

Education Committee

Oral evidence: [Supply of teachers](#), HC 199

Wednesday 19 October 2016

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Members present: Neil Carmichael (Chair); Lucy Allan; Marion Fellows; Suella Fernandes; Lucy Frazer; Ian Mearns; Stephen Timms; William Wragg.

Questions 159 - 242

Witnesses

I: David Anstead, Strategic Lead, Nottingham Education Improvement Board, **Professor Dame Alison Peacock**, CEO Designate, College of Teaching, **Peter Sellen**, Chief Economist, Education Policy Institute, and **Jack Worth**, Research Manager, NFER.

II: Nick Gibb MP, Minister for School Standards, Department for Education.

Written evidence from witnesses:

Department for Education ([SOT0046](#))

National Foundation for Educational Research ([SOT0057](#))

Examination of witnesses

David Anstead, Professor Dame Alison Peacock, Peter Sellen and Jack Worth.

Q159 **Chair:** Good morning. Welcome to our inquiry on teacher retention and recruitment. Just so we are all clear, the objectives for this session are as follows: to review the latest evidence on teacher retention in England; to discuss the impact of workload on teacher retention and morale—a key issue; to discuss the role of teacher professionalism in teacher recruitment and retention—that is an important aspect; and to question the Minister on developments since the last oral session we had on this subject.

In the next hour or so, that is what we are going to be focusing on. We have a panel of experts, and I would like you to introduce yourselves and say exactly who you are for the purposes of those watching on television.

David Anstead: I am David Anstead. I work for myself, for a company called All the Best Consultants. I am working on an interim basis at the moment for Nottingham Education Improvement Board. We have been doing what we think is some pioneering work around something called a fair workload charter.

Peter Sellen: Hello, I am Peter Sellen. I am the Chief Economist at the Education Policy Institute. We have recently formed a new brand since our former incarnation as CentreForum. We now have a focus on education policy and have been doing a lot of work on teacher workload and teacher supply more generally.

Professor Dame Alison Peacock: I am Alison Peacock. I am currently a primary headteacher, head of a teaching school and large alliance in Hertfordshire, about to take on the role of CEO of the new Chartered College of Teaching from January.

Jack Worth: I am Jack Worth. I am a research manager at the National Foundation for Educational Research. We have an ongoing programme of research looking at teacher retention, including two reports recently.

Q160 **Chair:** Thank you very much. To discuss a problem we first of all have to be clear about the scale of that problem. The question is, to what extent is teacher retention a problem, and is it getting worse?

David Anstead: Yes, it is a problem, and I would say it is getting worse. Certainly locally, Nottingham heads say to me all the time that they are finding it particularly difficult to recruit, and they are struggling to recruit in almost all subjects and at all levels. When people do advertise, they usually complain about a shortage of applicants. I am aware of some posts that people have been unable to fill with good-quality applicants. So, certainly in Nottingham, we think it is a big problem, and it is something that certainly needs addressing, because getting good-quality teachers and teaching assistants into our schools is critical to driving up standards.



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Q161 **Chair:** Okay. Thank you very much for that viewpoint from Nottingham. Peter, you are an economist, so let's hear some facts and figures.

Peter Sellen: It is fair to say that on the recruitment side it is pretty clear that things are getting more difficult. The rates of hitting the initial teacher training targets are lower than they were a few years ago. They have reduced recently, but particularly in secondary school subjects—it is not completely across the board; primary school recruitment has not reduced so much—and it is subject-specific as well. What those figures don't tell you that much about is exactly in which parts of the country this issue is more of a problem. It is definitely fair to say there is strong evidence that on the recruitment side things get more difficult.

On the retention side, there has been a recent increase of roughly 10% in the number of teachers leaving in a given year. It is not as dramatic as I think it might be seen, and the number of teachers in the system relative to the number of pupils has not changed very much at all recently. That has gone flat, and it is not higher than it has been in the recent past.

There clearly are difficulties. It is what you would expect in an economy that has been improving recently and with the rate of pay of teachers declining. So there are challenges. I suspect those challenges are much more difficult for certain schools and in certain areas.

Q162 **Chair:** Are you saying that there are regional variations, but even within those regions there are cold spots, or whatever you would like to define them as?

Peter Sellen: I would imagine so, yes.

Chair: Alison, do you have any thoughts on that question?

Professor Dame Alison Peacock: Anecdotally I would say that it is a concern for headteachers when they go out to recruitment, because we all know, in schools, that our schools thrive when we have highly engaged professionals who are experts in their field. Obviously what you want to do, if you are unfortunate enough to lose one of your teachers, is replace them with somebody who can enhance what you already have in your school rather than detract from what you have.

Recruitment and retention is something that heads are talking about a lot. In a very small-scale example, just in my own school—we are an outstanding school and we have been outstanding for a long time, since 2006—for the first time in a long time we advertised for a teacher vacancy in Key Stage 2 this term, and we have had one applicant. We are not going to interview that applicant. So just on that basis, this is a tiny desirable school—I would say that, wouldn't I, but it is—and there was one applicant.

Chair: Jack, do you have any comments, quickly?

Jack Worth: Yes. On the numbers of teachers being retained, I would agree with Peter that it is not an overall problem at the moment. The



balance of outflow of teachers against the inflow is fairly balanced and the pupil-teacher ratio does not seem to be changing an enormous amount. Having said that, however, there is an expected increase in pupil numbers that is going to be quite large, especially in secondary schools. That puts importance on retention now, as well as recruitment. There is also some evidence that it is becoming harder to recruit working-age teachers, so the proportion of teachers leaving, not retiring, has increased from 6% five years ago to 8%. That may not seem much but it is quite a big change. If that is a trend, it is something we need to be concerned about.

Q163 **Chair:** Thank you. What additional data do you think we should have to get a better grip on this problem?

Peter Sellen: As we found in our recent report on teacher workload, one of the concerns is not just the overall quantum of teachers leaving or coming into the profession at certain points, but the decisions that have been made and how that determines the sorts of people coming in and out.

When you have a situation where teacher workload and other issues about working conditions are such important factors to a teacher deciding to join or to stay, you know that it is not going to be just teacher effectiveness or day-to-day ways of working that affect who stays and who goes. That means that even if your overall quantum is not drastically different, it may be affecting the effectiveness of the teachers there. So more information about what is driving people to leave or to return, and also what incentives help effective teachers who are going to want to stay for the long term—join and stay—is important. So, it is not only about whatever we can do to get as many teachers through the door as possible, but what are the incentives that help people who are going to make good teachers and who are going to enjoy teaching for the long term come in and stay. More data on that and more research would be very helpful.

Professor Dame Alison Peacock: I would like us to focus on what is working well. I would like us to focus on where are the schools and the communities of schools where teachers have a great sense of agency and energy and optimism about what they are doing; teachers who are openly saying how much they love their jobs. I would like us to have much more of an educational discourse that talks about why our profession is so wonderful. Clearly there are challenges; there will always be challenges. But it seems to me that if we can shift the discourse to being one of sharing ideas, collaborating, engaging with evidence, listening to colleagues where they feel they are able to make a difference within their school community and their wider community, and how they are working together, all of these things provide hope within the system.

We are used to being blamed. Teachers would say that typically we feel as though we are on the sharp end of being told, "This isn't good enough; that isn't good enough". My sense is, if we want people to stay, which we



absolutely do, and if we really want to value the teachers that we have and encourage more teachers to come to us, we need to have a conversation that says, "When schools work well, they change lives for the better". We need a lot more of that kind of focus.

Q164 **Chair:** Thank you. One of the characteristics of the workplace these days is sometimes expressed as, "We are all going to have a lot of different jobs during our careers. We will change positions; we will have new opportunities", or whatever. That brings me on to a comment that Nick Gibb, the Minister for Schools, made some time ago, which is that there may well be churn and so on within the teaching profession, but it is no different from other professions. Retention is effectively about the same in teaching as it is in other professions, partly driven, no doubt, by the kind of workplace change that we are all familiar with. Is that correct? Or are the changes in teaching more sharply defined? Peter.

Q165 **Peter Sellen:** It is fair to say it is pretty difficult to compare teaching with other professions and say, for definite, whether this is a good retention rate or a bad retention rate. What is more worrying is the evidence about the experience of our teachers compared with those in other countries. Around 48% of our teachers in secondary schools, at least in England, have got over 10 years of experience, and that compares with an average in other countries of about 64%. So we have one of the youngest, least experienced workforces, in the world. I would be surprised if that is not something to do with differences in retention rates. It is going to be common across many countries, particularly in the developed world, that ways of working are changing and so on.

So I agree that there will definitely be some need for churn, and that is a normal part of an industry, particularly one that is trying to improve its use of performance management, which the education system is. But I do think the statistics show that there is something different in this case, and a lack of experienced teachers, combined with what look to be fairly low levels of continuing professional development, is a concern for teaching effectiveness.

Chair: Thank you. David, one last comment on this.

David Anstead: Yes, there certainly is churn. One of the main drivers of it is workload. Looking at what happens, I take my own example. I was 22 years a teacher. I became a secondary headteacher and from there I went to work for Ofsted. That might be the sort of pattern that people follow, but what you do not see so much is people going back the other way. Perhaps people come in, we train them up, they get the skills, and then we lose them. I am reminded of a survey conducted by the national heads association in 2015. Around 25% of teachers leave after three years, according to the survey, and the main driver of that is workload.

Chair: Thank you. We are going to move on to reasons for leaving the profession, and William is going to take us through that.

Q166 **William Wragg:** David, you touched on the workload. Other than



workload, is there anything else that you think drives teachers away from the profession?

David Anstead: Yes. There are a number of things. The main driver probably changes over time. In Nottingham, we have been surveying new teachers about their hopes and aspirations. We obviously survey our current teachers about what they are feeling. In the most recent consultation we carried out, around one third of respondents came back and said workload was the prime reason. There were 40-odd of those.

There was one person who came back and cited pay. Considering we have had a pay freeze, effectively, for six years, I was quite surprised that that came out so far down.

Other sorts of issues that get mentioned include difficulties of managing or coping with behaviour in some places. But I think workload is clearly the main single problem at the moment.

