I also attended this club run by the LEA here … which is every Monday so if there's a course that I'm interested in I will after teaching go down and from 4.30 until 6.00 o'clock they have good sessions there … So they have different courses if you are doing literacy, numeracy, they will have about working interviews, assessment, target setting, and anything for sciences, history – .*

> *The* [named LEA agency] … *puts on a lot of courses. Particularly people new to supply would benefit from this, perhaps having demonstrations and talks given by existing supply teachers, because they are the people in the immediate firing line, they have the most immediate experience. Probably better qualified to talk about it than somebody high up in the hierarchy, an advisor or an inspector, dare I say it.*

However, the impression given in Table 12.3 that LEAs are more efficient in providing CPD for the supply teachers is an over-simplification. Table 12.3 categorises only the main way of working, but as Chapter 5 showed, many supply teachers obtain work in more than one way. Moreover, however they obtain the placement, they then have a variety of options for accessing CPD. Thus we have analysed the sources from which CPD was accessed in relation to the main way the teacher obtained work.

Table 12.4 shows that those who work through private supply agencies and through local authority supply services have two major sources to draw on for professional development: the organisation they work through and the school, while those who work mainly directly for schools are less likely to access CPD from any other source.

It also shows that overall, many more supply teachers obtain professional development through the schools they work in (23%) than from private agencies (8%) or local authorities (8%).

Table 12.4: Supply teachers' responses: Professional development activity by main way of working and by provider of the CPD (including only those who had been working as supply teachers for more than a year)

	Main way of obtaining work			
	Private supply agency	Local authority supply service	Directly for schools	All
Provider of CPD activity	%	%	%	%
Private supply agency	21	9	2	8
LEA	5	19	7	8
School	16	29	25	23
CPD from any source	36	46	32	34
N	*287*	*90*	*647*	*1024*

Percentages add up to more than in Table 12.3 above because some supply teachers access CPD from more than one source.

This last point raises a question: if professional development is most likely to be accessed through schools, do those supply teachers who only work in one or two schools (and thus have a closer relationship with them) access more professional development than those who work in many schools? This would be suggested by schools' statements that they include their regular supply teachers in INSET days or twilight sessions. In fact this is not the case: a higher proportion of those teachers who had worked in more than five schools in the last year had accessed professional development than of those who had worked in less than five. However, in comparison with other supply teachers, more of their professional development was through agencies and less through schools.

A few of those who said the school provided their development activity were employed part-time by the school, or were school governors, and they noted that the CPD they had accessed was in that role; this may also have applied to others who did not indicate this.

While some teachers had attended INSET days, much of the professional development activity described through schools was quite limited:

> *Just mainly staff meetings with a bit extra, you know, maybe dealing with a particular curriculum area or integrating curriculum areas together.*

The onus was often on the teacher to ask if they could attend:

> *You need to be with a school that you feel comfortable saying, look, I see you are having such and such a training, is it OK if I come along, which I have done in a couple of schools. They have said yes, if you are in, and there is nothing confidential going on, you are very, very welcome, just be aware that we won't pay you for it.*

Supply teachers were asked on the questionnaire to give details of the nature professional development activity that they had attended. This was not always done very fully, and many teachers gave broad headings (for example, more than 50 said that they had attended school INSET days without giving any further details). Thus these data should be seen as indicative only. However, where specific information

was given, the main areas of professional development were ICT and behaviour or classroom management (Table 12.5).

Table 12.5: Nature of professional development activity of those who have been supply teachers for one year or more, by source of CPD

	CPD provided by ….			
	a supply agency	an LEA	a school	all
	%	%	%	%
ICT	4	13	22	17
behaviour/classroom management	40	10	5	13
teaching and learning	11	5	9	8
English/literacy	7	9	7	7
SEN	4	6	6	5
health and safety	1	4	5	4
maths/numeracy	5	8	3	4
supply teacher specific	9	6	0	3
pastoral, child protection, PSHE	1	6	3	3
NQT specific	0	5	0	1
school INSET day	0	5	26	17
other	19	23	13	16
N	*81*	*80*	*243*	*404*

Table 12.5 shows that schools were more likely to have provided ICT training. Questionnaire responses indicated that this often related to their specific systems or innovations:

> *An hour's instruction in the use of the whiteboard, which was quite useful as an introduction.*
>
> *ICT advisor brought in to explain/go over ICT schemes as I was covering the ICT teacher.*

In a focus group one supply teacher explained that school staff are often very helpful in this respect:

> *I think good will, which is what I have come across in school after school, they will help, ICT co-ordinators and other teachers will help you, they will give up time, to show you how to do things, but it is piecemeal.*

Supply teachers considered that interactive whiteboard training was particularly important: '*I mean we obviously qualified and had our training but we didn't have stuff like this'*.

Under agency provision, behaviour management was much the most frequently mentioned area:

> *One day course on class management, mainly focused on how to deal with pupils' misbehaviour. Duration: about 5 hours. Fairly useful.*
>
> *Course on behaviour management – quite good ideas – good to meet other supply teachers.*

One supply teacher commented that:

> *Behaviour management is another one they've done a few hours course on, … very practical, but I don't think there's been so much in other subjects. I haven't seen a science or a history or a geography and I think it would be useful for other subjects to be covered.*

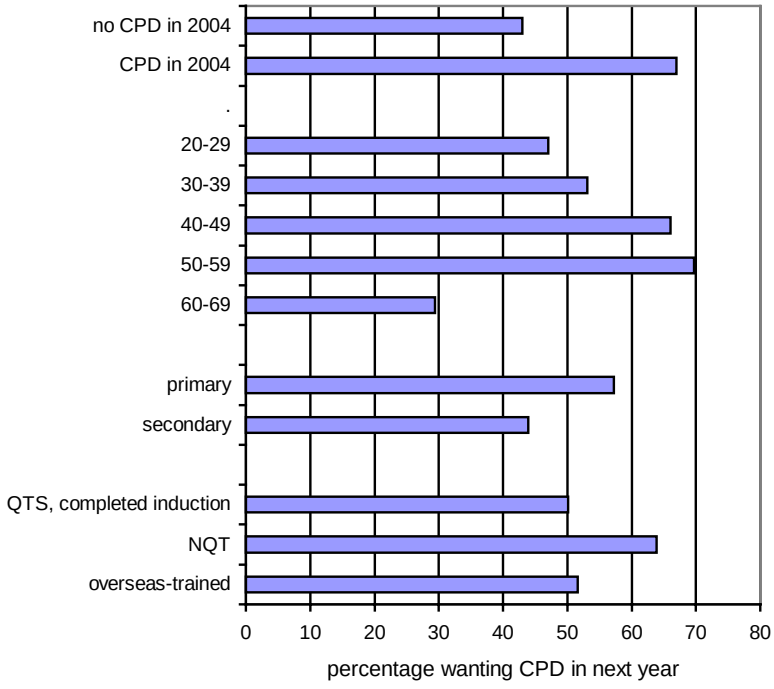
A local supply agency interviewee commented that when she sends out a list of the courses that are available, asking supply teachers to indicate what they would find most valuable, '*it is nearly always behaviour management'* that they choose.

It was noticeable that for many of those who did identify professional development activity they had undertaken, the amount of time spent on this was very little – just one one-day course, or in the case above, one hour's instruction on the interactive whiteboard, or even less.

It is hardly surprising, then, that of those who had been supply teaching for a year or more, only 5% believed that they were experiencing as much professional development as a regular teacher; 7% did not know, and 88% thought they were experiencing less.

Just over half the supply teachers in the sample identified professional development that they would like to be involved in during the next year. Figure 12.3 shows what proportion of various groups identified CPD needs for the year ahead.

Figure 12.3: Percentage of various groups of supply teachers who identified CPD needs for the year ahead



It is predictable that the oldest teachers be less keen on CPD as they are moving into retirement, but perhaps more surprising that those in their fifties are more enthusiastic about CPD than those in their twenties. Those who had engaged in professional development in the last year were more likely to indicate areas in which they would like development in the future.

Fifteen percent of the whole sample wanted ICT training, especially in the use of interactive whiteboards; 11% said they would welcome training in behaviour management particularly in the context of supply teaching; 5% wanted training relating to national initiatives including workforce remodelling; and 5% said it would be useful to be updated in developments in teaching, learning and curriculum.

The need for ICT training also arose in the focus groups. For supply teachers who are not attached to a particular school or LEA and for whom there is a sense of being independent and 'free floating', the absence of a strong institutional base can be the cause of particular anxieties in this field where such teachers may have very limited access to the technology that is required to enable them to keep up to date:

> *I think we all have exposure as supply teachers to ICT, the latest smart board technology, but as we have said, if you are then away from it for a few weeks you have forgotten what you have learnt and you are not really establishing a bank of knowledge, you are just dipping in and out, so you could do with not just the occasional ICT course, but perhaps an on-going programme.*

In the focus groups some supply teachers argued that it is important for supply teachers to be included in professional development so that they can contribute to efforts to raise standards:

> *I was told recently that the league tables have come out and* [named town] *is down at the bottom. And so ok, what are these strategies? … How can we contribute as supply teachers to achieve standards? Have they even thought about it, because when you add up all the hours that in the* [named town] *schools are being done by supply teachers over a period of a year, it is probably quite high. And are there some things that we could be doing better.* (Supply teacher in focus group)

It was also argued that supply teachers need CPD if they are to move into permanent jobs:

> *I've had a 20 minute lesson on an interactive whiteboards over 3 years. You know when you are faced with, like one of the adverts for the job that I am going for is interactive whiteboards in every classroom. I'm going, yeah but I need to go back and practice that, where do I go and practice that, how do I practice that?* (Supply teacher applying for permanent post)

The continuous nature of change and innovation in English education is to some extent a new phenomenon that poses special challenges to those who, like a number of supply teachers, may feel they are working on the fringes of the education system, as an example from a secondary trained supply teacher illustrates:

> [Int: So how important is professional development to you?] *Vital. In this day and age when the pace changes so rapidly and we get so many new initiatives to take on board, you need constant ongoing INSET course training.* (Supply teacher in focus group)

Some of those for whom supply work was a staging post in their career (either as new teachers or as returners) were also very conscious of the need to keep up with innovations, as, for example, an early years teacher needing to adjust to recent developments in the Foundation Stage:

> *I was also appreciative of the fact that, I wish I had taken it up now, I did have the offer to do a bit of retraining for the Foundation Stage and I wish I had taken it up. … It was a one evening a week kind of thing and it would have retrained me as a Foundation Stage teacher, which is another of my worries in that there are developments in education that are going on that I can't keep up with, and that is one of them. The*

reception teachers were part of Key Stage 1 when I trained and they are not with me any more. I have not had the training that covers that. (Supply teacher in focus group)

If we accept that good practice should include significant and structured provision of professional development opportunities for supply teachers, two further questions emerge: who should be responsible for providing it and who should carry the cost of the provision, including the question of whether supply teachers should be paid for the time they spend undertaking professional development. Supply teachers in focus groups argued:

I think it has to be a governmental thing, whether a local government or centrally organised

They [probably referring to the LEA] *should value their supply teachers in the way they value their permanent teachers who are constantly going on courses.*

12.4 DfES self-study materials for supply teachers

The supply teacher questionnaire included questions about the use of the DfES self-study materials for supply teachers (DfES, 2002b). Responses are shown on Table 12.6.

Table 12.6: Supply teachers' responses to questions about the DfES self-study materials for supply teachers (DfES, 2002b)

	Primary	Secondary	Special
	%	%	%
Proportion that are aware of the materials	23	23	34
Proportion that have used them	10	7	6
Proportion that found them 'very useful' or 'quite useful'	8	6	6
N	*732*	*653*	*32*

Overall, only a quarter of the supply teachers were aware of these materials, and a smaller percentage had actually used them, but the majority of those who had used indicated that they were quite useful, and a few, very useful. While it might have been expected that these were more useful for young or overseas-trained supply teachers this was not the case; they seemed to be used equally across all groups. However, among those returning to the primary sector after a career break, marginally more had used the materials (14%) and found them useful (12%). Positive comments written on the questionnaire included:

They are presented well, so you can study in sections and return to particular chapters with ease.

