Treatment of evidence
The Committee agreed to undertake a short inquiry into teacher workforce planning (and associated issues with school staffing). The Committee issued a call for views running for just over two weeks to inform the evidence sessions on Teacher Workforce Planning.

The information was requested in a questionnaire and we have received a large number of responses. These are the responses from teachers.

As these submissions are sensitive in nature they have been anonymised wherever requested and the names of teaching staff have been removed, as that may lead to individuals working in schools or local authorities being identified. All those submitting were sent a message to make clear that their submissions would be published unless they stated otherwise.

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PRIMARY SCHOOL – NAMED SUBMISSIONS

BRIONY CALLAGHAN
Q1 What type of teaching role do you have?
Primary school. Generally upper school.

Q2 Whereabouts do you work?
Walker Road School in Aberdeen City.

Q4 What are the positives that keep you in the teaching profession?
I enjoy my job most of the time.
Good working hours, holidays and weekends.
My job is rewarding and I feel like as I gain more experience I am getting better as a teacher, which makes me more confident and in turn happier at work.
I like feeling like I make a difference to children’s lives and I want to help make an impact on their future and community.

Q5 Do you consider that you will teach until you retire or do you consider leaving early or for alternative employment? (If you consider leaving, please specify why if it relates to your enjoyment of your role)
I think I will probably always be a teacher as I do enjoy my job and the hours suit me hopefully becoming a parent at some point too.
Q6  What would encourage you to seek promotion to senior management, including to headteacher level? What would discourage you from seeking promotion?
Not feeling like I would be fully supported in the role by other members of management or staff.
The responsibility also puts me off as parents and staff rely so heavily on HT and I don’t always feel they are treated with respect for the amount of work they do. I would also be put off by the workload which is so heavily paperwork and not entirely child based.

Q7  What do you think are the main challenges, if any, in recruiting or retaining teachers (and other staff) at your school? (please feel free to provide details of practical experiences)
Teachers seem to leave us because of a number of reasons:
• Money – living in Aberdeen is too expensive. I don’t have the same lifestyle as teachers in other councils as they don’t pay as much to rent as I do! ACC set up Irish probationers in a terrible part of town miles away from their work placements so cost them too much getting to school.
• Management – some staff haven’t been treated equally and this has led to a lot of staff moving on.
• I will probably leave soon too as even though I enjoy working where I am, I would rather move to the central belt to buy my house as I can get a lot more for my money.
• Challenging behaviour – some staff have left as pupils have been extremely difficult to manage which has led to stress.
• Stress – workload.

Q8  Which particular subject specialisms/support roles face the greatest challenges with recruitment or retention?
Teaching staff

Q9  Do you have any suggestions for how challenges with recruitment and retention might be addressed?
• Increase in pay.
• Help with rent/ mortgage for teachers/nurses.
• Monitoring of management
• Frequent questionnaires to be completed in order to gauge staff happiness.

Q10 Have any measures been put in place as a result of changes to staffing numbers in recent years at your school (examples include multi-school headship/leadership teams, composite classes, changes in the use/availability of support assistants)?
If so:
• What are these measures?
   1. We no longer have Support for learning staff which means that children who are in need of targeted support no longer get as much teacher time.
   2. PSA’s are shared amongst more classes as we have less.
   3. Lack of teaching staff means management are in class.
• How well are they working?
  1. Children are not as confident as they should be so attainment is also dropping for those children. Staff are more stressed as you do not feel you are meeting their needs.
  2. Cannot meet needs of all children as 1 teacher to 30 children cannot help all children at all times – especially with new EAL children with no English that take up most of teacher’s time.

• Are these changes a permanent or a temporary measure (ie is it covering vacancies at present or is it to reflect the number of teacher/other posts has reduced?)
  They are permanent until there are solutions.

Q11 Are there any subject choices or other opportunities that are not available to pupils as a result of staff shortages that you consider would be valuable? (please specify)
  Support for learning
  After school clubs – teachers too stressed to put on clubs as days are so busy.

Q12 How would you describe general morale among staff (very good / quite good / quite low / very low) and what are the key factors that influence it?
  Quite good. We are a happy staff. I would say for me, if it wasn’t for the staff, I would’ve left as I found the challenging children and the lack of staff very overwhelming.

Additional comments

It is easy for me to say teachers need paid more as I do not have to work out how this could be done. However, golden handshakes do not work. We need long term incentives. I know I will be leaving Aberdeen city to move to Falkirk, Stirling or West Lothian as it is cheaper for me to buy a nice house there. I simply cannot afford to buy a house and raise a family here on a teacher’s wage. So many people leave because of money as golden handshakes only get them in the building, it doesn’t keep them here.

As a teacher in a city we are balancing behaviour, challenging parents, counselling issues, drug abuse, non-English speakers who begin throughout the school year, bad attendance, unhealthy children and unlooked after children. I know these same problems are found in rural areas, however, having worked in Falkirk previously, I can definitely say that problems here are far greater. It is very stressful, overwhelming and quite often an upsetting job to work in. With so many targets coming out and policies telling us to do more all the time- it becomes over bearing!

There are no extras for working in these circumstances for the teachers. We are expected to keep doing everything we can to raise attainment and improve the lives of these children. We go above and beyond all the time because we want to but also because we need to! I understand management are paid accordingly for workload but teachers aren’t. So when we take on extra work because of class sizes, EAL, staff absences due to stress, no SFL staff etc, we aren’t paid more or recognised for extra time needed out to organise, plan and assess. It is no wonder so many staff go off on stress.

Teachers need to be recognised for what they do.
MARILYN MILLIGAN
Q1 What type of teaching role do you have?
   Primary 7 class teacher
Q2 Whereabouts do you work? Kirkstyle Primary School, East Ayrshire Council
Q4 What are the positives that keep you in the teaching profession?
   Childrens’ responses when they achieve success or even when they understand the concept you are trying to get across.

JENNIFER MENZIES
Q1 What type of teaching role do you have?
   Primary class teacher (part time – 2 days a week)
Q2 Whereabouts do you work?
   Hunter Primary, East Kilbride, South Lanarkshire
Q4 What are the positives that keep you in the teaching profession?
   I enjoy working with children. I love hearing their stories and helping them to enthuse about things.
   I enjoy helping them to learn and to become independent.
   No two days, weeks, years are the same! We often complain that there are always new initiatives and this can be exhausting, but I suppose it also stops the job becoming boring.
Q5 Do you consider that you will teach until you retire or do you consider leaving early or for alternative employment? (If you consider leaving, please specify why if it relates to your enjoyment of your role)
   It is quite a thought that I could be doing this for another 20 years!
   However, I work part time because of family circumstances and this helps to give a better worklife balance.
   I don’t have any plans to leave at the moment or to take up alternative employment.
   However, I have no plans to go back to full time working either.
Q6 What would encourage you to seek promotion to senior management, including to headteacher level? What would discourage you from seeking promotion?
   I have no intention to seek promotion to senior management level. I feel these roles are too far removed from working with children which is what I enjoy. Senior management often end up working in class but at short notice to cover absences or to allow staff release and I would find this very dissatisfying. There are also a lot of pressures from parents, staff, paperwork and bureaucracy and I would not like that pressure.
Q7 What do you think are the main challenges, if any, in recruiting or retaining teachers (and other staff) at your school? (please feel free to provide details of practical experiences)
   The recruitment process often seems to be overly complicated and there are many hurdles to overcome. Folk who are good at interview may not always be the only good teachers and vice versa.
It is often hard for new teachers to get long term or permanent class posts. Good teachers often give up before they get a permanent class post because they are demoralised or cannot afford to wait.

It used to be that when you qualified, if you did not gain a permanent post right away, you worked your way ‘up the ranks’. Short term supply for a period, then long term supply, then you were entitled to apply for permanent class posts. You still had to go through application and interview for these posts, but at least it was more of a pecking order.

Q8 Which particular subject specialisms/support roles face the greatest challenges with recruitment or retention?

As far as I understand, Maths and Science teachers are difficult to recruit. There also seem to be far fewer supply teachers available.

Q9 Do you have any suggestions for how challenges with recruitment and retention might be addressed?

It used to be that when you qualified as a teacher, if you did not gain a permanent post right away, you worked your way ‘up the ranks’. Short term supply for a period, then long term supply, then you were entitled to apply for permanent class posts. You still had to go through application and interview for these posts, but at least it was more of a pecking order. It seemed to be a fairer way to work and there were no recruiting problems then. However, perhaps there were more teachers available then too.

The shortage of supply teachers partly seems to be connected to when the daily rate of pay for supply was cut to the basic for short term placements.

Q10 Have any measures been put in place as a result of changes to staffing numbers in recent years at your school (examples include multi-school headship/leadership teams, composite classes, changes in the use/availability of support assistants)?

If so:
- What are these measures? Support staff are now used mostly to work one to one with children with ASN,
- How well are they working? This is great, but means that all the other children are missing out on general class support. Children who are struggling with reading/writing and maths would in the past have been able to work in a small group with a support assistant and this rarely happens now because resources are more stretched.
- Are these changes a permanent or a temporary measure (ie is it covering vacancies at present or is it to reflect the number of teacher/other posts has reduced?)

It is reassessed each year as staffing and pupil numbers change.

Q11 Are there any subject choices or other opportunities that are not available to pupils as a result of staff shortages that you consider would be valuable? (please specify)

Not really at my school.
Q12 How would you describe general morale among staff (very good / quite good / quite low / very low) and what are the key factors that influence it?
I would say morale is quite low. Staff are tired and often stressed. We are often coping with children with ASN in large classes and without adequate support. The processes to diagnose children and to get support or advice are often very protracted, can take years and may not help the class teacher who actually starts the referral.

Additional comments
If you have any other comments please include them below:
It has been really good to be given the chance to voice our opinions about teaching and recruitment. Thank you for allowing us to do that.

LORRAINE DEVLIN
Q1 What type of teaching role do you have?
Primary Class Teacher
Q2 Whereabouts do you work?
Glasgow City Council
I previously worked for the City of Edinburgh Council and East Dunbartonshire Council.
Q4 What are the positives that keep you in the teaching profession?
Teaching is a very important job and I want to do something valuable with my life and something that is valuable to society. That keeps me in this job. I trained for this position. Undertaking the B.Ed and therefore having a specialist degree.
There are many good people in teaching. Professionals who are open minded, hardworking and collegiate. I am part of Scottish Teachers for Enhancing Practice, an organisation for teachers by teachers that aims to provide high quality career long professional learning to colleagues. This is just one example of the high commitment made by individuals in the profession. There are joyful days with the children, getting to know and love them, sharing learning and getting to know their families.
Q5 Do you consider that you will teach until you retire or do you consider leaving early or for alternative employment? (If you consider leaving, please specify why if it relates to your enjoyment of your role)
Over the last few years I have considered leaving the profession due to the nature and demands of the job. Financially I am not much better off than I was at a previous administrative job I had, yet I work at least twice as hard. I don’t feel like my qualifications, hard work, professionalism or experience are rewarded.
There are huge demands on teachers. Despite government and union efforts, teachers are still drowning in paperwork. This can vary slightly from school to school but in my experience the paperwork is unreasonable. The curriculum and benchmarks are supplemented or expanded by local authority and/or school planners, schemes of work and other paperwork. This needs planned, tracked and evaluated. Some of this is done at the whim of the head teacher and staff, myself included, feel powerless to approach management and tackle this. I find myself asked to do some tasks in triplicate ... beaurucracy gone mad! Too much is dictated from HT and management when class teachers too are professionals, some with as much or more teaching
experience. I know about the standard for headship and the work of SCEL and other organisations but this doesn't account for personality, management style etc. In many schools HT rule with an iron fist and staff feel that tackling this would put them in an unfavourable position, resulting in bullying and people leaving their school or the profession.

The profession is not as respected as it once was. There are been a public shift in perception, teachers/schools to blame for issues and no individual accountability on the parents or children. The public think we have an easy role (colouring in, 9am to 3pm) with too many holidays - despite the obvious fact that these holidays are accounted for in our T&C and salaries. Every societal issue is to be dealt with in school time. Health (tooth brushing, dental checks and fluoride varnish, flu nasal sprays etc), tackling extremism etc. Daily I hear on the radio, "if they just taught more of this in school". We have a very busy and demanding curriculum and a limited number of hours in the day.

I am concerned that Initial Teacher Education faculties are passing students that they shouldn't. I have heard many instances, without wishing to sound anecdotal, of them passing students who wouldn't meet the standard because too many are seen as failing. This fails our children and the profession.

I also wish to briefly say something about Chartered Teacher. This was a programme in place while I was at university but stopped as I began my career, removing the option of further career development and pay progression. I have found myself next door to another teacher, doing the same job, but being paid significantly less. I am not someone who sees themself in a management role, it isn't what I entered the profession for and I'm not certain I have the skills for such a role. I have my own CLPL, developing my practice but no longer any professional recognition for this beyond a certificate or masters credits.

The attitude of management to NCCT is poor in some areas. At times, they treat it as a favour to you and at other times a great inconvenience – yet this is our contractual right. If you have to ask for NCCT that hasn’t been covered you are treated with hostility. I fear losing NCCT in the future as I would be unable and unwilling to do this job without it.

Teachers have to work very long hours to get the job done. I have seen examples of good practice or sector leading work. When I have enquired it has been evident that teachers are working way beyond their school day. I know colleagues who work each evening and weekend without end – no wonder people burn out and seek employment elsewhere. And pity the teachers who fall short – not achieving such high standards. As it is, report writing, planning and preparation can only be completed using some of our own time. I myself worked past 9pm the past two evenings to prepare resources for my class and I will be doing the same again tonight.

Q6 What would encourage you to seek promotion to senior management, including to headteacher level? What would discourage you from seeking promotion?

The only reason I have considered this is because I have found myself professionally frustrated by ideas and visions dictated by management who in many circumstances haven't been able to give clear guidance on this or support. In some circumstances these visionaries haven’t been class teachers
themselves for very long before seeking promotion. They quickly forget the intensity, pressures and pace associated with being a class teacher (or the practicalities). This makes me want to be promoted so that I can be part of the decision making and support my colleagues in their roles.

I am discouraged as I don’t see myself having the skills for a DHT/HT post. I know which areas I would need to develop but I don’t think this could be addressed through training. It’s a personal, rather than professional skill. If given the opportunity to shadow a DHT/HT for an extended period, then it might be possible. Seeing them responding to the day to day demands of the job and how they approach parents and other professionals. So often in teaching, arrangements like shadowing or sharing the classroom experience fall through due to lack of staff/money.

I have been acting PT for a short time but in some schools I have seen people in this position being asked to undertake huge, unreasonable tasks with agreed non-contact hours not being met. Financially the reward is not equal to the post. It should be possible to do your job within the contracted time. Nothing should be asked or expected beyond that – it is then up to an individual to commit more of their time if they feel it is appropriate.

Q7 What do you think are the main challenges, if any, in recruiting or retaining teachers (and other staff) at your school? (please feel free to provide details of practical experiences)

I think people know of the workload and many feel that the salary is not equal to the position. They are correct. In schools many teachers don’t feel respected or valued and this leaves them demotivated and often looking for alternatives. In all the posts I have had, there has only been one HT (and wider management team) who led with grace, clarity and compassion. I felt supported, encouraged and I know it allowed me to develop as a professional in skills and confidence. Pastoral care is seriously lacking in places. I could provide countless examples of staff being mistreated or treated like children, instead of the qualified individuals that they are.

I am greatly concerned by any short cuts to teacher training as I think this further damages the reputation of the profession and the education of our young people. People from STEM backgrounds etc, while a fantastic idea, should undergo the same high level training. Even in these times of short staffing, we can’t just let people in without the correct skills, time, qualifications and opportunities to develop.

Initial Teacher Education should focus on school contact – learning on the job as much as possible. While I strongly believe in the academic side, I have heard of different ITE faculties reducing school experience, especially in the early years of training.

Funding in schools is very short. This has immediate effect on staffing, not to mention PSA /classroom assistant staffing etc. Adding to stress, overworking and the pressure of the job.

I now work in Glasgow and compared to my previous post in Edinburgh (where the budget was tight) we are in a grave state of affairs. This was similar to my experience in East Dunbartonshire. No money for resources. I have bought many of my own supplies and continue to do so. Things purchased by myself or colleagues; paper, pencils (regularly), wall paper for classroom, art resources of every kind (unless you want to paint then you
won't be designing or creating anything - no clay, tissue etc etc), photocopy paper, whiteboard pens, glue sticks. This list is endless.

Q8 Which particular subject specialisms/support roles face the greatest challenges with recruitment or retention?
Across the board there are huge challenges to teacher numbers. Supply is the main area of concern. Changes to contracts ~(ie working 5 plus days before being paid at scale etc) has put people off taking this role. It has become so bad that schools are not asking for supply but trying to cover in-house – leading to huge knock on effects and shortages in available management staff. In addition, this results in many last minute changes and arrangements falling through, even staff missing NCCT.

Q9 Do you have any suggestions for how challenges with recruitment and retention might be addressed?
I believe that if the profession was more valued in society and more financially rewarding that more people would be attracted to it. We must continue to seek out high calibre applicants to maintain and improve the level of teacher skill and professionalism.
We MUST address the workload issue. Actually reducing it and not just making noise about reducing it. HT/schools who continue to make such large demands on their staff should face repercussions for doing so. Training DHT/HT to be more realistic, have better pastoral and people skills would help greatly. You can want the job but that doesn’t mean you have the skills for it. The number of men in promoted post is also a huge concern for me. As a primary teacher, a profession with many more women than men, it is evident that the percentage of men in promoted post outweighs the percentage of men in the profession. While I am in favour of more men entering the profession, I question the balance in terms of promoted posts. I myself worked in a school where everyone on the management team was a man. We must encourage women to these jobs just as we do STEM subjects.

Q10 Have any measures been put in place as a result of changes to staffing numbers in recent years at your school (examples include multi-school headship/leadership teams, composite classes, changes in the use/availability of support assistants)?
If so:
• What are these measures?
• How well are they working?
• Are these changes a permanent or a temporary measure (ie is it covering vacancies at present or is it to reflect the number of teacher/other posts has reduced?)

There is a huge shortage of PSA /classroom assistants and a large number of children with complex learning needs who require additional support, and for who whole class situations with only one teacher is insufficient. Day after day many colleagues have to teach a class while attempting to support individuals who find staying on task or progressing without direct support almost impossible. This puts intense pressure on the class teacher and in some
classes I am sure this is disruptive. I have no objection to children with learning needs attending mainstream education; in my classroom experience this has always been positive. But the children must be appropriately supported and the child, parent and class teacher should have the biggest say in this – not the budget!

Q11 Are there any subject choices or other opportunities that are not available to pupils as a result of staff shortages that you consider would be valuable? (please specify)

There seems to be a shortage of specialist teachers in primary schools. These visiting teachers (in PE or music etc) help to share skills and knowledge with other staff and provide high quality teaching to children.

Q12 How would you describe general morale among staff (very good / quite good / quite low / very low) and what are the key factors that influence it?

Morale is very low. Workload is overwhelming and bringing many to their knees. By the end of term many teachers are exhausted and/or sick and well ready for the holidays – which isn’t a holiday because you are recovering and not enjoying your leave as you have the right to do.

Curriculum for Excellence was supposed to provide more freedom, flexibility and autonomy for teachers but in reality staff are being micro managed and everything is dictated to them. There is no scope to develop your skills and it leaves you feeling professionally disrespected.

ANNABEL RODGER
Q1 What type of teaching role do you have?
Primary Teacher

Q2 Whereabouts do you work?
Tinto Primary, South Lanarkshire

Q4 What are the positives that keep you in the teaching profession?
Working with children, doing a job with clear positive outcomes and impacts on the learners, sense of team from other staff, good area to work in and close to home.

Q5 Do you consider that you will teach until you retire or do you consider leaving early or for alternative employment? (If you consider leaving, please specify why if it relates to your enjoyment of your role)

I doubt anyone’s ability to physically cope with the classroom to the age of 65/68 when we need to be able to teach all aspects including PE and outdoor learning. Even with continuous training and requalifying such as Masters I know my ideas and methods will not always be the latest or most effective and children benefit from a range of teaching staff around them which needs to be refreshed regularly. Personally I hope to either gain promotion into management or to move to a related career in time which is less physically, mentally and emotionally demanding but will use my skills and experience professionally.
Q6 What would encourage you to seek promotion to senior management, including to headteacher level? What would discourage you from seeking promotion?

I have had one interview for PT but now I know more about the job and the package I will wait before seeking promotion, I have a young son and need to prioritise family time.

I am also aware from peer’s experiences that the financial rewards are just not good enough for the further commitment and responsibility when pension and taxation come off some are even worse off after promotion. I am the main breadwinner in my household and that is a serious consideration. I am now at the top of the main scale and I want to earn more but it will mean promotion. I am already doing masters study to complete this year but in my authority they prefer to promote candidates with management related masters which I am not taking. This will mean further self-funded or part self-funded study and I cannot justify that from our household income.

Q7 What do you think are the main challenges, if any, in recruiting or retaining teachers (and other staff) at your school? (please feel free to provide details of practical experiences)

Rural area puts many off from commuting to us, Salaries are low or not competitive with the private sector.

Q8 Which particular subject specialisms/support roles face the greatest challenges with recruitment or retention?

It seems that support staff and all outreach services (EAL, behaviour support, learning support) have been increasingly cut in the three years since I came to the authority. This is having a massive negative impact on teaching and learning and means many pupils are simply not getting an appropriate education.

Q9 Do you have any suggestions for how challenges with recruitment and retention might be addressed?

Better salaries – they need to be at least improved so that we are no longer so badly affected by inflation, flexible working improvements – if I wanted to go part-time for a while I couldn’t then re-increase my hours, I would have to look for a new job. Allow more training funding and recognise financially that people are better qualified. I would also like an opportunity to access a better pension like the original final salary instead of my own average salary. Student loan forgiveness would also relieve the near poverty many newly qualified teachers are in where they are often forced to work additional jobs.

Q10 Have any measures been put in place as a result of changes to staffing numbers in recent years at your school (examples include multi-school headship/leadership teams, composite classes, changes in the use/availability of support assistants)?

If so:
• What are these measures?
• How well are they working?
• Are these changes a permanent or a temporary measure (ie is it covering vacancies at present or is it to reflect the number of teacher/other posts has reduced?)
Support staff have reduced each year I have been in teaching (6 years). This has a huge negative impact in the quality of education for all learners but particularly those who require additional support.

Q11 Are there any subject choices or other opportunities that are not available to pupils as a result of staff shortages that you consider would be valuable? (please specify)
Music specialists, PE specialists, Drama and Art specialists
Increased learning and behavioural support
More access to child mental health services

Q12 How would you describe general morale among staff (very good / quite good / quite low / very low) and what are the key factors that influence it?
Poor and it’s got worse each year as I have taught. The increasing demands on schools and teachers combined with the cuts in resources and staffing are really telling. No-one seems content any more.

Additional comments
If you have any other comments please include them below:
I still see our system as a good one but I really worry about the future. Education and schools cannot cope with cuts, we have never wasted money or resources and yet we are being asked to do more with less. It clearly does not work. I understand with austerity and tight budgets nationally there is a huge issue here but its only going to get worse without intervention.
In my authority the length of process and failure rate of recruitment is abysmal. It is a constant source of frustration and delay and only makes everything harder. The insistence of all recruitment being done centrally just makes it all slow, often inappropriate and likely to fail.

PRIMARY SCHOOL – ANONYMOUS SUBMISSIONS

ANONYMOUS 1

Q1 What type of teaching role do you have?
Full-time primary school teacher, upper-stages.

Q4 What are the positives that keep you in the teaching profession?
Educating children and making a difference to their lives.

Q5 Do you consider that you will teach until you retire or do you consider leaving early or for alternative employment?
I have considered taking early retirement but not alternative employment as my age is against me for re-training. I did request a cut in hours as I am within five years of retirement but was told by my head teacher that would not be accepted.

Q6 What would encourage you to seek promotion to senior management, including to head teacher level? What would discourage you from seeking promotion?
A decent salary for the extra responsibility and hours of work that are unpaid!
The extended hours of work that go unpaid. I have on two occasions had acting up opportunities, the first one very positive the second time which (was more recent) was a very different experience. Most of the time was spent in class covering teacher absences due to no availability in supply staff resulting in late evenings working on the school improvement aims and completing the relevant bureaucratic documents required to prove progress of these.

Q7 What do you think are the main challenges, if any, in recruiting or retaining teachers (and other staff) at your school? (please feel free to provide details of practical experiences)

The workload relating to CfE changes, starting everything, from scratch, progression planners, extensive electronic planners and attainment evidence to be filled in on a regular basis as well as keeping paper copies for evidence. Reporting to parents using home link books that has now morphed in to full blown reports on a termly basis; the extended day because of this record keeping. Reporting to parents four evenings now in place of the two we had previously. Reporting to parents at end of session despite being only Literacy, Numeracy and Maths; Health and well-being now is a full 2 A4 document of prose and for 20 children plus requires extensive hours at home to complete. Push on raising attainment when in real terms the teaching time has been reduced due to out of school visits to places of work and endless visitors to school the children interview regarding their jobs. Scottish week and international week; core subjects are again dropped for these. Unrealistic expectations of management.

Q8 Which particular subject specialisms/support roles face the greatest challenges with recruitment or retention?

Reduction of support staff puts great pressure on teachers who find themselves stressed due to the fact they feel that some children are unable to access their education without the use of an adult who can scribe, or read over documents for them. Throughout my teaching career the number of children with ‘needs’ has in fact increased, not decreased so you may have 4 or more children in any one class that have real difficulties.

Q9 Do you have any suggestions for how challenges with recruitment and retention might be addressed?

Re-instate ASN staff, classroom assistants and early intervention. Long term service should be rewarded with an increment to salary ever four years after they have reached the top of their pay scale to encourage staff to stay, especially those not looking for promotion.

Q10 Have any measures been put in place as a result of changes to staffing numbers in recent years at your school (examples include multi-school headship/leadership teams, composite classes, changes in the use/availability of support assistants)?

If so: Yes

Admin lady now expected to do role of support assistant.
- What are these measures? To accommodate cut-backs
- How well are they working? Stressed Administrator, overworked.
• Are these changes a permanent or a temporary measure (i.e. is it covering vacancies at present or is it to reflect the number of teacher/other posts has reduced?)

Permanent.

Q11 Are there any subject choices or other opportunities that are not available to pupils as a result of staff shortages that you consider would be valuable? (please specify)

Expressive arts (Art, music, drama) used to take place on a fortnightly basis each area over a four week block rotating on a week A and B. This has changed to cover the non-contact time and the children get an hour and a half session of art for six weeks, then six week of PE, Then six week of music and in-between these the teacher teaches an additional hour of PE but not any of the other expressive arts. Dram is taught through school performances and occasional visiting workshops. Since repetition is the key to all learning I personally feel this arrangement will have a dramatic impact on children’s artistic abilities.

Q12 How would you describe general morale among staff (very good / quite good / quite low / very low) and what are the key factors that influence it?

Very low: all of the aforementioned plus behaviour of children and no common measures in the education system to support teachers with this.

Additional comments

If you have any other comments please include them below:

As a teacher I no longer have the responsibility for leading the learning at the stage I am teaching; what is to be taught (with the exception of Numeracy, Maths and Literacy) from the rest of the curriculum is dictated by the head teacher and rotates on a three yearly cycle due to the school being composed of three composite classes. I have only been at his school two years and I am transferring next session back to a larger main stream school where the experience of promoting leadership in staff was very different.

ANONYMOUS 2

I am at present planning to retire Christmas 2017. At that time I will be 62 and have accumulated 27 years’ service. Although officially I am not taking early retirement I feel that the demands of my job mean that I cannot sustain the pace required for classroom teaching.

I LOVE my job, it was all I wanted to do and for the most part it has been fulfilling and rewarding. CfE has changed teaching beyond recognition. There are too many vague requirements and no one really appears to know what is wanted in terms of assessment and targets. As a result most schools are re-inventing the wheel trying to meet what they THINK is needed (but I suspect a great number do not really have confidence in what they are doing)

A case in point:-

Look in the maths experiences and outcomes MNU 1-03

*I can use addition subtraction multiplication and division when solving problems, making best use of mental strategies and written skills I have developed*
These 4 processes form the baseboard for all areas of maths. They have been reduced to 2 lines and shown no more significance than work on 2D shape. I really feel that some areas of the curriculum require a heavier weighting and that this should be made clear to teachers in training or already in the job. It is easy to lose focus when there is no guidance on priority. I think too because of lack of guidance and a feeling that textbooks are frowned upon there is a danger of Scottish Education being dictated by what is on Twinkl (an online resource) which a large number of teachers buy into. This is not a positive way forward but lack of confidence and the increased work load as we try to hit all curriculum areas means that many teachers look for an easy solution to planning. Most of us are just working week to week because we are looking to the children to guide where they want their learning to go. Resourcing and planning in this way can be tricky, exhausting and worrying if we are not sure if what we are teaching will hit the required targets I think there are many teachers in Scotland who are on part time hours. This has an impact on getting teachers for the job. With young family and a exhausting demanding job, which requires a lot of personal commitment and input, a full time class can be a step too far when trying to maintain relationships and family life. I know I would not be able to do the job if my family were not now self-sufficient and my husband were not retired and supporting me emotionally.

The answer is not always money. I believe that most schools are pretty well resourced (always use for more) BUT the best resource a class can have is an enthusiastic teacher who wants to be there. That is what we have lost/are losing Head teachers have a pretty thankless job at present. They are trying to keep too many masters happy. I feel that they do not always feel supported either by their local authority or by the government especially when dealing with parents and children. We understand that procedures and safety are of the essence but surely there should be clear guidelines on what is acceptable behaviour of parents towards head teachers. Many forget that we are in the job because we care and want to make a difference. I have always felt strongly that CfE just makes the gap larger. We are trying to give all pupils the experiences that will help them become well rounded citizens ready to take their place in society. However the minute certain areas of society see this they just up their game and go even harder to give their children an even wider range of what the world has to offer.

Technology also has its place to play. Either teachers using it for communication and socialising parents not interacting with their children or children glued to it for large stretches of time. It all has an impact on teachers and learners. The genie is out of the bottle and we can’t put it back. The solution is to try and work with it to best effect.

This is a bit of a ramble but I have tried to put some of the things I see as being problematic on paper. If I can be of further help please get in touch.

**ANONYMOUS 3**

**Q1** What type of teaching role do you have?
Primary Teacher

Q4 What are the positives that keep you in the teaching profession?
The pleasure from seeing a child make sense of their learning, progressing as they grow and their natural enthusiasm. Sociable hours and good holidays. I also work with a good group of staff which makes a huge difference.

Q5 Do you consider that you will teach until you retire or do you consider leaving early or for alternative employment? (If you consider leaving, please specify why if it relates to your enjoyment of your role)
I joined the Teaching profession later in life after another full career – I intend to work until retirement if possible.

Q6 What would encourage you to seek promotion to senior management, including to headteacher level? What would discourage you from seeking promotion?
I have no interest in promoted posts; I came into teaching to work every day with children and I am happy to continue in this role.