Q167 **William Wragg:** Thank you. Peter, you mentioned that in certain subjects, such as science and modern languages, there is a particular problem. Why are those teachers more likely than others to consider leaving the profession?

Peter Sellen: It is partly the same reason that we often see; teachers will say they are not particularly motivated by pay but statistically there is a relationship between pay and recruitment. It is because teachers of certain subjects have got better outside options. Teaching is a very highly skilled profession, and a lot of those skills are very highly valued in many other industries, and at the moment particularly in STEM industries. So science and maths teachers particularly will have other options that are very lucrative, and it is perfectly reasonable for them to be looking elsewhere. It may be that the trigger for them moving is the workload becoming too difficult to cope with, but that translates into somebody moving if there are better options.

The interesting thing we found in our report recently was that the number of hours worked does not vary hugely across different subjects, so clearly that translates into different effects on recruitment and retention potentially because of outside options.

Q168 **William Wragg:** Alison, from a primary perspective?

Professor Dame Alison Peacock: The workload is inextricably linked to the accountability agenda. Teachers generally are very committed people who come into the profession because they want to make a difference. We want to do the best we can. We all know the job is never finished: you never go home at the end of the day as a teacher and say, "That's it; jolly good—I finished everything; marked every book; spoke to every child; phoned every parent I was going to talk to; and went to that meeting". You never do that. So, there is this sense within the profession that we know the job is kind of endless, but it is not about people being afraid of working hard.



I think the problem is when you work hard and you feel as though you cannot see the purpose of what you are doing. If you are doing things that feel quite tiresome and perhaps quite meaningless, that is very energy-sapping. When we work hard and we can see the benefit of what we are doing, that is very energy-giving. So if you are working hard to prepare a series of lessons for young people, and then the young people engage in those lessons and you can see the progress they are making—you can feel the energy in the room as they are being excited about what they are doing and they are saying to you, “I looked this up at home, and I found out that”—that is very energy-giving. If, on the other hand, at the end of that day you then have to spend several hours proving that that energy happened in the classroom through some sort of dialogic discourse that you are having to write down in the book, that feels very energy-sapping, because who are you proving it to, why are you doing it? A lot of the time it is not even Ofsted. The Ofsted fear is very real, but the leadership of people like Sean Harford has helped the profession a great deal to see that what Ofsted is looking for is high quality. But the fear factor remains, particularly at the leadership level, because we are all worried about being found out one day and that at some time they will come in and find out, “You are no good after all, Peacock”. So, that sense is what means we then drive our teachers to say, “Perhaps we’d just better prove it. It’s lovely you told me that happened, but is there a photograph? Is there something written down?” That becomes unmanageable pretty quickly, I think.

Q169 William Wragg: Yes, absolutely. Jack, is there anything that you could add, particularly with any reference to the accountability measures as a drive to teachers leaving the profession?

Jack Worth: I am not sure about the accountability. I think Alison is right that there is a perception of Ofsted and then the real nature of Ofsted, which may have some disconnect in terms of the implications for teacher workload. But in terms of the reasons for teachers leaving, in our recent report we looked at lots of staff engagement factors, which described the nature of the job and picked out some that were particularly related to teachers’ intention to leave. Overall job satisfaction comes out as the biggest driver, and also things related to whether they feel supported and valued by management. So I think there is a big, important role that school leaders and governors face in setting that school culture and that tone for teachers.

Professor Dame Alison Peacock: I also think, as school leaders, we need school values, and we need to feel that we have a voice. As a school leader if you, yourself, feel weighed down with worries and concerns about everything that you are trying to do day-in, day-out, that is exhausting and will shift the culture. Vic Goddard from that “Educating Essex” programme—we all know Vic Goddard—talks about how the headteacher makes the weather. So as a headteacher if you come in to an environment and you are open to ideas and you are able to scaffold the teacher’s professional learning and say, “Well, let’s try this”. It is



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always driven by what is best for the children and young people. Then there is that notion of “We can do this, we can make things better within our school, across our school, or with groups of schools.” The agency that builds is infectious. On the other hand, if you are feeling that you are making the weather but it is snowing—that there is a blizzard going on—you do not feel very good, and probably your teachers do not feel very good either. So we need to look after our leaders.

I think alongside the new Chartered College of Teaching, the new foundation for leadership and education is a very welcome initiative, because this is about making sure that we retain a space for professionalism for our leaders in order that they can nurture our teachers. You can’t just look after one bit, can you?

Chair: Lucy, how about Government initiatives?

Q170 **Lucy Allan:** Yes, thank you, Chair. Jack, you were talking earlier about the balance between recruitment and retention, and there have certainly been a number of Government initiatives around recruitment. We have seen bursaries for maths and physics and changes to initial teacher education. Do you think that the balance is right in the efforts being made to recruit and retain? Could we, should we, be seeing more effort being put into retention of the good teachers that we already have and want to keep? Presumably that is more cost-effective. Do you have a view on that?

Jack Worth: Yes. I think broadly you are right; there has been a lot of focus on recruitment initiatives and new initiatives to get particular types of teachers or bursaries towards certain subjects. I think that focus has been away from retention, and I think retention is equally important, if not more important. I think more should be done to look at recruitment as a way of keeping teachers, because it also affects the numbers.

Q171 **Lucy Allan:** So should retention be a primary driver, and then recruitment be something that is done as well, but the primary goal should be about keeping the people who we have and who we value?

Jack Worth: I think there are different flavours in retention. I think that it is not necessarily true that 100% retention is the best way, because some teachers do not feel like teaching is working for them, so movement in and out is part of a healthy functioning system. So it is difficult to know how to make that initiative work, but I think it is as important as recruitment and should get more focus, because I do not think it is receiving the focus it needs at the moment.

Q172 **Lucy Allan:** Alison, do you think we have the balance right between the efforts on recruitment and retention?

Professor Dame Alison Peacock: I think there is so much more that could be done. In my new emerging role as a CEO, I sent a tweet saying, “I am coming to meet with the Select Committee to talk about these issues, what do you think?” I can give you a document of all the



comments that came back, most of them hugely positive, saying, “These are the things that we could do”. One of the suggestions was around making it easier for women with young children to leave the profession but come back very easily, so that kind of fluidity is important, along with access to childcare and so on and so forth.

Other people talked about colleagues within their schools who are currently support staff, and how it would be helpful to have a route for those colleagues to become qualified teachers. Many people talked about the importance of feeling valued and being able to share practice, and to have a sense of having a voice—not in a hectoring kind of way, but when you are given a voice about what you are doing and when the things that you are doing are shared, it makes you feel better and you can also help others.

Just to give you one example, there are two teachers at the moment in the west midlands who have developed a way of using Google Docs to analyse questions on exam papers. It is for primary-aged children. They are sharing this resource completely free of charge, just because it makes them feel good to think they are doing something that will help other people. So I think we need more of that—loving the ones we’re with, but also having some strategies to build fluidity and say, “Okay, well, we have this issue. We have heard about a lot of teachers leaving after three years. What are we doing to welcome them back, maybe five years after that?”

We invest in our teachers when we train them. We want them to be the best they can be. How are we going to ensure that the profession is irresistible? I think that is where the optimism of the Chartered College comes in, because if we have this notion of how we shift the discourse to one of positivity rather than blame, hopefully means that in a couple of years’ time, people will be tempted to come back. So retention is important.

Q173 Lucy Allan: The Government initiatives that we currently have are nice to have, but are they delivering?

Professor Dame Alison Peacock: One of my teachers was on the DfE workload group and contributed to that. I think there was a lot of very valuable work that was done. I am sure teachers watching this would say, “Yes, but while I have this, there are 60 books to mark tonight. I do not have time to read the workload document to work out what I need to do to reduce my workload. While my head does not have time to read it either, probably things are not going to change in my school.” So I think we are in a bit of an impasse in what we do about this, but the very fact that the Government is holding this session, and the very fact that you recognise that there is an issue, means that we are part of the way to starting to say, “What are we going to do about it?” That has to be a hugely good thing.

Lucy Allan: Do the others of you want to come in on that?



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David Anstead: Yes. I think we need to tackle both recruitment and retention, as has already been said, but in doing that we have to recognise what is the main problem that is preventing teachers coming into teaching and forcing good teachers out who just do not want to do it any more. I think at the moment it is workload.

I was working on this workload issue with Nottingham heads when those three Department for Education working parties reported, and I found those reports and the recommendations incredibly helpful, because they were explicit. They were sensible and gave some very clear messages about how workload can be reduced, and that is what we acted upon in our charter. Rather than talking to schools and saying, "Well, maybe you can look at what you are doing with marking, and maybe you can do a bit less", what we tried to do was say, "Let's put a realistic cap on the amount of work people should do after school, and we will seek, consult and get consensus from the staff associations, from heads and from Ofsted about what is reasonable". Then we will work backwards and see what needs to change with what is happening in schools, so that people are not sitting there with their 60 books to mark and working four hours into the evening.

Peter Sellen: I also add that it is encouraging to see the Government focusing on the key issues of data management, marking and planning. Our recent analysis confirms again that those are big issues, and it is not necessarily time in front of classes that is taken up by teachers here.

I would also add that the recommendation in those reports are quite valuable from my perspective. I think they need to be put into action in schools. It is hard to think of any centrally led initiative that the Department for Education could launch that would help this over and above action within schools. While the majority of teachers do say that the accountability system is a big driver of their workload, which seems pretty clear, I think what is important is the long-term thinking of the system. If schools, multi-academy trusts and other system leaders have a long-term view of what is going to be best for a set of pupils, which is keeping good staff and training them and motivating them, it should not be about asking, "How do we get good key stage 4 results in the next three years?" If the accountability system can drive those long-term behaviours and the lessons from those reports are put into practice on the ground, I think there will be great progress.

Professor Dame Alison Peacock: I think one of the other important things is that trends emerge quite easily within the teaching profession. I can say that because I am a teacher. The very useful and helpful work that the Education Endowment Fund has done in bringing research findings to the profession is laudable. However, if we are not careful, what happens is that people read the headline that says, "Feedback has a high impact and is a low-cost way of improving standards", and nobody reads any more than that. That, I suspect, is what has led to the extensive requirements in schools for so much feedback from teachers.