The material covers all applicable points of the national curriculum in a very clear and efficient format.

I can choose times when I am not overtired and do at own pace.

Useful as reference material.

I originate from South Africa. The material helped for orientation.

However, not everybody felt they were useful:

Very long-winded and not particularly relevant.

A little too much jargon used in DfES stuff.

I teach nursery class, nothing available for this age.

Some noted that they did not feel that they needed such materials because they were experienced and up-to-date; others, particularly those in secondary schools, said that as work is always provided, they had no need for detailed information.

Don't usually look for materials because everything supplied. Short term cover means that teachers know what they want you to do.

Others had not accessed them because they did not have internet access at home. But perhaps the most frequent comment was that they had not heard of the materials, with 20 teachers adding that they wished they had known about them:

No notification by LEA or school of such materials.

I wish I had known.

Will investigate now, I know about them.

What is the name of website?

We also asked interviewees in private supply agencies and LEAs whether they had used or recommended these materials. Responses were variable. Most of the national agencies recommend them, along with other websites and materials, on their website, but had little idea about the take-up. Interviewees in smaller organisations could generally give more detailed feedback. For example, an LEA interviewee indicated that teachers had responded positively to the information:

We notified all supply teachers that they were available and we gave them a website and we suggested each of them contacted them and the majority of them have actually got books. (LEA supply service)

One agency interviewee thought they were very useful:

I have used those materials that the DFES produces, with our supply teacher and returner courses. I think they are useful. The annoying thing is you can't get your hands on the hard copies as much these days, they are in short supply. (Local agency)

An LEA respondent made the same point about hard copies in a comment on the questionnaire:

Looking at using DfES supply teacher training materials. Disappointed they are no longer available as a manual. (LEA comment on questionnaire)

Others were less positive about the materials. An agency with a strong focus on overseas-trained teachers had the materials in the office, but felt that they contained too much jargon:

They can come here and use it and, but it bores people, they're not that interested. … I mean, frankly it's written in edu-speak, and it's very difficult for a lay person to actually get to the bottom of it … and it's so repetitive and you can't have them think that it's being done for sake of doing it. (Local agency)

Another local agency also had the materials to hand, but thought that people found the volume of information daunting:

These, yes, well I always have them there when they come for an interview. I always talk to them about them and the response is mixed but I will always offer it as an option, but it is mixed, the response. We do talk to them about them but I haven't had anyone actually be enthusiastic! … I think they are too much, you get all of that. Who

wants all of it? Primary, secondary, classroom management, getting started, it's quite a lot really? There are bits that are useful, but it's a bit daunting when you're primary and you get a secondary pack and everything. I don't know, but anyway, I do always mention it. It's always there anyway. (Local agency)

Schools were also asked about the DfES self-study materials; about a fifth knew of their existence, but fewer were familiar with them, and very few had recommended them to supply teachers (Table 12.7).

Table 12.7: School responses to questions about the DfES self-study materials for supply teachers

		Nursery	Primary	Secondary	Special
		%	%	%	%
Are you familiar with the materials?	yes	5	3	5	1
	not in detail	16	16	21	16
Have you recommended them to supply teachers in your school?	yes	0	2	2	1
N		*50*	*591*	*548*	*117*

12.4 Summary: professional development

Provision for professional development of supply teachers

The majority of agencies and LEAs offer some professional development for supply teachers, though several noted that many supply teachers are not enthusiastic about CPD. Forty-three percent of the LEAs in the survey provide CPD designed to meet the needs of supply teachers, and 43% said that supply teachers had access to some of the range of LEA CPD; however, a further 21% commented that this would only be the case if the school or the supply teacher paid. LEAs that provide a supply service or agency are more likely to offer CPD, and in some cases this was carefully designed to meet supply teachers' needs, and training needs were identified from feedback from schools. LEAs partnerships with private sector companies varied enormously in their provision: in some cases no provision for CPD had been made in the partnership agreement, and in other cases one partner or other was responsible. The best practice came where both partners had an equally strong commitment to the development of supply teachers. Private supply agencies offer a wide range of provision, often linked to social events where supply teachers can meet each other. While there have been some imaginative attempts to improve provision, including accredited courses and internet courses, the general view was that take-up is limited. Schools tend to include long-term and regular supply teachers in INSET days and twilight training, but generally feel that this is not their responsibility.

Supply teachers' responses about professional development activity

Overall, 34% of the supply teachers responding to the survey and who had been supply teaching throughout the previous year had had some CPD in that year. The overseas-trained teachers (49%) were the most likely to have done so, while those in their sixties (23%) and NQTs (25%) were the least likely. Primary supply teachers were more likely than secondary to have undertaken any CPD (39%, 27%). Although they were not specifically asked about reasons for not engaging in CPD, many

explained that this related to loss of pay (if held during the day) or to inappropriate timing (if held in the evening); the latter was the view of those doing supply because it offers flexibility and allows them to prioritise child-care. Those approaching retirement simply felt that they were too old. But a substantial group indicated that they had never been offered any CPD. Those who had experienced CPD indicated that this was in many cases limited to a single twilight session in the year. Supply teachers working through LEAs were the most likely to have accessed CPD, and those working directly for schools the least likely; however, schools were overall the largest provider. The main areas of CPD were ICT (most often provided by a school) and behaviour management (most often provided by an agency)

Fifty percent of the supply teachers identified areas in which they would like CPD in the year ahead: ICT and behaviour management were the most frequently mentioned areas.

DfES self-study materials for teachers

A quarter of the supply teachers were aware of these, 9% had used them, of which the majority had found them useful. Most agency and LEA interviewees were aware of them and promoted them; however, very few schools (4%) said they were familiar with the materials, and only 1% had recommended them to supply teachers.

13 Emerging themes: good practice in the management, development and deployment of supply teachers

13.1 Introduction

In this report we have set out our findings in relation to the characteristics, recruitment, deployment, management and development of supply teachers. We have established that there are approximately 40,000 teachers who work in the supply market at some point in any year. This is a very significant section of the overall teaching workforce and yet in many respects it is a section whose contribution to schools is often under-represented and sometimes undervalued, and whose needs and aspirations are often not considered.

In this final section of the report we draw together some of the themes, issues and concerns that have arisen from the research; these are discussed through a framework focusing on good practice. Good practice in relation to supply teachers has been very clearly specified in two documents: *Quality Mark 2005-7* (DfES, 2004a), and *Using Supply Teachers to Cover Short-Term Absences* (DfES, 2002a). We use these as our starting points in this discussion.

13.2 Quality Mark standards

While the sections that follow are structured in relation to the main providers, we do not consider it is possible to make meaningful comparisons between different ways in which supply teachers are employed and deployed, because the teachers and schools are themselves so different. Thus it is not possible to say that one way of working (e.g. through a private supply agency or directly for schools) is more effective, or leads to better practice, than another, because the teachers working in each of these arrangements are doing so in very different circumstances. Younger and less experienced teachers tend to work through agencies and in more challenging situations, while older and more experienced teachers tend to work directly for schools that are generally less challenging.

Agencies and LEAs

Quality Mark 2005-7 sets out standards for good practice by agencies and LEAs. These are in four areas, selection and referral; development, working with schools and working with overseas-trained teachers. While we were not inspecting agencies or LEAs against these criteria, they are useful categories in which to consider good (or less good) practice. However, it should be noted that all but two of the agencies that we interviewed had been awarded the Quality Mark, as had two of the LEAs. We cannot say, therefore, that they were representative of all agencies or LEAs.

In relation to selection and referral, the standards indicate that all relevant checks should be undertaken, and face-to-face interviews should be conducted. All the agencies said that they carried out appropriate checks. However, concern was expressed that the checks are not always fully completed before supply teachers commence work in schools, and it is not currently a legal requirement that they should be. One agency working in partnership with an LEA did not carry out face-to-face interviews – or indeed any interviews.

The standards for development include soliciting feedback on teachers' performance, giving feedback to teachers and identifying development needs. All the agencies and LEAs sought feedback from schools, though the regularity and format in which this was collected varied. Only a minority of organisations (generally LEAs or LEA/agency partnerships) made a specific link in interview between the feedback collected and the provision of professional development activity. It was far more often talked about by interviewees in relation to future deployment of the supply teacher.

LEAs are expected to facilitate the appraisal of teachers who are eligible for the performance pay threshold. Interviewees acknowledged that it was difficult to do this, because it is difficult to collect appropriate evidence of pupil progress and extra-curricular activity while undertaking short-term placements.

All LEAs and some, but not all, LEA/agency partnerships paid supply teachers to national scales and enabled them to contribute to the Teachers Pension Scheme. It is a concern that some LEA / agency partnerships do not pay any supply teachers on the Upper Pay Spine, and do not enable teachers to contribute to the Teachers Pension Scheme. A minority of agencies offered stakeholder pension schemes. However, there was inconsistency in agencies' responses about whether they were able to offer such schemes. We found that 55% of the supply teachers aged under 60 were *not* paying into any pension scheme; this included 40% of those working through local authority supply services or directly for schools, who would have been eligible to pay into the Teachers Pension Scheme. It must be a cause for concern that many supply teachers are not contributing to pension schemes.

The standards for the award of the Quality Mark specify that agencies should have a statement of policy on fees and charges. We found that most agencies indicated that they would charge more to place a teacher in a challenging school. It was variously argued that this was because only more experienced (and therefore more expensive) teachers would be placed in such situations, or because it was necessary to pay teachers 'danger money'. These statements do not fit well with the notion of having transparent charging systems.

The standards also state that teachers should be given advance information about the schools they are placed in. Some information was provided, but this was generally limited and did not allow teachers to make any preparations (even as much as collecting up any resources they had for the relevant age group).

Facilitation and monitoring of professional development is central in the Quality Mark standards. While most LEAs and agencies made some provision for professional development, this was not universally the case. Some NQTs reported that they were not offered appropriate opportunities for professional development. Many supply teachers who worked through agencies and LEAs had not undertaken any professional development activity in the last year, and did not have portfolios of development and training. This was partly because the supply teachers were not able to access professional development courses at the times and locations that they were provided, or said that they would lose pay by attending. However, some agencies and LEAs were making imaginative efforts to create a range of professional development opportunities that would appeal to particular groups of supply teachers, and that were available at times when they would be willing to attend. This included combining professional development with social activities; indicating that teachers had an entitlement to professional development that they were expected to take up; making on-line provision; and setting up a variety of accredited courses.

Most schools felt that the agency or LEA that they worked with provided them with a reliable service and offered high quality supply teachers. However, as they noted, they would change to another provider if this were not the case.

Many of the agencies interviewed were generally operating with effective models of good practice. This was partly because, as they pointed out, in the current context of buoyant teacher supply, and of demand for supply teachers that is beginning to fall as a result of workforce remodelling, the only way an agency is likely to survive in a competitive market is by offering quality provision to both schools and supply teachers. This is a very different context from that of a few years ago when there was an overall shortage of teachers, and some agencies were undoubtedly using poor practices to fulfil demand and make a profit (as described by Grimshaw *et al*. 2004, for example). However, not all agencies reach the standards achieved by most of our interviewees, and it was clear that it is still possible for an agency to operate and to win business without reaching these standards. The vast majority of small agencies that we interviewed were models of good practice; they had a good understanding of school needs in their particular locality, the staff appeared to have good relationships with schools, and the supply teachers spoke positively about them.