Q7 What do you think are the main challenges, if any, in recruiting or retaining teachers (and other staff) at your school? (please feel free to provide details of practical experiences)
The personnel dept. are inconsistent in their allocation of posts. The process is interview/ score/ if successful then wait for allocation, however, in reality there is very little point to it as HT’s override this and ask for certain staff. I scored 100% at interview in May 2017 (I was only advised of this when I queried the timeframe) and had to wait until the big push to recruit in September 2017 to be confirmed in a post. I know for a fact that others scored less and were allocated much sooner. Why have a system and then not stick to it?
Another issue is the treatment of staff by Senior Management. In some schools the pressure is incredible. It varies greatly across the authority with expectations often unrealistic. How things are dealt with has a huge impact. I had 4 violent incidents submitted to Personnel and had to take time off with stress (the first time in 30 years of working full-time) and received not one phone call from anyone in Personnel. The HT in this case was supportive, however, my return to work was not managed well. If I hadn’t given up so much to retrain I would have been inclined to move on at this point.

Q8 Which particular subject specialisms/support roles face the greatest challenges with recruitment or retention?
Not sure but there seems to pressure during the recruitment process to opt for Nursery/ ASN and a wide location (Clydesdale)

Q9 Do you have any suggestions for how challenges with recruitment and retention might be addressed?
Be clear in advertising – specific job roles like ASN require a very different skill set. Stop mucking people around during the recruitment process; it is very disheartening to have a confirmation letter and then jobs are advertised. An email saying you are still being considered does little to alleviate the stress.
Q10 Have any measures been put in place as a result of changes to staffing numbers in recent years at your school (examples include multi-school headship/leadership teams, composite classes, changes in the use/availability of support assistants)

Proper CCC time only given 1 week from since the end of January due to shortages. When dealing with violence in the classroom, I sought union support who advised me to email HT outlining the support I thought the class needed to ensure safety. Only then was support time increased from 45mins to all day (other classes then lost out).

If so:
- What are these measures?
- How well are they working?
- Are these changes a permanent or a temporary measure (ie is it covering vacancies at present or is it to reflect the number of teacher/other posts has reduced?)

Q11 Are there any subject choices or other opportunities that are not available to pupils as a result of staff shortages that you consider would be valuable? (please specify)

No because everyone is committed and ensures the children don’t suffer.

Q12 How would you describe general morale among staff (very good / quite good / quite low / very low) and what are the key factors that influence it?

I am in a very positive working environment and I really enjoy it. Morale remains high due to the team that is in place

Additional comments

If you have any other comments please include them below:

Currently, the Primary Teaching profession relies heavily on the goodwill of teachers and the willingness to work extra hours and buy resources from their own pocket. I would be very supportive of a month long work to rule approach as it seems like the only way to show how much is being done over and above the paid h

ANONYMOUS 4

Q1 What type of teaching role do you have?
Primary Teacher

Q2 Whereabouts do you work?
Dundee City Council

Q4 What are the positives that keep you in the teaching profession?
I enjoy helping children develop their knowledge and skills and seeing their confidence develop. I enjoy practising and developing my own skills. Lovely colleagues.

Q5 Do you consider that you will teach until you retire or do you consider leaving early or for alternative employment? (If you consider leaving, please specify why if it relates to your enjoyment of your role)
As I’m within a few years of retiring, I plan to retire at the earliest possible opportunity.

I have also reduced my working hours.

**Q6** What would encourage you to seek promotion to senior management, including to headteacher level? What would discourage you from seeking promotion?

I would not seek promotion now as there seems to be a culture of fear where people are more concerned about covering their backs and toeing the party line within the council/education hierarchy – often to the detriment of the children’s needs.

The schools are understaffed and there is a constant need to juggle staff. Government funding is constantly allocated according to free school meal numbers instead of school size - with the result that children who need additional support in a primary school where few take free school meals and where most classes are at, or close to, the maximum class size limit, those in need have virtually no chance of any additional support. The situation is frequently difficult and frustrating to manage for the class teacher.

This funding issue also means that we are short of textbooks and materials and have to rely on parental fundraising. Many of these are ‘just managing’ families.

**Q7** What do you think are the main challenges, if any, in recruiting or retaining teachers (and other staff) at your school? (please feel free to provide details of practical experiences)

Initial Teacher Education needs to be addressed. Hopeful candidates should be assessed for basic literacy and numeracy skills before acceptance as many new teachers lack confidence in teaching upper primary classes. This undermines the profession as a whole. More time should be spent as part of the courses covering direct teaching methods and strategies at a variety of levels so that new teachers gain confidence before their probation year.

CfE has been poorly understood and poorly implemented at Authority and management levels. Teaching staff have frequently been left with no coherent structure and without the resources to teach properly. We frequently appear to have a system based on ‘stuff from the internet’.

The behaviour policy is not well supported at management levels. Strategies are inconsistent. This particularly lets down newly-qualified and less experienced teachers and undermines us all.

**Q8** Which particular subject specialisms/support roles face the greatest challenges with recruitment or retention?

In my primary school there is very little SfL provision or behaviour support. Certainly nowhere near enough for 400 children. Our experience SfL teacher has been covering a mainstream class full-time and any cover appears to be as and when supply staff can be allocated.
In Dundee all specialist primary staff were cut – so no PE, Music, Art or Drama provision. Ironic when there is so much emphasis on physical and mental well-being!

**Q9** Do you have any suggestions for how challenges with recruitment and retention might be addressed?

Trust and listen to teachers who actually enjoy working with children. Explicitly and constantly voice that support with conviction.

Put money where it matters –

- at school level
- Into every school
- for basic teaching materials and resources
- for support and specialist staff
- to reduce class sizes. 33 is far from ideal for the requirements of CfE.

Stop throwing poorly researched, faddy ideas into the mix every 5 minutes. And stop paying the snake oil salesmen and charlatans (sorry – experts) big money for this.

**Q10** Have any measures been put in place as a result of changes to staffing numbers in recent years at your school (examples include multi-school headship/leadership teams, composite classes, changes in the use/availability of support assistants)?

If so:

- What are these measures?
- How well are they working?
- Are these changes a permanent or a temporary measure (ie is it covering vacancies at present or is it to reflect the number of teacher/other posts has reduced?)

Reduced access to support assistants.

Greatly reduced access to SfL support.

These appear to be permanent measures.

**Q11** Are there any subject choices or other opportunities that are not available to pupils as a result of staff shortages that you consider would be valuable? (please specify)

Access to learning support.

Access to behaviour support.

Access to off-site provision if required.

Access to PE, Music, Art and Drama specialists.

Access to a clear, coherent curriculum which is properly supported by appropriate materials.
Q12 How would you describe general morale among staff (very good / quite good / quite low / very low) and what are the key factors that influence it?

Very low. See all of the above.

Additional comments

If you have any other comments please include them below:

CfE has proven to be overly complex with hundreds of Es and Os, 4 capacities, 12 attributes, 24 capabilities, 5 levels, 7 principles, 6 entitlements, 10 aims, 4 contexts, 8 curriculum areas and 3 interdisciplinary areas.

Research consistently supports direct teaching methods over inquiry learning and constructivist principles.

CfE has been based on unquestioned ideologies over scientific evidence and has replaced a logical subject based approach.

This has all had a huge cost in terms of teacher well-being and we have watched actual and relative achievement fall (OECD).

ANONYMOUS 5

Q1 What type of teaching role do you have?

Primary teacher, part time permanent, CCRT cover, various subjects

Q2 Whereabouts do you work?

East Renfrewshire,

Q4 What are the positives that keep you in the teaching profession?

Working with children, making a difference to them by using my skills in interactive teaching – developing their thinking skills particularly in science is the main reason to stay.

Q5 Do you consider that you will teach until you retire or do you consider leaving early or for alternative employment? (If you consider leaving, please specify why if it relates to your enjoyment of your role)

Paperwork, inflexibility of management, restrictions on scope of teaching, box ticking approaches, micromanagement of the curriculum and the failure of CfE (enforced by the drive to create a curriculum that can support a detailed assessment regime) in terms of allowing teachers to be flexible all jump to mind as reasons to leave.

Q6 What would encourage you to seek promotion to senior management, including to headteacher level? What would discourage you from seeking promotion?

The only reason to seek promotion would be if this was the only way to influence the system. It would reduce my time spent working with the children.

Q7 What do you think are the main challenges, if any, in recruiting or retaining teachers (and other staff) at your school? (please feel free to provide details of practical experiences)
Dictatorial management is the main reason that I have seen for people to leave this profession. The stress of unreasonable workload is also a factor.

Q10 Have any measures been put in place as a result of changes to staffing numbers in recent years at your school (examples include multi-school headship/leadership teams, composite classes, changes in the use/availability of support assistants)?
   If so:
   • What are these measures?
   • How well are they working?
   • Are these changes a permanent or a temporary measure (ie is it covering vacancies at present or is it to reflect the number of teacher/other posts has reduced?)
     We have fewer support assistants. The work they do is important. Expecting teachers to take it on is unrealistic.

Q12 How would you describe general morale among staff (very good / quite good / quite low / very low) and what are the key factors that influence it?
   The management style of the head teacher is the biggest factor affecting my morale.

Additional comments
In the recruitment form for promoted staff, there is a section in which candidates are asked to provide evidence of ways that they have successfully implemented change. This causes change to be implemented where no change is needed, increasing stress and workload. If such forms were changed to ask for examples of how candidates have successfully reduced workload, the teaching profession would change for the better in the space of a few years.

ANONYMOUS 6

Q1 What type of teaching role do you have?
   I am currently working as a short term supply teacher for Glasgow City council in the primary sector.

Q2 Whereabouts do you work?
   Glasgow City Council

Q4 What are the positives that keep you in the teaching profession?
   I love working with children
   I enjoy being able to teach without the incessant paperwork
   I still care about the way children should be educated and nurtured

Q5 Do you consider that you will teach until you retire or do you consider leaving early or for alternative employment? (If you consider leaving, please specify why if it relates to your enjoyment of your role)
I taught for 32 years and was in a promoted post for 18 of those years. It was a sad day for me when I took the decision to resign from my post. I decided to leave as I was working such long hours and had endless paperwork to complete due to the additional support needs of the school. The joy of teaching was slowly diminishing and I felt drained of all energy. Furthermore, I had other family commitments that I wanted to have time for.

Q6 What would encourage you to seek promotion to senior management, including to headteacher level? What would discourage you from seeking promotion?

I was in a promoted post and also completed several months as an acting head. However, it would not have been a route I would have continued to take as the role of the Headteacher has changed dramatically in recent years. Essential time with the children is being lost due to the continual overload of paperwork... Additional support needs paperwork, assessments for areas of the curriculum, target setting, paperwork for new initiatives for the school/paperwork for how money has to be spent, countless meetings on how to improve your school and what you should be doing! The role of the Head has moved away from what's really important (the children) and they have become Business Managers instead trying to juggle a million and one things! Children need the Headteacher to be visible and they need to know they care about their learning. Headteachers often don't get the chance to speak to their children everyday.

Q7 What do you think are the main challenges, if any, in recruiting or retaining teachers (and other staff) at your school? (please feel free to provide details of practical experiences)

1. The salary for teachers is uninviting and there are no real rewards or incentives for teachers who go the extra mile or put in so much work for their children/school.
2. The workload.... Even during holiday periods there are many teachers who are working at home preparing for next session. It's a very difficult profession to switch off from.
3. Many probationers find the job a difficult one as there are now so many children with mental health issues, behavioural issues and learning difficulties which affect their ability to concentrate on the learning as well as how they relate to others in the class. Insufficient training given to probationers on how to manage a class. It's hard enough for an experienced teacher to cope with some of the issues let alone a young probationer.
4. I have found in my many years as an experienced teacher that probationers really do not have a great understanding of what children should be learning and how it should be taught. Many teachers give up their own time to support the probationers which is fine up to a point.... I think it's time the universities looked at how they are preparing students for schools. Maybe they need to go back to the days of when methodology was every bit as important as the theory. Primary Tutors need to be assigned to these students where regular methodology is discussed and implemented on teaching practice.

Q8 Which particular subject specialisms/support roles face the greatest challenges with recruitment or retention?
Modern languages…… Languages are not taught consistently enough for children to retain grammar points or remember vocabulary. Shortage of staff often means that time allocated for modern language will be taken away to provide cover. Also, teachers reluctant to sign up for modern languages as it is intense and they really need to have had previous knowledge of the language to be able to support children well.

Q9 Do you have any suggestions for how challenges with recruitment and retention might be addressed?

1. Students need to be out in schools for longer periods in the first and second years to ensure they are equipped to teach in their final practice.
2. A primary tutor should be assigned to the student for their years at university so that they get to know them and can be better advised as to how to support them.
3. Salary needs to be more inviting with opportunities for development whether you go down management route or not.
4. Standards required to get into teaching maybe need to be raised along with better salary to encourage more to apply. At the moment the calibre of students coming out from universities troubles me …. their basic skills in spelling and grammar are worrying. This is especially evident when writing reports for children or teaching from the whiteboard!

Q10 Have any measures been put in place as a result of changes to staffing numbers in recent years at your school (examples include multi-school headship/leadership teams, composite classes, changes in the use/availability of support assistants)?

If so:

• What are these measures?
• How well are they working?
• Are these changes a permanent or a temporary measure (ie is it covering vacancies at present or is it to reflect the number of teacher/other posts has reduced?)

In my last school support staff had to be divided up according to where there was greatest need for them ie in classes where there were children who required more one to one support . The Headteacher tried to allocate support staff equally but it was sometimes difficult to maintain as they could sometimes be pulled from classes to carry out other jobs.

Q11 Are there any subject choices or other opportunities that are not available to pupils as a result of staff shortages that you consider would be valuable? (please specify)

Modern languages

EAL opportunities for children who are new to English…. Many teachers have to rely on creating their own resources to support children. Giving quality time to the pupils is especially difficult and they would definitely benefit from having more input from EAL services on a regular basis. This should be a priority considering the number of EAL students in increasing. The goodwill of teachers see many making up individual programmes for these children and
trying to give time to them in class at the expense of other children who are also in need of support.

Q12 How would you describe general morale among staff (very good / quite good / quite low / very low) and what are the key factors that influence it?

I would say that most primary school teachers feel that the curriculum is overloaded and children are not retaining important information as they do not get enough time to practise the skills. Many teachers feel there is a need to go back to basics to ensure that they can count, spell, read and write with greater independence. Only then will they be able to work on other areas of the curriculum without the interventions currently needed. Many pupils have lost the ability to think for themselves and want to be spoonfed. Children need to know they are at school to learn and they must be encouraged to have high expectations. Unfortunately, there is an increasing number of children who have mental and emotional difficulties which impacts on the teaching and learning. Schools are finding it very challenging to support these pupils as they do not receive enough support from psychological services or outside agencies on a regular basis. Waiting lists grow longer and longer in schools. Whilst teachers are trying to deal with many issues themselves before any kind of intervention takes place. Morale is low because teachers work incredibly long hours and have many challenges within the classroom to overcome. Moreover, additional support is limited which means that teachers become frustrated in not being able to have quality time with all pupils on a regular basis. Raising attainment will only happen when class sizes are reduced, when teachers have more time to spend on basic literacy and numeracy skills using whole class lessons with differentiated follow up tasks and additional support is given priority in areas of deprivation. Children who are emotionally challenging are not receiving the support they need to enable them to learn.

Additional comments

The joy of actually teaching needs to come back.....

Changes to the curriculum and endless learning styles becomes frustrating

Children need to see purpose to their learning.

Headteachers need to be visible in the school

Children have the right to be educated in a safe and happy environment.

ANONYMOUS 7

Q1 What type of teaching role do you have?

I am a full time primary teacher

Q2 Whereabouts do you work?

City of Edinburgh Council

Q4 What are the positives that keep you in the teaching profession?
This is the job I was trained to do. I enjoy working with the children and seeing them making progress in their learning and creating fun and engaging lessons for them. I love teaching them art and passing on my skills to others.

I can work full time but also be around to spend time with my children in the holidays.

**Q5** Do you consider that you will teach until you retire or do you consider leaving early or for alternative employment? (If you consider leaving, please specify why if it relates to your enjoyment of your role)

I can’t see how any teacher could continue teaching until 68 or whenever the retirement age will be changed to in years to come. This is a completely different job from even 10 years ago. Planning, paperwork, curriculum overviews for parents, reporting in written form 4 times in one year plus 2 parents evenings, tracking and monitoring of progress, constant observations by senior management and colleagues all contribute to the many changes and additions to teachers workload. This weekend I spent Friday afternoon, all day Saturday and most of Sunday writing notes for 2 parents evenings next week, updating all of my tracking in my forward plan and writing out some of the areas I need to plan for my forward plan. All of this is time which is precious time away from my family or friends who were all out enjoying the sunshine. This is a frequent use of my time at weekends, evenings and holidays, particularly this year where we have been writing 4 reports. If teachers are using up all of their relaxation time working to keep on top of the job, they are not going to be rested and be able to teach to the best of their ability.

I would consider leaving teaching if I could find a job where I could get the same salary. One month I calculated how many hours I worked and divided it with my take home pay and it worked out at £9 an hour. Not a lot for a professional person with 28 years’ experience.

**Q6** What would encourage you to seek promotion to senior management, including to headteacher level? What would discourage you from seeking promotion?

I haven’t looked for promotion as I feel I work so many hours as a teacher that I don’t want to add to that by adding more to the workload. I am already at the top of the pay scale so there is little incentive to add to the workload to gain another couple of thousand pounds which will just be taken off in tax. I enjoy being in class and working with the children rather than working in the office as part of the management team.

**Q7** What do you think are the main challenges, if any, in recruiting or retaining teachers (and other staff) at your school? (please feel free to provide details of practical experiences)

One challenge would be working with children with additional support needs who attack myself and pupil support assistants on a daily basis hurting us by kicking, punching, scratching and spitting at us 3 or 4 times daily. If inclusion is to work in mainstream schools, the correct staffing and resources have got to be provided. It has been very upsetting observing staff and the children in my class being regularly hurt and seeing the negative effect it has had on them coming into school on a daily basis. Evacuating your classroom several
times in a day while the resources and furniture are being upended is not a good or safe learning environment for the children and is an extremely challenging environment to work in. Trying to teach when a child is screaming and crying continuously is a struggle for both the teacher and the children. I have many children in the one class who have a wide variety of additional support needs but their needs can not always be met when one individual child needs the support and intervention from 2 sometimes 3 support staff to keep the staff member safe at work and to avoid being hurt. I have been teaching for many years but only in the last 10 years I have observed the behaviour which is becoming more common in mainstream primary schools. If so many children with extremely complex needs are to be introduced to mainstream schools, the only way this can work is to have the appropriately trained specialist staff to work with these children and the resources required both for the child with needs to make good progress and for the other children in the class to be able to access the curriculum without fear for their safety.

Q8 Which particular subject specialisms/support roles face the greatest challenges with recruitment or retention?

With the recent addition of many children with severe, complex additional needs being introduced to mainstream schools, it is often the least experienced or qualified support staff who work with these children. If specialised training and an appropriate upgrade in salary was offered, there would be benefits for the children with needs and the staff who are working with and trying to support these complex needs. Pupil support assistants are on such a low salary for an extremely challenging daily job which they do so well. Things will have to change to retain these staff.

Q9 Do you have any suggestions for how challenges with recruitment and retention might be addressed?

If teaching staff are expected to regularly work a 50 hour week, with many weeks exceeding that, then the salary should be reflecting this. My daughter will start work when she graduates earning my salary which is at the top of the pay scale. If staff are to complete all of the new initiatives with no pay increase then more non class contact time should be provided so that at least some of the workload can be completed within the school day and not in the evenings, holidays or weekends.

Q10 Have any measures been put in place as a result of changes to staffing numbers in recent years at your school (examples include multi-school headship/leadership teams, composite classes, changes in the use/availability of support assistants)?

If so:

- What are these measures?
- How well are they working?
- Are these changes a permanent or a temporary measure (ie is it covering vacancies at present or is it to reflect the number of teacher/other posts has reduced?)

The role of support assistants has changed and the support assistants role is to support individual children who have additional support needs. If there is
one child who requires a lot of support then the other children with less complex needs miss out on the support they require. Due to the needs of one child in our school, it has been necessary to use 4 support staff for this one child which means that many children are missing out on the support they need.

Q11 Are there any subject choices or other opportunities that are not available to pupils as a result of staff shortages that you consider would be valuable? (please specify)

As a result of violent behaviour towards staff and children in my class, it has been necessary for one of the children to work on a one to one supported timetable outwith the classroom. I have many children with additional support needs in my class and they do not get the support they need from the pupil support assistant as she is now not working in the classroom. No extra staff have been provided to rectify this situation.

Q12 How would you describe general morale among staff (very good / quite good / quite low / very low) and what are the key factors that influence it?

General staff morale is at an all time extreme low but this is widespread in teaching and not just in our school. You can see from comments on social media sites how people are feeling. Many teachers are commenting on when they are leaving teaching or going part time to relieve the stress and to regain a proper work life balance.

The key factors which are influencing this are unrealistic constant pressure of continually adding to the workload of a very demanding job which just keeps on getting harder. Many of the recently recruited headteachers are very young and some do not have the life skills or training to be in a management position managing a large staff. Maybe more in depth training would be beneficial.

Additional comments

If you have any other comments please include them below:

It would be fantastic if you could give schools a budget where we could have enough glue, pencils, pens and just the basic equipment to teach the curriculum to the best of our ability. I spend a lot of my own salary on items which I use in class because I want the children to have engaging lessons, but I don’t agree with having to buy the basics too. We were asked to buy knives, chopping boards and plates and washing up liquid to serve the fruit to the children.

ANONYMOUS 8

Q1 What type of teaching role do you have?

Primary Teacher (Primary 3)

Q2 Whereabouts do you work?

North Ayrshire Council

Q4 What are the positives that keep you in the teaching profession?

WORKING WITH A MOTIVATING TEAM OF COLLEAGUES
GETTING OPPORTUNITIES TO DEVELOP PROFESSIONALLY
SEEING THE CHILDREN ACHIEVE ACADEMICALLY/ GAIN CONFIDENCE

Q5 Do you consider that you will teach until you retire or do you consider leaving early or for alternative employment? (If you consider leaving, please specify why if it relates to your enjoyment of your role)

YES, I CAME INTO TEACHING FROM A MARKETING POSITION WITHIN THE HOSPITALITY INDUSTRY AND PLAN TO BE TEACHING UNTIL RETIREMENT.

I DO, HOWEVER, KNOW SEVERAL COLLEAGUES INTERESTED IN LEAVING TO GO INTO THE FIRE SERVICE OR TO PURSUE A MEDIA CAREER.

Q6 What would encourage you to seek promotion to senior management, including to headteacher level?

WAGE INCREASE, ABILITY TO DO THE ROLE WITHOUT CONSTRAINTS OF TIME (IE COVERING CLASSES DUE TO ILLNESSES ETC), OPPORTUNITIES TO TAKE INITIATIVES FORWARD

What would discourage you from seeking promotion?

HOW THIS WOULD AFFECT RELATIONSHIPS WITH COLLEAGUES (FRIENDS)
MORE RESPONSIBILITIES - AFFECTING HOME LIFE - WORK/ LIFE BALANCE
LESS CONTACT WITH THE CHILDREN

Q7 What do you think are the main challenges, if any, in recruiting or retaining teachers (and other staff) at your school? (please feel free to provide details of practical experiences)

TEACHERS WANT PERMANENT POSITIONS - JOB SECURITY AFFECTS ABILITY TO APPLY FOR MORTGAGE, ETC

SOME TEACHERS ARE BORED/ FRUSTRATED
CAN BE DEMOTIVATING - TOLD TO HAVE PLANNING READY FOR MONITORING, AND SPENDING TIME PREPARING LESSONS, BUT LAST MINUTE CHANGES MEANS YOU WON'T HAVE A CA FOR CERTAIN PLANNED TASKS, OR YOU NO LONGER HAVE ACCESS TO TECHNOLOGY (LAPTOPS, IPADS ETC)

Q8 Which particular subject specialisms/support roles face the greatest challenges with recruitment or retention?

SUPPLY TEACHERS TO COVER ILLNESS/ TIME OUT OF CLASS FOR SENIOR TEACHERS/ TIME TO COVER FOR CPD OPPRTUNITIES
CLASSROOM ASSISTANTS - LONG TERM SICKNESS IS NOT COVERED

Q9 Do you have any suggestions for how challenges with recruitment and retention might be addressed?
A BANK OF PERMANENT SUPPLY TEACHERS THAT ARE ABLE TO COVER WHERE/ WHEN NECESSARY (EG FOR THE CLUSTER, LIKE THE OLD PERIPATETIC STAFF)

OFFERING MORE FLEXIBILITY OF WORKING HOURS

Q10 Have any measures been put in place as a result of changes to staffing numbers in recent years at your school (examples include multi-school headship/leadership teams, composite classes, changes in the use/availability of support assistants)?

If so:

- What are these measures?
- How well are they working?
- Are these changes a permanent or a temporary measure (ie is it covering vacancies at present or is it to reflect the number of teacher/other posts has reduced?)

WE HAVE TO USE OUR PUPIL SUPPORT TEACHERS TO COVER PT TIME OUT OF CLASS, AND FOR ILLNESSES. THIS HAS LED TO LACK OF CONTINUITY AND SUPPORT FOR THE PUPILS WHO ARE THE MOST VULNERABLE. ALSO DEMOTIVATING FOR THE TEACHERS INVOLVED.

Q12 How would you describe general morale among staff (very good / quite good / quite low / very low) and what are the key factors that influence it?

I LOVE MY JOB AND VERY LUCKY TO BE WORKING WITH EXCELLENT STAFF PARTNERS, BUT GENERAL MORALE CAN BE UP AND DOWN - STAFF ROOM LUNCH TIME CHATS HELP TO DESTRESS, BUT WE DON’T HAVE MUCH OPPORTUNITY TO BOND WITH EACH OTHER AND BUILD POSITIVE RELATIONSHIPS - ESPECIALLY TEACHERS WITH CLASSROOM ASSISTANTS WHERE THERE IS A STRONG DIVIDE.

Additional comments

HAPPY STAFF = HAPPY CHILDREN = INCREASED ATTAINMENT

ANONYMOUS 7

Q1 What type of teaching role do you have?

Primary school teacher.

Q2 Whereabouts do you work?

Moray

Q4 What are the positives that keep you in the teaching profession?

Working with children and seeing them learn and grow. Working with other supportive professionals.

Q5 Do you consider that you will teach until you retire or do you consider leaving early or for alternative employment? (If you consider leaving, please specify why if it relates to your enjoyment of your role)
I would love to stay in teaching as I love working with the children however I can see how many people choose to leave early or opt for an alternative career option. There is far too much paperwork, to many boxes that need to be ticked when at the end of the day the important part of our jobs is ensuring the children leave school being about to read, write and do number work while also being sociable and caring citizens.

**Q6** What would encourage you to seek promotion to senior management, including to headteacher level? What would discourage you from seeking promotion?

Absolutely not. I feel that I have far too much on as class teacher I can’t possibly see how I could fit more work and stress into my already hectic life when I barely have any time for myself.

**Q7** What do you think are the main challenges, if any, in recruiting or retaining teachers (and other staff) at your school? (please feel free to provide details of practical experiences)

Work load pressure, expectation of delivering amazing fantastic lessons with little or no resources. I have spent in the region of £300-£500 a year on my class just so that I can give the children the education and teaching that we are expected to deliver. It is very difficult to be all singing and all dancing, provide active hands on lessons with little resources. I also think that in some instances inclusion plays a difficult role. I have taught many challenging children over the years with a varied degree of behaviours with little or no support from other adults. I am supposed to teach 20-30 children when I have one or two children who are violent or abusive, who are disruptive and who are effecting the other children from receiving the education they deserve.

**Q8** Which particular subject specialisms/support roles face the greatest challenges with recruitment or retention?

All areas of education.

**Q9** Do you have any suggestions for how challenges with recruitment and retention might be addressed?

Provide less paperwork and more support staff to support teachers. Stop making cuts to additional support needs and stop expecting staff to replace the role of the parent by ensuring the children have brushed their teeth and have exercised. This leaves us little room to actually get through the curriculum.

**Q10** Have any measures been put in place as a result of changes to staffing numbers in recent years at your school (examples include multi-school headship/leadership teams, composite classes, changes in the use/availability of support assistants)?

If so:

- What are these measures?

Cuts in support staff.
• How well are they working?
   Not working well at all.

• Are these changes a permanent or a temporary measure (ie is it covering vacancies at present or is it to reflect the number of teacher/other posts has reduced?)
   Permanent and cuts keep being made.

Q12 How would you describe general morale among staff (very good / quite good / quite low / very low) and what are the key factors that influence it?
   Quite low – staff are exhausted. Lack of support staff and /or pupil support assistants to work alongside children with particular needs is taking its toll on not only staff but pupils.

ANONYMOUS 8

Q1 What type of teaching role do you have
   Primary – Specialist Provision
   Additional Support Needs teacher

Q2 Whereabouts do you work?
   Perth and Kinross Council

Q4 What are the positives that keep you in the teaching profession?
   Passions for education
   Helping children who find education difficult, succeed and thrive
   Job can be fun especially when in contact with pupils

Q5 Do you consider that you will teach until you retire or do you consider leaving early or for alternative employment? (If you consider leaving, please specify why if it relates to your enjoyment of your role)
   I hope to teach until I retire but I have to weigh up family life and work life balance

Q6 What would encourage you to seek promotion to senior management, including to headteacher level? What would discourage you from seeking promotion?
   Nothing would encourage me. The amount of abuse, workload, stress and expectations of managers is way beyond anything I would put myself through

Q7 What do you think are the main challenges, if any, in recruiting or retaining teachers (and other staff) at your school? (please feel free to provide details of practical experiences)
   Workload
   Paperwork
Challenging parents

Lack of support in classrooms with high levels of needs

Q8 Which particular subject specialisms/support roles face the greatest challenges with recruitment or retention?
ALL AREAS

Q9 Do you have any suggestions for how challenges with recruitment and retention might be addressed?
Reduce workload
Empower teachers and schools
Address the pay issues

Q10 Have any measures been put in place as a result of changes to staffing numbers in recent years at your school (examples include multi-school headship/leadership teams, composite classes, changes in the use/availability of support assistants)?
If so:
• What are these measures?
• How well are they working?
• Are these changes a permanent or a temporary measure (ie is it covering vacancies at present or is it to reflect the number of teacher/other posts has reduced?)
Lack of specialist staff leading to a reduced curriculum and exposure to expressive arts.

Q12 How would you describe general morale among staff (very good / quite good / quite low / very low) and what are the key factors that influence it?
General morale will depend very much on school, local authority and experiences of each class teacher. I feel that in general the profession is at a very low level due to pay freezes, workload, levels of support and stress levels.

ANONYMOUS 9
Q1 What type of teaching role do you have? (Primary School

Q2 Whereabouts do you work? Aberdeen City

Q4 What are the positives that keep you in the teaching profession?
Seeing the progress being made by my pupils.
Every day is different.
Helping them with every day health and wellbeing issues and raising their self-esteem.
I like to see the innocence, creativity and sense of right from wrong that children display - they deserve far more credit than they are given. I am always blown away by their passion and sense of doing what is right.

Q5

Do you consider that you will teach until you retire or do you consider leaving early or for alternative employment? (If you consider leaving, please specify why if it relates to your enjoyment of your role)

I am considering leaving this year after ten years of teaching. Here is a quick summary of the reasons in no particular order-

1. I have found the job too demanding and stressful. Some children in my class have severe emotional issues, and therefore every day can be a battle. There is too much pressure surrounding attainment in Literacy and Numeracy- not taking into consideration health and well being. I have developed anxiety type issues around planning, tracking and assessment. Policy and expectations change so often that I struggle to keep up with what is going on.