Mary Myatt will talk about this. She is an Ofsted inspector, and she will say that sometimes she goes into schools and the quantity of writing in the book is greater from the teacher than it is from the child—the teacher writes more giving feedback than the child does.

The point about the research is that it is the feedback that matters, not how much you write. It is the targeted aspect of what you, as the expert teacher, can offer the learner to enable them to improve their work. That might be one line that is targeted and specific, or it could be spoken feedback in the lesson. I think what happens is that we care so much as teachers that we almost create our own stick to beat ourselves with.

At the moment we are worried about books, every school is worried about their books, because with levels going—and I was an advocate for levels going, so that is another conversation—people are worried about proving progress, so then it all comes down to the book. There is almost this sense with everything that has to be done that you cannot move unless it is recorded in the book, and then the teacher has to respond to it. That is where there has been so much increase in workload over the last number of years.

So it links back to accountability. It also links back to a sense of professionalism that has gone slightly too far in one direction. So we need engagement with research and what the research says. What we want to do through the Chartered College is enable teachers to engage in scholarship where they are able to find out what the findings are saying so that they can improve practice rather than extend burden, which is a kind of unintended consequence.

Q174 Chair: Are those points—they are very good points—connected not just to the leadership of the school but to the culture within the school and across the staff room?

Professor Dame Alison Peacock: We need to shift the culture of schools, because we are quite good, as teachers, at constantly looking for the things we need to do better. We are quite good at kind of self-flagellating, if you like. We are always saying that we need to improve this and we need to improve that.

We need to shift the culture to one of celebrating what works. I think every teacher in the land would understand the reasons for the accountability agenda and the reasons why we need to make sure that everything we do is for the best interests of the children and young people we work, with but my sense is that that has gone too far. We now need to be finding what works.

One of my ideas is that we ask and encourage teachers to be brave enough to share a small snippet of their practice, of something they feel excited about in their classroom. Other teachers will be interested to see that, and then we will situate that on our new knowledge platform that we are going to have for the Chartered College alongside the research.



So we say, "Come and see what's happening in this room. This looks interesting. What do we know about this? What could we read about this? What could we find out? How can we engage in dialogue with others about what is working in their classrooms?" So it is about building our own knowledge of what works rather than everyone, in their own individual classroom, trying to solve the problems of the world. We try and do that as teachers, because we care, but that is a bit exhausting.

David Anstead: I will just give you an anecdote that illustrates that. There was a well-known national speaker who went around the country a few years ago talking about good practice. He talked about a school he had visited where people were marking students' work using one coloured pen—green, I think it was—and students were responding in purple ink, and then the teacher was responding again in green pen. I was inspecting with Ofsted at that time as an HMI for a number of schools, and I started suddenly seeing green pen and purple pen all over the books. When I talked to the heads about it they would say, "That is what Ofsted expects". At that time—I cannot speak for Ofsted now—Ofsted did not expect that, but it became common knowledge, and then I would hear from teachers, my wife for example, that a head would come into the staff room and say, "Look, we need to do this, because that is what Ofsted expects".

So that is part of the problem, and part of what we need to challenge, perhaps by bring on-board the heads and letting them feel confident that they do not have to do all this. I think this has been said, but they are driven by the accountability agenda. When we launched our work in Nottingham to start tackling workload, one of the things we did straight away was to get in touch with Sean Harford at Ofsted and ask him if he would come and speak in support of it, because he sat on two of those working groups. Assuring the heads that it is all right for their staff to do less has been critical.

Peter Sellen: In support of that, it is important to remember that many of our current heads were not very long ago classroom teachers, living and breathing that same culture. They will have picked up lots of practices and norms, both through their initial teacher training and through what they have learned as classroom teachers, which they may well be taking through into their leadership. So that is an important thing—there might be cycles to break there.

Q175 **Chair:** Because of course a good head, a confident head, would not necessarily need to use a proxy to get a point across by saying, "Well, this is Ofsted's responsibility. I am doing it because Ofsted has told me." They could do it because, "I think this school needs to go in this direction".

David Anstead: Yes, but it is easy as well to say, "That is what Ofsted expects."



Professor Dame Alison Peacock: So there is something about, “How do we build professional courage?” That is borne out of information and research and evidence, because typically one feels more courageous if you do not feel that you are on your own and you do not have to be citing accountability bodies to be drivers for improvement. One would hope that much greater drivers in improvement are the researchers who tell us what works.

An example of that is that there has been some research done in New Zealand about what makes the impact within schools when you want to change the culture and change practice, and it is not staff meetings at the end of the day with a cold cup of tea and a limp biscuit. It is coaching conversations, focus in classrooms on specific children and young people. Teachers value that, and it happens within teams. It is not about bringing someone in from the outside, but it is with senior leaders, who as we have just heard have all that experience of recently being in the classroom, engaging in dialogue with teachers about what can we do to enable this to work better and to make sure that this does not happen again tomorrow.

So it is about a sense of agency. Dialogue, informed by research evidence, is a natural way to work, but then we feel guilty and think, “Oh, but we ought to have a whole load of meetings on top of that”. We know the meetings are not going to make the difference, and we have to be courageous enough to say, “An information sharing meeting once a month might be more effective, along with more time spent talking about what is happening in our classrooms and sharing that”. Not to judge the teacher but to focus on the learning in the classroom.

Chair: Thanks for that. We are going to move on to Ian, on the workload of teachers in England.

Q176 **Ian Mearns:** In interviewing teachers who have left the profession, there were a few main reasons for people leaving: increased workload, inspection and policy changes. So workload has been widely cited as a key issue for teacher morale in England. We know, by the way, that around the world, international schools are recruiting teachers from English schools, and that is one of the reasons why teachers are leaving English schools. We also know that workload in England seems to be a little bit heavier than in schools around the world. I think one stat was that it is 19% or 20% heavier in England than average around the world. How could high workload be better managed in schools from that perspective?

Professor Dame Alison Peacock: We have obviously rehearsed a lot of this, but within a school-led system, a self-improving system, I think we have an opportunity that the rest of the world can look to. When Michael Gove launched teaching schools back in 2011 he was talking about the fact that this was something that had not been tried before, and said that he was trusting school leaders. School leaders need space—we all need space, the teaching profession needs space—to get on with working



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together and collaboration. So it is less about structure and more about collaboration and how we work together, because then we can make things more effective across the piece, it seems to me.

There are opportunities for what we are going through now to be turned around so that we can say, "Well, there was a situation in 2016 where the Select Committee needed to look at workload and retention, because things were feeling pretty tricky. But we trusted the profession to start to engage in a way of working that meant that we were able to share practice." There are a lot of examples across the country of multi-academy trusts, or informal relationships between schools, where they are sharing professional learning opportunities. There is a lot we can do.

Q177 Ian Mearns: I am wondering though, Alison, is that something we should be doing as a nation in England? Is England doing something that is creating more workload for teachers than our international comparators? You are nodding your head, David.

David Anstead: I am. I worked in Spain as a teacher for two years, so I can give you a small comparison. Teachers in England—this is back in the 1990s, and I think it has probably become much worse since then in England—spend far more time preparing lessons and assessing them than they did in Spain when I was there.

I think the solution to this, which is where you are coming to, is that the accountability creates the pressure in schools to drive themselves to do all this.

Q178 Ian Mearns: So just for clarity, by accountability you mean the raw data—results and Ofsted inspections, among other things.

David Anstead: Yes. Having worked with Ofsted and been on that side of it, inspection itself does not create the workload. It is the fear of inspection, the fear of the consequences of it, the fear of the data not doing it—

Q179 Ian Mearns: Particularly if you allow urban mythology to drive school policy, like purple ink and green ink. That is nothing more than educational urban mythology, is it?

David Anstead: As I go round the country working with schools at the moment, the main thing I get asked is, "What will Ofsted think of this?" I get things thrust in front of me and asked, "What will Ofsted make of that?" People are worried about it. That has not come from Ofsted or any of the other accountability measures. That is generated within the profession.

Teachers and heads are incredibly hard-working. They have moral purpose, that is why they are there. They could probably earn far more going into other professions. So people are there because they want to make a difference. But it is that desire to be doing the right thing that is the problem. As I said earlier, I think one of the solutions is to be working



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together to say that it is alright to be doing a lot less. Ofsted and other people will be alright with that, and there is a safety in numbers approach to it.

We got the heads together in Nottingham—we have worked with the staff unions on this as well—and talked about the hours that teachers are required to work that go beyond something called “directed time”. Directed time is what heads direct staff to do in schools. But all the other stuff, which is lesson preparation, marking, data entry and the rest of it, is done in their own time, and it is that part of the work that has just grown massively.

So we started by saying, “Is there a middle way here, where we can say, ‘Let’s just cap this?’” The heads around the table and the staff union around the table—this was a big move for them—all agreed eventually that we could cap it at two hours a night for classroom teachers, three hours a night for those with leadership responsibilities. So that would mean that in practice, if you finished in school at 4 pm or 5 pm, classroom teachers would still do another two hours. If you had a meeting that, say, went to 5.30 pm or 6 pm, you would still do another two hours. So the staff associations were supportive of still quite heavy workloads, but they saw it as a step in the right direction, because it would be a massive reduction on what they do now.

So having established what that middle ground is by saying, “Okay, this is what people are going to do in their own time”, then it is a case of going back to those marking policies, lesson planning policies and other things, and saying, “How can these be changed to make what we expect people to do to be reasonably deliverable within those two hours?” So we have launched that. People are consulting about it at the moment with their governing bodies and others, but within Nottingham we have a handful of schools that have already adopted it, which surprised me. I did not think we would have anyone until 2017, but because of the press coverage, we also have schools coming in across the country asking if they can engage with this. So I feel that we perhaps have struck a nerve here. We have taken the recommendations of those three working parties, which are very sensible and clear, and we have said, “Right, let’s take some of those and turn them into approaches in the schools”.

If I can, I will just give you a couple of examples on marking that I have cherry-picked from the Department for Education report. I thought these were brilliant. It says, “we are concerned that it has become common practice for teachers to provide extensive written comments on every piece of work when there is very little research evidence that this improves pupil outcomes in the long term”. It also says: “One message was very clear, marking practice that does not have the desired impact on pupil outcomes is a timewasting burden for teachers that has to stop.” What was most helpful for our work was that it said, “Policies should be judged on the actual hours spent on marking and adjustments to requirements made where necessary”. It was that bit where I got the



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feeling of "Ding! We can run with that." That is where we are working with the schools and saying, "Okay, let's look at these policies and let's work out and monitor in practice what extra workload they are creating".