The Quality Mark was seen by most agencies as a useful specification of minimum standards, rather than an assessment of high quality provision. Some agencies would have preferred the latter. Only 11% of schools took the Quality Mark into account in deciding which agency or supply service to use, and it was clear that some of those using agencies without the Quality Mark were very contented with the provision made.

Overall, we identified three LEAs (working alone, or with other LEAs or agencies) that appeared to provide particularly good practice. This involved in each case a very clear motivation to improve provision and raise standards across schools, for example, by ensuring that teachers were involved in professional development activity, and to operate ‘ethically’ in terms of payment to teachers, prices to schools, and provision to schools in challenging circumstances. Some other partnership arrangements were very new, and were designed to improve quality, but were not yet putting their ideas into operation. Most other LEAs and partnerships had a less clear sense of mission, and, in the case of partnerships, had perhaps taken less care in their contractual arrangements to ensure that provision was of a high quality.

Very few LEAs or LEA / private partnerships had applied for the Quality Mark; some did not understand that it applied to them, and some assumed that their provision would not meet the standards. However, while few had been awarded the Quality Mark, this did not necessarily imply a lack of quality.

Around a third of LEAs make no provision at all. In some cases this was because there was a strong agency culture in the locality (as in London) and there did not appear to be a demand for LEA provision. One of the better LEA supply services was under review at the time of our research because of financial targets within the LEA. While the supply service was self-financing, it sat within an area of operations which had to meet particular financial targets, and as a result there was some possibility that it might close. If this were to happen, it would seem to be an unfortunate loss of a high quality service for schools.

Schools

More than half the supply teachers in the survey generally worked neither through agencies nor through LEAs, but directly for schools. In these circumstances the criteria for the Quality Mark are not relevant. Nevertheless, these supply teachers, like any others, would benefit from systematic attention to issues around their employment, deployment and development. It is clear from the DfES guidance (2002a) that schools are responsible for ensuring that all required checks have been made. There was little evidence at the time we conducted the fieldwork that all schools saw this as their responsibility. However, since that time the public concerns raised about CRB checks will have heightened their awareness. A number of schools noted in comments on the questionnaire that their LEAs were no longer taking on CRB checks etc. for supply teachers, and they felt that this was an additional administrative and financial burden on schools.

Some of the schools indicated that they invited the supply teachers that they employ regularly to attend professional development sessions, but this was not always the case. Some LEAs said that such teachers could only attend courses if the school paid, and as a result, a considerable number of teachers are offered no (or very minimal) professional development activities.

While schools generally find the supply teachers they employ directly to be very satisfactory, and both parties are very happy with such arrangements, there is nothing in place to ensure that quality is maintained.

13.3 DfES guidance for schools

The guidance that is provided for schools, *Using Supply Teachers to Cover Short-Term Absences* (DfES, 2002a) relates to all supply teachers, whether working directly for the school, through an agency or through an LEA. It is guidance on good practice in relation the use of supply teachers on short-term placements in schools. It emphasises the need for continuity in classroom management and curriculum, and indicates that key strategies to ensure such continuity are for the absent teacher to leave plans, and for support to be provided by the key stage co-ordinator or subject leader, or a 'buddy' assigned to the supply teacher for the day. It advocates making information about the school available to the supply teacher in advance, providing the supply teacher with an essential information handout on their arrival in school; and going through the key features of the school's behaviour policy. It suggests that supply teachers should be asked to complete feedback forms on their lessons, and that the class teachers who have had their classes covered complete evaluations. Supply teachers spoke very positively about schools where any of these strategies were used, but made it clear that such practices were not universally in place.

While we came across a number of examples of good practice in schools, it is not possible to identify many schools that could be seen as having overall good practice. Many of the primary schools had adopted strategies described above, and there was undoubtedly some high quality practice through which supply teachers were supported in contributing effectively to teaching and learning in the school.

However, it was quite clear that this was much harder to achieve in secondary schools. The management of supply teachers in secondary schools is obviously a much more substantial task, in that there are more supply teachers in total, and each teacher teaches in different classes through the day. But for these very reasons one

might expect a much more structured approach to the provision of necessary information and support than in primary schools, and this was not always the case. One reason for this appeared to be that in most secondary schools, responsibility for the management and support of the supply teacher was shared between, for example, the deputy head, the head of department and teachers in nearby classes. It seemed that it was very easy for such systems to operate in such a way that nobody supported the supply teacher effectively. It was also the case that in some secondary schools, the deployment of supply teachers appeared to be seen more as a technical exercise – to ensure that classes are covered – rather than as a key element in the successful management of teaching and learning and the quality of educational provision. This is not to say that there was no good practice in secondary schools, but we found that only a minority of the case study schools had succeeded in addressing the various issues effectively.

In both primary and secondary schools, the most effective practice appeared to be in suburban or rural schools where it was possible to build up a group of supply teachers who would provide continuity, and where behaviour management was generally less of an issue. In such circumstances there was often no need for detailed procedures for induction and support, in that the teachers were familiar with the school and pupils, and had worked there regularly. Urban secondary schools, and particularly those in London, where unfamiliar supply teachers were more often used, were less likely to feel that there was the time to provide all the information that would be useful, or to have a clear structure for supporting and monitoring supply teachers.

13.4 Supply teachers

Finally we consider the extent to which there was good practice among supply teachers themselves. There is no specific guidance equivalent to *Quality Mark 2005-7* or the DfES guidance for schools to tell supply teachers what is expected of them. Clearly the Professional Standards Framework applies. However, supply teachers on short-term placements are not generally given sufficient information about the pupils to enable them to teach in accordance with the Standards (for example, by differentiating their teaching to meet the needs of the pupils, or taking account of pupils' interests and experiences). Moreover, we found evidence that schools had very varied expectations of the work supply teachers should undertake, and that these were not always made explicit to the teachers. However, in general, interviewees reported that there had been considerable improvement in recent years, with most schools rating their supply teachers as good or excellent across a range of factors, and only a very tiny minority using rating than as poor.

Primary school headteachers spoke of supply teachers providing continuity in relation to the curriculum. While a minority of schools had experienced one or more poor supply teachers in the last year, a far higher percentage said that they would have been happy to have employed some of their supply teachers in permanent posts. In comparison, in secondary schools there was less evidence of curriculum continuity and more of disruption to learning, particularly in the more challenging schools. However, this could have resulted, to some extent, from the very low expectations that many secondary schools had of the work that would be undertaken by supply teachers, who were often given a purely supervisory role The limited information secondary supply teachers were given about pupils could also have contributed.

Many supply teachers had chosen supply teaching because it offers greater flexibility and lower workload than regular teaching; however, it would be a mistake to assume that this might result in lower commitment. All those in focus groups and interviews took their work seriously and tried to do a good job. Many indicated that they disliked doing pure 'supervision', and preferred to be able to teach, following the class plans to ensure curriculum continuity. They felt frustrated when, through lack of information or resources, they were not able to do a good job.

Nevertheless, it was clear that a small minority of ineffective supply teachers are still deployed to schools. While most agencies/supply services described a range of procedures where issues of quality were raised by schools, there are some gaps in these. Schools may not fully report the problems they have experienced, but simply 'blacklist' the supply teacher. Similarly some agencies persist longer in trying to see if a teacher who has received poor feedback can be more effective in a different school than is consistent with their aspirations (and the Quality Mark standards) for quality.

13.5 Policy developments

While, as we have shown, the government has offered clear information about good practice both through the Quality Mark (DfES, 2004a) and through the guidance for schools (DfES, 2002a), we found that only 8% of schools considered the Quality Mark to be a very important factor in making decisions about which agency or supply service to use, and only 18% of primary and 36% of secondary schools indicated that they were familiar with the DfES guidance.

Current developments associated with Workforce Reform are having some impact on supply teachers' work, but at the time the fieldwork was conducted, the impact was limited. This was partly because the reforms had not had time to take full effect, but also because of reluctance, in many schools, to deploy non-teaching staff to undertake cover. Some schools that were using support staff were doing so because of budgetary imperatives rather than because they believed that this was the best way of promoting effective teaching and learning. While some felt that using support staff in this way was proving to be effective because they were familiar with the pupils, others reported less positive experiences, particularly when new, rather than existing, support staff were being used in this role.

We found that in a small number of cases, schools were using agency cover supervisors on a daily-paid basis to provide cover. This is obviously not in line with the notion that support staff can be more effective because they are familiar with the school, and appeared to be purely a cost-cutting exercise. While some schools are moving to a position where more cover is provided by support staff and less use is made of supply teachers, most interviewees felt that there would still be a role for supply teachers in the future. It is therefore important that schools adopt best practice in deploying them to ensure minimum disruption to the curriculum or the pupils.

Many school respondents indicated that the best way to provide cover would be to have 'floating teachers' (possibly sharing these between small schools). The next preference was for familiar supply teachers who worked regularly in the school, who were seen as 'good' or 'excellent'; some argued that such supply teachers would be easier to find if more LEAs set up supply services along the same lines as agencies. Some schools undoubtedly felt that unfamiliar supply teachers (generally rated 'fair' or 'good') were a better way of providing cover than using support staff, though a minority were enthusiastic about using support staff. The more challenging schools

tended to be less enthusiastic about using support staff because they were not confident that their staff had the necessary skills and experience.

If the pool of supply teachers is seen at least in part as a source of future permanent teachers, it should be recognised that a significant part of the pool has no desire to return to permanent work, either because they are winding down towards retirement or because of lifestyle choices (including some who were unhappy with workload and/or bureaucratic demands in permanent work). For those who may join or rejoin the permanent workforce issues of professional development and career development are crucial.

13.6 Summary: emerging themes and good practice

Clear descriptions of good practice are set out in the standards for the Quality Mark and in the DfES guidance (2002a). While LEA, schools and supply teacher respondents were not all aware of or familiar with these documents, the accounts of good (or less good) practice given by all respondents were largely in accord with those of the Quality Mark standards and guidance for schools.

Overall, much good practice was evident. Agency practices were, with a few exceptions, good, and appeared to be very much better than research conducted a few years ago had indicated. Agency interviewees argued that in the competitive market they need to operate with good practice in order to survive. While some LEA arrangements (including private sector partnerships) were models of good practice, the quality was variable, and some make little or no provision. Where schools recruited and employed supply teachers directly, it was difficult to assess how far appropriate procedures were being employed, for example in relation to checks and quality. Comparisons between the different forms of employment / deployment are generally inappropriate because they are catering for different school markets and using different groups of supply teachers.

In relation to employment and deployment to schools, the main issues of concern among supply teachers and schools were:

- Pay and pensions: the process for threshold assessment is not entirely appropriate in relation to the working patterns of supply teachers. Fifty-five percent of supply teachers aged under 60 are not paying into any pension fund.
- Challenging schools: such schools use more supply teachers, often have to pay them more, but also often receive less well qualified and experienced teachers. The operation of a market (which includes agencies, LEAs and all schools and supply teachers) militates against such schools obtaining high quality supply teachers.
- Professional development: 66% of supply teachers had experienced no professional development activity in the last year.

Many schools were operating in line with the DfES guidance on using supply teachers, but some were not. Some supply teachers could have contributed more effectively to teaching and learning if they had been better informed and supported by the schools. The main issues of concern in relation to the use of supply teachers in schools that arise from the data collected are:

- lack of familiarity of schools with the DfES guidance;

- limited provision of information hand-outs, adequate information about pupils, and in some cases, resources;
- varied expectations of supply teachers that were not always made explicit.

It remains to be seen whether support staff and cover supervisors can provide cover effectively in all schools; it is a concern that a minority of schools were using support staff who they said were not appropriately skilled and trained to provide cover, and indicated that they were doing this as a cost-cutting measure.

Many schools intend to continue using supply teachers to provide short-term cover in the foreseeable future, and most expect to use them to cover long-term absences. Many supply teachers would prefer to continue in this role. It therefore seems crucial to continue to work to support this part of the workforce so that they can make an effective contribution to teaching and learning.