2. QIO’s come into school and speak negatively about our teaching and our attainment results- this is demoralising and depressing.

3. Cut backs have been appalling and as a result we haven’t had the basic equipment to teach a full curriculum. E.g. 2 glue sticks for 27 children! Imagine the stress of organising a craft lesson with only two glue sticks?!

4. Holidays are so expensive out of term time and so we (including families) are punished financially for taking breaks at this time of year.

5. Leaders are getting younger and younger with little life experience let alone teaching experience. Some DHT and HT haven’t turned 30 yet! One HT in the city has only 4 years teaching experience. Rumour has it that a QIO has just turned 30. Some people are becoming Probationer mentor’s in their 1st year of teaching- this is the blind leading the blind! This kind of management structure does not instil confidence and it demotivates me. With the staffing crisis, there are ‘acting’ HTs, DHTs and ‘helicopter’ management- I don’t think this is efficient. Noone seems to have a grasp on what is going on, who is in charge, who is making decisions and therefore the staff morale drops. This leads to issues with whole school ethos and morale. I cannot speak for other Local Authorities but there seems to be deep rooted problems in Aberdeen City.

6. We have a major health time bomb on our hands with no-one getting to the root of the problems. In my experience, we have several factors at play including - chronic low self-esteem, low resilience and co-dependency issues within families suffering from addiction. We are burying our heads in the sand about sugar addiction and obesity. Technology is taking over with little guidance, and many children are being baby sat by i-pads, tablets and phones. Sexting, and online grooming is more and more common- sometimes as young as Primary 3! Children are lonely as their parents are too busy on Facebook or Candy Crush to even put them to bed, let alone read them a story.
Q6 What would encourage you to seek promotion to senior management, including to headteacher level? What would discourage you from seeking promotion?

My aforementioned point about lack of life experience being taken into consideration. I do not feel as though I am being helped to develop to the best of my ability, I carry out development work, in my own time and unpaid, and yet seem to get little thanks as management are so bogged down in paperwork and policy.

Q7 What do you think are the main challenges, if any, in recruiting or retaining teachers (and other staff) at your school? (please feel free to provide details of practical experiences)

Pay
Stress/workload
Lack of support from parents - they are on the child's side even though you are trying to help them by raising a concern. Many parents aren't parenting and are letting their children down.
Uncertainty with curriculum changes and planning/assessment policy changes.
Some people do not want to take attitude/cheek from children and this happens a lot in the job. A lot of people wouldn’t have the patience.

Q8 Which particular subject specialisms/support roles face the greatest challenges with recruitment or retention?

In Primary Schools, I have seen a big cut back in all specialist teachers - they are like gold dust. This is so sad as they make a world of difference! Please bring back more specialists.

Q9 Do you have any suggestions for how challenges with recruitment and retention might be addressed?

Stop changing, or threatening to change, assessments etc. Just as one idea is introduced it is whipped away and replaced by something else. Look at staffing structures. There seems to be 'too many chiefs and not enough Indians'. Staff on the ground know the problems and challenges they face but they are being told by QIOs what to focus on. The two do not marry up and classroom teachers are left feeling frazzled and frustrated.

Q10 Have any measures been put in place as a result of changes to staffing numbers in recent years at your school (examples include multi-school headship/leadership teams, composite classes, changes in the use/availability of support assistants)?

If so:
• What are these measures?
• How well are they working?
• Are these changes a permanent or a temporary measure (ie is it covering vacancies at present or is it to reflect the number of teacher/other posts has reduced?)
We have had an acting DHT and HT for over 2 years. We have had to amalgamate classes, increase class sizes, lose specialist teachers to cover classes, have no SMT support as they have to teach etc. It is a terrible situation.

**Q11** Are there any subject choices or other opportunities that are not available to pupils as a result of staff shortages that you consider would be valuable? (please specify)

I worked in the Independent sector for several years and saw the difference that specialist teachers make e.g. P.E and Music. I would try to introduce more specialists back into Primary Schools. We also need the proper equipment to teach these subjects. This situation has got worse with recent cutbacks.

**Q12** How would you describe general morale among staff (very good / quite good / quite low / very low) and what are the key factors that influence it?

Very low - cutbacks, lack of discipline, negative feedback from above, workload, stress, overall poor behaviour of children due to poor diet/gaming/family issues.

**Additional comments**

Apologies for the rushed comments- I only got this last night! I do not want to come across as a trouble maker. I am just very passionate about helping our young people to be

**ANONYMOUS 10**

**Q1** What type of teaching role do you have?

Currently Primary supply.
Previously full time at Primary school, left to work abroad

**Q4** What are the positives that keep you in the teaching profession?

Knowing that no matter how difficult a child maybe that one child's life can be improved either by someone caring enough about them for them to feel they matter and feel valued and through gaining an education that allows them to get out of difficult home circumstances.

To see children develop a sense of self and their role in society within their peer group and wishing the school community.

Satisfaction of working in a supportive team, and work life is never boring as a teacher as no two days are ever the same and constantly learning on the job.

**Q5** Do you consider that you will teach until you retire or do you consider leaving early or for alternative employment? (If you consider leaving, please specify why if it relates to your enjoyment of your role)

Although I enjoy teaching, and intend to stay in the profession as an experienced teacher I have previously felt that experience is not valued or recognised especially via renumeration. It seems although cheap and inexperienced is preferred. Often the inexperienced think they have invented something new and dismiss tried and tested methods, yet the "new approach" is just a rehash of a previous method with a new name. E.g cross
Curriculum learning/ interdisciplinary learning / creative curriculum/ child led learning all have common elements used to engage children. It seems like there is a lot of money and time wasted on new initiatives instead of refining and honing current methods. As far as staffing goes lack of pay for supply teachers that recognises their experience is a huge issue for getting teachers back into the profession- if someone can "dip their toe " back into education and find a school they like they could be be persuaded to return to teaching. A large number of teachers have left the UK to teach abroad- especially in the Middle East. Renumeration, constant sunshine, work load, resources and support with behaviour are all perceived to be better. ( The reality is it depends on the school but people move for the perception)

Q6 What would encourage you to seek promotion to senior management, including to headteacher level? What would discourage you from seeking promotion?

I would go for a promoted position now I have work e in several schools and feel I have the experience. What would prevent me is lack of power to implement school level changes, an imbalance of head teacher to pupil and parental power.

Q7 What do you think are the main challenges, if any, in recruiting or retaining teachers (and other staff) at your school? (please feel free to provide details of practical experiences)

Lack of recognition of the teachers right to work in an non violent, safe environment.- Children who's behaviour is out of control ruling the classroom to the detriment of the children who want to learn and the teacher's health. The teacher then being bullied and blamed by SMT within the school instead of being supported in dealing with the child with severe behaviour issues. I have along with 3 teachers being reduced to being signed off with stress and long term depression as a result of pupils not having consistent boundaries and the headteacher need not to exclude a child due to pressure from senior management in the area. I left to work abroad, the two teachers have quit teaching and let their GTC registration lapse and the 3rd teacher is still at the same school, is frequently ill both physically and mentally.

Pay supply teachers according to their experience form day 1, stop treating them as second class teachers.

Look at introducing zero tolerance to any form of violence (verbal and physical) for all staff, children and parents. Create a big campaign to introduce it across the whole of Scotland just before the new academic year- TV ads to show examples of good parenting, and where to get help if parents need it.

All parents to sign a contract when their child starts school to say they agree to the zero tolerance and they understand they will be asked to support the school and take full responsibility for their child's behaviour. Parents who's children violate this will be asked to remove their child/ accompany their child during the school day/attend parenting classes/ family therapy sessions etc at the Head teacher's discretion. Failure to attend constitutes preventing their child attending school and the necessary legal action is taken.
Support parents with parenting workshops on how to set and maintain boundaries, how to interact with their child (bedtime stories, going to the park, activities in the local areas), how to access other services such as social work, health visitors, etc.

Look at teachers health issues- is there a pattern? Is retention or health issues worse Specific authorities - why? What are the authorities that retain teachers doing differently that makes teachers want to stay?

Make the pay scale go up further, maybe start where it is currently but have a bigger range.

Look at getting teacher’s working abroad to come back to teach in Scotland- Irish teachers are granted up to 5 years working abroad and their job is kept open for them... this might allow teachers to gain valuable experience in other education systems, which could be brought back to benefit Scottish schools if they could return to their old post in Scotland. - many people only want the experience of working away for 2-4 years before coming home.

Look at recruiting English, Irish, Welsh and New Zealand teachers- give priority for council houses/ supplemented accommodation such as university halls type accommodation- great for NQT!

Give every teacher a classroom assistant to help deal with the children with ASN.

Q12 How would you describe general morale among staff (very good / quite good / quite low / very low) and what are the key factors that influence it?

Low in general. - Overall lack of respect of the teaching profession. Teachers being expected to be all things to all people- social worker, nurse, police etc. Lack of knowledge and confidence compared to specialist staff e.g Music, PE, Drama, Dance, The view the child is always right and the teacher is always wrong in the media.

ANONYMOUS 11

Q1 What type of teaching role do you have?
Primary teacher

Q2 Whereabouts do you work?
North Ayrshire Council

Q4 What are the positives that keep you in the teaching profession?
Knowing that I am having a positive impact on developing our young learners/ job security and salary/ enjoyment within my role.

Q5 Do you consider that you will teach until you retire or do you consider leaving early or for alternative employment? (If you consider leaving, please specify why if it relates to your enjoyment of your role)
I consider that I will teach until I retire.
Q6 What would encourage you to seek promotion to senior management, including to headteacher level? What would discourage you from seeking promotion?

Encourage: colleagues/ making a bigger difference to learning/ increased salary

Discourage: Increase in pressures, responsibilities and demands against the perceived benefits or advantages. Staff perceptions of myself as a leader, particularly if staff morale is low.

Q7 What do you think are the main challenges, if any, in recruiting or retaining teachers (and other staff) at your school? (please feel free to provide details of practical experiences)

I think a big challenge in recruiting teachers is promoting the profession to ensure that individuals see it as worthwhile. Quite often teaching is looked down upon with various views on ‘being in the job for holidays’ or ‘learning being child minding’. I also think that newly qualified teachers shouldn’t have to meet so many expectations and requirements to receive a permanent position. As I am aware of probationers, having completed the required GTCS profiles (including observations) having to be observed once again in the interview process for a position. In some cases, individuals are even required to go to other establishments to teach other classes of children, which they have never met before, having no prior knowledge of the children or indeed their needs and are observed in these circumstances for a full time job, which in my view is completely unnecessary and unfair. Many people as a result move authority, country or even profession.

I believe workload and stress are huge factors in both recruiting and retaining teachers. Through university some students are required to complete tedious tasks, micro-planning individual lessons on a daily and weekly basis with individual lesson plans being at times 3 a 4 pages long. Similarly, there appears to be no appreciation for current staff despite the long, hard hours that they work outwith the working time agreement in order to meet deadlines and requirements within their posts, before even considering the fundamentals of planning and implementing teaching and learning experiences. Teachers are facing ever-increasing pressures from senior management, parents and guardians and even some challenging children themselves. From my own experience, colleagues who have left the profession because of stress have related their leave to one of these 3 causes. Due to the current crisis in education, many additional support needs teachers are drafted away from their current role in supporting small groups or individuals in learning to teach whole classes, sometimes even in other schools. This is extremely detrimental as the children are firstly not receiving the additional support that they need and secondly the teachers themselves are then adopting a role that they may not be contracted for or indeed envisioned themselves doing. Lastly, I think that staffs, despite having all the expectations placed upon them, receive very little support in the way of delivering the curriculum. From working in a range of schools the majority of practitioners do not believe they are supported in delivering a curriculum for excellence, with many claiming that it simply doesn’t work. First hand I have found it extremely difficult to balance teaching two additional languages
(French and Spanish), science, two hours of quality P.E., religious and moral education, health and well-being, technologies, art, music, drama amongst daily miles or ‘fit-fifteens’, rights respecting schools initiatives/assemblies and other whole school events, ‘days’ or themes before even considering the essentials such as the children’s first language (reading, writing, spelling, grammar, handwriting) and maths (number processes, shape, measure, data handling, algebraic thinking, rounding & estimating, place value, time, decimals, fractions, angles). I believe there is too much going on for 25 hours a week with 30+ children, that the curriculum is too cluttered and that schools need to be seen to be doing all of these things that quite often the basic aspects of teaching and learning are lost.

Q8 Which particular subject specialisms/support roles face the greatest challenges with recruitment or retention?

In my experience I haven’t found a specific area with the greatest loss.

Q9 Do you have any suggestions for how challenges with recruitment and retention might be addressed?

Raising the profile and respect of the profession, possibly an increase to teacher’s salaries to encourage more people first of all into the profession but also to reward those who work tirelessly to deliver high quality teaching and learning experiences to our young people.

Reducing workloads as most individuals, in order to do their job acceptably, have to work outwith and beyond the working time agreement up to 60 hour weeks, while being paid less than other professions with lower working time agreements.

Ensuring that staff are appropriately prepared and skilled to deliver the curriculum or redesigning the curriculum to ensure it is more structured without the addition of all the ‘extra’ things schools need to be seen to be doing.

Q10 Have any measures been put in place as a result of changes to staffing numbers in recent years at your school (examples include multi-school headship/leadership teams, composite classes, changes in the use/availability of support assistants)?

If so:

- What are these measures?
- How well are they working?
- Are these changes a permanent or a temporary measure (ie is it covering vacancies at present or is it to reflect the number of teacher/other posts has reduced?)

There are currently 5 members of temporary staff at my establishment. I and several of my colleagues do not receive classroom assistant support at all despite having our additional support needs teacher taken from us to ‘fill’ a position which has been vacant due to a stress related absence. Quite often we lose our time out of class because there is no one to cover our absence from the room at that time. In short the measures that have been taken are
temporary but are clearly not working and have to be changed for the benefit of the learners.

Q11 Are there any subject choices or other opportunities that are not available to pupils as a result of staff shortages that you consider would be valuable? (please specify)

Not applicable (primary)

Q12 How would you describe general morale among staff (very good / quite good / quite low / very low) and what are the key factors that influence it?

I believe that staff morale is currently very low at my current establishment as staff feel overworked, stretched to breaking point and ultimately unimportant in the education system and process. I believe the perception of the profession is one influence as is the increasing requirements and demands. Another factor is the way that staff are treated from senior management. I have experienced staff from a range of schools being belittled, humiliated and bullied from leaders within their own and other establishments. Two of these professionals have since left the profession as a result of the way they were treated from senior managers.

ANONYMOUS 12

Q1 What type of teaching role do you have?
Primary

Q2 Whereabouts do you work?
East Ayrshire

Q4 What are the positives that keep you in the teaching profession?
The children I work with.

Q5 Do you consider that you will teach until you retire or do you consider leaving early or for alternative employment? (If you consider leaving, please specify why if it relates to your enjoyment of your role)

When I first entered teaching I would have said until retirement. However more and more pressure and demands are placed upon teachers with resources and equipment being more limited!

I have found myself purchasing different resources and equipment in order to teach lessons for the pupils in my class as budgets are being continually stretched and cut moreover more expectations are placed on teachers.

Q6 What would encourage you to seek promotion to senior management, including to headteacher level? What would discourage you from seeking promotion?

To make a positive difference to the lives of the pupils I work with and bring about positive changes. Share my knowledge and experiences with colleagues including specialisms in ASN.

Q8 Which particular subject specialisms/support roles face the greatest challenges with recruitment or retention?
Uncertain

Q9 Do you have any suggestions for how challenges with recruitment and retention might be addressed?
More permanent contracts
Increase in pay
Reduce bureaucracy
Reduce workload!!!!!!

Q10 Have any measures been put in place as a result of changes to staffing numbers in recent years at your school (examples include multi-school headship/leadership teams, composite classes, changes in the use/availability of support assistants)?
If so:
• What are these measures?
• How well are they working?
• Are these changes a permanent or a temporary measure (ie is it covering vacancies at present or is it to reflect the number of teacher/other posts has reduced)?

Shared headship (nursery head became nursery and primary head)
This change happened giving the HT very little support when she was open about having no experience in running a primary.

Q11 Are there any subject choices or other opportunities that are not available to pupils as a result of staff shortages that you consider would be valuable? (please specify)
A specialist language teacher
Funds to access staff from the secondary school for specialist teaching for a block.

Q12 How would you describe general morale among staff (very good / quite good / quite low / very low) and what are the key factors that influence it?
Quite low due to workload and pressures

ANONYMOUS 13

Q1 What type of teaching role do you have?
primary class teacher (job-share)

Q2 Whereabouts do you work?
South Lanarkshire

Q4 What are the positives that keep you in the teaching profession?
• I'm qualified and feel I have a lot of skills and expertise to offer
• enjoy working with children
• mentally stimulated
• no 'clock-watching' (I am never bored!)
• terms and conditions of employment
• sense of job stability
• suits raising my family (eg, off work when my own children are off school)
• element of flexibility (attend appointments after 3pm/some work can be done from home, eg, reports, planning, marking, if necessary)

**Q5**  Do you consider that you will teach until you retire or do you consider leaving early or for alternative employment? (If you consider leaving, please specify why if it relates to your enjoyment of your role)

I am open-minded about this depending on the on-going demands and stresses of the job. Ideally I would love to continue teaching until retirement as it is my passion. Being realistic, I am unsure if it would be good for my health.

When I observe other people at their place of work it always appears that they have a much easier time of it than teachers do!

**Q6**  What would encourage you to seek promotion to senior management, including to headteacher level? What would discourage you from seeking promotion?

I am not interested in seeking promotion; being a manager does not appeal to me because it appears that the cons outweigh the pros. My preference is to work directly with the children (hence training as a teacher in the first place). I would be discouraged from seeking promotion because:

managing is a different sort of job/role (not what I trained in)

less contact with children

colossal responsibility, often unrecognised

being in the 'firing line'

having to lead staff through constant change (for change's sake)

feeling like the journey to improvement never ends

losing touch with the demands practising teachers face

**Q7**  What do you think are the main challenges, if any, in recruiting or retaining teachers (and other staff) at your school? (please feel free to provide details of practical experiences)

My local council's system of annual mass recruitment seems to be the main stumbling block. There would seem to be no shortage of teachers who would be keen to work in our school, based on the number of applicants applying for jobs. However, many teachers are 'stuck' in temporary permanent supply/cluster roles. Perhaps head teachers should have more direct involvement in the selection of staff for their own schools?

It has been shameful to witness some of my (older) very skilled, experienced and committed colleagues leave the teaching profession earlier than they
would have ideally liked. My perception of this is that they felt undervalued, out-of-date (despite fulfilling their professional learning) and worn out by constant demands that bore little relation to the daily job of class teaching. Being half way through my career, I can identify with some of these feelings already!

Q8 Which particular subject specialisms/support roles face the greatest challenges with recruitment or retention?

I am highly concerned by the cuts of learning support teaching provision. In this day and age, it is outrageous to me that children with specific learning difficulties are waiting months to be assessed by a qualified specialist. In my opinion, it is also a cop out for the responsibility to meet those specific needs to be foisted mainly on the class teacher as we are working with large groups of children and have limited time available to us, despite our best intentions and desire to make a meaningful impact.

Opportunities for class teachers to consult directly and regularly with specialist staff, eg, educational psychologist Q&A sessions, would be very useful. Unfortunately there doesn't seem to be enough of them employed despite extensive numbers of concerning cases to deal with.

Q9 Do you have any suggestions for how challenges with recruitment and retention might be addressed?

It is interesting to me that recent tv advertising campaign's main pull to "get in to teaching" is a bursary to train. The danger therein is attracting people who are not necessarily passionate about working with youngsters in the first instance. The fact that other important, long-term 'selling points', are not used to entice wannabe teachers speaks volumes!

I would suggest that majority of poor souls who are recruited/on supply to cover staff absence would welcome a permanent contract in a school, where they can become an established member of the staff team, be known to children and parents, work confidently within a school's policy and feel settled. I suggest that there should be a limit on how long someone is expected to work in cluster/supply positions, and that they should have the option to become a regular class teacher in a specific school after the limit, without the need of another interview.

I suggest job-sharers also be offered the opportunity to be slotted in to vacancies that arise in their schools. I would suggest that a teacher who is already an employee of SLC, who is already established as a member of the school team doing a great job, would be an obvious choice for a smooth transition. (Many job-sharers opt for job-sharing to suit temporary circumstances such as raising a family/caring for a dependent relative and would welcome further contracted working days when those circumstances change.)

Q10 Have any measures been put in place as a result of changes to staffing numbers in recent years at your school (examples include multi-school headship/leadership teams, composite classes, changes in the use/availability of support assistants)?

If so:
• What are these measures?
• How well are they working?
• Are these changes a permanent or a temporary measure (ie is it covering vacancies at present or is it to reflect the number of teacher/other posts has reduced?)

We have more composite classes as well as very full classes nowadays. We make them work as well as they can. Undeniably, to have smaller class sizes (if more staff were employed), there would be more scope for many aspects of teaching and learning to be enhanced. I wish the government would make a move in the direction of reducing class sizes.

Q11 Are there any subject choices or other opportunities that are not available to pupils as a result of staff shortages that you consider would be valuable? (please specify)

My children attend a secondary school in the same learning community in which I teach. There is no drama teacher despite the school having a drama studio facility. I think this is poor show – pardon the pun - as drama can be a really useful tool for teenagers to 'come out their shell' and explore different roles/expressions/team building etc.

Q12 How would you describe general morale among staff (very good / quite good / quite low / very low) and what are the key factors that influence it?

My perception of staff morale is that it is quite low. Despite our best efforts and 'knocking our pans out', it seems like there is an ethos of "not good enough". Experts in this and that pass on new ideas and initiatives, some of which are good, and therein implies an emphasis on "out with the old" – no matter how effective it has been – and onto the new/current/buzz words/change.

For me personally, as a professional who works many extra hours in order to deliver a good service, I am pained that even when we routinely devote extra hours and effort to our job, there is always vast amounts we could still do. It's hard to stop but never 'finish', and I struggle to resign myself to always feeling like there's more to be done.

The curriculum is jam packed! Quite literally, there are not enough hours in the day.

What also perplexes me, is the expensive 'passing the buck' to class teachers, eg, regarding learning support as I mentioned above, assessment etc. Whole staff teams of teachers meeting with colleagues from each other's schools on an in-service day to deliberate upon and make decisions about assessment and moderation seems like a very expensive way of doing things. Surely the people responsible for curriculum for excellence should have had a handle on this by now.

Additional comments

If you have any other comments please include them below:
Due to the extremely short period of notice given to take part in this questionnaire, I have not had a lot of time to fully think through my responses. In future, it would be more useful to give an appropriately timed deadline.

Although I would not feel comfortable to participate in a committee meeting scenario, I am happy to be contacted in future via email should there be a need for further explanation/clarification. I hope my honest answers have been helpful, if anyone has read this far!

**ANONYMOUS 14**

**Q1** What type of teaching role do you have

I am a full time class teacher in a primary school in East Ayrshire. I have a permanent contract with the local authority I work in however no stability in being permanent to a school. This is my third year teaching. Last academic year I was across three different schools. For half of the year I worked two days in one school with a job share class and three days doing Non Class Contact Time (NCCT). This year I have remained in one of those schools and have a class for the full year. I do not know if I will remain here next year or be moved elsewhere in the authority.

**Q4** What are the positives that keep you in the teaching profession?

Working with children and young people. Having some autonomy over my working day. The flexibility of some parts of the curriculum. Flexibility to do my 'unpaid' work at the weekend/in the evenings/over the holidays as I choose (by this I mean the hours required to do the job to GTCD standards that are over and above the myth that is the 35 hour working week).

**Q5** Do you consider that you will teach until you retire or do you consider leaving early or for alternative employment? (If you consider leaving, please specify why if it relates to your enjoyment of your role)

Absolutely not! I plan on leaving teaching and working for myself on a self employed basis within the next three years before I am 30.

The reason for this is because of the complete lack of work/life balance, the amount of unpaid hours I work in a week, working on my days off (weekend) and for a large portion of my holidays, the stress and impact on my mental well-being, the strain that this career is putting on my personal relationships and the amount of money I spend out of my own pocket on basic resources for my children. I have no stability in a school or to a stage. I have a classroom full of resources, equipment and furniture that I have bought yet it could be useless next year if I am moved stage or moved school. I might not even have a classroom to put it all in next year if I am told I am doing NCCT again or being used as a support teacher.

**Q6** What would encourage you to seek promotion to senior management, including to headteacher level? What would discourage you from seeking promotion?

Nothing would encourage me to promote to SMT. I have no desire for promotion or to work as a senior manager of people. I got into teaching
because I have a passion for working with children and for being a teacher in a class.

Q7 What do you think are the main challenges, if any, in recruiting or retaining teachers (and other staff) at your school? (please feel free to provide details of practical experiences)

-Funding.
-Pay. No real pay increase. Pay not reflecting the true hours worked. Supply rate is an absolute joke also.
-Morale amongst current teachers being rock bottom.
-Lack of stability to a school and to a stage where teachers can build up a bank of resources to reuse (cutting down future planning. Half the problem is teachers are reinventing the wheel on a lesson by lesson basis).
-Overcoming the negative aspects of the job... Eg
- The challenges of the job- eg work life balance, stress has a major impact on retention and recruitment of teachers.
- The feeling of jumping through hoops and putting on an all singing, all dancing showcase otherwise you aren’t doing your job properly.
-Lack of discipline and basic manners from children in general before they’ve even step foot in a classroom.
-Not being supported by management.
-Teachers being the ‘fall guy’ for all of societies ills and problems.
-Blame from parents. Not being supported by parents.

Q8 Which particular subject specialisms/support roles face the greatest challenges with recruitment or retention?

class teacher jobs? Supply!

Q9 Do you have any suggestions for how challenges with recruitment and retention might be addressed?

Higher pay to reflect the hours put in by teachers working 60-80 hour weeks instead of the fallacy of a 35 hour week. These hours currently are unpaid or if taken as a 'salary for a job' are low/underpaid.

Go back to teachers being made permanent to schools and encourage head teachers and SMT to keep teachers at stages and year groups they feel comfortable with/want to teach as they have experience/have resources etc for instead of 'keepings things fresh' and 'keeping people on their toes'. Give class teachers more say in where/which stages they teach unless they want a change.

Schemes of work that can be picked up and taught like the old 5-14. This would cut down planning and resourcing which takes a long time and results
in teachers reinventing lessons, spending time resourcing and making things which increases workload and decreases work/life balance.

Less government and authority testing/assessing and tracking of pupils and of teachers. This takes away from teaching and learning. Teachers will always assess and track attainment, we don't need or want a prescriptive set of tests coming from above that we have to 'fit in', mark and track alongside everything else.

Moderation activities of teachers from local authorities is one of the biggest waste of time activities that takes hours of planning, organising, carrying out, writing up paperwork, photocopying evidence, meeting with other colleagues with absolutely no benefit to the children.

Q10 Have any measures been put in place as a result of changes to staffing numbers in recent years at your school (examples include multi-school headship/leadership teams, composite classes, changes in the use/availability of support assistants)?

If so:
What are these measures?

How well are they working?

Are these changes a permanent or a temporary measure (ie is it covering vacancies at present or is it to reflect the number of teacher/other posts has reduced?)

Shortage of teaching staff, including supply. SMT have had to cover classes which means they are not available when you need them.

Q12 How would you describe general morale among staff (very good / quite good / quite low / very low) and what are the key factors that influence it?

Very low.

Factors influencing it- work life balance and working hours. Knowing you are going to be taking lots of work home at night or at the weekend or on holidays. Workload in general- the feeling that you are never on top of anything. Times in the year that are even more workload heavy eg writing ILPs and Reports, moderation activities. Having observed lessons. Feeling pressure to take part in extra activities (as per GTCS standard commitment to life of the school !!!! Eg school disco, after school clubs, residential trips). Parents nights. Collegiate nights and staff meetings. Not being supported by SMT. Extra initiatives and the extra work that goes alongside that- eg rights respecting schools, dyslexia friendly awards, eco awards. Curriculum development and improvement planning. Book scrutinies and learning walks. Being under resourced eg no whiteboard pens, no jotters, no lined paper. Buying basic resources for your class with your own money. Never having time for yourself, your own family or your own life.
ANONYMOUS 15
Hello, I am a recently retired primary teacher with friends and family still teaching. I retired early, despite joining the ‘winding down’ scheme, as the burden of ‘paperwork’ was just too much, taking too long to do and not leaving me time to prepare properly for the actual job of teaching which was what I enjoyed and had considerable skills and experience. My son is a Curriculum Leader, in his thirties with a young family. For him teaching is a vocation and he gives his all. He loves his job but is tired at the end of each week, exhausted at the end of each term. I can't see how he can possibly continue till he's 67, another 30 years!
Here are my top tips!
1. Cut down on emails. They are very easy to send but take forever to go through. Lots are not necessary. Head Teacher friends complain that they can't get out of their offices as they have so many to dredge through. (Then they forward half of them to staff!!!)
2. Don't add on a new initiative without taking something else away.
4. Share good practice. Give teachers time to work with each other.
5. Take the budget headache from Head Teachers and let them manage the school and be a presence in the school.
6. Support teachers under stress or with illness. The current regime is very damaging.

ANONYMOUS 16
Q1 What type of teaching role do you have
Primary

Q4 What are the positives that keep you in the teaching profession?
Definitely not a boring job – every day is different
Holidays – as I have a school age child
The kids are fantastic

Q5 Do you consider that you will teach until you retire or do you consider leaving early or for alternative employment? (If you consider leaving, please specify why if it relates to your enjoyment of your role)
Teaching till 67 is ridiculous due to the horrendous stress and workload.
I would hope to find alternative employment.

Q6 What would encourage you to seek promotion to senior management, including to headteacher level? What would discourage you from seeking promotion?
Nothing. Ever. Would encourage me to move into senior management.
Even more monumental workload.

Q7 What do you think are the main challenges, if any, in recruiting or retaining teachers (and other staff) at your school? (please feel free to provide details of practical experiences)
Q8 Which particular subject specialisms/support roles face the greatest challenges with recruitment or retention?
Lack of supply staff means SMT are in class, classes double up, RCT is not always available. Feel guilty for staying off as you know your illness is an inconvenience. More stress and more absences. It’s a vicious cycle.
ASN
Art
PE
Music

Q9 Do you have any suggestions for how challenges with recruitment and retention might be addressed?
Better pay
Allow teachers to teach and stop constantly moving the goal posts
Better pension
Reduce the workload

Q10 Have any measures been put in place as a result of changes to staffing numbers in recent years at your school (examples include multi-school headship/leadership teams, composite classes, changes in the use/availability of support assistants)?
If so:
- What are these measures?
- How well are they working?
- Are these changes a permanent or a temporary measure (ie is it covering vacancies at present or is it to reflect the number of teacher/other posts has reduced?)
Members of SMT in class fulltime – increasing workload for rest of management team and teaching staff

Q11 Are there any subject choices or other opportunities that are not available to pupils as a result of staff shortages that you consider would be valuable? (please specify)

Q12 How would you describe general morale among staff (very good / quite good / quite low / very low) and what are the key factors that influence it?
Quite low
Main factors influencing it would be
Workload
Constant new initiatives
Paperwork and non-teaching work
Many hours of unpaid work every single week
Having to justify everything you do
Professional judgement not considered good enough

**Additional comments**

If you have any other comments please include them below:

**ANONYMOUS 17**

**Q1** What type of teaching role do you have

Primary class teachers.