Q180 Ian Mearns: Jack, this was your organisation's research from the interviews that you conducted. Were there any particular findings that NFER had after doing that work?

Jack Worth: I think there were. In those interviews there was a big emphasis on the workload, and that was driven by policy change. So it was about bigger changes to assessment, which have meant a lot of work to change what schools do in terms of assessment and the new curriculum, but also the requirements of Ofsted, whether perceived or real, which we have spoken about a lot.

Also what came across was how leadership in schools helped to mitigate the effects of those things. If leaders are just passing it on to teachers, that is when stress comes in.

I think David is right about working hours. Research from the Department, looking at the diary of workload, shows 50-plus hours a week on average for teachers. We need to make sure that teaching is a sustainable profession throughout teachers' careers, and fits around their other life commitments. We did a piece of research looking at the labour force survey, looking at teachers who left their job and took up another job. They were, on average, reducing their hours by 10% to 15%, so I think there is a particular thing in teaching.

Q181 Ian Mearns: The EPI report that you have produced recently has suggested that workload in secondary schools could only decrease if class sizes were increased. Have you given any thought to whether there are any potential unintended consequences of that approach?

Peter Sellen: What the report suggests is that, in terms of time spent in front of a class, there are some quite fundamental relationships between the number of teachers and the size of the classes they are teaching. So with a given number of teachers, if they are all teaching very small classes there are going to be more classes for a given teacher to teach. We also find that in countries where teaching timetables are larger, teachers spend less time planning each of their lessons, which is sort of as you would expect. What I am definitely not saying is that, as a rule, we should start expanding class sizes. What I am saying is that there are some fundamental principles here that mean it is hard to compress the amount of time teachers have to spend teaching.

In other countries they choose different balances. Some of them have large classes, and that affords their teachers more time to do other things, because they spend less time in front of children. The reason why these relationships are important is that over the next few years, schools will be under greater financial pressure. In some cases there will be more pupils per teacher, and all else being equal, that will, particularly in



secondary schools, expand the amount of time that teachers have to teach in a given week, unless other things like class sizes change.

So I am definitely not saying that we should massively expand class sizes and everything will be fine, but I think it is important for schools to remember that some of these relationships are important for teaching hours. Rational discussions, particularly with parents, about the pros and cons of having small class sizes are key.

I just want make another point on planning, which I think is important to remember. While English teachers spend a bit more time on average planning than teachers in other countries, what our report shows is that average time spent planning each lesson is not much different from the average, and it is significantly lower than in some countries, particularly Shanghai in China.

I think part of the reason why many teachers in the Workload Challenge expressed concern about planning time is that they felt it was not being used very well. What they were not doing was scientifically planning how to get concepts over to a group of pupils. They were writing lots of things down and tracking what was going on with each different pupil in the lesson. That is why seeing an improvement in what we are doing with our planning time is probably more important than reducing the overall amount. I think on marking time, it is more obvious that it is just too much.

Chair: Okay, thank you. Stephen, you have questions on the DfE's Workload Challenge.

Q182 **Stephen Timms:** Yes, I want to explore whether you think the Government is doing enough to address these workload issues. We have seen the recommendations from the review groups and the Workload Challenge group. Alison, you said that a member of staff was on one of those groups. You made the point that the question is whether teachers and headteachers are going to have time to read the recommendations. There has been some criticism that those recommendations were a bit weak. Do you think that the solution to this problem has been identified in those groups?

Professor Dame Alison Peacock: I think what the group set out to do was to come up with some live, practical on-the-ground strategies of things that you can do to make a difference, but the overall landscape that we operate in has not changed. So while we still have things like the coasting schools initiative, while we have lots of Government change in terms of assessment, and while we have people not knowing where they are in terms of the syllabus for GCSE, all those kinds of pressures mean that it still feels very pressured for teachers. There is pressure at all kinds of levels.

I want to be very clear that teachers are not in any way work-shy. Teachers want to do the best they can. I do not know whether the



Committee is aware of this, but there is a sort of groundswell of teachers now seeking their own professional learning on Saturdays across the country at conferences like Northern Rocks, researchED and Learning First; teachers are flocking to them across the country. They are free, by and large, and people are choosing to spend their Saturday there because they want to learn.

The profession wants, I think, to have a voice about how to do things well, and the professional does not feel trusted. So were the profession to get a sense from this Committee and from others of how much they are valued, they might be more inclined to believe the Government when the Government produce workload reducing documents and say, "They mean it. They are not going to change their minds." Then somebody else is not going to come in over the hill from Ofsted or wherever else and say, "No, that is just a Government document". We need a bit of credibility around it. We want to be brave.

Q183 Stephen Timms: So if the Government want to address this Workload Challenge, what do you think they need to do?

Professor Dame Alison Peacock: I think the discourse needs to shift to one of constantly expecting to find good in schools. The assumption would therefore be that when teachers are working, they are making a professional judgment about what they need to do rather than constantly working because they think if they do not, someone is going to come in and find them out. So I think there is a lot that could be said right from the heart of Government, but on the ground, we would need to see that in practice. Headteachers need to feel that bit more liberated. They need to feel that it is okay to release the pressure on their staff because they themselves are not going to be metaphorically shot if they are not doing the right things. It feels a bit brutal out there, if I am honest.

Q184 Stephen Timms: Okay, thank you. David, you have explained to us what you have done in Nottinghamshire to take the review group recommendations further. Do you think that will crack the problem in those schools that are going to be involved?

David Anstead: We believe it will. To go back to your earlier question, I think the recommendations and the comments in these reports are clear enough and explicit enough, but the issue is, how do we encourage and empower heads to feel that it is all right to do this and move forward with it?

We took the approach of producing the charter because it was about bringing the heads and the staff associations together and having a common agreement about it so that everyone was clear. Already some of the primary heads have said, "Look, we already do most of this, so we will adopt it" and so on. Others are talking with their staff associations and their governing bodies about how they might implement some of this. Nobody wants to tell a school how to do it, but I think we have to give some clear messages that unless we do this, we are not going to



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resolve this recruitment and retention problem. The longer journey for heads is that schools that do this will not have the problem.

We are saying to our schools that adopt the charter that they will get a logo they can use on their advertising material. It works a bit like the living wage thing before George Osborne expropriated it; people coming to a living wage employer knew what they would get. In Nottingham and the other schools nationally that are talking to us, if they sign up for the fair workload charter teachers coming there know the deal they will get, and we think that will help our recruitment.

Q185 Stephen Timms: The fair workload charter, it will be about hours that—

David Anstead: It has two components. One is about reducing workload. We have talked closely with the heads to ensure that we can protect good and better provision, so that we do not damage what children are getting, but it is about capping the extra hours for classroom teachers to two hours beyond directed time a day, and three for leadership people. It is about saying, "Okay, let's look at all we have to do, and let's just expect people to do what is reasonable to deliver within that time". So people applying will see that logo on the website, and they know that if they come to a school like this, that is what they will get. We are also linking it to CPD, which is important in terms of retention.

Q186 Stephen Timms: Can I ask Peter and Jack whether there are any other things that you think the Government ought to be doing to address this problem?

Peter Sellen: I don't know a precise solution that could be implemented on the ground, but I am concerned that the accountability framework does not encourage enough good behaviours on long-term staff development and retention. I think it will be difficult for somebody like Ofsted to go round from school to school and check how many hours teachers are working. We found in our study that it was incredibly hard to find noticeable differences in the average across different schools, because there is a lot of noise out there, and a lot of teachers are very enthusiastic and choose to work long hours and that sort of thing.

But, again, we find that teachers feeling ill-prepared for being a teacher is a cause and an effect of high workloads. There is probably more to be done to ensure that schools are doing more to develop their staff, and that could be the way that Ofsted and the regional schools commissioners approach schools so that schools and multi-academy trusts have a long-term picture of what is best for pupils rather than just chasing the next inspection or the next set of results. There is a vicious cycle here; teachers in England receive very little professional development compared to those in other countries, which makes them feel less prepared, and that makes them struggle more with their working hours.

Jack Worth: I agree with David that the recommendations in these workload groups were very sensible, they were very good. They just need



implementing and actioning, and there is a limited role for what Government can do in terms of implementing those things. It is up to leaders. One of the recommendations we have made is that schools have a governor, or a trustee, or a senior member of staff who is responsible for it—a champion of the wellbeing of teachers and workload. So when there is a new thing that needs doing, they will say, “Oh, hang on a minute, if we are going to do this, what are we not going to do? How can we use our time efficiently to both do this and deliver our job?”

Q187 **Chair:** Thank you, Stephen. We have been hearing a lot about CPD in previous sessions, and we have mentioned it today as well. As a general first point, how do we think CPD might be able to improve the professional standing of teachers?

Professor Dame Alison Peacock: One of the things that the profession needs is CPD that is relevant to what they are doing in the classroom, and teachers are telling us this loud and clear. I was part of the DfE CPD standards group, and we came up with recommendations about ensuring that CPD is of high quality, sustained over time and research-informed, and that leaders recognise the importance of providing a professional learning culture for teachers. The new Chartered College will offer scholarship routes to enable teachers to become chartered, and one would hope, down the track, that we can also look at how we can produce a professional learning spine for other colleagues throughout the profession, whether they are support staff, special needs teachers or in FE.

Having a route for professional study is important, because there is a bit of a desert if we are not careful. There are some courses that run at a very high cost to schools, and probably the impact is quite negligible when you get back into school. So giving people a day out is not an option. This is about a professional learning culture that needs to be provided and nurtured.

Chair: Of course, you see the college playing a significant role in that.

Professor Dame Alison Peacock: Absolutely.

Q188 **Chair:** Peter, you made an interesting point before about using planning time properly. There is of course a link with CPD there. First of all, can you explain how you might see CPD helping that use of planning time? Secondly, for all of you, there is the question of whether or not there is enough time for CPD given all the workload issues that have been put on the agenda in recent times.