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Appendices

A. LEA Questionnaire
B. School questionnaire
C. Supply teacher questionnaire
D. Nursery school handout for supply teachers
E. Primary school handout for supply teachers
F. Junior school handout for supply teachers
G. Secondary school handout for supply teachers

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January 2005

The Recruitment, Deployment and Management of Supply Teachers in England:

Research commissioned by the DfES

The Institute for Policy Studies in Education has been commissioned by the DfES to carry out research into the recruitment, deployment and management of supply teachers in England. This research will inform future policy developments in relation to supply teachers.

As one strand of this research, we are asking all Local Education Authorities to fill in the attached questionnaire. We have aimed to address this letter to the appropriate officer in each LEA. If, however, you are not the appropriate person to complete this, we would be grateful if you could pass it on to that person.

The research will also involve a national survey of schools and of supply teachers; interviews with a sample of LEAs and private supply agencies; case studies of schools; and focus groups with supply teachers. In this questionnaire we are therefore asking LEAs to respond in relation to their current knowledge and perceptions; **we are *not* asking that you collect further information from schools or any other source**.

If your LEA does not provide a supply service, the questionnaire will take only a few minutes to complete. If a supply service is provided, it is likely to take 30-40 minutes, depending on the complexity of the arrangements.

The responses to this questionnaire, together with data from other research strands, will be used to compile a report for the DfES, to be published early in 2006. Your answers will be treated in the strictest confidence and all findings will be anonymised so that they cannot be traced back to individual people or LEAs. Individual LEAs will be identified only to illustrate innovative and good practice, and with your prior permission.

We would be grateful if you could complete and return this questionnaire in the reply paid envelope provided by WEDNESDAY 26 JANUARY. If there are particular reasons why this timescale may pose difficulties, please contact us to propose an alternative timescale.

If you have any queries about this research, or the questionnaire, please contact me (see contact details above). Thank you very much for your cooperation.

Yours sincerely

Dr Merryn Hutchings

SECTION A: Provision in the LEA

1. LEA ……

2. Job title and areas of responsibility of the person completing the questionnaire:

3. Does the LEA provide any form of supply teacher service, either independently, or in partnership with another organisation(s)? *Please tick in the appropriate box:*

NB If the provision is a preferred supply list only, answer 'no' and turn to Section D, which asks about these.

Yes	☐	PLEASE GO TO SECTION B
No	☐	PLEASE GO TO SECTION D

SECTION B: The supply service

PLEASE NOTE: **If the LEA is involved in more than one type of supply service provision (e.g. an LEA pool for primary supply teachers, as well as a partnership with an agency for secondary supply teachers), please photocopy Section B and fill in ONE copy for each different form of provision.**

4. Who runs the supply service? Please tick as appropriate:

The LEA alone	
The LEA in partnership with one or more private supply agencies	
The LEA in partnership with a web platform provider	
The LEA in partnership with other LEAs	
The LEA in partnership with some other organisation(s)	

PLEASE NOTE: The questions in this section all refer to the supply service as identified above: i.e. run by the LEA alone, or run in partnership with another organisation. Some of the questions may ask about information that is held by the partner organisation rather than by the LEA itself. In this case, please reply, 'don't know'.

5. Please name any other organisations involved in partnerships to run the service. (If there are no other organisations, please go on to Question 7.)

……

6. Within the partnership, who takes responsibility for each of the following in relation to supply teachers? If responsibility is shared, please tick all relevant boxes:

	the LEA	a private supply agency	a web platform provider	other LEAs	schools	some other organisation (please give details below)	don't know / not applicable
advertising the service to schools							
advertising to attract supply teachers							
selection and carrying out checks							
communication with schools							
deployment of teachers to schools							
payments by schools							
payment of supply teachers							
appraisal of supply teachers							
professional development of supply teachers							
monitoring of effectiveness of the service							

Please add any additional information about the working of the partnership, and/or attach relevant documents:

7. Does this supply service cover all schools or only certain types of school?

all schools certain types of school (please circle)

If 'certain types of school', please state which: ……

8. What date was the supply service established in its current form? …….... (year)

9. What were the main reasons for establishing this supply service?

10. The Quality Mark for good practice in supply provision

Has <u>either</u> the supply service (run by the LEA alone or by the LEA in partnership with another organisation), <u>or</u> any agency working with the LEA to run the service, been awarded the Quality Mark?

the supply service	Yes	No	(please circle)
an agency working with the LEA	Yes	No	(please circle)

If NO, has an application been made for this? Yes No don't know (*please circle*)

If no application has been made, what are the reasons for not applying?

11. Arrangements for deployment: What do schools do to book a supply teacher?

	please tick
school phones teacher from list / database provided	
school contacts the supply service who will locate a suitable teacher	

IF YES, is this:	
a paper list issued to schools?	
an on-line database listing all teachers registered with the supply service?	
a database updated daily to show which teachers are available that day?	
an interactive booking system through which a school can select and book a teacher?	

If YES, is contact made:	
by telephone	
by email	
either	

What principles are used in prioritising requests from schools?	
first come first served	
certain schools get priority (please add details)	
pre-booked gets priority	
emergency needs get priority	
don't know	

Additional information (e.g. different arrangements for primary and secondary schools; planned changes to the current system):

12. What are the charging arrangements of the supply service to schools? Please explain briefly**:**

13. What are the hours during which schools and supply teachers may contact the supply service?

from …….to …….. (weekdays). Please add details of weekend hours if applicable:

14. When a school first uses a particular supply teacher, what information about the teacher is routinely provided to the school by the LEA / agency?

experience	
subject expertise	
whether has UK Qualified Teacher Status (confirmed by the GTC England)	
whether has completed induction	
feedback from other schools	
don't know	

Please add any other information that is routinely supplied: e.g. nationality, age, gender

15. What information about the school is routinely provided by the LEA / agency to a supply teacher before a new placement?

transport details	
school policies	
details of classes and subjects to be covered	
don't know	

Please add any other information that is routinely supplied: e.g. nature of pupil intake, academic level …..

16. What is the size and scale of the supply service? Please answer the questions below as far as you are able, estimating where necessary.

How many daily-paid teachers are registered on the supply list to work in your LEA?	
How many, approximately, are currently (i.e. January 2005) deployed in school on the average day?	
Of these, please estimate the number deployed in placements of one term or less:	
What proportion of all the schools in the LEA that could potentially use the supply service have done so in the last year? Please estimate:	%
What proportion of all supply cover in the LEA is provided through the supply service? Please estimate:	%

Are any teachers employed on permanent contracts to provide short-term supply cover in schools?

Yes No (please circle)

If YES, please give the number of such teachers: ……

Please explain briefly how they are deployed:

SECTION C: Variation in demand for supply teachers

17. Is there a geographical variation across the LEA in the supply of supply teachers and the demands from schools for their services?

Yes No don't know *(please circle)*

If YES, please describe:

18. What is the current (January 2005) balance between supply and demand? Please tick the most appropriate description for each type of school, or indicate 'don't know':

	demand greatly exceeds supply	generally demand exceeds supply	supply and demand balance	generally supply exceeds demand	supply vastly exceeds demand	don't know
nursery						
first / lower						
primary						
middle deemed primary						
middle deemed secondary						
secondary / upper						
special						

19. Do certain schools that use the supply service have higher than average demands for supply teachers?

Yes No don't know *(please circle)*

If YES, please explain what sort of schools, and why:

20. Are there certain secondary subjects, or particular age groups (e.g. Year 6), for which demand exceeds supply? Please specify:

21. How does demand change through the year? Please indicate the typical level of demand for each period, or indicate 'don't know':

	low	moderate	high	don't know
Sept - Oct				
Nov - Dec				
Jan - Feb				
March - April				
May - July				

22. Overall, how has demand for supply teachers changed since 2000? Please circle:

considerable decrease | slight decrease | no change | slight increase | considerable increase | don't know

23. Please add any other comments about the relationship of supply and demand, and changes in either:

24. Monitoring and feedback

a) Is feedback routinely collected from schools about the performance of individual supply teachers?

Yes No *(please circle)*

If YES, is this: fed back to teachers ☐ recorded on file ☐ used to inform CPD planning ☐ *Please tick all that apply*

b) Is feedback routinely collected from supply teachers about the support offered in particular schools?

Yes No *(please circle)*

If YES, is this: fed back to schools ☐ recorded on file ☐ used to advise schools on appropriate practice ☐ *Please tick all that apply*

c) If either form of feedback is collected, could you summarise the overall picture gained from this feedback?

SECTION D: Preferred supplier lists

25. Does the LEA recommend that schools use a particular agency or agencies, for example, through issuing a preferred supplier list to schools?

Yes No (please circle)

If YES, please explain the basis of this recommendation, or attach relevant documents:

26. How effective an indicator of good practice in supply teacher provision do you consider the Quality Mark to be?

very effective fairly effective not effective don't know *(please circle)*

Please add any comments to explain this response:

Please add any views on the impact, if any, of the Quality Mark in raising quality of provision:

SECTION E: Support and professional development

27. Guidelines to schools

Does the LEA issue any guidelines to schools about the information and support that they should provide to supply teachers?

Yes No (please circle) If YES, please attach a copy

Does the LEA draw schools' attention to:

	yes	*no*	*don't know*
the DfES Guidance Using Supply Teachers to Cover Short-Term Absences (DfES/0472/2002)?			
Workforce Agreement Monitoring Group guidance on cover supervision?			

28. Professional development

Does the LEA provide professional development specifically designed to meet the needs of supply teachers?

Yes No (please circle*)* If YES, please attach information about this*.*

Do supply teachers have access to the full range of LEA-provided professional development activities?

Yes No (please circle)

Who pays for the professional development of supply teachers? Please circle and add detail as necessary:

the LEA | the supply teacher | schools | the agency/other organisation in partnership with the LEA | it depends (please give details below)

Please add further comments on professional development provision:

29. DfES on-line self-study materials for supply teachers:

- are these recommended by your LEA to supply teachers? Yes No don't know (please circle)
- are they used in any other way: e.g. designing courses? Yes No don't know (please circle)

SECTION F: The current supply situation and the future

30. To what extent are any of the following issues of current concern for headteachers in your LEA?

	a major concern	a minor concern	not a concern	don't know
Availability of supply teachers				
Quality of supply teachers				
Time taken to obtain a supply teacher				
Cost of supply teachers				
Professional development of supply teachers				
Developing effective cover systems that do not involve supply teachers				
Other (please indicate what below)				

31. In what other ways does the LEA monitor the situation in schools in relation to provision of cover?

32. Is the LEA planning any changes to the current provision? Yes No (please circle)

If Yes, please add details, and indicate the timescale for these plans:

33. In your view, what impact is the remodelling agenda and enhanced roles for support staff having on the market for provision of supply teachers? What impact do you expect over the next two years?

34. Please add any suggestions for the DfES that you feel would improve the current situation in relation to provision of cover:

Please could you attach any relevant documents that will help the research team to understand the LEA arrangements: for example:

- guidelines for schools
- preferred supplier list
- details of professional development activity targeted at supply teachers.

Thank you very much for completing this questionnaire. Please could you fill in contact details below in case we need to contact you for further information; these details will not be shared with the DfES.

Name: ……..

Contact details (phone / email): ……..

Appendix B: School questionnaire

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January 2005

The Recruitment, Deployment and Management of Supply Teachers in England:

Research commissioned by the DfES

The Institute for Policy Studies in Education has been commissioned by the DfES to carry out research into the recruitment, deployment and management of supply teachers in England. This research will inform future policy developments in relation to supply teachers.

The views of school staff responsible for supply staff are clearly central to this research; we would therefore be grateful if the relevant member of staff in your school could complete and return the attached questionnaire. We estimate that it will take it will take approximately 20 minutes to complete.