**Q4** What are the positives that keep you in the teaching profession?

Seeing children flourish.
Support of colleagues.

**Q5** Do you consider that you will teach until you retire or do you consider leaving early or for alternative employment? (If you consider leaving, please specify why if it relates to your enjoyment of your role)

Until we retire.

**Q6** What would encourage you to seek promotion to senior management, including to headteacher level? What would discourage you from seeking promotion?

To make a positive change within education.
Unrealistic workload would discourage staff.

**Q7** What do you think are the main challenges, if any, in recruiting or retaining teachers (and other staff) at your school? (please feel free to provide details of practical experiences)

Lack of trained teachers so schools are finding it difficult to fill posts.

**Q8** Which particular subject specialisms/support roles face the greatest challenges with recruitment or retention?

Lack of finance.

Demands on staff to produce planning and paperwork in general.

**Q9** Do you have any suggestions for how challenges with recruitment and retention might be addressed?

Better pay grades particularly for support staff.

**Q10** Have any measures been put in place as a result of changes to staffing numbers in recent years at your school (examples include multi-school headship/leadership teams, composite classes, changes in the use/availability of support assistants)?
If so:

- What are these measures?
- How well are they working?
- Are these changes a permanent or a temporary measure (i.e., is it covering vacancies at present or is it to reflect the number of teacher/other posts has reduced?)
- Multi school headship (2 primaries and 1 nursery).
- Unrealistic expectations from authority.

Q11 Are there any subject choices or other opportunities that are not available to pupils as a result of staff shortages that you consider would be valuable? (please specify)

Q12 How would you describe general morale among staff (very good / quite good / quite low / very low) and what are the key factors that influence it?

Pressures to raise attainment but emotional, social and behavioural needs of children are greater than ever but these factors do not seem to be taken into consideration when official data is produced.

Additional comments

If you have any other comments please include them below:

ANONYMOUS 18

Q1 What type of teaching role do you have

Primary School Teacher

Q4 What are the positives that keep you in the teaching profession?

Working with children.

Reward of seeing improvement in the children within my class.

I feel confident within my role.

Q5 Do you consider that you will teach until you retire or do you consider leaving early or for alternative employment? (If you consider leaving, please specify why if it relates to your enjoyment of your role)

Unknown. Would like to move in to guidance/ nurture roles rather than class teacher.

Q6 What would encourage you to seek promotion to senior management, including to headteacher level? What would discourage you from seeking promotion?

Nothing. The workload, stress and lack of interaction with the children within the school.

Q7 What do you think are the main challenges, if any, in recruiting or retaining teachers (and other staff) at your school? (please feel free to provide details of practical experiences)

Lack of support from management.
Low amount of PSA support.
Inclusion of children that have additional needs that are not being supported.

**Q8** Which particular subject specialisms/support roles face the greatest challenges with recruitment or retention?
Unknown.

**Q9** Do you have any suggestions for how challenges with recruitment and retention might be addressed?
Mentorship roles, especially for NQTs.
Pay incentives.

**Q10** Have any measures been put in place as a result of changes to staffing numbers in recent years at your school (examples include multi-school headship/leadership teams, composite classes, changes in the use/availability of support assistants)?
If so:
- What are these measures?
- How well are they working?
- Are these changes a permanent or a temporary measure (ie is it covering vacancies at present or is it to reflect the number of teacher/other posts has reduced?)
Unknown

**Q11** Are there any subject choices or other opportunities that are not available to pupils as a result of staff shortages that you consider would be valuable? (please specify)
Unknown

**Q12** How would you describe general morale among staff (very good / quite good / quite low / very low) and what are the key factors that influence it?
Quite low.
Poor management.
Lots of changes within the curriculum to make you feel like you are constantly needing to learn something new.

ANONYMOUS 19

**Q1** What type of teaching role do you have

_P4/5 class teacher_

**Q4** What are the positives that keep you in the teaching profession?
Job satisfaction – when the children learn something new or are proud of something that they have achieved.
The freedom to make exciting materials that stimulate and engage the children.

The opportunities to be creative.

Learning new skills such as French and Coding – every day is a school day, even for teachers!

Supportive colleagues!

**Q5** Do you consider that you will teach until you retire or do you consider leaving early or for alternative employment? (If you consider leaving, please specify why if it relates to your enjoyment of your role)

I always thought I would teach until I retired, however at times I feel that my work life balance is out. I will continue to teach until it gets too much.

**Q6** What would encourage you to seek promotion to senior management, including to headteacher level? What would discourage you from seeking promotion?

I would not apply for a promoted post as I enjoy teaching too much. The paper work, and dealing with unhappy parents would also discourage me from applying for a promoted post.

**Q7** What do you think are the main challenges, if any, in recruiting or retaining teachers (and other staff) at your school? (please feel free to provide details of practical experiences)

- Paper work
- Constant changes to the curriculum
- Additional roles and remits – not directly linked to your classroom teaching
- The challenging behaviour of some children leading to stress, anxiety and poor mental health/quality of life
- Hours of work done in own time at home and after school – poor work/life balance – I generally work from 8:15am until 5:30pm at school and then I spend time at home planning, assessing, making materials and marking.

**Q11** Are there any subject choices or other opportunities that are not available to pupils as a result of staff shortages that you consider would be valuable? (please specify)

Our principal teacher is covering a middle stages class one day a week as there are no supply teachers. As she is class committed this pulls her away from support that she was providing to groups and individuals.

Our nurture class has also had to stop as the nurture teacher is covering an infant class as the teacher is off for the term.

**Q12** How would you describe general morale among staff (very good / quite good / quite low / very low) and what are the key factors that influence it?

I am lucky to work with a staff that have strong bonds and support each other. We have a good sense of humour and that can really help us to get through hard times. We notice when colleagues are feeling low and support them.
We also know the children well and that can help as we don’t feel that we are in it on our own.

There are times when paper work, changes to the curriculum and the challenging behaviour of children can really get us down.

ANONYMOUS 20

Q1 What type of teaching role do you have? (please specify if you are working at primary or secondary school or other, if you are a supply teacher, and any subject specialisms or other roles)

Primary Teacher – 35 years – 8 full time, 10 supply, 17 job share.

Q4 What are the positives that keep you in the teaching profession?

The actual ‘teaching’ and the very supportive colleagues with whom I work. The days when I know I have engaged successfully with my class and they have been excited by what we have been learning make it worthwhile.

Knowing you have made a difference in the life of a child is hugely rewarding. For some with a chaotic home life, school can be a safe place for them

Q5 Do you consider that you will teach until you retire or do you consider leaving early or for alternative employment? (If you consider leaving, please specify why if it relates to your enjoyment of your role)

I am 55 so nearing the end of my teaching career. I certainly won’t teach past 60 and now feeling I will leave sooner rather than later. No matter how much time I spend planning and preparing it never seems to be enough. After 35 years I feel less valued and appreciated.

Q6 What would encourage you to seek promotion to senior management, including to headteacher level? What would discourage you from seeking promotion?

Absolutely nothing would persuade me to go into management. I became a teacher to teach, not manage people, budgets and fire fight one crisis after another, many of which have little to do with ‘teaching’.

Q7 What do you think are the main challenges, if any, in recruiting or retaining teachers (and other staff) at your school? (please feel free to provide details of practical experiences)

The constantly changing goal posts. There are too many layers of management outwith schools who have to justify their existence and so pass on ideas/demands/evidence requirements to the layer below them. Teachers are on the second bottom layer of a huge pyramid with children at the bottom. By the time ideas/demands/evidence filters down to us we are overwhelmed by more and more plates to spin

The large number of children with ASN within mainstream without enough PSAS there to support them and the teaching staff. Whilst I applaud and would encourage ASN children to be there it is unrealistic to expect their needs and those of the children in there class to be met without appropriate support. The cluster HTs for our local High School are allocated hours and
then have to “thrash” it out between them according to the individual needs within their schools.

Curriculum for Excellence is far too big and “woolly”. I’ve been teaching for 35 years and I often look at the experiences and outcomes we are expected to cover and wonder what exactly does that mean!

Too much paper work!

Q8 Which particular subject specialisms/support roles face the greatest challenges with recruitment or retention?

I mourn the loss of Expressive Arts teachers in Primary Schools. Specialists in the fields of Art, Drama, Music and PE gave support to teachers who have also to teach a broad curriculum within the classroom. Their knowledge shared with us on a regular basis over the school year enabled us to build on the skills we saw them teach.

Q9 Do you have any suggestions for how challenges with recruitment and retention might be addressed?

Smaller class sizes

Support special needs within mainstream schools

Pay supply teachers in line with their experience. Why should someone at the top of the scale be paid the same as someone starting out? Wouldn’t happen in a hospital!

Q10 Have any measures been put in place as a result of changes to staffing numbers in recent years at your school (examples include multi-school headship/leadership teams, composite classes, changes in the use/availability of support assistants)?

If so:

- What are these measures?
- How well are they working?
- Are these changes a permanent or a temporary measure (ie is it covering vacancies at present or is it to reflect the number of teacher/other posts has reduced?)

Multi-school headship – this only worked because of the strong DHTs we have. Was set up twice and after a few weeks it ended – waste of time and frustrating for all involved. The presence of our HT was missed.

Composite classes are in place every year in our school due the number of teachers allocated by the LA. It is not new but having class size capped at 25 is excellent. Drawbacks are dealing with parents who still don’t understand CfE and think that their child will be completing work of either the year ahead or year behind the year they are in. The policy of organising composite classes by age is detrimental to the pupils when a class contains more than half the pupils as the youngest in their year group. Older/more mature pupils can be a positive influence of the younger ones.

To facilitate NCCT time pupils spend too much time too often in whole school Assemblies because this is the only way management can give staff the time.
Q11 Are there any subject choices or other opportunities that are not available to pupils as a result of staff shortages that you consider would be valuable? (please specify)
See Q8 – and …… teaching French, German or Spanish. I last did French as a Higher in 1978, yet I am expected to draw on that, using smartboard software and an accent which makes me sound like an extra in “‘Allo! ‘Allo!” Whilst I applaud the PLP Platform as a resource this would be more effective if used by a trained ML teachers.

Q12 How would you describe general morale among staff (very good / quite good / quite low / very low) and what are the key factors that influence it?
quite low – we have a very good DHT who makes her team feel valued and supports us but all the other factors stated in this questionnaire leave staff feeling low.

Additional comments
If you have any other comments please include them below:
This is a wonderful chance for those involved in education to voice their concerns and feelings but offering such an opportunity over the Easter Break was not well thought out. Many people will be on holiday or writing reports.
This may seem a very negative response. I do embrace change when I see a purpose and a valid need for it but when change is brought in for the sake of change and not with the needs of children at the forefront it is not constructive. If as a country our standards have not moved on then the changes brought in have not done their job.

DYW – an excellent concept but at the appropriate stage. Do Nursery children really need to be aware of this? Surely it’s more important that they can put on their own coats, shoes, go to the toilet at the right time and most importantly enjoy quality play?

I still love my job but I am old enough and have enough experience to smile at the demands made by management in school and beyond and concentrate on the needs of the children I am privileged to teach.

ANONYMOUS 21
Q1 What type of teaching role do you have
Primary Teacher
Q4 What are the positives that keep you in the teaching profession?
I enjoy my job and love working with the children in my care.
Q5 Do you consider that you will teach until you retire or do you consider leaving early or for alternative employment? (If you consider leaving, please specify why if it relates to your enjoyment of your role)
I have considered leaving in the past as the pressure of the job and the excessive work load has had an impact on my health and wellbeing.
Q6 What would encourage you to seek promotion to senior management, including to headteacher level? What would discourage you from seeking promotion?

I would not seek promotion as I like working with the children and a senior management role or headteacher role is now dealing with data and statistics and paper work, not children. Also the work load is excessive, with new roles and responsibilities given to head teachers.

Q7 What do you think are the main challenges, if any, in recruiting or retaining teachers (and other staff) at your school? (please feel free to provide details of practical experiences)

Our currently level of pay means that due to inflation and cuts, we are now earning less, it is no longer a well paid job. The excessive workload that teachers have, that only increases as classroom support continues to be cut can put many people off or affect health and wellbeing. The changes to supply teachers contracts mean they are not willing to travel to out of reach places to cover a days supply. Teachers professionalism comes into question time and time again, this is demoralising.

Q8 Which particular subject specialisms/support roles face the greatest challenges with recruitment or retention?

Speaking from a Primary perspective we struggle to get supply cover.

Q9 Do you have any suggestions for how challenges with recruitment and retention might be addressed?

Give teachers back their professionalism.

Restore supply teachers contracts.

Increase pay.

Reduce workload.

Provide more classroom/ASN support.

Q10 Have any measures been put in place as a result of changes to staffing numbers in recent years at your school (examples include multi-school headship/leadership teams, composite classes, changes in the use/availability of support assistants)?

If so:

- What are these measures?
- How well are they working?
- Are these changes a permanent or a temporary measure (ie is it covering vacancies at present or is it to reflect the number of teacher/other posts has reduced?)

The availability of support assistants continues to be cut and this has an impact on teacher workload as more time is spend photocopying, laminating dealing with displays ect instead of planning lessons.
The lack of support assistants also impacts the children, although they continue to make progress, more could be made with a support assistant.

Difficulty in obtaining supply staff means that when a member of staff is off it impacts the whole school with children having to be split between classes to cover.

Q12 How would you describe general morale among staff (very good / quite good / quite low / very low) and what are the key factors that influence it?

Morale is very low as teachers are struggling with the excessive work load and lack of support.

ANONYMOUS 22

Q1 What type of teaching role do you have

I am currently the primary 6 in my school. I am also the schools ICT coordinator and help to plan and implement languages. I plan, implement and assess Bike Ability sessions for Primary 6 and 7 and also take a lunchtime Yoga club.

Q4 What are the positives that keep you in the teaching profession?

I love working with children and helping to make a difference. I know that every day will be different and will bring a new challenge therefore I never get bored. I enjoy fostering a love of learning and a happy environment in the class for all children. I also enjoy the flexibility of school holidays.

Q5 Do you consider that you will teach until you retire or do you consider leaving early or for alternative employment? (If you consider leaving, please specify why if it relates to your enjoyment of your role)

I would love to say that I will teach until I retire but physically and mentally I do not think that will be possible because of all the pressures and demanding nature of the job. I already find myself getting stressed over work load, dealing with children who do not have respect for the teacher and attitudes and expectations of parents. I have only been qualified as a teacher for 4 years and I have had major issues with parents regarding children’s behaviour and also parent’s behaviour towards me. Often nothing is done about it because the Council are scared to stand up to parents because of the backlash that will follow. I think that as the years go by this will only get worse unless strict guidelines and expectations are set out in schools with regards to behaviour and relationships between parents and staff.

Q6 What would encourage you to seek promotion to senior management, including to headteacher level? What would discourage you from seeking promotion?

I have already completed my Masters in the hope of promotion in the future however I am discouraged by the many pressures which seem to fall on schools and the attitudes of parents towards teachers. I am also worried about that many teachers are leaving the profession or moving abroad to teach for more money and a better working environment and we are continually short staffed as a result.
Q7 What do you think are the main challenges, if any, in recruiting or retaining teachers (and other staff) at your school? (please feel free to provide details of practical experiences)

* Workload

* Management of staff and workload

* Issues with parents where teachers are not properly supported

* Teachers move for better money

Q9 Do you have any suggestions for how challenges with recruitment and retention might be addressed?

* If a teacher completes a successful probationer year with the Council I think they should be guaranteed an interview for the jobs that come up.

My council should put in place the same system as Glasgow City Council whereby if you are on the supply list for 2 years you are guaranteed a permanent job.

Q10 Have any measures been put in place as a result of changes to staffing numbers in recent years at your school (examples include multi-school headship/leadership teams, composite classes, changes in the use/availability of support assistants)?

If so:

- What are these measures?
- How well are they working?
- Are these changes a permanent or a temporary measure (ie is it covering vacancies at present or is it to reflect the number of teacher/other posts has reduced?)

* Changes to the availability and use of support assistants has drastically changed in my school. It means that teachers do not have the same support and cannot offer children who need help or challenged because there is only 1 adult in the room.

Q11 Are there any subject choices or other opportunities that are not available to pupils as a result of staff shortages that you consider would be valuable? (please specify)

* Savvy savers

* Additional clubs (lunchtime and after school)

Q12 How would you describe general morale among staff (very good / quite good / quite low / very low) and what are the key factors that influence it?

Teachers in my school are really feeling the impact of staff shortages and the stress and extra pressure this is putting on everyone is immense. I am also feeling the impact of issues with parents. I was hit by a child last year and I put in a formal complaint to the council and nothing was done about it when I raised it. I did not even get an apology from the parents. This year I have
had parents shouting and being abusive during a parent’s night in front of the school community. Although the head teacher tried to speak to the parents, I received no apology and there were no consequences. I feel that if that happened in any other profession e.g. police officer, office worker etc there would be a formal process.

ANONYMOUS 23
Q1 What type of teaching role do you have
Primary Teacher
Q2 Whereabouts do you work?
Moray Council
Q4 What are the positives that keep you in the teaching profession?
I love working with children, inspiring them, educating them and giving them as many exciting learning opportunities as possible.
Q5 Do you consider that you will teach until you retire or do you consider leaving early or for alternative employment? (If you consider leaving, please specify why if it relates to your enjoyment of your role)
Unfortunately at the age of 25, I cannot see me staying in teaching until retirement. Before I started my probation year, without a doubt it was my career for life. However, with the constant demand of paper work, planning and constant changes to the curriculum it leaves me feeling like when I choose to have a family there is no way I could keep up. I currently arrive at school at 8am and stay until 6pm, I then do at least 2 hours of work at home and also work on the weekends for at least 4 hours, planning for the following week. It is a job that you can never switch off from. With big classes and children coming from tricky circumstances you are more than just an educator, there is so much more to the day than just teaching. The behaviour in schools has sent droves of amazing teachers out. They and I are fed up of being assaulted physically and orally by pupils who have anger/behaviour issues, children who are included but it just doesn’t work for them. Inclusion is what every teacher wants, but children are just expected to cope in mainstream with no support and the teacher is just to get on with it. I know I am not the only one who feels Exceptional needs schools NEED to be brought back for the pupils and teaching staff who are not trained to deal with these children. It saddens me that I cannot offer the amazing learning environment for an autistic child in my class that he deserves.
Q6 What would encourage you to seek promotion to senior management, including to headteacher level? What would discourage you from seeking promotion?
I would be encouraged if there was more steps to achieve promotion. In Moray PT’s and deputy heads are near non-existent. As a young teacher I would love to aim higher but unfortunately the option is just not there.
Q7 What do you think are the main challenges, if any, in recruiting or retaining teachers (and other staff) at your school? (please feel free to provide details of practical experiences)
As stated above, the constant demand of work leaves very little time to actually have a life. Children's behaviour is horrendous in some cases, where staff members are sworn at and assaulted on a daily basis and very little gets done.

Q8 Which particular subject specialisms/support roles face the greatest challenges with recruitment or retention?
Supply!

Q9 Do you have any suggestions for how challenges with recruitment and retention might be addressed?
Please read my document at the end of this document.

Q12 How would you describe general morale among staff (very good / quite good / quite low / very low) and what are the key factors that influence it?
Very low. Not just in our school but across all schools. Attached is a document I created when I met with John Swinney earlier in the year. I felt it was important to get a broad range of opinions from teachers across Scotland. This document has not been edited or spell checked etc. It is just direct comments from teachers.

If you really want to keep teachers, read this and act upon it as the education system is crumbling and we can’t keep it going much longer.

Additional comments
Please read below.

What challenges are Scottish teachers facing today?

Primary teachers across Scotland using their voice.

“To be honest, why should we be afraid to say any of what's been said here? Nothing that has been mentioned is untrue or offensive in any way. There is so much on encouraging and supporting pupil voice (and parent voice!) but where is the teacher voice among all this? I believe many teachers feel under-valued and morale is certainly dropping across the board. Clearly something isn't working in our education system and needs to be addressed. Teachers are the foundation stone to education and if we are not supported or valued (with many fantastic teachers leaving the profession) then it makes everything else a lot more difficult! Unfortunately, most of us feel like we don't have a say or are too afraid to say how we really feel... 😞”.

“I resigned from my teaching post earlier this year feeling despondent.

I loved being in class but the interruptions caused by poor behaviour, inept management teams fumbling their way through issues and a general sense of not being trusted by SMT to do our job made me decide to leave.

However, I have found it difficult to fully step away and have ended up doing supply work. I have been extremely fortunate to work in schools which have wonderful staff and children but I’ve also been in schools where morale is non-existent.

Staff are in tears during break times and feel unsupported by SMT and to add insult to injury they are over monitored by inexperienced management who do little to support them. Staff are too scared to question the number of visits and fear they are viewed as having ‘something to hide’.

Fortunately for me I get to walk away from these establishments and do not return, but we need to stand shoulder to shoulder with our colleagues who aren't as fortunate.”
Inclusion

Continuous behaviour problems with lack of pupil support worker time and management who are too busy to deal with them or are too softly, softly in their approach! Workload, meetings targets, lack of supply cover..... I could go on!

Tell him the attainment gap exists BEFORE school and home issues and support need addressed. Maslow before Bloom’s.
Shortage of teachers is a massive problem. Supply teachers need paid a better rate to make it worth their while.
More support needed in class since closure of so many specialist units. Behavioural problems are rife and the children and families need support in order to impact on classroom learning.

I think support bases similar to high school in primary schools for disruptive pupils would be beneficial as surely there would be more if a chance of impact with the kids at an early age x

One of my main concerns at the moment is inclusion. We are now teaching classes where multiple children will have differing needs and disabilities but have very little extra support or training to ensure we are "Getting it Right for Every Child" as they would like us to.
On top of this behaviour issues are gradually getting worse, with children coming to school with poorer social skills and little manners. I would say half of my day is spent managing behaviour and not teaching.
Our school has a high percentage of EAL children also. The P1 class are currently sitting at around 70% therefore immersion just isn't working as there are more non-English speakers than native speakers, but we currently have no EAL specialist to help the children to develop their language skills.

“Print it all off. These are the voices of teachers on the frontline and all of their points are valid since this is their reality. He may not have the answers immediately but knowing our issues will give him the opportunity to address them in future. Perhaps a consultation opportunity for teachers on the frontline may be a way forward.”

“Good luck! I hope you get your message across and give him some food for thought.

“Having the opportunity to talk to Mr Swinney I think showing him these comments and concerns is a great way to show him what 21st century teachers put up with the low morale is scary.”
Also... a pay rise please 😊

That feeling of 'getting it right' for one child at the expense of the rest of your class is inclusion at its worst. I often think if parents could see how much time is lost in a day due to behaviour issues there would be an uproar.

I genuinely cannot believe that since August I have not had ONE parental complaint. They've complained about daft friendship falling outs and lost jumpers but for whatever reason, evacuating the classroom every day hasn't even come up. My parents would have been appalled. Just a pity my mammy can't phone the HT and complain 😂

Inclusion without adequate support doesn't work, can't raise attainment if you're firefighting behaviours. Why insist on putting children with complex needs in mainstream classrooms why shut special needs schools. Losing the experienced staff in process

Inclusion, inclusion, inclusion...not meeting the needs of children due to lack of resources and appropriate staffing. Disruption to lessons to accommodate the needs of 'included' children, classrooms being evacuated and lessons being interrupted whilst 'included' children have an 'episode'. Staff being assaulted verbally and physically by children. SMT's who are lacking in teaching/classroom experience and who have terrible skills in managing staff, resulting in staff morale being zero. These 'management' teams over monitoring with classroom visits...when are teachers deemed 'safe' to teach? It's ridiculous how often some teachers are observed, a huge waste of salaries and for what benefit? Good luck, please let us know how it goes.

More support in early years, primary, and high school our council is cutting staff but more and more ASN children are coming through this system is failing them and us

Presumption of mainstream isn't working! Inclusion doesn't mean we all do the same ...

... I assumed everyone understood this!

Inclusion and how it affects the other children's learning when not resourced/ funded appropriately

Agree with all above on lack of support staff and resources for inclusion.

Highly trained and experienced pupil support teachers being used as supply teachers. The children who are in dire need have their support withdrawn at a moments notice and the over stretched class teacher left to 'cope' on her own.

I feel that often the children that are being 'included' are no better off for it either. They are rarely receiving the specialist support and education they require to thrive.

Totally agree with all the inclusion comments to as children have the right to learn, feel safe and happy at school and by including children with a variety of needs and behavioural problems it often goes against these rights.
Can you ask him about support for kids with behaviour issues. Mainly the ones HTs deny are in our schools because they think it looks bad for us rather than supporting these kids and allowing us to teach the rest.

Wouldn’t it be wonderful if after his ‘chat’ with class teachers John Swinney would make a concerted effort to address teachers’ concerns. Managing challenging behaviour in the classroom with limited support is a huge issue affecting so many teachers and needs to be urgently addressed. Lack of resources, teachers having to supply materials, curriculum overload, unrealistic benchmarks, this list could go on... Good luck next week and I really hope you are given the opportunity to have an open and honest ‘chat’. Would be great to hear how it goes 👍

I'd like to tell him that GIRFEC and social inclusion aren't worth anything without adequate numbers of well trained support and teaching staff. From a very frustrated ASN teacher who sees children being let down by a system that doesn't work for all!!!

I'd like to tell him that GIRFEC and social inclusion aren't worth a damn without adequate numbers of well trained support and teaching staff. From a very frustrated ASN and previously class teacher working in a system that doesn't work for all kids!!!

There are so many children who need that extra help in the class...but due to sharing a part time PSA with another class means that many children in both classes lose out....there are only a finite number of hours and it doesn't matter how we try to fit in all those in need, it's never enough. I came in to teaching to teach...to help those kids to learn...it saddens me that the system is preventing me from doing just that....We need extra PSA help...

Absolutely. The problem is not inclusion it's the complete lack of any support or resources. The cutting of support staff and ASN teachers at a time when there are increasing numbers of needs. Having said that, the abovementioned friend now home schools her son as mainstream was inappropriate for his needs yet she could not get access to any alternatives.

I would like to know more about how we are to support inclusion and additional support needs when SfL Teachers and PSAs are removed from the classrooms? How do we support big classes, especially infants with no additional support? Also, how are we to teach all subjects well without specialist teachers? I do not speak French, but still must teach it and music and PE without a particular skill in these areas and what about art and science, why are they not deemed subjects that need specialist input especially from P5 up?

How are we really going to tackle recruitment and a diminished supply list? Can we make Inclusion and SfL an integral part of the BEd and PGCE programmes? Could Social Services, CAMHS and Education use the same database throughout Scotland so that we are tracking and supporting our most vulnerable families who for one reason or another have to move authority? Could there be more emphasis on professional dialogue and judgement when assessing as there is still a lack of confidence in assessing a level due to reliance on standardised testing? How are we going to measure the success of the Pupil Equity funding?
Can you ask him how we are expected to support inclusion in mainstream when they don't recognise the need for additional staff or in the very least, training for staff.

Brilliant thread and agree with it all! Overloaded curriculum which thanks to CFE can be interpreted in loads of different ways. In my opinion inclusion policy is the biggest barrier to attainment as 2-4 children are taking up 80% of teachers time and sadly this number grows as others then behave similarly when they start to realise this also gets them attention. If they want to close the attainment gap children should attend schools that meet their needs not expect mainstream schools to adapt to meet the needs of few but ignore the needs of many. Violence towards staff, and on occasion this has resulted in hospital treatment. Schools no longer suspending children as HT afraid of backlash from on high!

Most of our auxiliary support goes on severely disruptive children who don't want to learn. There are so many children who could benefit from their time but don't get the chance. A high percentage of my time is spent sorting out behaviour rather than teaching. It has to stop! GIRFEC is certainly not happening for the hard workers who deserve better. Interfering parents can take a hike too!

Too much on the curriculum -too many with needs and no support-no real answer to bad behaviour!

**Attainment**

Key things to me seem to be:
1. If you want inclusion to work it needs to be properly resourced and staff properly trained. Classes need to be smaller to accommodate this. More considered decisions also need to be made about whether it is actually appropriate for an individual child to be in mainstream.
2. Reduce the number of curricular outcomes and subjects to the basics, and provide a national bank of assessment resources that are easy to access.

I also don't think the Scottish government focus on poverty is the issue. If it was financial poverty how can Africa and India produce well educated kids? The issue is moral and value poverty at home for many kids. Money should be spent via social work into the more deprived homes, not schools to be effective.

We might just have a shot at raising attainment then - no hope in current climate! 😞

Increasingly high academic expectations (benchmarks) at early level. Too much pressure far too soon

Definitely, children at age of 5, learning so much so quickly but they have already failed to achieve standards expected, so demoralising for everyone involved.

It appears the focus for the government is on the attainment gap (and quite rightly so in a lot of cases!) but one thing we were asked to consider was, how were we meeting the needs of the children at the other end of the scale, those needing challenge and exceeding their expected level as well as those needing support in the basic elements. It really is like spinning plates with minimal staff and resources.
Additional pressure and expectations being put onto teaching staff without resources or support staff to close the attainment gap. Good luck with it, hope it can make a difference to us all.

Agree wholeheartedly with the lack of support and inclusion comments. Also, the Early level benchmarks are far too challenging - they need to be changed! Furthermore, I think the government has to do something to raise the profile of the teaching profession. Our salary does not reflect the expectations of our profession. Parents being allowed to constantly question our professional judgement based on misinformation or a perception of what they think education involves needs to stop! Would they question a doctor's choice of medication?

We get so many children in Primary one who are not ready for school. (can't hold a pencil or sit and listen for a short time or are too used to getting their own way due to only free play in nursery) Children need to be prepared for school and teachers should be put back into nurseries. Teacher's need to feel valued and also need to get backed up by parents instead of having every decision questioned. More needs to be done to help close the gap before children get to school as often the damage is already done.

Nursery education also appears to be extremely mixed - our feeder nursery claims that they have been told not to direct the children. So they get into P1 and some old witch is telling them what to do for the first time in their lives.

How he is preparing to tackle an all time dip in teachers and support staff moral? Pushing to close an attainment gap that we already focussed on naturally as part of our jobs without being 'measured' on it! It's part of our tapestry as teachers to do the absolute best for our pupils!

Ask him how sustainable the education system is as it currently sits with workload/pressure/low moral in teachers!

I'd love to know, if they're so desperate for us to show we are better independently, why are they pushing us down the exact same road as the English education system? Why are we not looking to models that are proven to be effective??

In addition to the many valid points raised here, it would be good if you could include: children don't grow faster when you measure them more often; ditch the testing.

Great thread!
Reduce class sizes!!!
This would go along way to help improve attainment!

15 in a class would be fantastic! A class of 29 in P2 with varying needs is overwhelming! 😩😊

We have been fortunate enough to split our P7 class this year from 32 to two classes of 16. Teachers, pupils and parents have all praised this move! Pupils are more focused, less distracted and those needing support are able to get it in smaller class sizes. Behaviour issues have greatly improved and pupils appear happier! A much better learning environment for the pupils, which means better learning experiences.
Get rid of standardised testing... This will NOT close the attainment gap... The poverty gap must be closed first then the attainment gap will sort itself. However, with the small scraps Westminster give Scotland to work with while they have their austerity in place, the Scottish government have their hands tied as to how much they can work on the poverty gap... vicious circle really 😞

Please advise Mr Swinney that a reduction in class sizes would go a long way towards raising attainment.