Peter Sellen: Taking your last question first, it is clear that there is not enough time for CPD at the moment. I think 60% of teachers agreed that one of the key barriers to accessing professional development was their work schedule, and I think that is pretty clear here.

That said, a lot of teachers are not demanding more professional development. Lots of them in the survey we analysed suggested that



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they did not feel the need for much more professional development, so there is a bit of a demand and supply problem here too. I think what would be helpful for professional development to focus on is more of practising the pragmatic approach to teaching. What I would like to see, particularly in the initial teacher training, is more focus on how to ensure that teachers feel confident taking somebody else's lesson plan and just running with it on the day, without much time to look over it. It is the pragmatic approach that recognises that a teacher is not going to have a load of time to prepare well for every lesson.

Also, we need to get teachers to understand what makes a good lesson and how to recognise through means other than using workbook whether or not a child has a concept or not. They need to be able to do more thinking on their feet and respond verbally during a lesson to help understanding and to understand where progress is being made, without it needing to be about constructing very elaborate written lesson plans. That is the approach where, hopefully, the initial teacher training centre can make some improvements. I also think leaders should recognise where professional development can be used in a practical sense to help teachers out.

Q189 Chair: So in short, our CPD can be modified or adapted to deal with some of the workload issues.

Peter Sellen: I think so, yes, and the focus of all continuing professional development should not be just about maximising pupil progress in a given case, but about doing it without spending so long that all the other pupils do not have enough of your time.

Chair: Jack, is that something you would concur with?

Jack Worth: Yes. Absolutely, yes. CPD has to be well led and mean that staff are feeling well supported and well valued.

Q190 Chair: Do we think that the accountability system encourages or discourages CPD, David?

David Anstead: It might determine the kind of CPD that is offered. I think quite often leadership in schools is driven by what they think the accountability system wants people to see, so there is specific training around that. In general, my experience of schools is that they all offer good-quality CPD in other areas.

One of the things we are trying to develop in Nottingham at the moment is to link this back to the retention issue. So the education improvement board is looking at a city-wide CPD offer, and we are linking that to the professional development career ladder so that there is an offer for new people to teaching and an offer for people who have been teaching for two or three years who might be aspiring to become middle leaders. There is an offer for them, and then an offer all the way up to headship. If people can see that when they come to Nottingham, we are hoping they will stay because it is a place for them.



The other thing that is quite interesting—it is quite new and it has come from some heads in Nottingham—is that we are using some of our central funding to undertake a detailed question-level analysis of key stage 2 tests and GCSE tests. That tells us generically, across the city, for each subject, which topics in that subject we taught well and which ones we did not do so well in. So we are in the process of doing that at the moment, but the CPD will follow, and clearly we are going to target specific training. We have picked up that geometry is an issue in key stage 2 maths where we did not succeed. So I think that sort of approach will make a difference.

Q191 **Chair:** Alison, I think you want to say something, do you?

Professor Dame Alison Peacock: There is some great work going on with the math hubs. The White Rose Maths Hub in Halifax is producing lots of resources online, which teachers are accessing all over the country. That helps with the lesson planning and assessment of mathematics, including within teaching schools. So for example, in my school yesterday we had our year 6 teacher who has been to Shanghai, funded by the Government, invite a research group to come in to her classroom. She talked about what she was going to be teaching, then they all watched the lesson. Then after the lesson they all went to another classroom to talk together as a group about what they had seen and how they would assess what the learning was. So they are seeing in the classroom, on the ground, what is happening. Teachers love that, and we can do more of that virtually. That is high-quality CPD.

Q192 **Chair:** Thank you. Now I think we have established a really clear relationship between leadership, workload and CPD. Would you all agree with that? We have also established that we need to be looking at the quality of CPD and its deployment as part of the solution. Yes?

David Anstead: I think as well we need to be having a dialogue with leadership in schools about saying, “You need to make your staff do less”, to solve this recruitment problem. We need to do that as well.

Chair: Yes, absolutely. But my original question still stands, and your answers are—

Professor Dame Alison Peacock: Yes. On the part of the heads.

Q193 **Chair:** Yes. So, Alison, how is the College of Teaching going to help with that?

Professor Dame Alison Peacock: We want to establish a platform whereby teachers, each member, will have access to relevant research to wherever they are in their stage of their career. They will have access to a scholarship group, which will mean they can become chartered. They will know about CPD that is happening regionally, because they will be linked to a regional hub, which will hopefully be a school-university partnership.



We would love for part of our membership fee to go back to regions to establish a co-operative-style fund for things like sabbaticals for teachers. This is down the track a little bit, but we would love teachers to be able to have, maybe, time to go and study something so that the region would have a truly independent resource to enable its teachers.

When we think about the challenges for coastal teachers, for teachers in urban environments and for teachers in rural environments, they are all very different. So a bespoke Government-led initiative from the front might be able to help, but regional bespoke solutions will also be a part of that.

Also, we know that the profession needs to feel more connected, more joined up. There has been quite a lot of disruption due to the changes that have happened across the landscape. So we want teachers to know where they are in the environment and what is going on, in order that they can have a sense of agency and contribute.

Finally, yesterday I contacted a secondary headteacher. I have never met him, but I had heard that his school was doing some really interesting things. I phoned him up, and I said, "Could we come in and film what is happening in your school? We hear there are some great things going on". He was so thrilled to hear from me, and that sense of, "Oh, so you are asking us?" is just lovely. We need more of that.

Chair: That is recognition, isn't it?

Professor Dame Alison Peacock: Yes, absolutely.

Q194 **Chair:** David, Peter and Jack, do you see Alison's vision, and do you think it is part of the solution? Or a considerable contribution to the solution?

David Anstead: I do, and I think all those things are laudable, and we should be doing more and more of it. The only hesitation in my mind when you were speaking, Alison, was that I could just hear heads saying, "But how am I going to be able to release some of my staff to do this, when I am really struggling to put teachers in front of classes?"

Q195 **Chair:** By looking at the triangle of CPD, leadership and workload, presumably—we all agreed to that. Peter?

Peter Sellen: I do think finding the time is a very important thing. This is again why having a long-term perspective on a school's future is really important. It is an investment, and in the short term it will mean having some of your teachers spending less time teaching.

Q196 **Chair:** So you are talking about strategic vision there, aren't you?

Peter Sellen: Yes, and that is what I would want Ofsted to be looking for in leaders, and regional schools commissioners to be doing for leaders, because there are going to have to be investments made. The only other way you are going to afford people much more time is by hiring many more teachers, which is proving difficult at the moment. Or, as I said



earlier, by dramatically increasing class sizes to give more teachers free periods to play with. I think it is going to have to be about investment, and that is why the incentives have to be right for the long term.

Jack Worth: As a research organisation that does lots of randomised trials and other high-quality educational research to inform teachers' practice, we are keen to work with the College of Teaching, share their vision to increase use of research and get it into schools, and make sure it is translated effectively.

Chair: Sounds good. I want to thank all four of you very much indeed for coming along this morning and answering our questions as effectively as you have. We are now going to move on to the Minister for Schools to see what he thinks of those answers, and what plans he has.

Examination of witness

Mr Nick Gibb MP.

Q197 **Chair:** Welcome, Nick. It is great to see you again. You are one of our regular contributors, which is not a surprise, because you are of course Minister for Schools. The last time you were here was 5 December 2015, on this particular subject. How has the Department responded to continued issues with teacher supply since we last met on the subject?

Mr Gibb: We take the issue of teacher recruitment very seriously. There are now 456,000 teachers in our schools, 15,000 more than in 2010. We have engaged in a number of initiatives to encourage more good graduates to choose teaching as a profession, and to come into the profession. This 2016-17 recruitment year, more than 27,000 people have been accepted on to postgraduate courses. That is up from 26,500 last year, if you take out the TeachFirst figures from both numbers.

We have met targets in primary—in fact we have exceeded targets in primary—and we are also meeting and exceeding targets in priority subjects like biology, English, geography and history. In chemistry, maths and physics, acceptances are ahead of where they were this time last year. And we have introduced, and continue to introduce, generous bursaries, and we tweak those every year to reflect the priorities. The bursaries go up to £30,000 for a physics trainee.

We have refreshed our marketing campaign—I do not know if you have seen the adverts? They are very effective, and I am happy to send you the link to have a look at those adverts, because they are very good indeed. I was very pleased by them. We are spending £16 million on advertising and marketing; that is up £6 million on last year.

We changed the approach to allocation of places to universities, to School Direct, and to SCITTs. We learned the lessons from last year, and we have changed that system. We have uncapped recruitment, so these institutions can recruit as many graduates as they wish in those shortage



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subjects, and we have provided greater clarity on the other subjects. We have allocated subjects where institutions are quicker to recruit, such as history and primary PE and drama, and we have a hybrid system between the two for subjects that are slow to recruit, but where there is more chance of meeting the target.

Q198 **Chair:** Thank you, that is a very full answer, but one area you did not mention was the regional variations, which we heard about before. Do you accept that there are areas in England where the issue of recruitment retention is more difficult than others?

Mr Gibb: Yes. Although we had very good data at a national level, we wanted to have more granular evidence, because what we hear from the profession is that it is difficult to recruit in certain parts of the country—more difficult than in other parts of the country. So for example, we know that we have a new measure of the proportion of schools reporting at least one classroom teacher vacancy, which is a more interesting figure than simply the vacancy rate, which is about 0.2%. This measure shows that there is regional variation, with London, for example, consistently having a higher proportion of schools with at least one classroom teacher vacancy.

Q199 **Chair:** So is there any plan to help address that particular problem?

Mr Gibb: What this does is that it just informs the data that we need to know how many teachers to recruit. It is difficult, other than ensuring that we have a spread of teacher training institutions—whether that is SCITTs or universities—because it is not necessarily the case that somebody who trains in Durham will want to teach in the north-east. So you cannot always micromanage the system like that. But we do want to make sure that we have a geographical spread of institutions and training, as well as sufficient numbers overall.

Q200 **Chair:** What is your general response to the recommendations by the Public Accounts Committee?