In addition we would be very grateful if you could hand out the enclosed envelopes (which each contain a questionnaire for the supply teachers to complete) to the next four supply teachers to work in your school. **Please note that in the context of this project a supply teacher is defined as a teacher providing cover in a school for a period of one term or less;** those providing cover for longer periods are not included in this survey.

The project also involves a national survey of LEAs; interviews with a sample of LEAs and private supply agencies; case studies of schools; and focus groups with supply teachers. The responses to this questionnaire, together with data from other research strands, will be used to compile a report for the DfES which will be published early in 2006. Your answers will be treated in the strictest confidence and all findings anonymised so they cannot be traced back to individuals or schools.

We would be grateful if you could complete and return this questionnaire in the reply paid envelope provided by **MONDAY 7th MARCH**.

If you have any queries about this research, or the questionnaire, please contact me (see contact details above). Thank you very much for your cooperation.

Yours sincerely

Dr Merryn Hutchings

SECONDARY SCHOOL OUESTIONNAIRE

IMPORTANT

Throughout this questionnaire, the term '**SUPPLY TEACHER'** is used to mean a teacher providing cover for a period of one term or less. Those providing cover for longer periods are not included in this survey. '**SUPPLY TEACHER'** is used to mean those working through LEA supply pools or services, those working through agencies, and those recruited directly by the school.

'LEA SUPPLY SERVICE' is used to mean both supply pools run entirely by the LEA, and supply services run by the LEA with private sector partners.

SECTION A: Arrangements for cover

1. How frequently has each of the following cover scenarios occurred in your school in the last 12 months? *In each case, select the response that best fits your practice:*

	almost daily	*at least once a week*	*at least once a month*	*at least once a term*	*occasionally*	*never*
class supervised by a member of the school's regular teaching staff						
class supervised by supply teacher						
class supervised by support staff* who are regular members of the school staff						
class supervised by support staff* employed on a daily-paid basis						

* e.g. teaching assistants or cover supervisors

If NO supply teachers have been used in the last 12 months, please go straight to **Section H**.

SECTION B: Recruitment and deployment of supply teachers

NOTE Sections B-G focus entirely on use of supply teachers. The use of internal cover is dealt with in Section H.

2. On which day of a staff absence would you normally aim to have a supply teacher providing cover? *Please tick appropriate columns for unplanned and planned absences:*

	1st	*2nd*	*3rd*	*4th or later*
unplanned absence due to sickness				
planned absence (e.g. having an operation, jury service, school trip)				

For a planned absence, how far in advance would you make the booking? ……. days

Additional comments:

3. What action is taken when a supply teacher is required? *Please complete the statements below using appropriate letters from the list:*

Our first action to obtain a supply teacher is ……

If that is not successful we would ……

(indicate any that apply, or leave blank if not applicable)

A: contact a private supply teacher agency
B: contact the LEA supply service
C: contact supply teachers on list provided by the LEA
D: contact supply teachers recruited directly by the school

Please add any other strategies you might use to obtain a supply teacher:

4. If you use supply teachers recruited directly by your school, do any of them fall into the categories below? *Please tick all that apply:*

- ☐ retired members of school staff
- ☐ former members of school staff
- ☐ parents of either pupils or ex-pupils
- ☐ teachers who answered an advertisement for supply teachers placed by the school

Please add comments about any other ways in which your school has directly recruited supply teachers:

5. If you use a private agency or LEA supply service, how important has each of the following factors been in your decision about which service / agency to use? *Please tick appropriate columns:*

	very important	*fairly important*	*fairly **un**important*	***un**important*
reliable service (based on previous experience)				
lower price to schools than other agencies				
quality of teacher provided (based on previous experience)				
having been awarded the Quality Mark				
having another mark of quality (e.g. Investors in People, ISO)				
appearing on a preferred supplier list				
provision of effective CPD for supply teachers				
whether supply teachers are well paid				
whether they are paid on national scales				
whether the service / agency monitors supply teachers in post				
loyalty schemes, financial and other incentives for schools				
preference for private sector rather than public sector				
preference for public sector rather than private sector				
positive relationship with staff in the agency / supply service				

6. Arranging supply teacher cover:

Please estimate the total number of hours spent by school staff arranging supply teacher cover in an average week: …… hours

In your school, what post is held by the person(s) who has overall responsibility for cover? ……

What post is held by the person who makes the practical arrangements for booking supply teachers? ……

SECTION C: Meeting the needs of your school

7. In general, how accurately do the supply teachers you have used match the needs of your school?

	usually	*often*	*occasionally*	*never*	*not applicable*
qualified and/or experienced to teach age group					
qualified and/or experienced to teach subject					
qualified and/or experienced to teach children with special needs					

8. What are the qualifications of supply teachers used in your school?

	one or more supply teachers in this group have been used (tick all that apply)	*the majority of supply teachers are in this group (tick one only)*
UK-trained NQT (not yet completed induction)		
UK trained, has completed induction		
Trained in European Economic Area (EEA)		
Overseas Trained (not EEA)		
Unqualified		

9. a) Please estimate the proportion of cases where supply teachers working for short periods of time (i.e. where absence is not expected to last more than a week) are NOT specialists in the relevant subject:

100% 90% 80% 70% 60% 50% 40% 30% 20% 10% 0% *(please circle)*

Please add any comments on this:

b) Do you routinely expect that a supply teacher will provide 'general cover': i.e. issue a timetable that involves covering lessons in different subjects on the same day?

Yes, regularly Sometimes No (please circle)

Please add any comments on this:

c) What are the subjects for which it is most difficult to obtain appropriately qualified supply teachers? Please start with the most difficult to obtain:

d) Are there any groups of pupils (e.g. particular age groups, special needs) for which it is more difficult to obtain supply teachers?

Yes No *(please circle)*

If yes, which groups, and why do you think this is?

10. a) Please tick ONE statement that best represents the situation in your school:

We generally use the same supply teacher(s) who are familiar with the school and its pupils	
We use some regular and familiar supply teachers, but also some unfamiliar ones	
The majority of our supply teachers are unfamiliar with the school	

b) If you use a private supply agency or LEA supply service, do you normally ask for a preferred teacher by name?

Yes No (please circle)

SECTION D: Supply teachers' work

11. Do you expect supply teachers on short placements (a week or less) to:

	usually	*sometimes*	*occasionally*	*never*
supervise pupils doing work that has been set				
instruct pupils to continue work from their text books				
devise a lesson following a weekly plan or a scheme of work that has been provided				
follow a lesson plan that has been provided				
plan a lesson and teach it				
arrive with a range of activities and select from these				

12. What tasks do you expect supply teachers to carry out, and how does this vary with length of placement?

	all supply teachers	*only those doing placements longer than a week*	*only those doing placements longer than a month*
undertake supervision at break times			
mark work			
plan lessons			
plan a unit of work			
take pupils on visits			
attend a parents' evening			
attend staff meetings			
update pupils' records			
write reports			
set homework			
mark homework			
stay until all pupils are collected			
take part in CPD activities within the school			

*If YES, are supply teachers paid for taking part in CPD activities? Yes No (*please circle*)*

SECTION E: Use of supply teachers

REMINDER: in this questionnaire supply teachers are defined to include <u>only</u> those working for a term or less in a school.

13. How many supply teacher <u>days</u> have been used in your school:

- in the last five days? ……..
- in the last year (2004)? ……..

14. How many <u>different</u> supply teachers worked in your school

- in the last five days? ……..
- in the last year (2004)? ……..

In this section, please give approximate figures rather than leaving questions unanswered

15. Please ESTIMATE the proportion of the total supply days used in the last year that were used for each of the following reasons:

%	short-term teacher sickness (less than 4 weeks)
%	short-term teacher absence for personal reasons / jury service/ funerals etc.
%	long-term teacher sickness or maternity leave (more than 4 weeks)
%	unfilled vacancies
%	professional development activity
%	other professional absence (meetings, sports events etc.)
%	other *(please state what)*
100%	TOTAL

SECTION F: Supply teachers in school

16. When a supply teacher new to your school arrives, what documentation are they given? *Please tick all that apply:*

	handbook or information sheet designed to meet the needs of temporary supply staff
	behaviour policy
	timetable
	information about pupils' attainment
	other information about specific pupils (e.g. special needs, medical or behavioural information)
	other – *please state what:*

17. Is there a named individual (or individuals) in the school responsible for the following aspects of supply cover? *Please circle yes or no in each case*:

Induction	Yes	No
Support	Yes	No
Supervision	Yes	No
Monitoring	Yes	No

18. If you responded YES to any part of Question 17, how effective do you consider these arrangements to be?

	very effective	*fairly effective*	*needs to be developed*	*no arrangements*
Induction				
Support				
Supervision				
Monitoring				

Please add any comments:

19. On the list below, please tick the THREE FACTORS that you consider to be the most important for schools to maximise the effectiveness of supply teachers:

	thorough induction
	provision of school policies
	provision of detailed lesson plans
	provision of schemes of work /weekly plans
	provision of information about pupil attainment
	a named individual to provide support and supervision
	developing a pool of supply teachers who are familiar with the school
	ensuring that supply teachers are included in professional development activity

Section G: Evaluation

20. In general, how would you rate the supply teachers you have used in the last year in relation to each of the factors listed below:

	excellent	*good*	*fair*	*poor*
knowledge of the curriculum				
communication skills				
ICT skills				
behaviour management				
ability to form relationships with teachers				
ability to form relationships with pupils				
appropriate professional behaviour				
willingness to contribute to life of school				
commitment				
enthusiasm				

Please add any comments:

21. In the last year, have you asked any supply teacher to leave before the end of the planned placement on the grounds of competence or conduct?

Yes, more than one Yes, one No (*please circle*)

If YES, please give brief details:

In the last year, how many (if any) of the supply teachers who worked in your school would have welcomed as permanent members of staff, had a vacancy arisen?

More than one One None (*please circle*)

22. Please rate the supply service / agency that you most often use in relation to each of the factors listed. If the service does not aim to provide a particular service, tick 'not applicable'.

	excellent	*good*	*fair*	*poor*	*not applicable*
quality of supply teachers					
ability to provide supply cover when needed					
efficiency of booking system					
match of teacher to school need					
monitoring the service provided					
value for money					

23. How far do you agree with each of the following statements? *Please tick appropriate columns:*

	strongly agree	*agree*	*neutral*	*disagree*	*strongly disagree*
The use of supply teachers is positive in that a change of teacher stimulates pupils.					
Pupils' behaviour is generally worse with supply teachers.					
Short-term pupil achievement is negatively affected by the use of supply teachers.					
Supply teachers can supervise pupils, but little is learned.					
Long-term pupil achievement is lower when they are regularly taught by supply teachers.					
Supply teachers introduce the staff to new ideas.					

Please add any comments:

24. Are you familiar with:

	yes	*not in detail*	*no*
the DfES Guidance *Using Supply Teachers to Cover Short-Term Absences* (DfES/0472/2002)?			
Workforce Agreement Monitoring Group guidance on cover supervision?			

If YES to either of these documents, what aspects have you found useful or followed?

25. Are you familiar with the DfES on-line self-study materials for supply teachers?

Yes Not in detail No *(please circle)*

If YES, how useful do you consider these to be?