Stop standardised testing and have a wellbeing gap not attainment gap, then attainment will come anyway

Resources

I'm finding the lack of support staff and resources very challenging. Good luck with your meeting, I hope that you get a chance to put your point across and that he doesn't pursue an underlying agenda 😊)

Lack of support is just horrendous.

Also adequately trained support staff. Our classroom assistants are lovely ladies, but have absolutely no experience or training in additional support needs which they usually bear the brunt of.

And on a different note... the lack of adequate bandwidth to support digital technology

More teachers, more classroom assistants, smaller class sizes.

Lack of money for resources. I'm not talking fancy stuff; stationary and books would be nice...

Good one to ask on here! How about suggesting that, despite any tosh spraffed by various educational types, maths is maths is maths, whether you are in Stornoway, Glasgow or Galashiels. Give us specific unpacked aims, give us a centralised resource bank, a made-for-curriculum supporting maths 'scheme' (we can do creative/other stuff if we want) and let us get on with the rest. PS - I'd suggest that punctuation/spelling/grammar is pretty similar..

Reduce class sizes in areas with multiple needs to give the children a chance. When a child is identified with a well being assessment plan ensure classroom assistant support is provided as well as training and resources. Have a forum for teachers concerns to be raised and listened to, not just lip service. Provide cash for physical resources such as reading books etc in areas of deprivation where fundraising cannot match other councils.

Teaching/ Curriculum

What a privilege to be able to give first hand to someone in the government a report on what it is like on the ground! I graduated in 1988 and I have to say that I have
never been...or seen so many of my colleagues... so overwhelmed with our job.
1. Teachers are not trusted to use their professional judgement anymore.
2. The primary curriculum is so unbelievably crowded that there is little time for the basics of numeracy and literacy.
3. and most pertinently...it doesn't take an Einstein to work out that it is not money to buy a few extras for the school that we need to raise attainment...but a thorough decluttering of the curriculum...letting teachers (proper ones) get on with teaching...interacting and assessing and evaluating as we have always done...without recording learning conversations...without all the gimmicks that are required.

I loved class teaching but I felt driven out of the classroom by the results of the educational policies of the Scottish Government. How they have killed what was once a wonderful profession to be in!
There are still wonderful class teachers around...but they are sailing on a rapidly sinking ship.
I got out of class teaching last year but as I look at good class teachers in the schools I work in...I have nothing but admiration for them!
But for me I just couldn't face the stress anymore.

Morale! We are all doing our very best in an education landscape which is changing daily. SALs, Benchmarks, NIF, ELCC and accommodating the increase in hours, GIRFEC paperwork. All with less support from a shrinking education authority, increasingly complex and challenging behaviour from a minority of young people who take up most of the time. Scrutiny and accountability has never been more apparent now, especially given the PEF, National Assessments, possible league tables, having to link with the community, engage parents all in a notional 35 hr week. Salaries have been eroded and no one is working only 35 hours. I could go on...

Teachers are paid to work 35 hours per week. It is understood, accepted and expected by Management/Authorities/Government that teachers will work far in excess of this contracted time in order to fulfill the demands (and ever increasing demands) that have been placed on the profession. In the light of the United Nations' Universal Declaration of Human Rights Article 23.3 and Article 24, how is this situation legally and ethically justified?

If we could stop having new initiatives thrown at us & give us a chance to embed the current ones & make them work for us & our pupils that'd be great. We still haven't got CfE right yet!

*Pay and workload, we get paid less than the minimum wage per hour if it is all broken down.
*More support for inclusion if it is to truly to work, smaller class sizes would go a long way. How can we GIRFEC for all children if we are constantly giving all of our time to 2-4 children who have Asn, behavioural or attachment/social needs.
*Retention of staff and a more robust supply pool.
*Cutting the red tape down for Cahms and Ed Psych referrals.
I agree with a lot of people he should come and teach for at least a year and truly experience what life is really like at the "chalk face".
I would like to know whether he thinks that P7 should be trained to sit still, listen and get on with work at least occasionally ... in order. To prepare them for S1. Or do we have to perpetuate the myth that "active" learning is essential!

There's a recruitment, supply and retention problem. Teachers *and SMT are overworked, stretched, tired, have increasing demands at local and national level put on them which impacts both their personal and professional lives. In other professions there are flexible working conditions, clear remits and roles, variety in career progression and flexibility within this, opportunities for professional development and networking etc etc. John Swinney said he would liberate teachers to teach but due respect needs to be paid to conditions and the profession as a profession in comparison to opportunities and working conditions offered by other professions. We need to keep the profession attractive or we'll continue to leave.

Lack of school funding... increasing class sizes due to lack of teachers....

Language1:2 - great idea, great vote winner - ridiculous implementation. I have no French yet have to teach it in P7, with no support. In a few years time I’ll have to teach a second language. Teachers all around me in the same position. Where are the specialist teachers to support?

The constant changes that are thrown at us without proper explanation, unclear assessment and everyone having different views of "levels", talk of reducing workload and paperwork but this not actioned, no pay rise AGAIN Curriculum far too overcrowded, with valuable teaching time being used for things that were traditionally a parent’s responsibility.... tooth brushing - to ensure this is being done, daily mile - as children are not active enough, dental checks - as parents not taking children to dentist, immunisations, nurture groups etc etc etc

We have a captive audience and so we are used to deliver all these initiatives. They are important, however over the week/term/year it is a lot of time out of teaching week with no allowances made.

Also, the PEF money looks good to public - lots of money being ploughed in to education, however FME is not the only measure of poverty or the children who require this help. I'm also concerned that the money will be very divisive. Also...

Not enough people on ground
Lack of agency support due to cuts
Lack of school budget to deliver what school needs
Increased expectations but not additional support, money, people etc.
(This feels sooo negative! I love my job - honestly!)

Too many new initiatives literally thrown at teachers over last few years... as a result nothing is done properly... low morale... ridiculous wages for an impossible job... I've had the same salary for about 10 years... no incentive for teachers who want to stay in class and don't want promotion!! Too much jargon and none sense trying to make a profession something that it's not! I could go on all night but I think we all feel the same.... class sizes too big if inclusion is to work... girfec is a joke! I've been teaching 26 years and love my job but it's becoming more and more difficult every year...

Something that has already been mentioned: an overfull curriculum which keeps getting more things added to it. We can't add more without reducing the quality of other aspects. I love teaching the variety of subjects in primary but we can't keep
adding more. Again as someone commented, we have new initiatives thrown at us with little or no training. Additionally, we are not being supported enough with what HMIE are looking for in a 'good' school. We are all trying our best but often without proper direction.

Think you've hit the nail on the head, CfE was born from the idea of giving free reign to teachers but the pendulum swung too far. Balance needs to be restored by uniformed guidance from top down 👍

**Pay and Conditions**

Teachers pay. Teachers get paid for a 35hour plus collegiate hours. Most teachers I know work about a 50 hour week. When you divide the take home pay by those hours we are worth approx £3.52 an hour. Not even minimum wage. After 40 years experience NOTHING MAKES more of a difference to kids attainment than a passionate, caring teacher. We deserve some of that caring and respect back. Pay what we are worth and watch the attainment rise. Pile more pressure on and the profession will sink.

No money for resources. Using our own money. IPROC fiasco

Lack of teachers, lack of a pay rise, even with inflation! Workload, commitment of staff through diversity.... reward for this would be nice!!

Suggest that he spends some of this money he was talking about on improving conditions for existing teachers rather than throwing money trying to attract new ones from overseas. At the moment half of all new teachers are leaving the profession within the first 5 years. It will just be like filling a leaking bucket unless they do something to try and keep the staff they have. Good luck with the meeting, hope he takes all the points on board, especially the lack of pay rise!

When we complain about salary the usual response I've found is, "You're in a privileged position, teaching is a vocation not a job, you're at the front line of education..." The number of job vacancies available in some areas doesn't wash well with the "privileged position" remark at all. Since when did having a vocation mean you had to put up with an inadequate salary?

Could you please ask about the Scottish Government's global campaign to hire hundreds of teachers to address crippling classroom shortages? What enticements are being offered to overseas teachers and teachers currently teaching overseas to come and teach in Scotland? What enticements are being offered to current Scottish teachers to encourage them to stay?

**ANONYMOUS 24**

**Q1** What type of teaching role do you have

Class teacher in Primary

**Q4** What are the positives that keep you in the teaching profession?

I enjoy working with children and their families

I enjoy the challenges involved in finding ways to motivate and engage learners, and provide positive learning experiences.
Q5 Do you consider that you will teach until you retire or do you consider leaving early or for alternative employment? (If you consider leaving, please specify why if it relates to your enjoyment of your role)

I have considered leaving the profession before I retire, as I have found the past few years challenging. Some of this relates to coping with full time job, teenage children and elderly parents living some distance away. However, I have also found that since the cutbacks resulting in the reduction of senior management within the school I work in it is impossible for the remaining management team to maintain the previous high levels of communication and the overall involvement and overseeing of the planning and curriculum development that is required to keep advancing this establishment, educationally and within the community. This places stress on teachers as we are accountable and judged on performance via PSV. I personally have found the stress in being observed and judged both at school level and authority level to be overwhelming, and crippling. I believe I am a good teacher, but I cannot function under PSV conditions. I accept that it is a necessary tool, but it is stressful and not always the best indicator of a teacher’s abilities. I personally feel this to the extent that afterwards I have felt a failure and have quite honestly wanted to leave the profession altogether.

Q6 What would encourage you to seek promotion to senior management, including to headteacher level? What would discourage you from seeking promotion?

I have worked as DHT in a previous school, and before I had my family. I feel it is a role which demands a high level of commitment to the school the children and their families, and I felt this would be to the detriment of my family.

Q7 What do you think are the main challenges, if any, in recruiting or retaining teachers (and other staff) at your school? (please feel free to provide details of practical experiences) Firstly there is obviously a shortage of supply teachers, resulting in staff then being stretched to cover classes, provide RCT as required. Members of management are also having to cover classes which takes them away from their principal role within the school. In addition many changes in management over the past 3 years have impacted greatly on the school. Present management needs to strengthen and as a result of the changes, lack of communication and guidance to staff, and general stagnation of any development within the school, staff have become demoralised and demotivated. Strong members of the teaching staff have sought employment elsewhere and the school has a number of supply teachers at any one time, some of whom don’t commit or stay for long. The school I work in has amazing children and supportive families and has a lot of potential to be an excellent school.

Q9 Do you have any suggestions for how challenges with recruitment and retention might be addressed?

Management teams need to be strong and have a clear vision and the required leadership qualities.
Q10 Have any measures been put in place as a result of changes to staffing numbers in recent years at your school (examples include multi-school headship/leadership teams, composite classes, changes in the use/availability of support assistants)?

If so:

- What are these measures?
- How well are they working?
- Are these changes a permanent or a temporary measure (ie is it covering vacancies at present or is it to reflect the number of teacher/other posts has reduced?)

Many vacancies are being covered in my establishment, with staff absence, staff leaving – particularly at management level - and this situation has been ongoing over the past 3 years, so is beginning to feel permanent!

Q11 Are there any subject choices or other opportunities that are not available to pupils as a result of staff shortages that you consider would be valuable? (please specify)

Extra curricular activities have suffered as workload increases, but teachers feel under appreciated as it is.

Q12 How would you describe general morale among staff (very good / quite good / quite low / very low) and what are the key factors that influence it?

Morale is low as a result of the issues I have outlined in Q7

ANONYMOUS 25

Q1 What type of teaching role do you have

Support for learning teacher in a primary school.

Q4 What are the positives that keep you in the teaching profession?

- Making a difference in children’s lives.
- Seeing children gain confidence in areas they find challenging.
- Striving to make sure that all children in my care leave school with a positive experience.
- Colleagues
- Hours and holidays fit in with family life

Q5 Do you consider that you will teach until you retire or do you consider leaving early or for alternative employment? (If you consider leaving, please specify why if it relates to your enjoyment of your role)

If I could afford to leave early, I would.

I love the job I do, however, because of a shortage of class teachers/illness/maternity leave I am increasingly being pulled from my SFL job to cover other classes. This means that the children in my care do not have the consistency they deserve. This is extremely frustrating for me as when I meet with parents they are angry that their child has not
improved. Last year I covered classes for 52% of my time. I can come in on a morning and find I have to cover a class with little time to prepare. This can be stressful.

I am also frustrated at the lack of space, resources and value given to my job. Money is not what drives me. Being valued and respected in my job is more important.

Q6 What would encourage you to seek promotion to senior management, including to headteacher level? What would discourage you from seeking promotion?
Not interested in promotion.

Q7 What do you think are the main challenges, if any, in recruiting or retaining teachers (and other staff) at your school? (please feel free to provide details of practical experiences).

- The area we live in. Most students want to work in cities
- Not enough student teachers to meet the demand.
- Changes to pay for supply teachers.
- Work load. I know of at least two friends that have left the profession due to this.

Q8 Which particular subject specialisms/support roles face the greatest challenges with recruitment or retention?
N/A

Q9 Do you have any suggestions for how challenges with recruitment and retention might be addressed?

- Give more money to those willing to teach in areas with difficulties recruiting.
- Have a council designated unit of supply teachers. This would enable flexibility to those who want to work part time, cover when they want and give experience to student/newly qualified teachers in the area.
- Reduce the gap time between someone leaving on maternity cover/new job/illness to person being in post. As soon as someone informs an intention to leave – begin recruitment – do not wait until they actually leave.

Q10 Have any measures been put in place as a result of changes to staffing numbers in recent years at your school (examples include multi-school headship/leadership teams, composite classes, changes in the use/availability of support assistants)?

If so:

- What are these measures? Composite classes.
- How well are they working? Sometimes. Depends on the mix of children. Smaller classes allow children to have more 1:1 time and helps with attainment. This certainly works well in private schools.
Are these changes a permanent or a temporary measure (ie is it covering vacancies at present or is it to reflect the number of teacher/other posts has reduced?) Both

Q11 Are there any subject choices or other opportunities that are not available to pupils as a result of staff shortages that you consider would be valuable? (please specify)

Extra support.

Q12 How would you describe general morale among staff (very good / quite good / quite low / very low) and what are the key factors that influence it?

Quite low.

- Stress. Workload. Feelings of guilt if taking time off for illness, bereavement etc
- Covering classes.
- Challenges of having children with undiagnosed conditions/lack of support staff

Additional comments

It was encouraging to have Mr Swinney come to our area and listen to teachers on the frontline.

ANONYMOUS 26

Q1 What type of teaching role do you have PrimaryTeacher

Q4 What are the positives that keep you in the teaching profession?

Working with young people. Developing their knowledge and understanding. Freedom of ACFE to involve new ideas and topics to keep teaching and learning fresh.

School holidays- flexible day- can work from home after 3 if required.

Q5 Do you consider that you will teach until you retire or do you consider leaving early or for alternative employment? (If you consider leaving, please specify why if it relates to your enjoyment of your role)

No I will teach until I retire unless the job changes and becomes more pressured paperwork/ monitoring wise- than it is at the moment.

Q6 What would encourage you to seek promotion to senior management, including to headteacher level? What would discourage you from seeking promotion?

Financial reward. Large management team rather than one person solely responsible.

Q7 What do you think are the main challenges, if any, in recruiting or retaining teachers (and other staff) at your school? (please feel free to provide details of practical experiences)
New teachers naïve to realities of the job. Don’t have enough in school experience before teacher training and don’t understand challenges. See as an option if they don’t know what else to do when it is a vocation you need to be dedicated to. Also lack of support in schools for new teachers as everyone is so stretched and don’t have time to support them.

Q8 Which particular subject specialisms/support roles face the greatest challenges with recruitment or retention?
ASN challenging schools where people are dealing with violent pupils. Open plan schools where teachers are working in a very difficult environment to support and teach young people. Very rural and very challenging schools.

Q9 Do you have any suggestions for how challenges with recruitment and retention might be addressed?
More promoted positions in school to support new teachers. Requirement of extensive school experience before accepting on teacher training courses. Additional money for teaching posts in very rural or challenging areas where it is very difficult to get and retain staff.

Q10 Have any measures been put in place as a result of changes to staffing numbers in recent years at your school (examples include multi-school headship/leadership teams, composite classes, changes in the use/availability of support assistants)?
If so:

- What are these measures?
- How well are they working?
- Are these changes a permanent or a temporary measure (ie is it covering vacancies at present or is it to reflect the number of teacher/other posts has reduced?)

5 30 minute assemblies every day to cover all teaching staff non-class contact time. They hope to reduce to two 30 minute assemblies in term 4 and the rest by ncc teacher. Detrimental to the children’s education in my opinion and you can’t differentiate p1-7. Also not reducing teacher workload in terms of planning/ reports as class teacher still teaching whole curriculum.

Q12 How would you describe general morale among staff (very good / quite good / quite low / very low) and what are the key factors that influence it?
Quite low.

Inclusion- children with complex needs in mainstream.
Monitoring- continual HT observations, peer observations- HMIE etc.
Funding- lack of money for basic like photocopying which make job easier.
Reduced size of management team- less people ‘out of class’ to support extreme behaviour.
ANONYMOUS 27
Q1 What type of teaching role do you have? - PRIMARY
Q4 What are the positives that keep you in the teaching profession?
- The children. I remain a teacher for all the reasons which brought me into teaching - to use my skills to teach and inspire tomorrow's generation.

Q5 Do you consider that you will teach until you retire or do you consider leaving early or for alternative employment? (If you consider leaving, please specify why if it relates to your enjoyment of your role). I do compare my working week to others in other professions and if I was to leave it would be to achieve a better work life balance for the benefit of myself and my family. The nature of teaching does dictate working during the day, then usually at night/weekends. I do often envy other professions such as nursing etc where you are unable to physically bring additional work from the job home.

Q6 What would encourage you to seek promotion to senior management, including to headteacher level? What would discourage you from seeking promotion?
I'd be encouraged if I truly felt that I was making a difference and not just pushing initiatives for them to be scrapped a few years down the line.
I'd be discouraged if I no longer had quite as much contact with children and if the workload had a detrimental effect on my home life.

Q7 What do you think are the main challenges, if any, in recruiting or retaining teachers (and other staff) at your school? (please feel free to provide details of practical experiences).
Lack of scope for flexible working - many have expressed a wish to reduce hours/days after returning from maternity leave but this often seems rejected at school level, unless you and another member of staff are prepared to do a 0.5 split (half and half job share split).
More historically and less recently but the reputation of the school both in the community and within the word of mouth teaching community - bad/negative experiences are often shared quickly - such is life at times. People often quicker to complain than praise.

Q8 Which particular subject specialisms/support roles face the greatest challenges with recruitment or retention?
Unsure

Q9 Do you have any suggestions for how challenges with recruitment and retention might be addressed?
- Raising the moral of staff and the overall profession.
- Helping society to value and respect teachers.
- Not expecting teachers to be responsible for absolutely everything in terms of the upbringing of children. - teachers are feeling the pressure of being guardians of the nanny state at times.
- Giving them time to teach, rather than flooding and pressurising them with the need to follow every single initiative (and at times - educational fad) that comes along.
- Really listening to those at the chalk face and valuing how well they know their children.
Q10 Have any measures been put in place as a result of changes to staffing numbers in recent years at your school (examples include multi-school headship/leadership teams, composite classes, changes in the use/availability of support assistants)?
If so:
• What are these measures?
• How well are they working?
• Are these changes a permanent or a temporary measure (ie is it covering vacancies at present or is it to reflect the number of teacher/other posts has reduced?)
- Support for learning is often cut in order to cover any teacher absences. Over time this is definitely to the detriment of the pupils who should have been receiving this support.

Q11 Are there any subject choices or other opportunities that are not available to pupils as a result of staff shortages that you consider would be valuable? (please specify)
- As above - support for learning, nurture.

Q12 How would you describe general morale among staff (very good / quite good / quite low / very low) and what are the key factors that influence it?
Quite good - morale is good when staff gel well and have time to know and spend time with colleagues. Feeling undervalued is the greatest influence towards negative relations.
Additional comments
If you have any other comments please include them below:

SECONDARY SCHOOL – NAMED SUBMISSIONS

ALAN MILLIGAN
I am writing as Head of my school’s Classics Department in relation to the recruitment of teachers in Latin and Classical Studies.
As you are no doubt aware, there is no longer any teacher training in Latin or Classical Studies in Scotland and there has not been for several years. This can make it difficult to find teachers with GTCS registration. For example, we lately advertised for a full-time post and ended up interviewing three candidates, none of whom had, at present, GTCS registration.
The message this gives out is that the Scottish government/parliament/education leaders have no commitment to the future of Latin and Classical Studies in Scottish schools.
It also means that Scottish classicists have to go to England for teacher training, even if they want to teach in Scotland; or that we have to recruit from outside Scotland. This then involves a cost for the teacher and a bureaucratic process of registration with GTCS.
Latin is one of Scotland’s Heritage languages and there has been a great tradition over the years of Scottish classical scholarship, which is in danger of being cast aside. (Also, the SQA no longer offers Classical Greek exams.)
If Scotland no longer wants to train teachers in Latin or Classical Studies, the GTCS should have a fast-track system to encourage teachers to come from outside Scotland. There are still lots of young people in Scotland wanting to learn these
subjects that are at the heart of western culture and civilisation. These youngsters should not be disadvantaged or deprived of the chance of a classical education.

FIONA MCNICOL

Q1 What type of teaching role do you have

Secondary Teacher of Computing Science and Business Studies (I am not a union rep – just an ordinary teacher)

Q4 What are the positives that keep you in the teaching profession?

I love teaching – I have always wanted to teach. I did not become a teacher until I was 40. I love it when my enthusiasm for my subject and life-long learning rubs off on my pupils.

Q5 Do you consider that you will teach until you retire or do you consider leaving early or for alternative employment? (If you consider leaving, please specify why if it relates to your enjoyment of your role)

I am pretty sure that I will teach until I retire, but if it is possible for me to find a job in education that does not involve having to manage very difficult pupils then I will take that opportunity. I am finding that after 16 years of teaching at the same school that a minority of the pupils are becoming so difficult to manage that I am spending less and less time teaching and more and more time managing pupils. It is just a minority of the pupils. I am privileged as my class sizes are no bigger than 20 pupils but you only need one or two difficult and challenging pupils in the class to disrupt the teaching and learning of all the others. It is not fair on them and it makes my life a misery.

Q6 What would encourage you to seek promotion to senior management, including to headteacher level? What would discourage you from seeking promotion?

It is a big leap from classroom teacher to senior management. There are very few jobs as Principal Teacher of Curriculum. I am a life-long learner and would love to have the time to take leadership courses but as a secondary teacher the work-load is increasing year on year. In Computing the course has not been stable since the new National exams were introduced – every year the content and the assessments have changed. I don’t have time to take any courses as I barely have time to keep up with my own subject. Development time, traditionally taken during exam leave, has now been shortened and I feel that much of my development is now done during school holidays and/or weekends. I haven’t had a weekend where I had no work to do for what seems like years!

I have looked for promotion in the past and have been unsuccessful. I am not a very confident interviewee. Successful applicants are more often than not selected on interview only. One interview I attended for a Computing Teachers job (not even a promoted post) I was told that the interviewers would not look at my references provided or my application form until they had interviewed and selected from the interview. They only used the references and what I had written on my application form as confirmation that they had made the right choice. My interview did not go as well as I hoped and when
the school phoned to tell me I had not been successful they couldn’t understand why I hadn’t said half the things that were on my application form. Why fill out an application for when it is not referred to or looked at during the recruitment process?

Q7 What do you think are the main challenges, if any, in recruiting or retaining teachers (and other staff) at your school? (please feel free to provide details of practical experiences)

I don’t think the problem with the school. We are a good school and we get quite a number of transfer requests for pupils to come to this school as parents consider it a good school. I think the problems are Scotland wide. So my answer is for Scotland in general rather than just my school.

The demands of teaching as a job are becoming unbearable for most subjects. Marking assessments, assignments, homework, classwork. The load is too much for many teachers. It will not lesson much with the new rules, particularly in my subject. There are some pupils who cannot manage to cope with exams – so we will be doing the end of unit assessments and not presenting them for the final exam. This means we will still be doing the assessments the SQA are saying are not needed.

The English teachers who don’t complain much to other teachers in the school are working until 1 in the morning just to get work marked.

Behaviour of pupil. We are finding that the 1st year pupils are finding the transition very difficult from p7 to 1st year. Pupils are often nurtured more in Primary and it is a shock to many pupils when they come up to ‘big school’ that they have to sit in rows facing the front to have a lesson. I am not saying what the primary schools are doing is wrong but the difference between Primary and Secondary is so great that pupils’ behaviour in first year has deteriorated considerably and enough to put people wanting to teach.

Q8 Which particular subject specialisms/support roles face the greatest challenges with recruitment or retention?

Currently unable to recruit an English teacher or Maths teacher. Recently looked for a temporary Art teacher but there were none. Very difficult to recruit general supply teachers.

Q9 Do you have any suggestions for how challenges with recruitment and retention might be addressed?

For NQTs - Make sure that there are places available for subjects for PGDE. I recently heard from a former pupil with his partner and baby. He was told that he could not do PGDE secondary for Computing as the university couldn’t offer PGDE for that Computing. He is about to complete a masters in Cyber Security and is just the sort of Computing Teacher the profession needs.

Be more flexible with the requirement for English Higher. Someone who has a masters or even a bachelors from a Scottish or English university must have a decent level of English.

Most regions have moved towards Generic Interviews but NQTs don’t know if they are being accepted until it is almost too late. We have had probationers
who have accepted in one region but then have had a later offer in another
region. They have then resigned from the first region and taken up the later
offer. Leaving the first region without a teacher. There must be a better way
that this to recruitment.

If schools in my area have teachers who are ‘surplus’ in their school the
council will move them to a school that needs them within the region. This is
not particularly encouraging as it means that anyone can be moved at the
beginning of any year without personal circumstances being taken into
consideration. For example we had a PE teacher who had been at the school
for 17 years and was moved to another school. We are a close knit family of
teachers at the High School – moving anyone is devastating for our teaching
community. Teachers could be moved far from their home – I could be
transferred to a high school which would take me 1 hour to get to instead of
the 25 minutes normally. It makes us feel like numbers rather than humans
and our long standing relationships with pupils and staff with whom we have a
connection and continuity suffers.

Perhaps give supply teachers a decent wage – even short term supply. Short
term are paid at point 1 scale for the first 5 days - which is not enough for an
experienced/retired teacher. Surely the pay should be as if they are a normal
teacher for however many days/hours they work. I couldn’t afford to retire and
take up doing supply to supplement my pension. It is not worth it and I would
probably better off finding a job elsewhere.

Perhaps supply teachers should work through agencies like in the English
system.

Q10 Have any measures been put in place as a result of changes to staffing
numbers in recent years at your school (examples include multi-school
headship/leadership teams, composite classes, changes in the use/availability
of support assistants)?

As a secondary school our school has suffered due to changes in staffing
numbers. The obtainability of supply staff and the decreasing numbers of
support staff are having a very detrimental effect on the teaching and learning.
There is now talk of increasing class numbers so decreasing the number of
teachers needed. This will add more stress to the already stressed teachers.

Computing has been faring badly. A practical subject where pupils need a lot
of support while working at the computers it is not on the list of ‘practical’
subjects. There are some school who increased the maximum number of
pupils in a Computing class from 20 to 30 and were able to decrease the
number of Computing staff by one member. This makes teaching Computing
very difficult. In a 50 minute lesson (with 5 minutes minimum to settle the
pupils down at the start, a 10 minute demonstration/lesson and pack up 5
minutes before the end of the lesson) we only have less than 2 minutes to
spend with each pupil helping them when they get stuck on their practical
work.

My HS has been unable to replace staff who have left and there have been
some unavoidable staff absences along with a lack of supply staff. As a
secondary school we have had to put classes in the hall with senior
management supervising. This is the last resort solution but unfortunately the only one available. At one time we had 5 classes in the school hall at one time. This does not work well for the pupils in the classes as they cannot possibly be learning correctly with over 100 in the hall and no teacher to assist them if they are stuck. It also doesn’t work for the rest of the school. We have pupils who take advantage that there are no senior management available (as they are in the hall) and will roam around the school being disruptive and showing a huge lack of respect towards teachers and those who are wanting to learn.

At first when I looked at the question I thought that the question was geared towards Primary Schools where I know that there have been multi-school headship/leadership teams. But looking at it again ‘composite classes – in Secondary school we now have S4, S5 and S6 all in the same classes. This on its own provides its own challenges.

I have had no experience with multi-school headship/leadership teams so cannot comment there. I have mentioned above about support staff. We are currently have available less and less support staff in the HS even though the pupils are becoming more challenging both in behaviour and in learning.

Q11 Are there any subject choices or other opportunities that are not available to pupils as a result of staff shortages that you consider would be valuable? (please specify)

The only subject we have had problems due to staff shortages in recent years is HE. There are a number of reasons why we have a more limited choice of subject than we used to but not specifically because of staff shortages, but more to do with money saving exercises to reduce the number of teachers in the school as a whole.

At this school it appears that even though our need is great for support staff TA it appears to me that every time one leaves we are told that the post is not going to be filled. We have some very difficult S1 to S3 pupils and very soon the support staff are going to be helping the pupils that have support during exams. For example, I have requested support for three classes and have been told I can’t have any as there is no one available. In these three classes I have been sworn at, called names, insulted, by pupils who show no respect for the teacher nor for those who want to learn.

Q12 How would you describe general morale among staff (very good / quite good / quite low / very low) and what are the key factors that influence it?

At the moment – very low. Especially as we are all going to have to put in a lot of work developing the new BGE course AND the new N5. It takes 3 or 4 years to really embed a course and we have barely had time to do this before the subject syllabuses change again. Along with staff shortages and the unavailability of teaching materials many teachers are unable to cope.

I am hoping to start a short course on Cyber Security. For this I will need some Raspberry Pi computers and other hardware equipment set up to do this exciting and interesting course. I will end up buying this equipment myself so that my pupils can take this course. Some of the pupils have offered to pay
for themselves but the HS is a ‘rural deprived’ school and I know that they cannot afford to buy extras.

GILLIAN DEARNESS

What are the main challenges in relation to teacher recruitment and retention?

- Do you have views or insight into the process for recruiting the right number of teachers to satisfy the demand for teachers in Scotland’s schools (including the availability of up to date information such as on supply and demand)? It’s not always the candidates with the best marks that make the best teachers, they are often the teachers that leave the profession as the options/desire for a management role or academic careers outwith the classroom are greater.

You need to take into account the natural desire to have a family and for (many) women returning on a part time basis. All professions are being affected by this.

Therefore more teachers should be trained than the “expected” requirements.

As a Drama teacher I can say that students wishing to train as a teacher find it very difficult to get into a Drama degree course. The standards are so high for (theatre) skills but perfectly adequate for students that want to be drama teachers.

- What are the factors that influence whether teaching is considered an attractive profession compared to other professions by those that might consider a career in teaching?

A career where you can nurture and develop a young persons skills for lifetime learning.

A profession that enables you to develop your own skills. A career path that gives you some options if you want to move into a management role.