Mr Gibb: I do understand their concern, but what the Public Accounts Committee did say was that given the double challenge that we face—one of growing a strong economy and also growing pupil numbers—we have managed to keep pace in terms of recruiting more teachers to fill those increasing pupil numbers. So we have kept the pupil-teacher ratio constant during a period of quite significant pupil number growth, caused principally by the birth rate increase in the early 2000s.

Q201 **Chair:** One of the things we are increasingly aware of is the complexity of routes into the teaching profession, as well as the retention issue. So what is your Department planning to do in terms of evaluating existing initiatives around that?

Mr Gibb: We are always evaluating all the routes, but the complexity reflects the fact we want as diverse a way of recruiting teachers as possible, because we want to be able to encourage people from all



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different circumstances. For example, we want more returners to come back into teaching and we want career changers to consider teaching, as well as wanting young graduates to come into teaching. In terms of returners, the number has increased from 11,000 returners in 2011 to 14,000 last year. So we do not apologise for the diversity of routes. We wanted to give schools themselves more say over who they recruit to be teachers. So the School Direct system, and the SCITTs—school-centred initial teacher training networks—are now responsible for the training and recruitment of over half of all new professionals coming into the profession. This is a good thing, because it is important that in a school-led system we give—as the other witnesses were talking about—schools more say and discretion over who they recruit, and how they are trained.

Q202 Chair: Is that reaching into the area we have already acknowledged, the regional variations and the variations within those regions?

Mr Gibb: Broadly, but not sufficiently. We have 757 teaching schools, I think the number is, but they are not necessarily in all the areas that we are concerned about. So one of the reasons why the Secretary of State has been talking about opportunity areas is that there are areas where there are, if you like, cold spots of social mobility. But also, some of those areas have disproportionately few national leaders of education, teaching schools and teaching schools alliances. So one of the things we have to do is to ensure there is proper coverage of teaching schools throughout the country.

Q203 Chair: Absolutely, but how are you going to do that?

Mr Gibb: This is a matter of working on the ground—the regional schools commissioners identifying schools, and getting schools to work across borders to try to ensure that there is the expert advice to help improve standards.

There are 773 teaching schools, I understand, so the 757 was an underestimate.

Q204 Chair: Thank you, that is interesting to hear. One last question before we move on to Stephen. We talked about the triangle of leadership, workload and CPD. Do you acknowledge that is an interesting way of looking at it, and how we might want to think about it in terms of policy?

Mr Gibb: Yes, I do agree with that, and we set up a review by David Weston to look into CPD—this is the group that Alison Peacock was talking about—and they have come up with some very important recommendations. There is now a standard for teachers' professional development that they have developed. So it is about how professional development should have a focus on improving and evaluating pupil outcomes; it should be underpinned by robust evidence and expertise; there should be collaboration and expert challenge; and it should be prioritised by the school leadership. So there are two of the prongs of your triangle. You are probably going to ask other questions about



workload, but it is a serious issue. The TALIS survey is also an issue which we are taking very seriously.

Q205 **Stephen Timms:** Thank you. You mentioned the increase in pupil numbers, and we are expecting quite a big additional increase in secondary school numbers over the next few years. Are we going to see a commensurate increase in teacher recruitment?

Mr Gibb: The answer is yes; we need to recruit sufficient numbers of teachers to match the increasing numbers of pupils, and that has been achieved over the last five or six years. We have to keep up the pressure on ourselves to ensure that we do continue that growth in the years ahead.

Q206 **Stephen Timms:** Are there additional measures that are proposed in order to do that?

Mr Gibb: Well, we keep under review the bursaries, for example. So this year the bursaries have changed, so that we are trying, for example, quite significant bursaries for first-class degrees.

On scholarships, the Rhodes scholarships are £27,500 in chemistry, computing, geography, maths and modern languages. We are giving bursaries of £30,000 for first-class degree graduates going into physics teacher training, and so on. So we keep all those under review, and we keep the marketing under review, and we look at other routes. We want to make sure that we are encouraging returners and career changers to come into schools. So we are piloting the returners programme and so on, to make sure that we are unblocking any possible disincentive there might be for someone to return to the teaching profession.

Q207 **Stephen Timms:** What is the distinction between scholarships and bursaries?

Mr Gibb: The scholarships are run by the learner body. So the Institute of Physics, for example, will determine who is awarded a scholarship. They are a prestigious introduction to the profession by those learned bodies.

Q208 **Stephen Timms:** Is there evidence that people with first-class degrees make better teachers?

Mr Gibb: Well, there is evidence that good subject knowledge improves outcomes for pupils. But I think in any profession, or in any walk of life, you want to be able to recruit the highest calibre of people that you can. Now, you can have a person with a first who is a terrible teacher, you can have a person with a 2:2 who is a very good teacher, and vice versa. There are correlations on both sides, if you like. But we do want to recruit into the profession the best possible people that we can.

Q209 **Stephen Timms:** Can I ask you about the teacher supply model that we have had evidence on? We gather that the Department is making efforts to improve the model. Can you tell us a little bit about those efforts?



Mr Gibb: We wanted to have it as transparent as possible. In the past it was a black box, and out popped the data, and no one was able to challenge those assumptions. So we have published the TSM, and if people have a strong view about inadequacies in those assumptions, those views are fed in and we learn from them, and we change the TSM the following year. We will be publishing this year's TSM later in the year.

Q210 **Stephen Timms:** You have mentioned already the geographical differences in this area. One suggestion that we heard was that it would be helpful to publish information on the locations of teacher training. You touched on this a little bit earlier. Is that being considered—the publication of teacher training locations?

Mr Gibb: We always publish the allocations by institution, and although we have made those allocations this year to the institutions, later in the year we will be publishing those allocations. So people will be able to see where—certainly for the higher education institutions—those allocations are. I am just turning my head to see whether we also publish those allocations for SCITTs and School Direct.

Stephen Timms: I can see some nodding heads behind you.

Mr Gibb: The answer, then, is yes, we also publish for SCITTs and School Direct.

Q211 **Stephen Timms:** Fine, thank you. You mentioned this new measure—the proportion of schools where there is more than one vacancy—so that is being published. Anything else to highlight geographical issues?

Mr Gibb: Well, we want as much granular detail as possible, so we are looking at things like the panel surveys. We are looking at a sample of schools, and we keep those samples the same from year to year to see what is happening in those schools, as a way of getting that granular detail. Rather than just looking at aggregate national figures, we want to know what is happening in schools. We are open to other ideas about how we obtain granular detail of what is happening in terms of school recruitment, because otherwise we are led by anecdote. Anecdote is very strongly indicating that there are problems with recruiting. We heard one today from Alison Peacock about the vacancy in her very excellent school, Wroxham Primary School.

Q212 **Stephen Timms:** One other issue. We were told that the vacancy rates that are published are a bit misleading—I think particularly because they tell you whether a class is being covered on a particular date, so they do not tell you whether the person standing in front of the class is qualified to teach that particular subject. Isn't there a case for more informative data? Particularly about that issue—whether the teachers who are in front of the class are qualified for the class they are there to teach.

Mr Gibb: Yes, that is why we moved on that; although it uses the same word, "vacancy", we are not just looking at the vacancy rate, which is 0.2% across the country. We are also looking at this new measure of the



proportion of schools reporting at least one classroom teacher vacancy. That is a different measure from the overall vacancy rate. But we are also doing more to try to understand the system, and we have officials working on what other data we want to extract from the system, to improve our policy making.

Q213 Stephen Timms: So does that new measure reflect whether the teachers are qualified to teach the subject they are teaching?

Mr Gibb: That is a separate issue; that is about specialist teachers. So we will not measure that. There is a whole other area about specialist teachers, and whether they are teaching their subject. I am looking for the right piece of paper, but there are very high proportions of teachers with the right specialism teaching subjects—it is something like between 80% and 90%. But even those other 20% will not be unqualified to teach those subjects. They will either have been through subject knowledge enhancement courses or they will have a related post A-level subject qualification. So a biology teacher may be teaching chemistry, for example, combined with a subject knowledge enhancement course. But the overwhelming majority of teachers teaching in our secondary schools do have the post A-level qualifications in the subject that they need.

Here is the bit of paper miraculously arriving. So for example, in mathematics, 18% of teaching time is by people who do not have a post A-level qualification in that subject, and that varies. For physics it is 25%, for history it is 11%, for French it is 18%, and so on. But they will not have totally unrelated post A-level experience to teach those subjects.

Q214 Stephen Timms: That is a worrying proportion in the case of mathematics, I think.

Mr Gibb: Yes, but there has not been a colossal change in these numbers over time. We do want to get to a system where 100% of teachers teaching these subjects have post A-level qualifications in them. We are looking at the impact of non-specialist teaching on attainment, which is something recommended by the PAC report.

Q215 Stephen Timms: Is that something that is going to be published? Or are you just looking at it?

Mr Gibb: Well, we are certainly looking at it, and I do not see why we should not make those things available.

Stephen Timms: We would welcome the opportunity to see that.

Q216 Ian Mearns: The Public Accounts Committee report did look at the fact that recruitment targets had been missed in particular subjects for four years now, and the fact that that is ongoing. Okay, the numbers might be increasing, but if we are missing targets year on year on year, that means the targets have to keep going up in order to meet the needs. Then when you come back and tell us how many lessons are being taught by non-specialist teachers, 18% in maths, 25 in physics, that gets a bit



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concerning to members of this Committee. Additionally, Nick, we also know that you have particularly tried to grow teacher training recruitment for school-based training. But for instance, School Direct have only recruited less than 50% of their target, so are we getting things right in the right proportions? People in the universities, for instance, feel that you have something against them at the moment.

Mr Gibb: On the School Direct thing, we always had very generous targets for School Direct, because we want them to recruit to the quality that they want, and we want to reduce inhibitions on them from recruiting. So we have had very high targets, and we do not expect them all to be met.

Q217 **Ian Mearns:** But 48%? If you are missing a very high target by, say, 20%, I could understand it, but missing it by 52%? That is how referendums are decided.