Have you ever recommended these materials to supply teachers in your school? Yes No *(please circle)*

SECTION H: Using internal cover

26. To what extent does the school use internal cover, by teachers or support staff (e.g. teaching assistants or cover supervisors) in each of the following ways?

	normally	*sometimes*	*occasionally*	*never*
to cover planned absences related to professional activities (CPD, meetings, sports events etc.)				
to cover short sickness absences				
in the early days of teacher absence before supply cover is used				
because supply cover is not available				
as a deliberate strategy to minimise / avoid the use of supply teachers				

27. a) How often does each of the following cover arrangements occur?

	very often	*sometimes*	*occasionally*	*never*
class supervised by a teacher who is scheduled to have 'non-contact time'				
class supervised by a member of support staff (e.g. teaching assistant, cover supervisor)				
class supervised by a teacher on the management team				
lessons cancelled				
pupils split between other classes				
two classes combined				

Please add any comments:

b) Please estimate the proportion of cases where teachers providing <u>internal cover lessons</u> are NOT specialists in the relevant subject:

100% 90% 80% 70% 60% 50% 40% 30% 20% 10% 0% *(please circle)*

Please add any comments on this:

28. Using support staff to provide cover: please indicate how far you agree or disagree with each statement. In this context support staff may include teaching assistants and cover supervisors.

	strongly agree	agree	neutral	disagree	strongly disagree
In this school, support staff provide cover for planned short absences (e.g. for meetings, CPD).					
In this school, support staff provide cover in emergencies (e.g. first day of sickness).					
In this school support staff cover classes for up to three consecutive days.					
Many of the support staff in this school are appropriately trained and skilled to provide cover.					
We will make more use of support staff to provide cover when more of the support staff have received appropriate training.					
The support staff in this school are a more effective way of managing cover than supply teachers because they know the pupils.					
In this school we use support staff because this is a more cost-effective way of providing cover than using supply teachers.					

29. How much has the use of support staff to supervise classes increased in the light of the National Agreement on workforce reform signed in January 2003?

no change slight increase large increase *(please circle)*

Please add any comments on this:

30. What has been the impact in your school of the September 2004 change to the School Teachers' Pay & Conditions Document, specifying that no teacher shall be required to provide cover for absent teachers for more than 38 hours in any school year?

How do you expect that this will impact over the rest of this academic year?

and finally …

31. Please complete the table below to give an overview of the teaching staff situation in your school in January 2005:

Total of regular teachers (including headteacher) FTE	
Vacancies (as recorded on 618g) FTE	
Temporarily filled posts (as recorded on 618g) FTE	
Number of supply teachers working in the school for a period of ONE TERM OR LESS on the day that you complete this questionnaire	
Number of supply teachers working in the school for a period of MORE THAN ONE TERM on the day that you complete this questionnaire	

Of the regular teachers, how many are:

NQTs	
Overseas trained teachers	
Teach First teachers	
Graduate and Registered Teacher Programme trainees	

32. What, if any, insurance arrangements offering cover in case of staff absence does the school make? *Please tick the relevant box.*

arrangements made independently	
insured through LEA scheme	
no insurance cover	

Please state the level of cover, if known ……

1. At what stage does cover start? Please tick as appropriate:

immediately	
after one week	
after two weeks	
other (please state what)	

33. What do you think could be done by LEAs or the DfES to improve arrangements for cover?

Thank you very much for filling in this questionnaire. We are hoping to interview some school staff who are responsible for arrangements for supply cover. If you are willing to be interviewed (either by telephone or face-to-face) please fill in your name and contact details below.

Name ……..

School ……Phone number / email ……

School questionnaire: versions of Question 9 for other sectors

Questionnaire for NURSERY schools: Question 9

9. a) How often are you able to obtain supply teachers who are trained or experienced with the age group of your pupils?

generally sometimes rarely never (*please circle*)

b) Would you use more supply cover if appropriately trained teachers were more often available?

Yes No (please circle)

Please add any comments on this:

c) Are there any groups of pupils (e.g. particular age groups, special needs) for which it is more difficult to obtain supply teachers?

Yes No (please circle)

If yes, which groups, and why do you think this is?

Questionnaire for PRIMARY schools: Question 9

9. Are there any groups of pupils (e.g. particular age groups, special needs) for which it is more difficult to obtain supply teachers?

Yes No *(please circle)*

If YES, which groups, and why do you think this is?

Questionnaire for SPECIAL schools: Question 9

9. a) How often are you able to obtain supply teachers who are trained or experienced in relation to the needs of your pupils?

generally sometimes rarely never (*please circle*)

b) Would you use more supply cover if appropriately trained teachers were more often available?

Yes No (please circle)

Please add any comments on this:

c) Are there any groups of pupils (e.g. particular age groups, particular subjects) for which it is more difficult to obtain supply teachers?

*Yes No (*please circle*)*

If yes, which groups, and why do you think this is?

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January 2005

The Recruitment, Deployment and Management of Supply Teachers in England:

Research commissioned by the DfES

The Institute for Policy Studies in Education has been commissioned by the DfES to carry out research into the recruitment, deployment and management of supply teachers in England. This research will inform future policy developments in relation to supply teachers.

It is extremely important that the views of supply teachers themselves are taken into account; we are therefore asking you to fill in the attached questionnaire. We estimate that it will take it will take approximately 20 minutes to complete.

The research also involves

- a national survey of schools and of LEAs;
- interviews with a sample of LEAs and private supply agencies;
- case studies of schools; and
- focus groups with supply teachers.

The responses to this questionnaire, together with data from other research strands, will be used to compile a report for the DfES which will be published early in 2006. **Your answers will be treated in the strictest confidence and all findings will be anonymised so they cannot be traced back to individuals.**

We would be grateful if you could complete and return this questionnaire in the reply paid envelope provided **BEFORE EASTER.**

If you have any queries about this research, or the questionnaire, please contact me (see contact details above). Thank you very much for your cooperation.

Yours sincerely

Dr Merryn Hutchings

SUPPLY TEACHER QUESTIONNAIRE

Section A: Your current work

1. Please tick the most appropriate description(s) for the neighbourhoods of the schools where you have been teaching in the last calendar year (2004). *Please tick all that apply*:

☐ inner city ☐ urban ☐ suburban ☐ rural

2. Please tick the Government Office Region(s) in which the schools where you have been working are situated:

☐	North East	☐	East of England
☐	North West	☐	Inner London
☐	Yorkshire and The Humber	☐	Outer London
☐	East Midlands	☐	South East
☐	West Midlands	☐	South West

3. Nature of your employment: please tick all the ways you have worked since January 2004:

☐ A. Through a private supply teacher agency
☐ B. Through a local authority supply service
☐ C. Directly for one or more schools

Which of these is the main way you work, A, B or C? ……..

How many (if any) different private supply agencies / LEA supply services are you registered with? …….

lease list all the agencies / LEA supply services you are registered with, starting with the one through which you most often obtain work:

4. Is your choice of supply agencies and LEA supply services influenced by the following indicators?
Please tick the relevant box in each row below:

	Yes	No	*I am not aware of this indicator*
The DfES / REC Quality Mark			
ISO 9000			
Investors in People			

Have you used other supply teachers' recommendations as a way of choosing agencies / supply services?

Yes, often Yes, occasionally No (*please circle*)

Please note any other reasons for choosing to work with a particular agency / supply service:

5. Length of school placements:

How many days do you expect to be in your current placement?	☐
How many days was your longest placement since January 2004?	☐
How many days was your shortest placement since January 2004?	☐

6. Approximately how many different schools have you worked in since January 2004? ……..

(If you have been a supply teacher for less than a year, please indicate how many months you have been a supply teacher, and how many schools you have worked in during that time)

7. What are the arrangements for your deployment in schools?

☐ I have to contact the agency or supply service to find out what work is available
☐ the agency / supply service contacts me
☐ individual schools contact me directly
☐ other: *please explain……*

How is the contact made? phone email other *(please circle)*

Additional comments on the system for deployment:

8. What proportion of your work is:

booked more than two weeks in advance	%
booked between two days and two weeks in advance	%
booked on the day or on the evening before	%

9. At present, how many days would you like to teach in an average week? ……

How many days do you actually teach in an average week? ……

10. In the last year (2004), please give your best estimate of the number of days when:

a) you were NOT offered work when you would have liked to be working? ……..

b) you turned down work that you had been offered? …….

11. Please indicate on the list below your reason(s) for turning down work, or add other explanation(s). Please *tick all that apply:*

	A. I did not want to work in that school
	B. I had already accepted work at another school
	C. The placement was not in a subject /age group I am qualified to teach
	D. I did not want to work that particular day
	E. Other: *please state what*

If you ticked A, please indicate whether your feelings were based on:

previous experience in this school	
reputation of school	
school location, difficult or expensive journey	

Please specify the nature of this →

poor resources	
lack of support in the school	
poor pupil behaviour	
poor management / leadership	
unfriendly staff	

12. What impact, if any, has the remodelling agenda and use of support staff to cover classes had on your work?

	strongly agree	*agree*	*neutral*	*disagree*	*strongly disagree*
I receive fewer short (1-2 day) bookings than previously					
I am offered less work overall than previously					

Other impact – please specify:

13. In your current placement, what are the hours you spend in the school?

arrive: …… a.m. leave: …… p.m.

Do you normally spend time doing school work in the evening at home? Yes No *(please circle)*

If YES, how many hours a week, on average? ……..

14. How accurate is each of the following statements for you?

	accurate	*fairly accurate*	*not accurate*
A. I only do supply work in one school			
B. I generally work in the same schools, and am familiar with schools and pupils			
C. I work in a large number of different schools, and am often unfamiliar with the schools I work in			

If you responded A, please indicate how you first got in contact with the school:

15. Over the last year, how often has your work taken each of the following forms?

	very often	*fairly often*	*occasionally*	*never*
supervising pupils doing set work				
instructing pupils to continue work from their text books				
devising a lesson following a weekly plan or a scheme of work that has been provided				
following a lesson plan that has been provided				
planning and teaching a lesson				
selecting from a range of activities that you have taken into school				

16. When you are given plans or schemes of work to follow, how useful have you found these?

	very useful	*fairly useful*	*not useful*	*not applicable*
schemes of work				
weekly plan				
detailed lesson plan				

17. What are the main limitations, if any, of plans or schemes of work you have been given to use? *Please tick all that apply:*

☐	insufficient detail	☐	lack of information regarding pupil levels
☐	resources not specified	☐	lack of knowledge about what has already been covered
☐	resources not available	☐	other – please explain

PRIMARY TEACHERS: please go to Question 19

18. SECONDARY TEACHERS: Please state the subject(s) that you are qualified to teach or experienced in teaching:

Approximately what proportion of your placements involve teaching only the subject(s) named above? ……..%

What proportion of your total working time do you estimate is spent teaching the subject(s) named above? ……..%

Since January 2004, what other subjects have you taught / provided cover for?

What are your views about teaching subjects other than the one(s) you are qualified to teach, or are experienced in teaching?

19. In what proportion of the schools you have worked in since January 2004 have you been expected to do each of the following? *Please tick appropriate columns.*

	almost all	*a majority*	*a minority*	*hardly any*
undertake supervision at break times				
supervise lunch				
mark work				
plan lessons				
plan a unit of work				
take pupils on visits				
attend a parents evening				
attend staff meetings				
update pupils' records				
write reports				
set homework				
mark homework				

20. Is your pay based on national teachers' pay scales? Yes No Don't know (*please circle)*
If YES, which scale are you paid on? Upper scale Main scale Unqualified scale (*please circle*)

21. In your current placement, what are you paid for a day's supply cover?
Please state gross daily pay before deduction of tax, pensions / superannuation and national insurance £ …….