Again the idea of a good quality of life for bringing up a family around your career. Pay/holidays etc.,

- Are there patterns or key reasons why some trainee teachers do not complete courses, or do not choose to go into teaching having qualified?

A lack of understanding of the rigour of the job. Longer working hours than imagined, stresses and strains of the workload and the constant requirements to resolve issues with pupils (course work and personal/social). There are times when you have no social or family life.

Not enough incentives to work in remoter areas, therefore choose another career path if they can’t get work where they would like to live…the central belt.

- What is the impact of teacher shortages in certain parts of Scotland or in specific disciplines?

Not enough incentives to work in remoter areas.
What factors influence teachers deciding whether to stay in the profession or to leave? and
Again...A lack of understanding of the rigour of the job. Longer working hours than imagined, stresses and strains of the workload and the constant requirements to resolve issues with pupils (course work and personal/social). There are times when you have no social or family life.

What factors influence teachers when deciding whether or not to apply for promotion to senior management/headteacher level?
I can’t imagine not teaching, and having to deal with staff, parents and paperwork on a day to day basis. The named person has put a lot of staff off.

ALISON MURPHY
I am a secondary school physics teacher, currently working in Edinburgh.

I taught for some years in England, and moved to Scotland over 10 years ago.

For a long time, particularly after moving to Scotland, I would have recommended teaching as a career. Though, in common with all professions, it had its difficulties, I enjoyed the nature and variety of the work, and shared that enthusiasm with others. At its best, teaching offers intellectual challenge, a chance to make a real difference to people’s lives and a reasonable degree of autonomy. There is generally a very supportive atmosphere amongst colleagues, and pupils are often appreciative of one’s efforts.

However, I am currently considering whether I can either retire early, or move into alternative employment. This is not something I am keen to do, but workload and other pressures mean that the many positives I find in my job are being constantly undermined. For example:

As a physics teacher, I enjoy keeping up-to-date with developments in my field, and sharing these with pupils. Pressure of work means that I have little time to read relevant professional literature myself, let alone consider ways of adapting my teaching so as to share ideas with pupils in an accessible way.

A few years ago, my school had the resources to support me in undertaking a Masters in Education. Though I had to fund the course fees myself, they were able to give me a small amount of non-contact time to undertake collaborative action research with colleagues, looking at ways of delivering science courses using cooperative pedagogies and thus enhancing the learning experience of pupils and the professional development of staff. However, increasing budgetary pressures, and a dearth of supply teachers, have meant that there has been no additional time to build on the work done, embed good practice or continue to develop this aspect of my practice.

I am constantly having to react to initiatives, none of which are given time to bed in before we are pushed to the “next big thing”. Though few have been bad of themselves, almost none have fulfilled their potential, due to rushed and under-resourced implementation.

I cannot properly differentiate my lessons to meet the increasingly diverse needs of my pupils. At the same time as the range of learning needs in
mainstream classes has massively increased, the support available has dropped considerably – everything from the availability of learning support, to money to buy in differentiated resources, to time to differentiate lessons. On the occasions when I am lucky enough to have a Pupil Support Assistant (PSA) in my classroom, there is rarely any time available to meet with them to plan how to best utilise their skills, and there is little consistency in the provision of support, as the shrinking pool of PSAs are constantly being pulled from their timetables to “firefight” emergencies – not to mention the huge churn in staff as good people leave to find better paid and less stressful work. I know that I am not meeting the needs of all my pupils, and it is incredibly frustrating to see students being turned off science, and learning in general, because I have not been able to do my best for them.

The appalling implementation of the new National Qualifications has been a dreadful experience. I saw pupils, and staff, driven to mental breakdown by the stresses of overassessment, and the constant changes. It is to be hoped that the recently announced changes offer some light at the end of the tunnel, but it is hard to be optimistic, given the history of the last few years, and the dread of continuing to see people suffer like this makes me consider leaving.

There still seems to be a total unawareness from national bodies about the nature of planning in schools. For example, we are only now receiving guidance on the changes to National Qualifications, with subject specific information still to follow. This means that we have less than a month of school time to implement these changes before the new timetable begins. This is totally unrealistic. It is particularly galling when national bodies such as the SQA, constantly miss their deadlines, “due to pressure of work” – they are able to do so but we, who have pupils who need to be taught in the appropriate classes, have no such freedom. Constantly dealing to such imposed pressures is another reason to think about leaving teaching.

A further issue is the lack of meaningful career progression. Were I to be interested in a career in senior management, this would be more difficult than previously – the move to faculty structures has meant that there is a greatly diminished number of middle management promoted posts available (and budget cuts have meant that many schools have also seen a substantial reduction in the number of deputy heads). I see some colleagues undertaking very substantial management tasks totally unremunerated, and in their own time, as “development opportunities” that they see as essential to enabling them to compete for the reduced number of promoted posts available. These are tasks that would previously have had both management time and money attached to them. In some cases the tasks are simply not being done, in others they are not being done as well because they are having to be “fitted in” with other roles. This not only reduces the attractiveness of promotion (with all the obvious impacts on retention) but also impacts on the effectiveness of everyone working in schools. As it happens, I have never wanted to become a senior manager (I enjoy time in the classroom too much, and am not convinced that a head or deputy head role would suit my strengths) and even middle management has limited appeal for me. As someone who is generally regarded as a “strong” classroom teacher, I would really like to develop this further – either through a revamped Chartered
Teacher scheme, or some form of Advanced Skills Teaching. As things stand, I have been at the top of the main grade pay scale for some years, and my only realistic prospect of achieving any salary progression is to move away from the classroom, or out of teaching. This is particularly depressing when I see friends with equivalent professional qualifications to me steadily drawing away from me in terms of earnings. I never thought I would become rich teaching, but I also never thought staying in this job would mean I end up significantly poorer than my peers in jobs that were once considered equivalent.

All these issues mean that I can no longer, in good conscience, try to persuade people to move into teaching as a rewarding career, and I know I am not alone in considering leaving. The morale of the staff at my school (both teaching and non-teaching) is about as low now as I have ever seen it, and more and more the talk is of people looking for early retirement, or other “escape plans”. The perfect storm of eroding pay, worsening conditions, a totally unmanageable workload, diminishing professional satisfaction and no realistic prospect of medium or even long term improvement means that Scotland faces the real risk that the only people left teaching the workforce of the future are those who are themselves unable to gain employment elsewhere… I shudder to think what impact that will have.

A PHIN
Q1 What type of teaching role do you have
Maths teacher (secondary)

Q2 Whereabouts do you work?
Monifieth High School, Angus

Q4 What are the positives that keep you in the teaching profession?
I enjoy working with the pupils. I get a great deal of satisfaction out of organising courses, making up activities to help pupils learn, creating an environment in which they feel it is safe to explore their growing understanding of maths, and seeing the progress they make. However, as the pace of change has become more rapid, I find myself less willing to invest my own time in this as many hours of work can suddenly be rendered irrelevant.

Q5 Do you consider that you will teach until you retire or do you consider leaving early or for alternative employment? (If you consider leaving, please specify why if it relates to your enjoyment of your role)
My retirement age is well past sixty so, unless there are significant changes, I will be seeking early retirement because the levels of workload, stress and frustration I am currently experiencing are likely to have a negative effect on my long term wellbeing. I accept that the price of early retirement may mean finding other employment.

Q6 What would encourage you to seek promotion to senior management, including to headteacher level? What would discourage you from seeking promotion?
I have been asked to consider a promoted post on a number of occasions. I am not willing to take this step because I can see the effect constant overwork and strain have had on my promoted colleagues. I value my health and my family life. In the current climate I am particularly glad that my job does not entail persuading colleagues to make changes that I can see are unlikely to benefit staff or pupils and trying to maintain a service with ever-diminishing resources.

Q7 What do you think are the main challenges, if any, in recruiting or retaining teachers (and other staff) at your school? (please feel free to provide details of practical experiences)

I think one of the main challenges is that, when potential teachers talk to existing teachers, they learn that morale in the profession is low. Low morale is due to the imposition of a curriculum which (in maths) is inferior to the one it replaces and an arrogant disregard for the views of teachers, particularly from the SQA.

Evidence from the SSLN and various standardised tests used by authorities (e.g. MIDYIS, INCAS) shows that pupils arrive in secondary school with poorer maths skills than previously. Having spent two years on secondment working with primary teachers this is not because primary teachers do not care about maths but because they have been bombarded with confusing and contradictory advice from Education Scotland. The S1-3 curriculum is still not properly defined after many years (hence the need for Benchmarks) and PISA shows that Scottish pupils at 15 are not reaching the levels of attainment they did in the past.

The reasons why the S4-6 curriculum is inferior to its predecessor were expressed very clearly in the submission from the Maths Advisory Group Scotland (included below). Personally, I was disgusted to see this thoughtful piece of work dismissed with a particularly crass piece of blame shifting by an SQA spokesman (TESS 17.03.17). To me it was typical of the way in which our national agencies are unwilling to take responsibility for the mess they have created and listen to teachers and work with them to improve the situation.

I would like to share a recent experience because it illustrates the way in which arbitrary decisions by the SQA cause unnecessary stress and workload for teachers, hence creating an atmosphere of insecurity which lowers morale and makes teaching a less attractive profession.

Aware that a significant number of pupils could pass National 4 in Maths but had virtually no chance of getting National 5 because of poor course design, I introduced the LIBF Certificate in Personal Finance three years ago. This was a GCSE qualification which was accepted as equivalent to National 5 and covered topics such as loans, mortgages, taxes, credit cards, bankruptcy etc. At first only eight pupils signed up for this course, but they enjoyed it and appreciated its relevance. This year 28 pupils signed up for 2017/18. However, just about a week after pupils made their choice I received an email from LIBF to say that the agreement with the SQA under which their GCSE course was accepted as an equivalent to National 5 had broken down. I
attended an Education Scotland event on financial education in Edinburgh at the end of March and made a point of speaking to the relevant SQA qualifications manager. He could give me no assurance that the SQA’s replacement course would be ready in time for the pupils who signed up to start a financial education course in June but he did share some draft documents which showed the content of the course would be significantly different.

There is no doubt that National 5 qualifications across the board created considerably more workload for teachers and attempts to reduce the workload seem to have backfired, creating a situation where, after failing to get rid of unit tests but introducing extra elements, some colleagues may actually face an increased burden.

Personally I reckon the extra assessments add a couple of hours to my working week and lot of stress. Although in principle unit tests are no longer necessary, maths is one of the few subjects where a pupil’s results are purely based on an exam. We have a relatively high failure rate and we cannot predict accurately which pupils will have a bad day on the 5th of May so I can see no alternative but to do unit tests with the majority of pupils.

Q8 Which particular subject specialisms/support roles face the greatest challenges with recruitment or retention?

The fall in the number of pupils taking Higher Maths is a serious problem because it considerably reduces the pool of potential scientists and engineers as well as future maths and science teachers. Recent research (TESS 14.04.17) shows that those in a career in STEM find mathematics more useful than science in their work. The research also shows that those who choose STEM careers had a high level of enjoyment of mathematics at school therefore the findings of the Maths Counts Report which shows Scottish pupils feel they are being rushed through an overcrowded curriculum in maths needs to be addressed.

Q9 Do you have any suggestions for how challenges with recruitment and retention might be addressed?

SQA and Education Scotland need to take teachers concerns seriously and start working with them to arrive at position where the curriculum is stable from year to year and the burden of assessment in S4-S6 is reduced so teachers can focus on helping pupils to learn.

This is certainly not a quick fix but, when potential new teachers talk to existing members of the profession and hear that life in the classroom is more satisfying, recruitment will improve.

Q10 Have any measures been put in place as a result of changes to staffing numbers in recent years at your school (examples include multi-school headship/leadership teams, composite classes, changes in the use/availability of support assistants)?

If so:

• What are these measures?
• How well are they working?
• Are these changes a permanent or a temporary measure (ie is it covering vacancies at present or is it to reflect the number of teacher/other posts has reduced?)

Q12 How would you describe general morale among staff (very good / quite good / quite low / very low) and what are the key factors that influence it?

Among maths colleagues morale is quite low because, as well as increased workload, we feel the system imposed on us prevents us meeting pupils’ needs as successfully as the previous 5-14/Standard Grade regime. We are constantly worried that we will miss some minor change in the ever-shifting system and end up disadvantaging our pupils unintentionally. We no longer have any confidence in either ES or SQA to manage change effectively.

Additional comments

In the last few years I feel I have been trapped in a system that is constantly self-harming!

(I have included the Maths Advisory Group Scotland’s submission referred to above)

Mathematics Advisory Group Scotland

To: Gill Stewart, SQA
Martin Brown, SQA
John Swinney, Scottish Government
Larry Flannigan, EIS
Euan Duncan, SSTA
Nicola Fisher, EIS

The Mathematics Advisory Group Scotland (MAGS) met on 17 November 2016 to discuss a number of matters related to mathematics education in Scotland.

It was decided to collate our comments and concerns around levels of attainment in mathematics and issues around National Qualifications in the subject area.
Is the progression from National 4 to National 5 mathematics realistic?

There was a general feeling that National 5 is challenging and a number of pupils are not getting National 5 in mathematics but achieving it in other subject areas. Data on Nat 5 attainment in mathematics, English and French show the disparity between the number of pupils gaining a National 5 qualification in English and those getting mathematics with only two thirds of those being awarded English getting mathematics.

Issues

- Appropriate presentation of pupils e.g. Pupils who used to get a KU 2 and RA 3 in S Grade finding Nat 4 too easy but Nat 5 too difficult. There is too big a gap between both the quantity and difficulty of learning required between the two levels.
- Removing unit assessments seems like a quick fix for workload but it may present many more problems around pressure to ensure pupil receive a qualification. In particular, we are concerned about the different assessment burdens that will be placed on learners of different abilities. The more able learner will benefit without unit assessments with more time will being spent on learning and teaching. However, the less able learner and borderline N5 pupil will, as a safety net, be completing units to ensure some level of certification if staff are not confident they will achieve an overall course award. This will mean less teaching time for those who need it most.
- There is another concern that if candidates fail the Nat 5 exam they will they have no numeracy award which is a national priority.
- There is a very poor progression success rate from Nat 4 in S4 to Nat 5 which we feel can be attributed to the aforementioned gap in volume of content and level of challenge. This excludes hard working candidates who would like to continue their mathematics education from accessing a recognised and credible qualification at a higher level.
- Is there a possibility of a National 4 external assessment which is a little bit nearer Nat 5?
- The announcement from SQA regarding need to look at the coursework and final exam to ensure it covers the course. Could we end up with an even more testing/challenging exam which might increase the gap between N4 and N5? Using the SQA information below and previous guidelines on the split of level C
and level A/B marks, the revised N5 exam could include another approx. 8 marks at A/B level and 12 at C level. We would encourage SQA to consider if all 20 extra marks could be used to ensure that hardworking but perhaps less able candidates will be given a fair opportunity to demonstrate all they have learnt. The increase in time allocation for these extra marks may disadvantage some pupils.

**SQA advice as of Feb 2017**

Both question papers will be extended to include more questions. The number of marks available in question paper 1 will increase from 40 marks to 50 marks and the number of marks available in question paper 2 will increase from 50 marks to 60 marks. The duration of each exam will therefore also increase.

The question papers are being extended to ensure they sample a greater amount of course content, following the removal of units. There has been a marginal change in the weighting between question papers 1 and 2 but this should have no overall impact on the assessment of mandatory knowledge and skills across the two papers.

**Why is the number of pupils sitting Higher Maths decreasing?**

The decrease in the number of pupils sitting Higher Maths is a concern. While the number of pupils sitting Higher English continues to rise, the number sitting Higher Maths falls. This is recognised in the “Making Maths Count” report:

**National Qualifications**

*The Group’s interim report discussed entry figures and pass rates for National Qualifications in Mathematics. Initial results data for 2016 are now available. These show a decline in entry figures for Higher Mathematics from 21,074 in 2015 to 18,868 in 2016. This contrasts with a rise in the entry figures for Higher English from 35,354 in 2015 to 36,356 in 2016. Our interim report highlighted the growing gap in entry patterns between Higher Maths and Higher English and it is disappointing to see this trend continue and increase with the latest figures. The total number of passes for Higher Mathematics also decreased in 2016 (13,863) compared with 2015 (15,169).*

From SQA External Assessment and Course reports the numbers of pupils sitting Higher mathematics has declined recently whilst the number of pupils sitting and passing Higher English has risen.

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Mathematics has suffered from bad press about the Higher exam. As discussed in Making Maths Count, the public need reassurance and clarity on what to expect from Higher Mathematics and its usefulness for future studies. We feel that in advance of the changes to the Higher exam in 2018/19 there is an opportunity for the SQA to address public unease perhaps with the publication of a suite of exemplar papers.

There is a perceived difficulty in mathematics courses. It may be that pupils taking a strategic decision to take courses where they have consider they are more likely to achieve at a better grade.

Is there lack of equity between mathematics courses and other subject areas?

As “Making Maths Count” noted:

Pupils in S4 to S6 perceived Mathematics as different from other subjects in terms of the time pressures particularly at Higher level: “You are constantly moving from one thing to the next and it makes it difficult if you are struggling with a particular aspect; it’s also hard to remember what you have done and catch up if you fall behind.”

We think there is lack of equality around mathematics courses and their difficulty related to other subjects. Staff in schools report that there is a number of S5 pupils who do 5 subjects with 4 being at Higher level but Nat 5 in maths.

Other subjects have a substantial internal component which reassures pupils that their efforts throughout the session have already contributed to the overall award potentially reducing exam anxiety. We do feel that this puts an additional stress on candidates sitting mathematics exams. We do not feel that putting in an assignment would be right for the mathematics courses but would certainly encourage an exploration of all options.

Despite having a few years’ experience of the National Qualifications colleagues are still reporting pupils being overwhelmed by the demands of internal projects or assessments.
in other subjects. This is causing pupils to prioritise coursework which is crucial to those courses as it forms part of the overall award. This is to the detriment of learning in mathematics as the pupils cannot meet the requirements of the mathematics course such homework, further study etc. This negative impact on mathematics is furthered by the fact that the mathematics award is solely based on the final exam rather than going into the final exam with a significant number of marks already “in the bag”.

In summary, nationally, secondary mathematics teacher and secondary head teachers are raising concerns that pupils, as a whole, cannot achieve National 5 mathematics while they can achieve National 5 in many other subjects. This would indicate a lack of consistency in assessment standards across the suite of examinations. This is causing a lack of equality, in opportunity and achievement, for pupils. Staff are extremely stressed, under pressure from above and demoralised by the perception of the poor performance in mathematics.

This inequality of opportunity needs addressed urgently by the SQA and the Scottish Government.

G KERR
Q1 What type of teaching role do you have
Drama Teacher - Secondary

Q4 What are the positives that keep you in the teaching profession?
The day to day interaction with the pupils. The fact that every day is different.

Q5 Do you consider that you will teach until you retire or do you consider leaving early or for alternative employment? (If you consider leaving, please specify why if it relates to your enjoyment of your role)
I would leave if I could. The reason why I would leave is that I have been teaching for 15 years and there is currently no opportunity to improve my wage or my skills without going into a Management position which I think is extremely detrimental to the profession. I want to remain in the class room, I did not come into teaching to tick boxes.

I can easily see a day where I feel ground down by the constant changes that take place in teaching, as well as the feeling my profession is used as a political football. People in power make decisions that directly impact on my job when they themselves have no experience of what teaching is like.

Q6 What would encourage you to seek promotion to senior management, including to headteacher level? What would discourage you from seeking promotion?
I came into teaching to teach, not to be a box ticker and to push through Government agendas that I don’t agree with. I have never sought promotion as I feel it would remove me from teaching, and my job would become an admin role. I would quickly become dissatisfied in such a role.

Q7 What do you think are the main challenges, if any, in recruiting or retaining teachers (and other staff) at your school? (please feel free to provide details of practical experiences)

There is no salary increase for teachers who have reached over 6 year teaching and want to remain in the class room and teach. We have created an environment where the only way to increase your wage packet is to go into management. Far too many people are being forced into management positions that they are not cut out to do as a result of needing more money.

The pressure placed on teachers is far too much, many teachers are having to work excessive hours with little support to try and keep up with the constant changes.

Lack of promotion opportunities due to the introduction of Faculties removing Head of Department roles; the removal of the Chartered Teacher programme (which offered an alternative way to expand your role and salary) also leaves teachers with no place to move forward.

Councils are more likely to employ probationers for one year, then let them go, rather than building a stable team of staff who are invested in and feel valued.

There is also the use of Area Cover staff, which again leads to fewer permanent posts for teachers.

Teaching is becoming an increasingly stressful job, with budget cuts, frozen salaries, changing societal pressures/ pupils with increasingly troubled backgrounds, and unfair criticism of teachers making it an increasingly unattractive career.

Q8 Which particular subject specialisms/support roles face the greatest challenges with recruitment or retention?

Unable to comment

Q9 Do you have any suggestions for how challenges with recruitment and retention might be addressed?

Returning the chartered teacher scheme would encourage more classroom teachers to stay in teaching. Increasing opportunities for secondments, flexible roles would also provide people with greater variety of roles/ activities throughout their career and may help retention

Q10 Have any measures been put in place as a result of changes to staffing numbers in recent years at your school (examples include multi-school headship/leadership teams, composite classes, changes in the use/availability of support assistants)?

If so:
• What are these measures?
• How well are they working?
• Are these changes a permanent or a temporary measure (ie is it covering vacancies at present or is it to reflect the number of teacher/other posts has reduced?)
• There has been an increased used of Area Cover and Probationary staff instead of permanent staff. This has allowed positions to be filled, but is a short term solution which leads to less consistency between years and very little continuity for the pupils.

Q11 Are there any subject choices or other opportunities that are not available to pupils as a result of staff shortages that you consider would be valuable? (please specify)

Home Economics is currently not offered to S2 in my school due to ongoing staff shortages. This means pupils are missing out on education surrounding nutrition/ healthy lifestyle choices, and the chance to develop practical life skills.

Q12 How would you describe general morale among staff (very good / quite good / quite low / very low) and what are the key factors that influence it?

I would say morale is quite low. Constant changes to courses, with little input from teachers, and often during the course of a year, mean many teachers feel uncertain of what they should be teaching and the best way to prepare for the exam. This also creates tension between pupils and teachers as pupils often assume the teacher is not prepared/ not bothering to teach them well.

DEBBIE MCKIBBIN

Q1 What type of teaching role do you have

I am a Secondary Teacher with a permanent contract. I am dual qualified in RMPS and Geography, and for the last few years part of my timetable has involved working in the Support for Learning department.

Q2 Whereabouts do you work?

I work in Larkhall Academy, in South Lanarkshire.

Q4 What are the positives that keep you in the teaching profession?

Helping pupils to develop as learners and to become positive, helpful people. Teaching, on good days, does provide a sense of satisfaction.

I also appreciate the degree of flexibility that teaching offers i.e. I can decide what topics/ strategies I can use with pupils to get the best from them.

Q5 Do you consider that you will teach until you retire or do you consider leaving early or for alternative employment? (If you consider leaving, please specify why if it relates to your enjoyment of your role)

Currently I feel I will stay in teaching until I retire but I worry that I will not be as effective a teacher as I have been. I can easily see a day where I feel ground down by the constant changes that take place in teaching, as well as
the feeling my profession is used as a political football. People in power make decisions that directly impact on my job when they themselves have no experience of what teaching is like.

Q6 What would encourage you to seek promotion to senior management, including to headteacher level? What would discourage you from seeking promotion?

I have never sought promotion as I feel it would remove me from teaching, and my job would become an admin role. I would quickly become dissatisfied in such a role.

Q7 What do you think are the main challenges, if any, in recruiting or retaining teachers (and other staff) at your school? (please feel free to provide details of practical experiences)

Lack of promotion opportunities due to the introduction of Faculties removing Head of Department roles; the removal of the Chartered Teacher programme (which offered an alternative way to expand your role and salary) also leaves teachers with no place to move forward.

Councils are more likely to employ probationers for one year, then let them go, rather than building a stable team of staff who are invested in and feel valued.

There is also the use of Area Cover staff, which again leads to fewer permanent posts for teachers.

Teaching is becoming an increasingly stressful job, with budget cuts, frozen salaries, changing societal pressures/ pupils with increasingly troubled backgrounds, and unfair criticism of teachers making it an increasingly unattractive career.

Q8 Which particular subject specialisms/support roles face the greatest challenges with recruitment or retention?

I am not sure if any particular specialism is suffering more than another.

Q9 Do you have any suggestions for how challenges with recruitment and retention might be addressed?

Returning the chartered teacher scheme would encourage more classroom teachers to stay in teaching. Increasing opportunities for secondments, flexible roles would also provide people with greater variety of roles/ activities throughout their career and may help retention.

Q10 Have any measures been put in place as a result of changes to staffing numbers in recent years at your school (examples include multi-school headship/leadership teams, composite classes, changes in the use/availability of support assistants)?

If so:

- What are these measures?
- How well are they working?
• Are these changes a permanent or a temporary measure (ie is it covering vacancies at present or is it to reflect the number of teacher/other posts has reduced?)

There has been an increased used of Area Cover and Probationary staff instead of permanent staff. This has allowed positions to be filled, but is a short term solution which leads to less consistency between years.

Q11 Are there any subject choices or other opportunities that are not available to pupils as a result of staff shortages that you consider would be valuable? (please specify)

Home Economics is currently not offered to S2 in my school due to ongoing staff shortages. This means pupils are missing out on education surrounding nutrition/ healthy lifestyle choices, and the chance to develop practical life skills.

Q12 How would you describe general morale among staff (very good / quite good / quite low / very low) and what are the key factors that influence it?

Generally speaking I would say morale is quite low. Constant changes to courses, with little input from teachers, and often during the course of a year, mean many teachers feel uncertain of what they should be teaching and the best way to prepare for the exam. This also creates tension between pupils and teachers as pupils often assume the teacher is not prepared/ not bothering to teach them well.

JANET KINNAIRD

Q1 What type of teaching role do you have

  I recently retired as acting depute head in a primary school and now work as a supply teacher.

Q4 What are the positives that keep you in the teaching profession?

The positives that keep me in the profession are 1.My belief that I can improve the life chances for our children in Scotland but not necessarily in agreement with the current government. 2. I know that I do a really good job. 3. I am interested in developments in school which are good for our children.

Q5 Do you consider that you will teach until you retire or do you consider leaving early or for alternative employment? (If you consider leaving, please specify why it relates to your enjoyment of your role)

I would have been very happy teaching full time beyond retirement age but Highland Council are so set on having young members of staff with little experience in promoted posts that this was no longer an option for me.

Highland Council seem very happy to lose willing experienced teachers in the vain hope of saving money. What they save in salaries they have to spend on CPD training in order to up skill the work force.
Q6 What would encourage you to seek promotion to senior management, including to headteacher level? What would discourage you from seeking promotion?

The support of my colleagues in doing a good job as an acting DHT encouraged me in my work and CPD to do my best for our school.

The attitude of the authority encouraged me to retire.

Q7 What do you think are the main challenges, if any, in recruiting or retaining teachers (and other staff) at your school? (please feel free to provide details of practical experiences)

Younger staff members have an entitlement attitude and are not prepared to put in the hours required. Perhaps this is not made clear to them prior to taking on the job/ or by their university.

Housing costs compared to salaries are high and within the Highlands remoteness can be an issue.

Constant change and paperwork . When the paperwork becomes more than the teaching time the balance is completely wrong.

Q8 Which particular subject specialisms/support roles face the greatest challenges with recruitment or retention?

Primary I believe because of the high expectaions of the job

Q9 Do you have any suggestions for how challenges with recruitment and retention might be addressed?

I think the reduced school week, more supportive input from parents and carers and less paperwork for all class teachers. Behaviour issues need to be addressed with HTs being given more support to exclude children more easily and for longer periods.

Q10 Have any measures been put in place as a result of changes to staffing numbers in recent years at your school (examples include multi-school headship/leadership teams, composite classes, changes in the use/availability of support assistants)?

If so:

- What are these measures?
- How well are they working?
- Are these changes a permanent or a temporary measure (ie is it covering vacancies at present or is it to reflect the number of teacher/other posts has reduced?)

Classroom assistant role has changed dramatically form a hands on support for CTs to the role of pupil support assistant targeting children with recognised needs. This has increased workload dramatically for CTs and reduced support to many children. The children who don’t have a recognised need but benefit hugely from a little extra encouragement or someone to sit and share with.The expectation is that CTs can still teach
reading, phonics and maths to small groups and maintain standards. This is not a reality.

Q11 Are there any subject choices or other opportunities that are not available to pupils as a result of staff shortages that you consider would be valuable? (please specify)

CTs who had the support of classroom assistants could embark on considerably more practical work, eg cooking, film making, outdoor learning

Q12 How would you describe general morale among staff (very good / quite good / quite low / very low) and what are the key factors that influence it?

Morale is not high and the constant changes have a huge negative impact on this. Teachers are regularly being told how well every other nation is doing but the powers that be are constantly tinkering around the edges undermining teachers. Money is thrown at subjects such as Mandarin yet many of our pupils in Scotland struggle with basic English. Within primary schools teachers are expected to teach a very wide range of subjects but a slightly narrower curriculum focusing on Language, Maths and Health and Well Being particularly in the early years would pay huge dividends later.

Additional comments

If you have any other comments please include them below:

There are a number of very good initiatives within Scottish Education. A good example being children who suffer multiple social deprivations access nursery education earlier than some of their peers. However there are still 20 hours a day when those same children are returned to that social deprivation. If, as a country, we are serious about improving outcomes for our most vulnerable and our politicians bang this drum – then the parents ought to be included in this process. When our vulnerable youngsters are in nursery their parent/s should be in a learning environment too. Learning how to improve their parenting skills/financial skills and household management skills. And yes this costs money but surely the benefit to the children and families as a whole is a cheap benefit to the country in the long run.

School Enrolment Age

Many children are attending school for the first time aged 4 ½. This is contrary to our European neighbours and particularly our Scandanavian ones. Research shows quite clearly that children who enter primary school following their fifth almost 6th birthday are on the whole more successful than those who start earlier.

Child care and education are significant aspects of family life but child care for working parents should be separated from formal education as it is with our European neighbours.

SIMON ROBINSON

Q1 What type of teaching role do you have

Secondary Teacher of Science – Chartered Teacher
Q2 Whereabouts do you work?

City of Edinburgh Council

Q4 What are the positives that keep you in the teaching profession?
I enjoy working with learners who want to learn, passing on my subject enjoyment and knowledge, and collaborating with other professionals.

Q5 Do you consider that you will teach until you retire or do you consider leaving early or for alternative employment? (If you consider leaving, please specify why if it relates to your enjoyment of your role)
As I am now expected to work to 67 I hope that I will be able to go part-time from 60 as I do not think I will be physically or mentally fit enough after this to do my job properly.

Q6 What would encourage you to seek promotion to senior management, including to headteacher level? What would discourage you from seeking promotion?
I have been a subject, faculty and curriculum leader, a head of year and an Assistant Head teacher who qualified with an NPQH in England, which taught me that I do not want a Headship. Too much stress, too many variables, too little time and too many interruptions to my work. I am happy that I have gone back to classroom teacher and can use my training and experience to support my students and colleagues.

Q7 What do you think are the main challenges, if any, in recruiting or retaining teachers (and other staff) at your school? (please feel free to provide details of practical experiences)
Many people still want to apply but Golden handshakes should only be provided after the third year in the job not to encourage trainees who might not take up a post. I like Scotland’s commitment to probationer employment. I wonder if this could be extended to two years?