Mr Gibb: I wouldn't worry about that, because we make those targets very generous for School Direct. The issue you might want to look at, and I think this is really where your question is aimed, is the universities. Again, we have been increasing the targets, on the basis of, first, the teachers supply model, but also whether the target was met in previous years. So for example, if you look at the challenge in subjects like mathematics, we met 93% of the target last year, compared with 86% of the target this year. However, in absolute terms, we recruited 2,407 graduates into teacher training last year, compared with 2,660 this year. You see the same in chemistry, going from 1,000 to 1,040; and physics has gone from 746 to 870. Modern foreign languages have gone from 1,300 to nearly 1,500. So they are going up in absolute terms, but we are increasing the target, and in fact with some of these figures we are increasingly meeting the targets. Modern languages last year was at 83%, this year it is 94% meeting target. So we are facing these challenges of a strong economy, competing in the same pool for top graduates as industry and commerce, and an increasing pupil population. But we are doing everything possible, and I think what we are doing has been successful, and that is why you are seeing these absolute numbers increasing, although there is a lot more to do.

Q218 **Ian Mearns:** Well, the plea from the universities—I am in touch with a number of the teaching universities—is please, please, treat them as part of the solution, not as part of an historical problem.

Mr Gibb: We absolutely do, and that is why we have introduced a system of identifying those universities that have delivered in the past and have very good quality teacher training, and that are recruiting high-quality graduates. We have given three-year commitments for numbers for those, both universities and for school-centred initial teacher training.

Chair: Thank you. William is a former teacher himself, so it is appropriate he is going to talk to you about teacher retention.

Q219 **William Wragg:** My reasons for leaving the profession are perhaps



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slightly different, but, Minister, we have heard this morning from a number of well-qualified experts about teacher retention, so do you accept that this is an issue that requires urgent Government attention?

Mr Gibb: We accept that we have to do everything we can to improve retention, because for every teacher who does not leave, that is a teacher recruited. But if you look at retention over a period, the figures are stable. Last year, 43,000 teachers left the profession—that is made up of retirement and people moving to other careers—and 45,000 people, full-time equivalents, came into the profession. If you look at retention after the first year, we are still looking at 87% being in the classroom after a year. After five years, it is 70%, and after 10 years, 61%. So these figures are consistent and not dissimilar to other professions. Of those that did leave, some went into teaching in the private sector, some became teaching assistants, some went into a non-teaching role within schools. So even who have been leaving are performing other functions in the education sector.

Q220 William Wragg: But in terms of the reasons given for leaving the profession, what was common from the four panellists earlier was workload. Okay, the Government did the Workload Challenge and so on, but what more do you think you could do as a Department, and as a ministerial team, to deal with the issue of workload as a reason for people leaving the profession?

Mr Gibb: Well I have been itching to talk about workload. I thought I was going to wait for Marion's questions, but I might raise this point now.

When the TALIS survey came out, in 2014, the previous Secretary of State, Nicky Morgan, took action in launching the Workload Challenge, which had 44,000 responses. As the panel before said, the top three issues were marking, data collection and lesson preparation. We set up three work groups, headed by headteachers Dawn Copping, Kathryn Greenhalgh and Lauren Costello. They did an excellent piece of work, each of those groups, and they reported with recommendations, and we accepted those recommendations. But the sector has to accept those recommendations, too.

Take marking, which is a key contributor to excessive workload. The TALIS survey showed that on average teachers in this country were working 46 hours a week, compared with 38 hours on average in the OECD. I think it is probably higher than 46 hours, based on other data that we have. But those extra hours were not spent, necessarily, in the classroom teaching, because for the teachers here, time spent in the classroom was the same as the average in the OECD.

Q221 William Wragg: Okay. But without stealing Marion's thunder too much, is there anything that you as a Minister can say, not so much as an instruction as to say, "We have heard the example of what was going on in the Nottingham area, and we will say there should be no more than two hours outside the classroom each night"? Is that something that you



would be willing to do as a Minister, as a Department?

Mr Gibb: Yes. There is a very good blog I read over the weekend from Doug Lemov, who wrote “Teach Like a Champion”. He is an American educationalist and runs a very successful chain of charter schools in New York state. He went to visit Michaela School, which is a free school of which Suella is chair of governors, and that was remarkable. The teachers there leave by 5 pm, because that is one of the qualms of the headteacher. She wants her teachers to work hard at school and does not want them coming in exhausted every day. She wants them to have a proper work-life balance, because she wants sustainability.

At that school one of the things they do—this is in this blog by Doug Lemov—is that they mark work simply. So a piece of written work will be graded A, B, C, C-, B- or whatever. That is it, and the feedback takes place in the classroom. The consequence of that is that they can set more work for the children, so they are doing the work that Tim Oates, who chaired our curriculum expert panel, talked about. Children need to produce work if they are going to improve, and that is how you can demonstrate progress.

In Alison Peacock’s school in Wroxham you see this par exemple. You go into her school and you see their exercise books, and they are packed full of children’s work. You can look at the September work compared to the November work and see how it has improved in quality in that time. It is important that they produce lots of work. If you are spending 10 minutes marking each piece of work and producing more writing from the teacher than the child, the teacher will not be able to set sufficient amounts of work, so it is very important that we get back to the situation where work is simply marked—so it is graded, or if it is mathematics it is right or wrong.

Q222 **William Wragg:** Thank you for that. In terms of subject-specific areas, you mentioned where there is particular difficult—not only with recruitment—and you mentioned the schemes you have there for recruitment. But what about retention in those areas once the shine has worn off those baubles, as it were? What more can you do to help retention in those particular subject areas?

Mr Gibb: It applies right across the board. We also need to continue our remorseless policy of improving behaviour in school, because behaviour is a factor that deters people from coming into the profession and is a retention issue as well. We have given teachers more powers. We have clarified the powers teachers have. We have removed the ability to second-guess headteachers’ decisions over expulsions and permanent exclusions and so on. We are always open to further ideas of how we can ensure improved behaviour in our schools.

The other two aspects of the Workload Challenge are about data collection. We need to make sure that we are only collecting data that is required to improve children’s education. We had the commission headed



by John McIntosh, the assessment without levels commission, which said that the data you should be collecting and the assessment that should be happening should be based on the curriculum of the school.

We have to get away from something that Mr Anstead spoke about—this thing of what Ofsted expects. We have worked very hard over the last few years with Sir Michael Wilshaw and with Sean Harford at Ofsted in sending out that message, so that there is no “Ofsted expects” approach to lessons, or data collection, or how you demonstrate progress or how you mark. How these messages are received, understood and believed by the sector is something we have to work very hard on, but Sean Harford has been superb in repeatedly sending out this message at conferences and on social media and so on.

Q223 William Wragg: I have a very specific question, which I believe you were asked at the December meeting last year. What is the retention rate for teachers who have received government bursaries? Apparently the Committee was told that information would be forthcoming, but it has not arrived with us, so I wondered whether there is a piece of paper making its way to us.

Mr Gibb: We will see if that piece of paper might arrive. We do keep the bursaries under review the whole time, and we look at the differential in terms of recruitment numbers when we increase or reduce the bursaries from year to year to see whether that has an impact on both recruitment levels and retention. But retention has been broadly consistent.

Q224 William Wragg: That is a very specific thing. You outlined the bursaries that are given for those subject areas, but we have not yet had the figures of retention rates for teachers who received those bursaries.

Mr Gibb: A small piece of paper has arrived, and I really cannot read it. I wish people would learn to write more clearly. I think we will write to you about that.

William Wragg: Thank you very much.

Chair: Thank you, Nick. Suella, do you have a question?

Q225 Suella Fernandes: Just a supplementary, going back to this issue of workload and looking more closely at marking—thank you for mentioning Michaela. I just want to look at what you think are some pioneer methods of marking. At Michaela we have done away with written marking, essentially, and there are many other methods, like quizzing, peer review and whole-class feedback. It has to be frequent and acted upon. I wonder what you think about the way the culture might be changing and what can be learned from changing methods of marking to enhance the time and lessen the workload on teachers.

Mr Gibb: The key thing is this notion of feedback on the face of the exercise book or piece of work. This is one of those notions that came from somewhere in the ether—possibly someone speaking at a conference. It was never required by Government. It was never required



by Ofsted, so we have to send out the message that this is not required. It is not required for there to be a dialogue on paper, with different coloured pens, to and fro between the child and the teacher.

I speak to teachers about this and some teachers say to me, "We are not even sure that the things I write are read by the child. What the child wants to know is what grade they got. Was it right or wrong?" The feedback comes if a teacher is marking 30 pieces of work and they notice the same issue is wrong in half the children's work. That is then information for the next lesson. That is what the feedback should be, not this time-consuming written dialogue between the pupil and the teacher on the face of the exercise book.

Everyone is trying to convey the message that this is not demanded by the Government or Ofsted, and we have to just keep repeating that message. This is a big profession. We are talking about 500,000 people you are trying to send this message to, but with the remorselessness that Ofsted is trying to convey this message with, I think it will get through.

Q226 Ian Mearns: Is there any particular reason why teachers in England are not held in such high esteem as teachers are in other countries, such as Finland? In the last Parliament the Select Committee visited Finland as part of another inquiry and they found a very different level of esteem for the profession there among the general population.

Mr Gibb: I don't know. All I know is that we are determined to raise the esteem in which the profession is held. We want to raise the status of the teaching profession in this country, and that is why we do always look at whether there are reforms to the qualification process that can help to deliver that.

Q227 Ian Mearns: Do you think there is anything that can be done in terms of offering teachers an entitlement package to CPD, for instance?

Mr Gibb: We think CPD is very important, and that is why we established the review by David Weston to look at that. We now have a set of CPC standards, and it emphasises the point that the leadership of the school is very important in showing that is taken seriously. CPD should not be about going on a course run by an exam board that tells you how to get a child across the borderline into a good pass. That is not CPD. CPD is subject knowledge. It is about pedagogy, how to improve the way of teaching a complicated subject to a class of children. That is what CPD is about, not simply attending some of these courses run by boards.

Q228 Ian Mearns: Could CPD not also be about nurturing soft skills within pupils as well as subject specialisms? A lot of employers tell us that a lot of the problems they have with youngsters coming out of the school system are with soft skills.

Mr Gibb: Yes, the ethos of the school is very important. It is about making sure children are expected to work hard at school, to behave well, to take responsibility for issues. The previous Secretary of State



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gave a great priority to issues such as character and resilience in schools, and I think these are very important issues.