22. Your pension: please tick the most accurate statement below:

I pay contributions into: • the Teachers Pension Scheme	
• a stakeholder pension fund arranged through a supply agency	
• a pension fund I arranged personally	
I do not pay into a pension fund	

23. Do you combine supply teaching with another regular activity? Yes No *(please circle)*
If yes, please tick appropriate box(es):

	a part-time teaching job in one school
	other employment: *please state what* ……..
	self-employment: *please state what* ……..
	child-care (own children)
	caring for other dependants
	studying
	other: *please state what* ……

Section B: Your career

24. Please give details of your teaching experience to date, indicating the <u>total</u> number of years for each type of activity:

	no. of years	*dates (in years e.g. 1987-89)*
daily-paid supply		
temporary or fixed term contract, teaching in one school		
permanent full-time work in one school		
permanent part-time or job-share work in one school		
teaching overseas		

25. Have you ever been employed / self-employed for more than a year in work other than teaching?
Yes No (*please circle)*

If yes, please state, for each type of work, what it was, and for how many years you did it:

job title *number of years*

26. How did you first get into supply teaching? *Please tick all that apply.*

	I approached an agency / LEA supply service directly
	I answered an advertisement placed by an agency / LEA supply service
	I resigned from a permanent job in the same local authority and moved to supply
	I applied for a post that I did not get and was offered supply
	at an HE recruitment fair
	through a personal contact / word of mouth
	other: *please give details* ……

27. What were you doing immediately before you started supply teaching? *Tick the appropriate box.*

	initial teacher training
	temporary/fixed term teaching post in one school (other than supply)
	permanent teaching post in one school
	permanent peripatetic teacher
	career break: *please circle best description of this*: caring for dependants travelling studying other
	unemployed and seeking work
	other employment/ self-employment: *please state what* ……

28. If you were in a permanent teaching post immediately before you started supply teaching, please indicate why you moved to supply teaching:

	Tick all that apply	*Please add detailed reasons*
Relocation		
dissatisfaction with permanent teaching post		
attractions of supply teaching		
other		

29. What do you expect to be doing in the future? *Please tick appropriate box(es) in each column***:**

	one year's time	*5 years' time*	*10 years' time*
daily paid supply teaching			
a full-time permanent teaching post in a UK school			
a part-time or job-share teaching post in a UK school			
a leadership post in a UK school			
a teaching or leadership post in a school in another country			
retirement			
a career break			
employment / self-employment outside teaching: *please state what:* ……			
other: *please state what* ……			

30. If you are NOT intending to move into a permanent teaching post in the future, is there anything that might persuade you to do so?

	major incentive	*minor incentive*	*not an incentive*
an increase in teachers' pay			
a reduction in teachers' workload			
increased autonomy for teachers			
a 'return to teaching' course			
greater availability of part-time / job-share posts			
better child-care facilities			
better behaviour management in schools			

Please add any other factors that might persuade you to take a permanent teaching post:

31. In your current circumstances, what would be your ideal employment?

	full-time teaching in one school
	part-time or job-share teaching in one school
	daily-paid supply teaching
	permanent supply teaching
	employment / self-employment outside teaching: *please state what* ……..

Section C: Your views on supply teaching

32. Why are you doing supply teaching? *Please tick <u>all</u> the statements that apply:*

A. Supply teaching fits with my childcare and family commitments	
B. I am supply teaching to supplement my pension	
C. I am supply teaching because this enables me to travel	
D. I am supply teaching in order to gain wider experience	
E. I prefer supply work because I am trying to develop another career: *please state what:*	
F. I am supply teaching because I cannot obtain a *full-time* teaching post in my area	
G. I am supply teaching because I cannot obtain a *part-time* teaching post in my area	
H. I prefer supply teaching because the workload is less	
I. I prefer supply teaching because there is less work outside school hours	
J. I prefer supply teaching for another reason: *please state what:*	

Which statement listed above best represents your main reason for supply teaching (A, B, C etc.)? …….

Please add any further comments on your reasons for doing supply teaching:

33. Please indicate the level of your satisfaction / dissatisfaction with particular aspects of supply teaching.
(Inevitably schools vary, but this question is concerned with overall satisfaction.)

	very satisfied	*fairly satisfied*	*neutral / not applicable*	*slightly dissatisfied*	*very dissatisfied*
the schools you are placed in					
the classes you are placed in					
the amount of work you are offered					
the degree of choice you have about where you work					
the degree of choice you have about when you work					
opportunities to develop relationships with other teachers					
opportunities to contribute to pupils' education					
opportunities to develop relationships with pupils					
pupil behaviour in the classes you teach					
pay levels					
workload and hours of work					
conditions of employment					

Please add any other comments about the level of your job satisfaction or dissatisfaction:

Section D: Support and professional development

34. When you are sent to a new placement, what information is usually made available to you beforehand?

- ☐ address
- ☐ contact details
- ☐ details of cover needed
- ☐ transport details / parking
- ☐ a sheet of information about the school
- ☐ name of contact person
- ☐ school reputation
- ☐ feedback from previous supply teachers
- ☐ other: *please say what ……..*

Who provides this information? (e.g. agency, school)……..

In what form do you receive it? (e.g. over the phone, on a website, in a letter)……

35. How often are you provided with each of the following by schools?

	almost always	*sometimes*	*occasionally*	*never*
a handbook designed for supply teachers				
behaviour policy				
timetable				
information about pupils' attainment				
other information about specific pupils (e.g. special needs, medical or behavioural information)				
access to the teaching resources you need				
a person responsible for your induction				
a person responsible for supporting you				
a person responsible for supervising / monitoring your work				
a feedback sheet				

36. Please give brief details of professional development activities you were involved in during 2004, indicating the duration and nature of the activity, and how useful it was:

provided by a supply agency
provided by an LEA
provided by schools

17. Have you had to pay for any of this professional development activity? Yes No (*please circle*)

If yes, please give details:

37. Do you think that you are experiencing as much professional development activity as a permanent teacher?

Yes No Don't know (*please circle*)

38. What professional development activity would you find useful to be involved in during the next year?

39. Are you aware of the DfES on-line study materials for supply teachers? Yes No (*please circle*)

If yes, have you used them? Yes No (*please circle*)

If you *have* used them, please indicate how useful you found them:

very useful quite useful not particularly useful (*please circle*)

Please give reasons for your response:

40. Please add comments about ways in which you could be supported to enable you to do your work more effectively:

Section E: About you

41. Your gender:

- ☐ male
- ☐ female

42. Your age

- ☐ 20-29
- ☐ 30-39
- ☐ 40-49
- ☐ 50-59
- ☐ 60 and over

43. Your ethnicity:

White
- ☐ White British
- ☐ White Irish
- ☐ Other White background

Asian/Asian British
- ☐ Indian
- ☐ Pakistani
- ☐ Bangladeshi
- ☐ Other Asian background

Chinese/Other ethnic group
- ☐ Chinese
- ☐ Other ethnic group (please specify)

Mixed
- ☐ White and Black Caribbean
- ☐ White and Black African
- ☐ White and Asian
- ☐ Other mixed background

Black/Black British
- ☐ Black Caribbean
- ☐ Black African
- ☐ Other black background

44. Your teaching qualification:

- ☐ Qualified Teacher Status (QTS) in England and Wales, completed induction year
- ☐ Newly Qualified Teacher, not completed induction year
- ☐ Teacher trained in European Economic Area (EEA)
- ☐ Overseas (not EEA) teaching qualification, currently on a route leading to QTS
- ☐ Overseas (not EEA) teaching qualification, not on a route leading to QTS
- ☐ No teaching qualification relating to teaching in schools

45. Your initial teacher training:

Year completed: ……..

Training institution: ……

Country: ……

For which age ranges were you trained to teach?

Please tick all that apply

- ☐ Foundation (3 –5 years)
- ☐ Key Stage 1 (5 – 7 years)
- ☐ Key Stage 2 (7 – 11 years)
- ☐ Middle school
- ☐ Key Stage 3 (11 – 14 years)
- ☐ Key Stage 4 (14 – 16 years)
- ☐ 16 years plus

Have you had training to teach pupils with specific special educational needs? Yes No (*please circle*)

If yes, please give details:

46. In which sector do you normally teach?

☐ nursery ☐ primary ☐ middle ☐ secondary ☐ special

Thank you very much for filling in this questionnaire. We are hoping to interview some supply teachers about their careers. If you are willing to be interviewed (either by telephone or face-to-face) please fill in your name and contact details below.

Name ……

Contact details (phone number and/or e-mail address) ……

Appendix D: nursery school handout for supply teachers

********** NURSERY SCHOOL
GUIDELINES FOR STUDENTS AND VISITORS

- Treat children with respect -once in the room children come first...try to enter their world...
- We try to encourage all children to be independent, therefore give them the freedom and time to try things for themselves and only help if necessary - suggesting alternative/easier ways of doing things is often helpful -or ask if another child can help, show or share their skills.
- We offer children time and space to develop their play -therefore observe first and intervene sensitively -join in when there's an opportunity. The children love to have an adult involved in their own play on their terms. Intervention to extend play is helpful -interference is not
- The room is a very busy workplace -in order to enable everyone to get on with their work in as peaceful an environment as possible please try not to raise your voice, or to have personal adult "chit-chat" or to discuss the children in front of them. Don't call to children or adults across the room –go to them.
- .Children need to explore and experiment at their own pace to find out how things work and the millions of possibilities the resources offer. Please don't draw for them or make things for them. They often think the way you've done it is the right and only way and will copy you instead of expressing and developing their own creativity and talents.
- Never make promises, threats or bribes.
- Don't smoke, chew gum, eat sweets, sit on tables or stand on furniture - Children copy!!!
- Never lift children onto equipment or carry them around.
- Never say a child is silly or naughty. Children are constantly testing the boundaries, it's all part of their learning. Just clearly state the rules e.g. we don't throw/swear. Never label them.
- Never make a child sit on your lap or give you a cuddle. They must be: given the same respect as adults - it's their decision if they want to be touched.
- When writing a child's name on their work, please check for the correct spelling.
- Remember that adults appear giant like to children, so try to sit, kneel or squat at their level when working with them. If you are in a group please don't crowd around them -it could feel intimidating to the children.
- Try to speak softly and clearly to them and listen carefully to them giving your full attention. Children need to know they have a receptive audience.
- Try not to be judgmental- we want them to learn to be their own judges, and to feel good about themselves and their work. "You look pleased, are you pleased with your work?"
- We encourage children to sort out their own conflicts and disagreements by following the "grievance procedure". Intervene and support them with the procedure or alert a member staff to support them. Don't sort it out for them.

We hope these guidelines are a help and not a hindrance, your comments are welcome.
Observe, listen, talk, join in, show interest and wonder, smile, relax, learn with the children and have fun!

Appendix E: Primary school handout for supply teachers

USEFUL INFORMATION FOR SUPPLY TEACHERS

Welcome to ******** Primary School. We hope you will enjoy your time teaching at the school. The following information may be of use to you.

The School Day

8.45 Briefing meeting in the staff room on Monday mornings.

Key Stage 1

8.55 Bell rung
9.00 Registration
10.15 Assembly
10.30 -10.45 Break
11.55 Washing hands
12.00 -1.10 Lunch
2.35 -2.45 Break
3.30 School ends

Key Stage 2

8.55 Bell rung
9.00 Registration
10.10 Assembly
10.30 -10.45 Break
12.15 -1.15 Lunch
3.30 School ends

Collecting Children

At the start of the day, infant children are collected from the playground:
Key Stage 1 -outside the front entrance
Key Stage 2 -go to the class on their own at 8.55am
Pupils are also collected from the same places after break and after lunchtime.
Children are expected to line up and teachers should ensure that they walk to their classroom in an orderly line. At the end of the day, children should be led to the playground. It helps if you are on time to collect your class.

Registers

These are outside the school office and must be completed at the start of the morning and afternoon sessions. The dinner register should be marked as outline below:
School dinner: / Packed lunch: PL Absent: 0

Late Children

Children arriving in class after 9.10 should hand you a 'late slip', which proves they have been booked in for lunch via the office.

A responsible child should take the register down to the office once it is completed.
(Page 2 Useful Information) .

Staffroom and staff toilets

The staff room is situated between the first and second floors. There is a staff toilet on each floor.