Q8 Which particular subject specialisms/support roles face the greatest challenges with recruitment or retention?
Any science graduate can get better pay, terms and conditions in industry so unless you are dedicated to teaching you won’t want to apply.

Q9 Do you have any suggestions for how challenges with recruitment and retention might be addressed?
Improved pay and conditions. Better support that needs more time in the whole system. The Chartered Teacher programme was the best CPD I completed because it allowed time to reflect and discuss with critical colleagues. That needs to be available for every teacher.

Q10 Have any measures been put in place as a result of changes to staffing numbers in recent years at your school (examples include multi-school
headship/leadership teams, composite classes, changes in the use/availability of support assistants)?

If so:

- What are these measures?
- How well are they working?
- Are these changes a permanent or a temporary measure (ie is it covering vacancies at present or is it to reflect the number of teacher/other posts has reduced?)

After options we might not have the staffing to cover 5 teaching groups despite pupil numbers being sufficient so we have had to offer students second options instead.

Many people still want to apply but Golden handshakes should only be provided after the third year in the job not to encourage trainees who might not take up a post. I like Scotland’s commitment to probationer employment. I wonder if this could be extended to two years?

**Q11** Are there any subject choices or other opportunities that are not available to pupils as a result of staff shortages that you consider would be valuable? (please specify)

For some students, they did not get their first choice.

**Q12** How would you describe general morale among staff (very good / quite good / quite low / very low) and what are the key factors that influence it?

In ten years I have been on maximum allocated time as my department has no slack in it. This means development time is extremely limited. Lots of work used to be done during exam leave but as this is shorter and with N4 classes remaining this time has been curtailed. I want to do a good job but have had to use summer holidays to write materials for new courses. This is becoming unpaid work.

Morale is low. Curriculum change has been very erosive. SQA moderation has been highly critical, unsupportive and frankly damaging. Colleagues have been in tears having failed moderation and seen no support for improvement from SQA.

It is only because my faculty team is very good that we have pulled together and dealt with this shambles.

Curriculum change and leadership have been poor for the introduction of National Qualifications. A juggernaut of change to the exams has flattened teacher morale and the leadership offered by government and SQA has been weak, variable, changeable and uninspiring. The fact that changes have been imposed after three years of unending initiatives shows how poorly conceived was their introduction.

**Additional comments**

If you have any other comments please include them below:

Some N5 subjects are harder than others.

3 years BGE is not well thought through.
5xN5 is limiting student choice too early.

Lack of progression between levels N345 is poor.

Removing unit assessment will penalise weaker candidates who can’t drop back in future.

Education leadership in Scotland has no underlying philosophy except cost-cutting.

P MUIR

Q1 What type of teaching role do you have

Secondary English Teacher 0.8. I became a teacher in 1991 after moving from a recruitment and training company

Q4 What are the positives that keep you in the teaching profession?

The invariable variability of young people.

Guiding young people to achieve their potential.

The challenge of approaching each individual’s learning journey afresh, remembering that this is the first time they have thought about a topic.

Being able to use the knowledge of National Standards I have gained as a Team Leader for National 5 English and previously as an Examiner for Standard Grade English.

Encouraging the development of questioning individuals who will make their way in the world with the aspiration to create a fairer, more equitable society.

Q5 Do you consider that you will teach until you retire or do you consider leaving early or for alternative employment? (If you consider leaving, please specify why if it relates to your enjoyment of your role)

Currently I envisage teaching until I retire, but I will reduce the number of days I work as a full timetable of classes is physically unsustainable for a person my age in an educational edifice which ‘forces everyone within the system to undergo intellectual, moral and practical contortions that no one really believes in’. Hence the effect of low morale within a totalitarian system is to reduce productivity and commitment, allied to a fear of putting a foot outside, of speaking out.

Q6 What would encourage you to seek promotion to senior management, including to headteacher level? What would discourage you from seeking promotion?

Promotion within existing structures means reduction in class teaching time, sometimes reduced to zero and appears to involve endemic laziness. If I can do this job on time I cannot be busy so could be given more work. Therefore I will do it late or not at all. Institutional inertia infects the entire edifice. Managers do as little as possible.
Head Teacher is a 19th century anachronistic construct not suited to the modern educational environment; a political role politically unaccountable to those they serve: staff, pupils, or parents; aren’t you jealous as MPs?.

A restructuring of the senior management structures to reflect the requirements of a 21st century education sector is outwith the scope of this remit, but a first step would be to remove the power of appointment from Headteachers and to reduce their power which operates within a ‘grace and favour’ system rather than increase the range of their powers. Why should they know best? And since when is it only their school?

Q7 What do you think are the main challenges, if any, in recruiting or retaining teachers (and other staff) at your school? (please feel free to provide details of practical experiences)

Salary

Promotion Structure

Q8 Which particular subject specialisms/support roles face the greatest challenges with recruitment or retention?

Those where traditional subject areas have been ‘modernised’ and the role requirements expanded outwith an achievable skills base for a single teacher. For instance, Home Economics now requires fabric design skills

Q9 Do you have any suggestions for how challenges with recruitment and retention might be addressed?

Personnel recruiters qualified to assess suitability of candidates should have sole control over promotion

Promotion within a school should only be in an acting capacity; all promotions should involve a change of school where possible.

Headteachers should be accountable to staff they manage and be removed where ineffective. This is an unaccountable post usually for life.

Q10 Have any measures been put in place as a result of changes to staffing numbers in recent years at your school (examples include multi-school headship/leadership teams, composite classes, changes in the use/availability of support assistants)?

If so:

- What are these measures?
- How well are they working?
- Are these changes a permanent or a temporary measure (ie is it covering vacancies at present or is it to reflect the number of teacher/other posts has reduced?)

Pupil support staff are being used in the role previously filled by trained teaching professionals doing cooperative teaching, as a result of which pupils are not being provided with a skilled trained teacher in order to develop to their potential. Parateacher is not qualified to fill the role of teacher.
Promoted posts are being filled in with ‘aspiring’ staff. Those individuals who have declared their interest in possible promotion. And if enough people aspire enough a full post can be filled saving staffing costs and hiding the recruitment issue.

Q11 Are there any subject choices or other opportunities that are not available to pupils as a result of staff shortages that you consider would be valuable? (please specify)

The opportunity to learn how to manage a healthy domestic life

Training in resilience delivered by experienced personnel

The opportunity not to be bullied; counselling for those students who are identified as at risk because of bullying behaviour towards others.

Q12 How would you describe general morale among staff (very good / quite good / quite low / very low) and what are the key factors that influence it?

Very low

Headteacher

Incompetence within key promoted posts required for the efficient running of a school, by which I mean failure to adequately support the values of the systems set up within the school to ensure the best for staff and students. Lack of action by senior staff to provide disruptive pupils with an alternative pathway.

Headteacher favourites among staff, especially those who indicate they aspire to becoming a Headteacher. The result of the corruption of undemocratically accountable power. Dictatorships are not benign.

Additional comments

If you have any other comments please include them below:

The current focus on education is both necessary and welcome, but education alone cannot function as a tool for social engineering without those in leadership within it having either a commitment to it or an accountable responsibility for delivering it. Within current structures the truth becomes irrelevant. Individuals who accept their roles within the system, who conform to it and fulfil it, are the system. They cannot be relied upon to alter it or to make it work. The teachers who commit to the delivery of a quality educational experience suited to the needs of every child are always faced with the blunt end of attempts to reform management practices in education from within. This adds to low morale and a reduction in quality of delivery which results in ammunition for management to scape goat individuals by instigating competency hearings or conducting pseudo disciplinary investigations involving teachers who do not conform to the corporate ideology espoused as the future guarantee of equity for pupils. In fact it has already resulted in dilution of those qualities which make for a great teacher rather than simply a good enough one.

Thank you for this opportunity to reflect critically on standards within my profession as there is no window that is open for individuals who actually teach to comment on what is going wrong in the school system. That is a window that a Headteacher and his cohort of supporters within a school would not invite one to leave by.
BARRY OGILVIE

Q1 What type of teaching role do you have

Secondary Head of Faculty

Q4 What are the positives that keep you in the teaching profession?
Observing young people achieve skills that you helped them learn.

Q5 Do you consider that you will teach until you retire or do you consider leaving early or for alternative employment? (If you consider leaving, please specify why if it relates to your enjoyment of your role)

I would consider alternative employment due to the unreasonable workload that is expected.

Q6 What would encourage you to seek promotion to senior management, including to headteacher level? What would discourage you from seeking promotion?

I would not consider promotion to SMT level because:

- It would take me away from my subject area.
- I do not believe the SMT get the support they require from the Local Authority.
- The role of the SMT is to follow the instructions of the HT – there is little opportunity to use your professional judgment and this would feel disempowering.
- Given the difference in salary and tax it would not be financially worth it.

Q7 What do you think are the main challenges, if any, in recruiting or retaining teachers (and other staff) at your school? (please feel free to provide details of practical experiences)

- Low staff Morale
- Unreasonable workload
- Continual outrageous behaviour from the same pupils.
- Lack of support from school leaders.

Q8 Which particular subject specialisms/support roles face the greatest challenges with recruitment or retention?

- Home economics – Chronic staff absence with no replacement for 5 years.

Q9 Do you have any suggestions for how challenges with recruitment and retention might be addressed?

- Reasonable workload.
- Improve impact of sanctions for indiscipline.
- Increase salary

Q10 Have any measures been put in place as a result of changes to staffing numbers in recent years at your school (examples include multi-school headship/leadership teams, composite classes, changes in the use/availability of support assistants)?

No we have had no additional support staffing added in the last 5 years, in fact the number of office staff and janitorial staff has been reduced.
If so:

- What are these measures?
- How well are they working?
- Are these changes a permanent or a temporary measure (ie is it covering vacancies at present or is it to reflect the number of teacher/other posts has reduced?)

**Q11** Are there any subject choices or other opportunities that are not available to pupils as a result of staff shortages that you consider would be valuable? (please specify)

**The opportunity for pupils to have their individual learning needs met is not available to pupils because staff have not been provided to do this.**

**Q12** How would you describe general morale among staff (very good / quite good / quite low / very low) and what are the key factors that influence it?

**Very Low.**

**Key factors – unreasonable workload, lack of support, poor discipline of pupils, staff feel disempowered in school decision making process.**

**Additional comments**

If you have any other comments please include them below.

**MICHELLE PHEE**

**Q1** What type of teaching role do you have

Full-time Permanent Secondary Teacher of Business Education and Economics. I am also the Faculty Head of Technology at Graeme High, Falkirk.

**Q4** What are the positives that keep you in the teaching profession?

I love my job! I get huge job satisfaction out of working with young people aged 12-18. It is genuinely a privilege to see how they grow and mature into young adults and to actually play a part in the development of the person that they become. I enjoy seeing them succeed and recognise their achievements no matter how great or small. I have been described as a great advocate for my subjects and take pleasure out of the fact that I am inspiring people to go into careers in the administrative and business fields.

I am also the Probationer Regent in my school which means I get to work with and develop the next generation of teachers the majority of whom are positive and enthusiastic. My school is considered to be a centre of excellence for Probationer support in Falkirk Council and I was lucky enough to be sent by Education Scotland on a Study Trip to the New Teachers Centre in Santa Cruz, California in 2010 and have been able to positively influence Probationer support in Falkirk Council. I was appointed as a Teacher Fellow for Business Education and Computing student teachers at Stirling University in November 2016 and this is giving me an insight into how we are training our next generation of teachers in our Universities, which marries well with my role of Probationer Regent in school. Again I love the fact that the majority of my students are bursting with enthusiasm and can’t wait to get into the classroom.
As Faculty Head of Technology I am responsible for the strategic vision, resourcing and management for Business Education and Design & Technology in my school. We are considered to be amongst the highest attaining Faculties not just within the school, Falkirk Council but nationally as well and I am very lucky to be working with a talented and highly motivated team of staff which means I look forward to going to work 9 days out of 10!

Q5  Do you consider that you will teach until you retire or do you consider leaving early or for alternative employment? (If you consider leaving, please specify why it relates to your enjoyment of your role)

At the age of 53 I would say it is highly unlikely that I would move into alternative employment now! Although I do have a Business degree and have been told by several friends that I can earn a lot more money in industry and have been offered jobs in industry. But I still want to teach.

Q6  What would encourage you to seek promotion to senior management, including to headteacher level? What would discourage you from seeking promotion?

At the age of 48 I spent 2 years trying to get a Depute’s post and was interviewed for every job I applied for as quoting a QIO "you have a huge amount of experience, not just within your subject area, but at Council and national level and I haven’t ever met anyone with as much experience as you have”. So in terms of what would encourage me to seek promotion, would be to see a few more people in their 50’s actually get it!! After all we are now meant to be working until we are 64 and as a person who still runs 10K’s I definitely have the energy and drive to do it.

Q7  What do you think are the main challenges, if any, in recruiting or retaining teachers (and other staff) at your school? (please feel free to provide details of practical experiences)

We are underpaid for the work we do. A graduate with a Business degree often now gets a starting salary of £30,000 pa. This salary will increase and the number of people who have £100,000 salaries in the UK has quadrupled over the last 20 years.

I know very few teachers who only work 35 hours per week. As a Faculty Head I am in school until 5.30 pm every day Monday-Friday and still have to go home and do about 8-10 hours of marking per week. I work my lunch hours as well so I am not exaggerating when I say I work 55 hours a week every week! When you start to work out my hourly rate of pay the money even as a Faculty Head is rubbish.

We are no longer considered to be a “profession” by insurers and we are also categorised by them now to have a dangerous job. The abuse both verbally and physically that teachers take on a regular basis is disgusting. With little or at times no sanctions given. In my school it is frowned upon for you to phone the police to get a pupil charged. This should be actively encouraged! We are trying to educate our young people for life as well as work and the reality is that if they were physically or verbally abusive up Falkirk High Street they would be charged. I have been both physically, and verbally abused in my 30 years as a teacher on 6-7 occasions and on one occasion my children were threatened by a pupil aged 14 when they were aged 7 and 9 as I live in the local area.
The public perception of teachers is now very low. I am sick of parents believing every word that comes out of their children’s mouths and blaming the teacher for their child’s poor progress. When often the case is that the child has poor attendance, attitude and behaviour.

Morale in the profession is currently at the lowest I have ever known it to be in my 30 years of teaching. We are basically over worked, under-valued and definitely under paid. The constant barrage of change, without taking on board the views and opinions of teachers is demoralising.

Q8 Which particular subject specialisms/support roles face the greatest challenges with recruitment or retention?

Science and Technologies. I run the Technology Faculty and I have been short staffed every year from January – May in either Business Education or Design and Technology for the last 14 years, and I have to strong departmental areas with good resourcing and my staff are well supported. The bottom line is we are no where near being paid enough to attract people from Technological backgrounds into the profession.

Q9 Do you have any suggestions for how challenges with recruitment and retention might be addressed?

Increase pay by at least 25%. We are all graduate’s with degrees, therefore we should be remunerated as such. This will allow us to be seen by graduates as being a credible profession again.

Actually reduce the workload, and the constant paper chase which is now education. I am finding myself having to carry out more administrative tasks which are not my job but due to cutbacks to office and other ancilliary staff it is the only way they will get done.

Come up with effective behaviour strategies and if that means staff and pupils are safer if a pupil is excluded for longer then that is what happens. We do have more seriously challenged and challenging pupils who would be better served by being educated in Units rather than in a comprehensive setting. Money needs to be invested in having more places available in alternative educational establishments which will better meet the needs of some of our pupils.

Stop rushing into educational change! Curriculum for Excellence was a fabulous idea, but as successive Scottish Governments have rushed it through, under-resourced it and provided minimal training for teachers then it has not met expectations. Once again John Swinney has rushed in and made poor decisions eg no fallback position for Nat 5 pupils who sit the exam and fail. We need to take our time, consult teachers, educationalists and all stakeholders before we come up with a strategic plan that will bring about improvement in all of the National Priorities. If you consider even the timing of this survey. During the Easter Holidays, staff only returned to school on 18 April but the closing date is 20 April! Do you really want our views or is this just consultation to say we have been consulted.

Q10 Have any measures been put in place as a result of changes to staffing numbers in recent years at your school (examples include multi-school
headship/leadership teams, composite classes, changes in the use/availability of support assistants)?

If so:

- What are these measures?
- How well are they working?
- Are these changes a permanent or a temporary measure (ie is it covering vacancies at present or is it to reflect the number of teacher/other posts has reduced?)

If Councils had been allowed to increase Council Tax by even 0.5% each year the situation would not be as dire. (I am an Economist to trade!). This means more administrative tasks are being pushed on to teachers, eg updating spreadsheets, databases with monitoring and tracking data. As I already mentioned we have more challenged and challenging pupils in schools than ever before and less resources with which to support them in terms of materials as we can't afford to photocopy them and fewer Support for Learning Assistants to support them in class. This means that these pupils disengage and disrupt the learning for all. Obviously this impacts on the attainment of all.

In terms of Business Education, Computing and Design & Technology these departments which are the more vocational ones in schools are being reduced and in some cases done away with as they cannot be staffed. This means that instead of schools being able to tailor their curriculum and offer more vocational courses as proposed in the Wood Report the opposite is happening.

**Q11** Are there any subject choices or other opportunities that are not available to pupils as a result of staff shortages that you consider would be valuable? (please specify)

As I have mentioned above in terms of Business Education, Computing and Design & Technology these departments which are the more vocational ones in schools are being reduced and in some cases done away with as they cannot be staffed. This means that instead of schools being able to tailor their curriculum and offer more vocational courses as proposed in the Wood Report the opposite is happening. We have lost Accounting & Finance and Economics as we have been left short staffed between January to May on so many occasions that we have been reduced from having 5 full-time staff members to 4. This meant that we could no longer run these courses. I would like to be able to offer Retail Services, Financial Services and ECDL which are all vocational courses which will increase pupils’ employability but due to staffing constraints I can’t.

**Q12** How would you describe general morale among staff (very good / quite good / quite low / very low) and what are the key factors that influence it?

Morale in the profession is currently at the lowest I have ever known it to be in my 30 years of teaching. We are basically over worked, under-valued and definitely under paid. The constant barrage of change, without taking on board the views and opinions of teachers is demoralising. I am going to repeat myself here but maybe then someone will actually take on board what I am saying.
We are underpaid for the work we do. A graduate with a Business degree often now gets a starting salary of £30,000 pa. This salary will increase and the number of people who have £100,000 salaries in the UK has quadrupled over the last 20 years.

I know very few teachers who only work 35 hours per week. As a Faculty Head I am in school until 5.30 pm every day Monday-Friday and still have to go home and do about 8-10 hours of marking per week. I work my lunch hours as well so I am not exaggerating when I say I work 55 hours a week every week! When you start to work out my hourly rate of pay the money even as a Faculty Head is rubbish.

We are no longer considered to be a “profession” by insurers and we are also categorised by them now to have a dangerous job. The abuse both verbally and physically that teachers take on a regular basis is disgusting. With little or at times no sanctions given. We are trying to educate our young people for life as well as work and the reality is that if they were physically or verbally abusive up Falkirk High Street they would be charged. I have been both physically, and verbally abused in my 30 years as a teacher on 6-7 occasions and

The public perception of teachers is now very low. I am sick of parents believing every word that comes out of their children’s mouths and blaming the teacher for their child’s poor progress. When often the case is that the child has poor attendance, attitude and behaviour. I do however, acknowledge that there are some teachers who should never have been allowed to enter the profession. We need to be far more honest with individuals in Teacher Training institutions and say “you are not suited to the profession”. Instead I have had instances when people have been sent to my school to undertake a Probation that they are either not ready for or will never be ready for.

Additional comments

If you have any other comments please include them below:

I would like to raise my concerns about the Technologies E’s and O’s not including Administration & IT. The consultation carried out on all of the Experiences, Outcomes and Benchmarks was flawed – it did not get to teachers! There is a great deal of anger amongst Business Education teachers that given that there has been a Parliamentary debate on the ICT skills gap amongst School, College and University leavers that it seems a bit ironic that Administration and IT which is now the only ICT course available in Scotland is not recognised in the final Technologies E’s and O’s. When you factor in the STEM agenda it seems even more ludicrous. Does that matter when we need a thriving technologies base in Scotland in order to remain a player in the world markets? Also apparently as the Primaries didn’t feel that the words “administration and IT” were necessary they were taken out. Given the fact that Primaries will have very few pupils who are Level 3 in Digital Literacy or the use of Microsoft Office Software by Primary 7 I am not sure that their views from Level 3 onwards should have been considered. At present Business Education Teachers are trying to find out how we go about getting the situation addressed.

GLENN LOGAN
Q1 What type of teaching role do you have

Principal Teacher
**Q4** What are the positives that keep you in the teaching profession?
Learning and teaching is a job that I enjoy – the vast majority of pupils want to do well and are engaged in school and the process of learning.

**Q5** Do you consider that you will teach until you retire or do you consider leaving early or for alternative employment? (If you consider leaving, please specify why if it relates to your enjoyment of your role)

No. I will retire early and find employment I another sector – I do not believe that a 67 year old me could cope with the demands of the profession, both physically and mentally.

The retirement age – the age I am able to draw on my whole pension changed and this has forced me to rethink my plans of retirement, however, I will not remain in teaching.

**Q6** What would encourage you to seek promotion to senior management, including to head teacher level? What would discourage you from seeking promotion?

I have no desire to work in education outside of the classroom.

**Q7** What do you think are the main challenges, if any, in recruiting or retaining teachers (and other staff) at your school? (Please feel free to provide details of practical experiences)

Workload is a big issue – there are far more demands on a teachers time now than ever before.

Pay is another issue, in real terms our pay has decreased each year over the last 6 years.

Assessment is another big issue – see below.

**Q8** Which particular subject specialisms/support roles face the greatest challenges with recruitment or retention?

I’m not sure that I have any specific knowledge that can answer that question; I think recruitment is an issue throughout each subject and different area.

**Q9** Do you have any suggestions for how challenges with recruitment and retention might be addressed?

Address the issues with assessment and address it properly, no more reactionary, quick fix policies.

The latest advice and documentation from the Assessment and National Qualifications Group has not been thought out with teacher workload in mind. The workgroup have introduced a 2 tier system – pupils will be able to choose between exams or subject awards – the documentation is quite clear and asks us to think about our planning process. Sadly, young people do not think or plan as coherently as documentation and many changes occur in a young person’s life over the course of the year. Also, we must still challenge pupils to achieve to the best of their ability which means that to retain fluidity within the certificate class; we will take all pupils
through the assessment process so that they can retain ‘real’ choice. Therefore I see very little difference in my workload. I find it very difficult to believe that such a group does not have a practicing classroom teacher as a member to make sure that all are aware of the practical implications of policy.

I am hopeful that the real ‘enemy’ of assessment, the SQA verification process will be reviewed. Whilst verification is important for a number of reasons, the SQA have redefined bureaucracy with this body.

BGE assessment remains an issue – the new benchmarks are not going to solve this, in fact, this is another reactionary policy that will not meet its aims because of the practical implications.

Pay – as above – there is no financial incentive to attract the type of teachers that future generations of young people need.

Workload – there is a far greater need for admin staff to support a teacher’s role.

Q10 Have any measures been put in place as a result of changes to staffing numbers in recent years at your school (examples include multi-school headship/leadership teams, composite classes, changes in the use/availability of support assistants)?

If so:

- What are these measures?
- How well are they working?
- Are these changes a permanent or a temporary measure (ie is it covering vacancies at present or is it to reflect the number of teacher/other posts has reduced?)

Class sizes are growing each year and this has a major impact on workload, particularly with certificate classes.

Q11 Are there any subject choices or other opportunities that are not available to pupils as a result of staff shortages that you consider would be valuable? (please specify)

Certain subjects are being removed from the curriculum each year – these measures are taken as a result of staffing rather than as a product of curriculum planning.

Q12 How would you describe general morale among staff (very good / quite good / quite low / very low) and what are the key factors that influence it?

Morale is the poorest it has been during my time as a teacher, I would say that it is quite low – using your scale above.

Pay/workload/assessment

DAVE FRANKLAND

Q1 What type of teaching role do you have

Primary School Teacher

Q4 What are the positives that keep you in the teaching profession?
Working with children.
Reward of seeing improvement in the children within my class.
I feel confident within my role.

Q5 Do you consider that you will teach until you retire or do you consider leaving early or for alternative employment? (If you consider leaving, please specify why if it relates to your enjoyment of your role)
Unknown. Would like to move in to guidance/nurture roles rather than class teacher.

Q6 What would encourage you to seek promotion to senior management, including to headteacher level? What would discourage you from seeking promotion?
Nothing. The workload, stress and lack of interaction with the children within the school.

Q7 What do you think are the main challenges, if any, in recruiting or retaining teachers (and other staff) at your school? (please feel free to provide details of practical experiences)
Lack of support from management.
Low amount of PSA support.
Inclusion of children that have additional needs that are not being supported.

Q8 Which particular subject specialisms/support roles face the greatest challenges with recruitment or retention?
Unknown.

Q9 Do you have any suggestions for how challenges with recruitment and retention might be addressed?
Mentorship roles, especially for NQTs.
Pay incentives.

Q10 Have any measures been put in place as a result of changes to staffing numbers in recent years at your school (examples include multi-school headship/leadership teams, composite classes, changes in the use/availability of support assistants)?
If so:
• What are these measures?
• How well are they working?
• Are these changes a permanent or a temporary measure (ie is it covering vacancies at present or is it to reflect the number of teacher/other posts has reduced?)
Unknown

Q11 Are there any subject choices or other opportunities that are not available to pupils as a result of staff shortages that you consider would be valuable? (please specify)
Q12 How would you describe general morale among staff (very good / quite good / quite low / very low) and what are the key factors that influence it?
Quite low.
Poor management.
Lots of changes within the curriculum to make you feel like you are constantly needing to learn something new.

DOROTHY ROSS

Q1 What type of teaching role do you have
Secondary Teacher

Q4 What are the positives that keep you in the teaching profession?
Desire to ensure I am able to give the pupils the best educational experience I can regardless of the many failings of CfE. Also genuinely as I used to find the job extremely rewarding, I hope it may again return to being an education system I and we can be proud of so I continue to try and get through CfE as best as I can.

Q5 Do you consider that you will teach until you retire or do you consider leaving early or for alternative employment? (If you consider leaving, please specify why if it relates to your enjoyment of your role)
If CfE is not completely overhauled and reviewed, I feel I, like many, will not continue teaching in the future. At the moment, the thought of even another 5 years of teaching courses too easy/not challenging/pointless for pupils (e.g. N4); those which are too difficult for some (N5/N6) but which there is very little if any alternative routes pupils can take after passing N4 but being unable to sit N5; repetitive dull courses which do not enhance the pupils’ experience or provide them for the world of work; laborious and necessary assessments/admin etc., I feel it would be unlikely I would continue for much beyond the next 5 years. This is genuinely heart-breaking that I may have to make this decision but as this job and workload is now impacting on my emotional/mental/physical state, I have to accept that it does have an end point where I may have no option other than to leave a career I once adored.

Q6 What would encourage you to seek promotion to senior management, including to headteacher level? What would discourage you from seeking promotion?
Absolutely nothing would convince me to go for promotion. The workload as a teacher is unmanageable let alone a promoted post.

Q7 What do you think are the main challenges, if any, in recruiting or retaining teachers (and other staff) at your school? (please feel free to provide details of practical experiences)
- Concerns over the failings of CfE
- Staff feeling their concerns about CfE are not being addressed or modified. Current changes to internal assessments will not really decrease workload as
if pupils later struggle with N5 for example, they will have to have passed the internal units anyway so that they can get some nature of an award so I assume we will just have to do them anyway as a backup so pupils leave with some sort of award.

- No increase to pay regardless of the fact that realistically the job cannot be done in their hours allocated and certainly cannot be done to the high standard our young people deserve.
- Teaching, even by the pupils, is now seen as something which is not an attractive career due to stress, workload, poor pay for the actual hours worked (generally this is at least 50-60 every week for me) lack of support from SQA etc.

Q8 Which particular subject specialisms/support roles face the greatest challenges with recruitment or retention?
Technical

Q9 Do you have any suggestions for how challenges with recruitment and retention might be addressed?
Look into improving the areas that I’ve outlined as issues in Q7.

Q10 Have any measures been put in place as a result of changes to staffing numbers in recent years at your school (examples include multi-school headship/leadership teams, composite classes, changes in the use/availability of support assistants)?
If so:

- What are these measures?
- How well are they working?
- Are these changes a permanent or a temporary measure (ie is it covering vacancies at present or is it to reflect the number of teacher/other posts has reduced?)
- Composite classes (N4-N6) in some. Not at all effective. How can any teacher ensure that N4, N5 and N6 pupils are all having a meaningful experience in a class of up to 30 when all 3 levels require individual/specific inputs? This seems to be becoming more and more common.
- Faculties being created through joining departments. Not effective. Teacher allocated will often specialise in 1 department area and will have a lack of knowledge of the other and therefore they prioritise/over focus on the area they are comfortable with and ignore/are not as effective in dealing with the others. Seems to be becoming more common.

Q11 Are there any subject choices or other opportunities that are not available to pupils as a result of staff shortages that you consider would be valuable? (please specify)

- Support for pupils who are illiterate or have severe literacy difficulties. This is become a serious concern and every year the new S1 cohort is demonstrating a lack of basic literacy and numeracy skills.
- Pupils are being taught by non-subject specialists due to struggling to find and maintain staffing; long term absences (stress etc. induced)
Q12 How would you describe general morale among staff (very good / quite good / quite low / very low) and what are the key factors that influence it?

Heartbreakingly low. Utterly devastating to see despondency amongst the staff.

Additional comments

The failings with CfE are not unknown; the decline in Literacy and Numeracy levels is known; staff concerns over excessive workload and stress have been heavily publicised so why is nothing being done?

RACHEL MMCCALLION

Q1 What type of teaching role do you have

Secondary School – Mathematics Teacher

Q4 What are the positives that keep you in the teaching profession?

The opportunity to build positive relationships with young people and provide them with knowledge and guidance for the future.

The job security in my own case.

The opportunity to be flexible in your profession, i.e travel, part-time, full-time.

The opportunity for progression in your career.

Q5 Do you consider that you will teach until you retire or do you consider leaving early or for alternative employment? (If you consider leaving, please specify why if it relates to your enjoyment of your role)

I would only consider leaving teaching should I feel at any point I no longer have the same patience and passion for the job I do.

If would only leave if I were to be considering a completely different career path.

Q6 What would encourage you to seek promotion to senior management, including to headteacher level? What would discourage you from seeking promotion?

Encourage: Support to progress my qualifications, implement important change and lead new ideas.

Discourage: Stress.

Q7 What do you think are the main challenges, if any, in recruiting or retaining teachers (and other staff) at your school? (please feel free to provide details of practical experiences)

As a NQT I have managed to gain a permanent position in my school for next year however there is another member of staff within my department who currently has a permanent area cover contract who also applied for the job.

I think there is an issue with permanent area cover teachers making the transition to permanent appointment in schools.
SARAH BRISTON

Q1  What type of teaching role do you have
    Secondary Art and Design / Photography - Principal teacher

Q2  Whereabouts do you work?
    Moray
    Speyside high school

Q4  What are the positives that keep you in the teaching profession?
    I have nearly 30 years under my belt and I love it.
    It’s really my subject that makes it special and in the last few years I have also taken on photography. I sat the Higher in order to fully understand the exam and excited to see the impact on students especially boys enthusiasm and engagement.
    I like change and variety – we are never short of this in teaching.