Q229 **Ian Mearns:** Another inquiry, on PSHE, comes into that whole area. We have not yet seen a statutory requirement for PSHE within schools. Are you thinking about that still?

Mr Gibb: We are looking at all these issues. What is important is that the quality of PSHE improves. Ofsted has been very critical of its consistency and quality across the system, so in terms of developing policy on PSHE, you have to work out what is the best approach to delivering that. Is it making it statutory, which it may well be, or is it improving resources that schools have or the CPD for teachers who are teaching PSHE?

Q230 **Ian Mearns:** Recently, in fact in the summer, the Migration Advisory Committee, in a call for evidence were looking at a shortage occupation list focused partly on teachers. There was a call for evidence on the shortage occupations that were highlighted, including education teaching professionals, primary nursing teaching professionals and special needs education teaching professionals. Did the DfE submit any evidence to that call for evidence from the Migration Advisory Committee?

Mr Gibb: Yes, we always respond to the Migration Advisory Committee's call for evidence.

Q231 **Ian Mearns:** This is about the fact that we are and have been recruiting teachers from overseas and, of course, if they come from outside the European Union currently they have to have a visa, so there is obviously a watch on that. But the fact that the Migration Advisory Committee has identified that there is a shortage occupation listing for teaching, does that concern you?

Mr Gibb: The shortage occupation subjects in teaching are maths and physics. We continually look at this issue and give similar evidence to the Migration Advisory Service. In 2015 we recruited 1,713 teachers from overseas who were on the shortage occupation list.

Q232 **Ian Mearns:** Could you furnish us with the evidence you put in to the Migration Advisory Committee on that?

Mr Gibb: I will take advice on that. I think that is something we do not publish, but I will take advice, and if I am able to send it I will. If I am not then I will not.

Q233 **Ian Mearns:** Since this inquiry is looking at the supply of teachers, it would seem appropriate that if there is evidence provided by the DfE on that, it would be useful to us. It would seem logical from our perspective.

Mr Gibb: Yes. I will take advice.

Q234 **Chair:** We look forward to hearing news of the advice, Nick.

Before we move on to Marion's workload issue, have you any thoughts on the correlation between class size, CPD and workload that we touched



upon in the earlier session?

Mr Gibb: I am not in favour of increasing class sizes, as was indicated by one of the panellists, but I do think CPD is very important. I think a school that neglects high-quality CPD for whatever reason—resources or time—is taking a short-termist view, because in the long-term high-quality CPD will determine the academic results of that school.

Q235 **Chair:** One last point that I think is appropriate to make. You talk about the reputation of teachers, and this Committee salutes teachers all the time. We want to put that on record.

Mr Gibb: Quite right, and I would join you in paying tribute to a very highly skilled profession. I visit schools all the time—over 400, probably, since I first began as Shadow Minister and then a Minister—and all I meet are very conscientious, very highly educated professional people who do their best for the pupils they are teaching. That is what I see on every school visit.

Chair: Thank you. Marion, you have been mentioned already, but it is now your turn to focus on workload.

Q236 **Marion Fellows:** I fear I can only disappoint after the build-up I have had. However, I will plough on. Minister, you told us in December that we are going into a period of stability for policy, implying that the workload might improve for teachers. What has happened? We have been talking today about increased workload for teachers.

Mr Gibb: There are two things there. First, on the workload issue, the issues that have driven workload have come, as I said, from within the education world—people going to conferences and making speeches saying that teachers should be using dialogic marking with two different coloured pens. That has not come from Government policy, either this Government or previous Governments.

But it is our responsibility to ensure that the profession is led by evidence and not by some of these notions that do not really have the evidence behind them. We also have a role to play in making sure the data demanded in schools, and therefore down to teachers, is what will help improve children's education and not just to feed the great data monster, which again is not Government policy. Ofsted also say they do not want superfluous data.

In terms of lesson planning and preparation, that is why we set up the group led by Kathryn Greenhalgh. On the use of textbooks, for example, we have a very low proportion of teaching time in this country spent based on textbooks compared with other countries. One survey—I think it was an OECD survey—showed that in maths, 10% of teaching time is structured on the basis of a textbook in this country, compared with 95% in Finland and similarly high proportions in other high-performing countries.



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One of the recommendations of the Greenhalgh review is to look at the quality of resources used in schools. There has been this almost ideological opposition to the use of textbooks, particularly in primary schools, that stemmed I think from the 1970s. We need to ensure that ideological opposition is replaced by evidence-based policy. If there are good-quality textbooks that help teachers deliver an enriched, knowledge-based curriculum, then we should be encouraging that. We have been working with the textbook publishers to develop a framework of quality to ensure that the textbooks the publishers are producing are what the schools want and are of a high quality.

Q237 Marion Fellows: As you know, I taught in and was educated in a completely different system, so sometimes I struggle with the differences between the two systems of England and Scotland. Do you think the workload for teachers has increased as a consequence of introducing new assessment regimes like the new primary assessment system?

Mr Gibb: The Workload Challenge survey identified the three issues we have already discussed as the key drivers of workload. In terms of stability, I absolutely acknowledged last time I came before the Committee, and in other forums, that the last five or six years of education reform are reaching a peak now in terms of delivery.

For example, the GCSE reforms have taken four or five years, or even longer to prepare. In English and maths the first teaching started last September 2015. On the whole raft of new subjects, first teaching was this September, 2016, and there are some other subjects that will be starting in 2017. So secondary school teachers have had to grapple with the new specifications for the awarding organisations and the subject content that came out before that, and now we are seeing the same reform happening with A-levels.

The primary curriculum was published in July 2013. We have been working on it since 2010. It came into force in September 2014, and then this May, of course, there were the first SATS based on that new curriculum.

2016 was always going to be a very challenging year, and so it has proved. But we are not engaged in massive further reforms to the curriculum going forward. What the previous Secretary of State wanted to ensure, and what the current Secretary of State has also determined, is that there should be a period of stability to allow this very radical set of reforms to embed and to allow teachers to become familiar with the new curriculum and the new assessment process.

Q238 Marion Fellows: Would you agree that when teachers are working at full capacity and working extremely long hours, even though they know something is coming down the line towards them, it will massively impact on their workload when they can see the lights of this train heading towards them? That is a real issue. You are talking about stability, but, excuse me, Minister, you talked about stability in December. So are you



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specifically saying that there will be no new policies or implementations coming in that are going to affect teachers' workload in the next year or so?

Mr Gibb: We are not engaged in a new curriculum review. There is no curriculum review happening now. What is happening now is the delivery of the curriculum review that happened in the last Parliament. That is what I mean by stability. We want the current reforms in the curriculum and assessment to embed over the next few years. We are also determined to reduce workload, as I have said, in terms of marking, in terms of data collection and in terms of preparation for lessons. What we want to ensure happens is that the best evidence of what works is disseminated through the profession, and that is what these review groups are about.

Dame Alison was talking about how there is a resurgent interest now in evidence-based policy and how there are these conferences on Saturdays. I have been to several myself, such as the researchED conference, where there is a vibrant discussion about an evidence-based approach to policy. It is happening through social media as well, and there are a lot of blogs being written by teachers. There is a real renaissance in thinking by the profession about its own approach to teaching, which is wonderful to behold.

Q239 Marion Fellows: I struggle a bit with the CPD idea, because in Scotland part of the contract teachers have is that they are entitled to CPD, and it is not something that is added on.

The TALIS 2013 international survey showed that teachers in England on average work 19% longer hours than those in other developed countries. How far do you think the recommendations of the Workload Challenge will go to reducing this?

Mr Gibb: I think they will go a long way, and you cannot overstate how seriously we take this issue. That is why we set up these review groups, and before I set them up we discussed this with the union leaders, because I think we are all of one mind on this issue. The difficulty is that you can produce a report, and it can be put on a website and we can send it, but it does take a little bit of time for that message to get through to half a million professionals, particularly when there is this constant concern about what Ofsted will expect.

That is why Sean Harford has been sending this message very clearly: Ofsted expects teachers to do what they think is right professionally and not to believe the urban myth that Mr Mearns talked about, which seems to circulate in the sector, that they should believe what the leadership of Ofsted is saying. He has said quite frankly that if there are inspectors on the ground who are contradicting what the leadership of Ofsted are saying about things like dialogic marking or not using textbooks, he wants to know about it.

Chair: Thank you. One more question, Ian?



Q240 **Ian Mearns:** Just one more. We talk about teacher recruitment and retention, and we know there are significant regional variations in much of the difficulty we have. It would be remiss of us before we finish not to talk about things like housing costs and pay. Is there anything the Government is thinking about doing in terms of payment for teachers, particularly in areas where there are significant problems with housing costs and housing shortages, for instance?

Mr Gibb: This is a whole other area, and we have given schools more flexibility in how they pay teachers and what they need to pay to recruit. One of the interesting things that came out of our more granular research is that a lot of the movement of teachers now—a significant amount, 40%—is teachers moving from one school to another, and we are doing more research to find out precisely why that is. Of course, schools have flexibility, but they also have to balance their budgets, so we are introducing the national funding formula. That does reflect things like the cost of living in certain parts of the country and other issues such as sparsity and so on, and the costs that affect schools. That is something we will be saying more about later in the year.

Q241 **Stephen Timms:** You said at the beginning of your evidence that the new vacancy measure you are publishing highlights recruitment difficulties in London. I wondered whether you have taken account of that in drawing up the national funding formula you have just referred to.

Mr Gibb: Just remind me where your seat is.

Stephen Timms: East Ham.

Mr Gibb: Yes, of course. As you know, Stephen, we have consulted on the principles behind a national funding formula. It does take into account cost of living in certain parts of the country, but it also takes account of deprivation and the prior attainment of pupils. There is a whole raft of principles that will underpin a national funding formula, and so those issues do get taken into account.

Q242 **Chair:** Nick, thank you very much for coming along today. You have promised a bit of extra information, so we will be most grateful for that. In the interests of reducing your workload, you will want to get on with it straight away, so can you promise to furnish us with that within a week or so?

Mr Gibb: Yes—thank you for increasing my workload, but we will be delighted to.

Chair: It is all meant in a friendly way, to ensure that the efficiency that emanates from this Committee reaches everywhere else, so thank you very much. Thank you, Nick.

Mr Gibb: It is a pleasure.