Behaviour

The school adheres to the principles of assertive discipline. Children should be encouraged and praised for their positive behaviour. If pupils misbehave, the following sanctions should be taken:

Step 1 -The teacher clearly informs the child what (s)he is doing wrong

Step 2 -If the child persists in misbehaving his/her name is put on the board

Step 3 -Another instance of poor behaviour leads to a cross being placed by the child's name.

Step 4 -A second cross leads to the child missing 5 minutes of playtime

Step 5 -A third cross results in the child being sent to the class next door. A responsible child should accompany the offender. If possible the child ought to be sent with appropriate work.

* In cases of serious misbehaviour, a responsible child should be sent to fetch the Headteacher.

Timetable

A timetable for the class is displayed in each classroom. Please check carefully to see if your class is having P.E or swimming today.

Photocopier

There are two photocopiers: one in the resources room and another in the secretaries' office.

Stock

Basic classroom equipment should be available in all classes. If you find that you are short of anything, please ask one of the secretaries.

Classroom Key

Classrooms must be locked during break times: a key is available from the secretariat's office.

Playground duties

You will be informed if you are to do a duty to cover for an absent teacher.

Assembly

Monday: KSI Year Group Assemblies -
Tuesday: KSI Ground Floor Hall, KS2 Year Group Assemblies
Wednesday: Class Assemblies -Ground Floor Hall
Thursday: KSI -Ground Floor Hall, KS2 Upper Hall
Friday: KSI -Ground Floor Hall, KS2 Upper Hall

Fire

The fire alarm rings like a bell. In the event of fire, children should leave the building by the exit shown in the classroom. Please ensure that you find this information on entering the room.

Tidying up

Please leave sufficient time for the children to tidy up at the end of the day. It really helps the regular teacher if s/he enters a tidy, organised room on the following day. It is your responsibility to make sure that the classroom is left as you find it. ***Please mark all work in green pen***.

Reporting on the day

Please write a short report on how the day has gone before you leave. This is extremely helpful for the regular classroom teacher who is able to follow up any issues that may arise. The report should be on the attached report sheet. This should be handed1n to the secretary when your timesheet is signed.

THANK YOU FOR YOUR SUPPORT. WE HOPE YOU ENJOY THE DAY

SUPPLY TEACHER'S REPORT ON THE DAY

Name: Date:

What activities did the children do during the day?

Session 1 (9-00 to 10-10)

Session 2 (10-25 to 12-00/12-15).

Session 3 (afternoon)

children who behaved well:

children who behaved poorly:

Any issues to follow up:

Appendix F: Junior school handout for supply teachers

General Information for Supply Teachers

Welcome to ********* Junior School. We hope you find these notes useful. Please do not hesitate to ask anyone for further information.
Check the whiteboard in the staff room for any special events that may affect your class.
Staff names: Headteacher: Mrs X. Deputy Headteacher: Mrs Y
Y3: Mrs A, Mrs B, Y4: Mr C, Mrs D
Y5: Mrs E, Ms F Y6: Mr G, Mrs H
Office: Mrs I, Mrs J , Mrs K
Classroom support: Mrs M, Mrs N, Mrs O, Mrs P
Caretaker: Mr Q. Cleaning staff: Mrs R, Mrs S
Lunchtime supervisors: Mrs T, Mrs W, Mrs L, Mrs AB.
Kitchen Staff: AC, Mrs AD
Cloakroom facilities: Staff cloakrooms are on the corridor leading to the staff room. A locking cupboard is available on request. Please do not leave valuable property unattended.
Refreshments: If you require a school meal please let the office know by 9.30am. You are welcome to use the communal drinks facilities in the staff room. Payments should be left in the tub next to the boiler. Full fat milk in the staff room fridge is for general use. The local shop next to the school sells snacks and sandwiches.
Registration: Ensure the register is completed at the beginning of morning and afternoon sessions and returned to the office. In the morning collect enveloped, labelled money in class tin or send child to office with it. Tick names of children having school meals on register (in end columns).
Behaviour We strive to create a positive ethos within the school and our open plan design requires that children and staff keep voices reasonably quiet. Children are rewarded for good behaviour with praise (verbal, written on work/stickers, stamps etc). At the end of the day you should nominate a child of the day and remind the children of what they have achieved. A note of any disruptive behaviour should be left for the class teacher indicating immediate action taken by yourself. Assistance from SMT should be requested if your own sanctions prove ineffective at any time.
Sick children should be sent to the school office with a card explaining whether you consider they need a short rest or to be sent home. CPL T are Mrs AZ and Mrs AY.
Duties: These should be indicated on the notes on the reverse of this sheet -if in any doubt please check the duty rota on the staff room notice board.

- Yard duty - *This is carried out before school and at the JO.25am and 2.00pm breaks*. At playtime children are allowed to play on the hard surfaces of the playground. There is a rota for large ball games (not just football) displayed in the staff room and on the windows facing the yard. Please encourage safe play. Send children to school office if minor first aid is required. Mrs AF should be sent for in the event of a major injury. The bell should be rung for the end of morning break 15 minutes after the end of assembly unless otherwise stated. Playground friends wear red caps. There is a support staff member on duty at morning break.
- Assembly duty -To sit at the side of the children to monitor behaviour.
- Missed break duty -This is a sanction for misbehaviour, which you may use as appropriate. Supervise the children at morning break. Register their attendance in the Blue folder stored in the office.

  Orange and red folders in the library contain worksheets for a variety of misdemeanours and may be given out.

Time sheet Time sheets are kept in the school office. Please make sure your time sheet is completed promptly by 3.30pm.
Emergency Evacuation Notices are displayed around the building. Summarised if a continuous bell rings supervise an orderly evacuation by the nearest exit and line up with children on the far North end of the playground where numbers and registers should be checked and Headteacher notified of correctness or otherwise. The children know which is their fire 'spot' on the yard.

IT IS ESSENTIAL THAT ALL WORK IS MARKED. Incomplete pieces of work may simply be initialled in the margin and a note left for the teacher in explanation if appropriate.

******* *Junior School Supply Teacher Information*

Yard duty? Yes No

- Please supervise children from 8.45am, send a child in to ring the bell at 8.50am if not already rung, and blow a whistle following the ringing of the bell.

Registration – 8.50 am

- Register children. Count dinner numbers making a note on the register.

Lesson 1 – 9.00-9.25

Lesson 2 – 9.25-10.25

Break Time - 10.25 – 10.40 am Yard duty? Yes No

- Please supervise break, send 2 children at 10.45 to knock on staff room door before ringing bell. Blow a whistle following bell for children to line up.

Balcony duty? Yes No

- Please supervise detention on the balcony, ensuring all children's names are recorded in the balcony folder and either stand silently or complete work set. Worksheets available in the cupboard. .

Lesson 3 – 10.40-11.40

Assembly 11.40-12.00

- Please supervise children while assembly is taken. Child of week assembly you may be asked to read out winning child's certificate.

Yes No

Lunch time 12.00-12.50pm. Duties are carried out by SMT and lunchtime supervisors

Registration – 12.50pm. Quiet reading until

Lesson 4 – 1.00-2.00pm

Break time – 2.00-2.10pm (no bell at start) Yard duty? Yes No

- As morning but send children in at 2.00pm to alert staff and ring bell.

Lesson 5 – 2.10-3.10pm

Special needs notes / Any other information ……..

Appendix G: Secondary school supply teacher handout

INFORMATION FOR SUPPLY TEACHERS
WORKING WITH PUPILS AT
********* SCHOOL

WELCOME TO *********

Timings of the school day

	Start	Finish
Registration	8.50 am	9.05 am
Period 1	9.05 am	9.55 am
Period 2	9.55 am	10.45 am
Break	10.45 am	11.05 am
Period 3	11.05 am	11.55 am
Period 4	11.55 pm	12.45 pm
Lunch	12.45 pm	1.45 pm
Registration	1.45 pm	1.55 pm
Period 5	1.55 pm	2.45 pm
Period 6	2.45 pm	3.35 pm

The school day

Your cover slip will be on the table below the notice board in the staff room. There is a hot drinks machine for your use in the staff room as well as a water dispenser. Morning break is at 10.45 and a variety of hot and cold drinks plus food is available in the staff room or in the canteen. Lunch is at 12.45pm and lunch for staff is available in the staff area of the canteen. There are a variety of cafe's on the ******* Road including a popular one with staff -'The *******'. There is also a post office and local supermarket.

Signing in / absence

All short-term supply staff are expected to be in school well before registration. Please sign in at reception when you arrive -this is for health and safety reasons. You will deliver your time sheet to reception at the end of the day when you sign out. Please ensure that it is filled in and signed by either a member of SL T or Ms. Z (pupil services manager). If you are unable to come to the school on the days you are booked, you should leave a message on the answer phone (020-**** *****) before 7.30am.

Responsibilities of the Supply teacher

Supply teachers are expected to follow ********* routines and procedures. They are expected to use appropriate language and model appropriate standards of teaching and behaviour management. They should not allow poor or disrespectful behaviour to go unchecked -we need to be told about it so that we can follow it up. Do not allow pupils to leave the class room unless they you have signed their diary with date and time and location. E.g. toilet. 2.00pm 12 Nov. Only allow pupils out if really essential and only one at a time.

Supply teachers may be required to:

- take a register and supervise tutor time/assembly
- invigilate exams, cover lessons, teach and actively help the class
- undertake other duties as directed by a Deputy eg break duties

Routines and procedures

At ********* all classes are expected to:

- line up quietly outside classrooms
- take coat off outside classroom
- stand behind their chair until the teacher directs the class to be seated

- sit in silence whilst the register is being taken
- work quietly and sensibly, putting hands up to ask or answer questions
- focus on their learning
- wear school uniform and abide by jewellery guidelines (1 pair of studs/sleepers)

Any incidents of unacceptable behaviour should be dealt with and/or brought to the attention of the HOF/Second in Charge/subject leader. An incident form should be completed for the HOF/HOL In an emergency send a pupil to reception, and SLT on-call will assist.

A class monitoring sheet will be presented to the teacher at the start of the lesson for checking attendance and monitoring behaviour in KS3. Please ask for the sheet if the pupils do not volunteer it. On the reverse of the sheet, please comment on good or poor behaviour. Please ask KS4 pupils to write names on sheet if no register is available and put in class teacher's pigeon hole in staffroom.

Pupil welfare

If a pupil seeks to discuss personal issues, a supply teacher should make it clear to pupils that confidential matters should be taken to Tutor/HOL or any member of the permanent staff. Any serious concerns about a pupil's welfare should be taken to Ms. A (Assistant Headteacher i/c child protection KS3) or Mr B (Assistant Headteacher i/c child protection KS4).

Health and safety

This is a 'no smoking' site. Please take care of your personal property. There is a code for entry to the staff room which you will be told upon arrival. There are phones in most Faculty offices. Should you need to phone reception in an emergency the numbers are: 221 and 269. The facilities manager is on 229.
In the event of a fire/bomb alert, please escort pupils quickly and quietly out of the building, following the green fire arrows in the corridor outside your room. Make your way to the tennis courts and line up by year and tutor group, facing away from the building to await instructions.

Toilets

Toilets for women are located just opposite the staff room. Toilets for men are located at the end of the corridor past the staff room, on the left.

Librarv/Learning Resource Centre

Is located on the 1st Floor -supply teachers can photocopy materials and use computers if they check with Mr W, the acting LRC manager.

Break duties

There is a team leader for each day of the week. They will approach you if needed to do a duty and they will explain what you are expected to do. You can take your hot drink with you whilst on duty or negotiate with your team leader about leaving duty early enough to get a drink etc.

Marking a register

If you are asked to take a register during tutor time, please follow the marking pattern and colour of pen used by the tutor previously. Supervise the tutor group until the end of the tutor period am/pm and ensure that pupils leave in an orderly manner. Put a note in a pupil's diary, on the appropriate page, if they are late. Always ask for an explanation if a pupil is late.

HAVE A NICE DAY!

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