Q5  Do you consider that you will teach until you retire or do you consider leaving early or for alternative employment? (If you consider leaving, please specify why if it relates to your enjoyment of your role)
    I would like to downsize to maybe 2-3 days, teaching is all encompassing and exhausting. Sometimes though I feel that I should get a life. There are hard and stressful, days and stress to deal with but generally I am positive in my role and like to be teaching part time beyond retirement.

Q6  What would encourage you to seek promotion to senior management, including to headteacher level? What would discourage you from seeking promotion?
    I am content with the level of responsibility I have
    Sometimes I wish I was a mainscale teacher and think I would have a lot less stress, but overall love the challenge and responsibility.

Q7  What do you think are the main challenges, if any, in recruiting or retaining teachers (and other staff) at your school? (please feel free to provide details of practical experiences)
    It has been proved very difficult to recruit another member in the department, a part time post!
    Over the last 4 years there have been periods of my being sole teacher approx. 2 years. I have tried hard to fill the role myself and have had reduced non contacts and during these periods have considered giving up.
    Many Non specialist staff and supply have not helped.
    I currently have an excellent part time member of the dept but she is looking for full time work within one school and seeking alternative work because the proposal of part time hours in several other schools would not suit her.
I am now facing my third bout of unfilled post, and dreading it.

I know several professional artists who would be able to teach under supervision Artist in residency.

I know several professional artists who would be able to teach under supervision.

Q8 Which particular subject specialisms/support roles face the greatest challenges with recruitment or retention?

Art and Design in 2007 I applied for a principal teacher post in Moray and 8 candidates were interviewed. Last year the same job was advertised and only 1 candidate responded.

At SHS we have had interviews with only 1 candidate (not recruited) candidates have withdrawn at the last minute through being appointed elsewhere.

Our ASG has not had an Art specialist for over 5 years and this service is patchy across Moray.

I have yet to meet an Art and Design specialist supply teacher in Moray.

Art staffing has reduced in the last 5 years from 2.5 to 1.5 staffing (In line with falling roll).

Subject has been reduced to single periods from doubles for S1.

Senior classes are now tri level and sometimes duel subject ie Art and design/photography.

Q9 Do you have any suggestions for how challenges with recruitment and retention might be addressed?

More flexible staffing, Rather than non specialist supply staff, employ an artist in residence.

Cpd opportunity, teachers and Artists to work on residency,

Exciting opportunities to create a project.

I know several professional local artists who would be able to teach under supervision Programme artist in residency across Scotland, exciting project for teachers to participate and enjoy, They could easily complete the PVG form.

Student teacher placements.

Q11 Are there any subject choices or other opportunities that are not available to pupils as a result of staff shortages that you consider would be valuable?

We are avoiding this by tri level and flexibility described above.

Q12 How would you describe general morale among staff (very good / quite good / quite low / very low) and what are the key factors that influence it?
Quite low, workload increased but salary static, recruitment,

**LAURENCE BEWS**

**Q1** What type of teaching role do you have

I am a secondary teacher. I have taught for 12 years and I teach Modern Studies. Although I am qualified to teach History and I have a PGCE in 3-14 Physical Education too.

**Q4** What are the positives that keep you in the teaching profession?

Seeing the pupils achieve their potential. I went into education to make a difference and so that the education I had benefitted from when growing up in Orkney could be replicated. Seeing the pupils grow and mature as they go through the school from S1-S6. Being able to give back by doing extra-curricular work in school.

**Q5** Do you consider that you will teach until you retire or do you consider leaving early or for alternative employment? (If you consider leaving, please specify why if it relates to your enjoyment of your role)

I do not see myself teaching until I retire. There is no way that anyone can keep teaching until they are 68 with class sizes of 30 and juggling all of the paperwork demands amongst other things that teachers have to do in their “35 hour” a week contract.

**Q6** What would encourage you to seek promotion to senior management, including to headteacher level? What would discourage you from seeking promotion?

I have considered in the past looking at promotion aspects but I only really want to be promoted into areas like Guidance now. I have done acting head of department before. The paperwork and long hours is not conducive to have a good family/work balance. More money etc. would not encourage me to seek promotion. I enjoy the interaction with pupils too much. Maybe once my children are older I would consider this.

**Q7** What do you think are the main challenges, if any, in recruiting or retaining teachers (and other staff) at your school? (please feel free to provide details of practical experiences)

Teaching is not seen as a job that many people do. I could complain about the poor pay in relation to private sector work or the fact that we have had no real pay increase in around 7 years. However, the work load is too excessive across all sectors of education. Too often new initiatives are dropped on us (teachers) before the older ones are embedded and this leads to apathy to new ones. The demands of teaching is such that the normal working week is 50+ hours a week. These long hours lead to many leaving as they can make similar amounts working 39 hours a week or slightly less but do not have to take work home.

Teaching is no longer respected as it was and there is too much focus on STEM subjects which has led to a severe shortage in other subject areas like Business, and Home Economics. Teachers are continually blamed for pupils not achieving grades in S4 from a test they do in S1 (MidYis) but the grade is
only if everything is equal from S1 onwards. There is far too much focus on exam results and this was meant to be a move away with CfE.

The real problem however is the education system under CfE. Too many changes, too many amendments, changing the goal posts with Es and Os, then SALs then Benchmarks (look similar to 5-14 by the way). Senior phases with no standard as grade boundaries moving (radically sometimes) each year up and down. Then just as we start to bed them in more changes to Unit Assessments, Exams with no consultation with ordinary teachers and more changes to happen in the next few years to courses. Never having time to properly audit courses and see it over a longer run that 1 year. This leads to real problems with teachers feeling dis-empowered and that we are only a number. Most teachers would not recommend teaching to other people now.

I have more to say on this but do to time frame to return this will leave it at that (only got the email yesterday evening).

Q8 Which particular subject specialisms/support roles face the greatest challenges with recruitment or retention?

At the moment Home Economics and Business are very bad. As are Sciences. My subjects are okay for recruitment but there will be problems in the future.

Q9 Do you have any suggestions for how challenges with recruitment and retention might be addressed?

Stop saying everything is okay in teaching. Be honest for once about the real problems we have in getting teachers. Stop looking for quick fixes and address the real issues – pay and conditions, the public attitude towards teachers, political interference and remind the unions that they are meant to look after our interests and not their own. Access to priority housing etc. and services for all public sector staff.

Q10 Have any measures been put in place as a result of changes to staffing numbers in recent years at your school (examples include multi-school headship/leadership teams, composite classes, changes in the use/availability of support assistants)?

If so:

- What are these measures?
- How well are they working?
- Are these changes a permanent or a temporary measure (ie is it covering vacancies at present or is it to reflect the number of teacher/other posts has reduced?)

Composite classes (bi-level) have been in place for years and only work at National 4/5 for some subjects if content matches.

Not enough support for children with Additional needs meaning that many pupils still slip through the net as in a class of 30 with 10+ with needs it is almost impossible to support them all with no support in class and if you see them only 3 periods a week.
Split classes in S1 means that you do not build a real relationship with the pupils over the year.

These are all permanent measures.

Q11 Are there any subject choices or other opportunities that are not available to pupils as a result of staff shortages that you consider would be valuable? (please specify)

This school is a city campus school meaning that many Advanced Higher are offered here. However, many pupils from other schools who could do an Advanced Higher do not want to travel to other schools to continue their education.

I would like to offer Higher Politics but this is not possible due to staffing.

Q12 How would you describe general morale among staff (very good / quite good / quite low / very low) and what are the key factors that influence it?

Very low. Staff are tired of constant changes, always being on the lookout (warned) about potential inspections. Paper work concerns and paper trails. Budget cuts means that we are struggling to get the basics for class with many buying pens etc. themselves.

Additional comments

The teaching profession feels that it is under attack. From the media, politicians and the public as a whole. We work very long hours but everyone latches onto 35 hour week and long holidays (that many staff use to catch up on marking, development work etc.). When you contact people about the issues you are largely ignored. Staff are increasingly coming into work over stressed and tired. In the 12 years I have taught the profession has changed fundamentally and not for the benefit of the pupils.

A Curriculum for Excellence was meant to be a world leading education system to close the Attainment Gap and ensure that all pupils achieve. However, it has failed, the system does not work with CfE from 3-15 and then an old archaic exam system that is not CfE (the name CfE Higher does not make it that) and does ot meet the needs of many shows that increasing numbers of pupils are being failed and the Pisa tests bear this out. A radical ’root and branch’ look at our education system is needed to make teachers feel that they are not only empowered but able to deliver an education system that I know we are capable of providing.

VIVETTE MONTGOMERY

Q1 What type of teaching role do you have

Secondary teacher of mathematics

Q2 Whereabouts do you work?

Fife, Waid Academy

Q4 What are the positives that keep you in the teaching profession?
The sheer satisfaction of helping pupils learn about my subject and experience success, no matter what their level of ability. I enjoy actually teaching.

Q5 Do you consider that you will teach until you retire or do you consider leaving early or for alternative employment? (If you consider leaving, please specify why if it relates to your enjoyment of your role)

The constant changes to the curriculum and expectations of teachers makes it really hard to envisage teaching beyond 60, despite the prospect of needing to work past 60 for financial reasons. I am 54 at the moment and not surprised by the number of people who reach their mid 50s and simply cannot tolerate the workload any more. The expectation that teachers will work at home is increasing. This is seriously detrimental to mental health. I have to admit that I have considered the possibility of alternative employment in the next few years.

Q6 What would encourage you to seek promotion to senior management, including to headteacher level? What would discourage you from seeking promotion?

Nothing would encourage me to seek promotion. The hours expected of promoted staff are completely unreasonable.

Q7 What do you think are the main challenges, if any, in recruiting or retaining teachers (and other staff) at your school? (please feel free to provide details of practical experiences)

The first challenge is the level of pay – you cannot claim respect for the profession and then fail to set an appropriate level of remuneration. If teaching is important, then pay teachers well and stop allowing the salary to fall behind by not ensuring that pay rises are appropriate.

The second challenge is the workload – none of the measures to reduce workload like “Tackling bureaucracy” are effective in practice largely because we do not have time(!) to come up with any good ideas and then implement them. There are constant excuses about how this bit of tracking on the computer only takes a few seconds per pupil so we should keep doing it, or that extra report for guidance is essential because it has been requested by a parent. The changes to the SQA qualifications will not reduce workload in practice. Teachers will still have to track and monitor the progress of pupils at Nat 5, Higher and Advanced Higher. So we will still have to test them. We still have to judge who should be presented for the final exams (and the quality of our judgements are measured) and this cannot be done solely by having a conversation with the pupils. We have to have concrete evidence otherwise we have huge conflict with parents.

The third challenge is respect for teachers – parents now think that they are qualified to tell us how to do our jobs simply because they were pupils once. Our decisions are challenged constantly. Our judgement is not trusted. School managements bend over backwards to accommodate parents at the expense of supporting their staff, perhaps through fear of litigation. We have had to postpone assessments because parents consider that they were not
adequately warned despite this lack of warning being the result of pupils not passing on letters to parents or, in fact, parents not bothering to read their emails from the school.

The fourth challenge is the value of education – parents do not think that the education that their children receive is worth much. As a result they will not back the school up when we seek to ensure that pupils attend classes, behave well so that lessons are not disrupted, complete homework etc.

The fifth challenge is the expectation on teachers by colleagues. The expectation remains that you work on the tasks of the job until they are complete regardless of how long it takes you. Also, schools are under pressure to improve results year on year regardless of the actual pupils that they have to teach and their ability. This leads to numerous chances being given to pupils to pass levels, extended deadlines to make sure every child submits work etc. With GLOW and other applications that can be used even on mobile phones, the expectation is that not only will pupils work on their homework, but they will have instant access to their teachers out of school hours as well.

The final challenge is resources – this is related to many of the other challenges as well. Schools need more PSA’s to support teachers in class and ensure that inclusion really works. Schools need more teachers – change the teacher/pupil ration to reduce class sizes. Less pupils in a class automatically means reduced workload. Schools need more money for resources and the upkeep of schools. Well maintained schools that are well resourced demonstrate the value that society places on education and the opposite is true as well.

Q8 Which particular subject specialisms/support roles face the greatest challenges with recruitment or retention?

I believe that Maths, Science, HE and Computing have recruitment issues in my area. This is hardly surprising given the opportunities for better paid jobs with better conditions elsewhere.

Q9 Do you have any suggestions for how challenges with recruitment and retention might be addressed?

Review the pay of teachers and ensure that pay is kept in line with comparable professions in the future – how about the Japanese model where teachers are the best paid profession since, without teachers, society will have no other professionals!

Put more resources into education. If you want a world class education system you need to be prepared to pay a world class price for it. You can’t get it on the cheap.

Seek to change the culture in schools that accepts working many hours over 35 per week. I am not quite sure how to accomplish this but teacher training needs to be included as well as the SQA and real consultation with teachers maybe via unions.
Q10 Have any measures been put in place as a result of changes to staffing numbers in recent years at your school (examples include multi-school headship/leadership teams, composite classes, changes in the use/availability of support assistants)?

If so:

- What are these measures?
- How well are they working?
- Are these changes a permanent or a temporary measure (ie is it covering vacancies at present or is it to reflect the number of teacher/other posts has reduced?)

Our numbers of PSA’s have been reduced. The number of pupils requiring support has increased. The PSA’s are run ragged. There are no effective measures in place to deal with this.

We have had supply issues for long term cover. A Computing teacher is on secondment to the union and works in school only 2 days a week now. We have been unable to get a temporary Computing teacher for 3 days a week. The supply teacher is maths qualified, not computing qualified.

We have had major issues getting sick cover for a Chemistry teacher – no Chemistry staff available.

Q11 Are there any subject choices or other opportunities that are not available to pupils as a result of staff shortages that you consider would be valuable? (please specify)

My school has trouble offering Advanced Highers in a number of subjects, in particular, Drama (only one member of staff). In Maths we have trouble offering sufficient classes for S5/6 to accommodate the different levels. We are forced into multi-level classes. We also have trouble offering Lifeskills Maths where appropriate in S4, again leading to multi-level classes.

Q12 How would you describe general morale among staff (very good / quite good / quite low / very low) and what are the key factors that influence it?

In this school, morale is quite good in most faculty areas. The ethos of support in the school is good and most staff feel the benefits of this. However, there are some subjects where morale is lower where there have been issues over assessments and parental complaints about pupils being withdrawn from the final exam despite the evidence. However, there have been signs over the past session that the constant changes are having a negative effect on morale and the measures to reduce workload by removing Unit assessments and the resulting changes by SQA have not been well received at all.

Additional comments

You have a considerable task in front of you to make the teaching profession one of choice again. By the way – sending this out during the Easter holidays was a really silly idea.
LEIGH GALLOWAY
Q1 What type of teaching role do you have
Modern Studies Teacher - secondary

Q4 What are the positives that keep you in the teaching profession?
Fantastic children, the chance to make a difference, through building relationships and also in the support roles I have with Nurture and Breakfast clubs.

The opportunities to teach a subject which is alive, constantly changing and to see the enthusiasm of the children for the subject.

The chance to offer support to young people who might be struggling in various aspects of their education

Q5 Do you consider that you will teach until you retire or do you consider leaving early or for alternative employment? (If you consider leaving, please specify why if it relates to your enjoyment of your role)
I am not sure, I might possibly leave in the future although I still see myself in some kind of education role

Q6 What would encourage you to seek promotion to senior management, including to headteacher level? What would discourage you from seeking promotion?
Discourage – workload! The fact that I would need to be away from the classroom, that I am not trained as a manager and I see that job as being very different from what I do at the moment

Q7 What do you think are the main challenges, if any, in recruiting or retaining teachers (and other staff) at your school? (please feel free to provide details of practical experiences)
Workload, the amount that is expected in some subjects and in some areas, eg Guidance, the pressures which NQT face, the lack of opportunities for teachers not that CT has gone and nothing has replaced it.

Q8 Which particular subject specialisms/support roles face the greatest challenges with recruitment or retention?
I believe it to be HE? It think it will be interesting to see if there are the people trained and available to fulfil the roles which might open up with the introduction of the PEF money.

Q10 Have any measures been put in place as a result of changes to staffing numbers in recent years at your school (examples include multi-school headship/leadership teams, composite classes, changes in the use/availability of support assistants)?
If so:
• What are these measures?
• How well are they working?
• Are these changes a permanent or a temporary measure (ie is it covering vacancies at present or is it to reflect the number of teacher/other posts has reduced?)

We have support assistants in the school but there has been debate about what their actual role is.

Mixed level classes is very challenging and is done because we don’t have the staff or the room to have additional classes.

The HT has a lot to juggle as each year the staffing changes across the school, particularly with new subjects being introduced into the curriculum and the added expectations that this brings.

Q11 Are there any subject choices or other opportunities that are not available to pupils as a result of staff shortages that you consider would be valuable? (please specify)

Politics

Q12 How would you describe general morale among staff (very good / quite good / quite low / very low) and what are the key factors that influence it?

Quite good - however this very much varies from one part of the school to another. People are busy, there is not always an even spread of the workload, people are often expected to do a lot more than just teach their classes – often a small group to a lot of the work and this gets challenging. It is difficult when some local authorities seem to be better resourced, eg with support assistants, than others.

SECONDARY SCHOOL – ANONYMOUS SUBMISSIONS

ANONYMOUS 27

Q1 What type of teaching role do you have

I am a Support for Learning teacher in a large Primary school.

Q4 What are the positives that keep you in the teaching profession?

When I am able to follow my timetable to support pupils, I enjoy the difference that I can make to pupils’ enjoyment of learning.

Q5 Do you consider that you will teach until you retire or do you consider leaving early or for alternative employment? (If you consider leaving, please specify why if it relates to your enjoyment of your role)

I plan on reducing my hours and then retiring early (at the age of 60). This is partly because of the pressures of carrying out cover for classes which are not part of my substantive post. I cannot see myself able to maintain this flexibility when I am 66. The other factor is that my husband has already retired

Q6 What would encourage you to seek promotion to senior management, including to headteacher level? What would discourage you from seeking promotion?
Support in preparation for applying for and carrying out such a role. It is unlikely at this late stage in my career that I would apply for such a post.

Q7 What do you think are the main challenges, if any, in recruiting or retaining teachers (and other staff) at your school? (please feel free to provide details of practical experiences)

For the Support for Learning team at my school there are 2 major factors which would affect the recruitment and retention of teachers:

- The regularity with which we are required to cover classes for an absent teacher. This frequently includes releasing teachers for appointments or short term absences which is less of an issue. The bigger concern is medium to long term sick or maternity leave cover where no replacement teacher has been recruited. I had to cover a class for 3/5 days a week for over a term when a teacher left last year and a colleague has been covering 4/5 afternoons a week for three terms (I cover the other 1/5). This impacts on our workload and on the continuity which is needed for the pupils who we are employed to support. It also impacts on the workload and stress on class teachers whose pupils do not get the support that they need.

It is partly an effect of more general recruitment difficulties in the profession but also likely to be a cause of difficulties in retention of SFL teachers.

- The other factor is the lack of space available to carry out our job. We have no SFL room and have even had to struggle to get a cupboard which will house resources. There is no suitable place to take pupils to work out of class.

These result in all staff feeling undervalued and taken for granted.

Q8 Which particular subject specialisms/support roles face the greatest challenges with recruitment or retention?

Difficulties in recruitment affect staff in all teaching roles.

Q9 Do you have any suggestions for how challenges with recruitment and retention might be addressed?

- Over the past 10 years both the pension contributions and the age at which teachers can retire have both increased meaning that teachers are paying more in to the pension fund but benefit from it at a later age. The inequity of this has affected many teachers so that it is now a staffroom joke! I am aware that there are economic reasons for increasing the pension age but another financial effect of this is an increase in sick leave and pressure on the NHS when teachers are asked to carry out a stressful job in later life. This could be addressed by remedying this inequity.

- Have supply teachers employed under permanent contracts who could step in when cover was required. This would give permanence to supply teachers and may be attractive to more newly qualified teachers to get experience of a variety of schools. It may also be attractive to teachers nearer their (long awaited) retirement age who may only want to work a few days a week. In the current situation I personally would find it attractive in that I would be
ready to carry out supply teaching as my substantive post rather than my current balancing act.

- Smaller classes would increase attainment and improve staff morale.

**Q10** Have any measures been put in place as a result of changes to staffing numbers in recent years at your school (examples include multi-school headship/leadership teams, composite classes, changes in the use/availability of support assistants)?

If so:

- What are these measures?

  Change in use of SFL teachers for supply cover.

  Although we have composite classes, these are a long term feature in most schools and not as a result of changes to staffing numbers.

- How well are they working?

  Change in use of SFL teachers has a detrimental effect on both those teachers and class teachers as detailed above.

- Are these changes a permanent or a temporary measure (ie is it covering vacancies at present or is it to reflect the number of teacher/other posts has reduced?)

  Change in use of SFL teachers is always supposed to be temporary but has been ongoing so long that it no longer feels that way.

**Q11** Are there any subject choices or other opportunities that are not available to pupils as a result of staffing shortages that you consider would be valuable? (please specify)

  Pupils in need of support do not get the consistency and continuity of support which would improve their learning.

**Q12** How would you describe general morale among staff (very good / quite good / quite low / very low) and what are the key factors that influence it?

  General morale is quite low for reasons detailed at questions 7 & 9. There appears to be no end in sight.

**ANONYMOUS 28**

**Q1** What type of teaching role do you have

  Faculty Head of Mathematics - secondary

**Q4** What are the positives that keep you in the teaching profession?

  Working with our pupils and staff, both teaching and non-teaching.

  Making a difference.
Q5  Do you consider that you will teach until you retire or do you consider leaving early or for alternative employment? (If you consider leaving, please specify why if it relates to your enjoyment of your role)

At 53, I don’t consider a ‘radical’ change in career an option. I will be looking to reduce my hours as soon as possible.

Q6  What would encourage you to seek promotion to senior management, including to Headteacher level? What would discourage you from seeking promotion?

The rise in salary from middle management to DHT is discouraging.

The extra hours required – after school meetings, parent councils, LEA meetings, etc. – leads to a reduction in the hourly rate. Having to deal with irate parents because they’ve parked in the school bus bay or similar, directing traffic and other menial tasks.

Q7  What do you think are the main challenges, if any, in recruiting or retaining teachers (and other staff) at your school? (please feel free to provide details of practical experiences)

Salary, lack of investment, extra demands as a result of CfE, constant changes, lack of planned training (when new systems are introduced we have to learn about them and implement them ourselves) parental demands, Education Scotland demands, bureaucracy. The list is getting longer.

Q8  Which particular subject specialisms/support roles face the greatest challenges with recruitment or retention?

Science, Technology and Maths seem to grab the headlines but what about the lack of male teachers, perceived lowering of entry requirements, education as a childminding service, teacher bashing (because we went to a school ourselves, we’re all experts). What are authorities and governments doing to tackle this?

Q9  Do you have any suggestions for how challenges with recruitment and retention might be addressed?

A salary that is competitive with other post-graduate professions. Progression routes that are realistic

Q10 Have any measures been put in place as a result of changes to staffing numbers in recent years at your school (examples include multi-school headship/leadership teams, composite classes, changes in the use/availability of support assistants)?

If so:

• What are these measures?
• How well are they working?
• Are these changes a permanent or a temporary measure (ie is it covering vacancies at present or is it to reflect the number of teacher/other posts has reduced?)
Move to a 33 period week to save money – it allowed a reduction in teacher non-contact time, facilitated moving S5/6 timetable to mainly double periods, increased class sizes in S5/6 resulting in teaching staff reductions. Reduction in support staff.

Q11 Are there any subject choices or other opportunities that are not available to pupils as a result of staff shortages that you consider would be valuable? (please specify)

Don’t know

Q12 How would you describe general morale among staff (very good / quite good / quite low / very low) and what are the key factors that influence it?

Low – we have had what has been referred to as a “perfect storm”. With all the other changes mentioned above, we had to cope with a merger and inspection as well.

ANONYMOUS 29

- What are the main challenges in relation to teacher recruitment and retention?

Pay has fallen behind other areas, especially for those trained in Maths and Technology. Since the freeze any increases in salary have been virtually wiped out by changes in N.I and Pension contributions leaving nothing to help towards cost of living increasing.

Workload, we have some of the highest pupil contact time in the world limiting the time left for preparation, etc. This has been made worse by the barrage of additional bureaucracy and paperwork being loaded on us – SQA, GTC, Local government, senior management building records in case of inspection with no real benefit to pupils.

Stress from workload, pupil behaviour and attitude, parental expectations “Johnny is never wrong”, etc.

Diminished sense of worth, teachers always to blame, not allowed to be professional without needing someone to be measuring us all the time or filling in forms for the sake of having filled in forms.

- Are there patterns or key reasons why some trainee teachers do not complete courses, or do not choose to go into teaching having qualified?

See above, I know some potential teachers who came from industry due to downturn who gave up one after another, citing “can’t believe how much/harder work teachers are required compared to old job and for a lot less money”, “can’t believe we are expected to do so much in our own time (especially keeping up with paperwork)”, “can’t believe attitude of pupils, lack of parental support, etc.”, “couldn’t believe how much being a teacher impinged on personal life”…
• How effective are the various approaches taken to cover shortages of teachers in schools?

Varying vastly – not helped by some authorities bureaucratic approaches. I know of one ex-teacher who had left to start a family, saw the reports of shortages and contacted the education authority to ask about supply list. She was told that they could not take names and she had to wait until an official advert appeared and she should apply to that. She asked when that would be to be told (despite the education authority having lots of primary vacancies) that there was no plan to advertise in the next month as they were only going to advertise fixed posts for the next few weeks and they had no idea when they would advertise again for supply. She was also told that even once the advert appeared she would have to then wait for an interview and only after that could the start the process to allow her to fill a vacancy. As she did not really need the money she gave up on the idea completely.

• What factors influence teachers deciding whether to stay in the profession or to leave?

Workload & stress, perceived lack of authority and proper pay mean many jump ship the minute they are financially able and some are not even waiting for that.

• What factors influence teachers when deciding whether or not to apply for promotion to senior management/headteacher level?

Workload, stress, amount of time on paperwork, loss of contact with pupils, contact with awkward parents, amount of time taken up dealing with problem minority often with little support from higher authorities, not doing the part of the job they actually enjoy (or not) – teaching, etc. means many excellent teachers will not consider moving up while sometimes encouraging those less dedicated to actually teaching to move up to positions where they can delegate.

ANONYMOUS 30

Q1 What type of teaching role do you have

Secondary teacher (Physics) working at PT 1 level

Q4 What are the positives that keep you in the teaching profession?

I enjoy the day to day engagement with the pupils and the chance to expose them to the wonders of my subject. Also the great staff I work with.

Q5 Do you consider that you will teach until you retire or do you consider leaving early or for alternative employment? (If you consider leaving, please specify why if it relates to your enjoyment of your role)

I will teach until I retire (early). This is caused by the decision to stop the conserved salary of promoted post holders.
Q6 What would encourage you to seek promotion to senior management, including to headteacher level? What would discourage you from seeking promotion?

Currently nothing would entice me to work at senior management level. The work load is impossible.

The old structure of subject specific PT’s running a single Dept worked well and along with APT’s gave a progression route that was easier to cope with. Now the steps are too large between class teacher, PT(C) and Depute Rector.

Q7 What do you think are the main challenges, if any, in recruiting or retaining teachers (and other staff) at your school? (please feel free to provide details of practical experiences)

The big issues are workload fewer teachers trying to do more so most teaching to max contact time making it hard to keep on top of paperwork and trying to develop new materials so the course stays fresh. The constant changes to exams etc with no real reduction in work load.

Get rid of assignments and folios if you are serious about reducing workload as they serve no real purpose in educational terms.

Salary is another big factor. It has fallen way behind what it should be if you want to attract the best new graduates and retain staff.

Q8 Which particular subject specialisms/support roles face the greatest challenges with recruitment or retention?

Sciences are struggling.

Q9 Do you have any suggestions for how challenges with recruitment and retention might be addressed?

Pay more, employ more staff so teachers have more non-contact time to develop courses, mark work etc

Q10 Have any measures been put in place as a result of changes to staffing numbers in recent years at your school (examples include multi-school headship/leadership teams, composite classes, changes in the use/availability of support assistants)?

If so:

- What are these measures? There are less support staff to help with ASN pupils
- How well are they working? It NOT WORKING well at all. Lack of reader scribes for assessment, support in the class room
- Are these changes a permanent or a temporary measure (ie is it covering vacancies at present or is it to reflect the number of teacher/other posts has reduced?)

Permanent as far as I'm aware
Q11 Are there any subject choices or other opportunities that are not available to pupils as a result of staff shortages that you consider would be valuable? (please specify)

Not aware

Q12 How would you describe general morale among staff (very good / quite good / quite low / very low) and what are the key factors that influence it?

Morale is mostly good most of the time but it can be very demoralising when faced with more changes and incomprehensible materials from the SQA which make the job harder. Education Scotland does not help either.

ANONYMOUS 31

Q1 What type of teaching role do you have

I work as teacher of German in an unpromoted post in a secondary school and occasionally support primary schools in the cluster. I am also a mother whose son has just been through primary education in Scotland.

Q4 What are the positives that keep you in the teaching profession?

Teaching children and young people is the best and most rewarding job. Unfortunately, in many cases the evidence appears years later when these children and young people are adults and follow their own path in life. Through my subject and teaching expertise I have been supporting teachers in Scotland over the last ten years which has enhanced my professionalism and has given me an overview of the state of the profession so that I am able to provide specific support at national events to deal with some aspects and issues.

Q5 Do you consider that you will teach until you retire or do you consider leaving early or for alternative employment? (If you consider leaving, please specify why if it relates to your enjoyment of your role)

I have been seeking promotion but have been unsuccessful. However, I have been successful on a national level as I am Principal Assessor for SQA which has made me feel valued and appreciated.

Q6 What would encourage you to seek promotion to senior management, including to headteacher level? What would discourage you from seeking promotion?

I have been seeking promotion, however, promoting staff here seems to have more to do with the timetable needs and surplus staff in certain disciplines rather than leadership skills and a vision to improve learning and teaching. I have been approached to take on extra responsibilities without management time or enhanced pay. This seems to be the case for other colleagues, too. Care must be taken that sole teachers in small schools who perform same
duties as PTs in their subjects are not approached to deliver extra duties without management time and/or enhanced salary. The faculty system which was introduced a few years ago has removed quite a number of subject PT jobs. As a consequence, sole teachers have been merged into faculties. To this end, they manage their own subject, their assessments, SQA paperwork and IACCAs, their resource development as well as any extra-curricular activities on their own – which is actually the duty of a PT.

I would definitely apply for a promoted post on a national level as this would give me the opportunity to support teachers more effectively since I am a classroom teacher and have been for 25 years with the experience of working in three different school systems. Promotion in my school and my authority is something I have dismissed because it seems to me that promoted post go to teachers who are always in agreement with the Head teacher at the cost of teacher autonomy and professional approach to matters.

I would refrain from going for a promotion if I was expected to always agree with my line manager and hence unable to exercise critical thinking in a professional way for the benefit of the children I teach, my staff and the parents I work with.

**Q7** What do you think are the main challenges, if any, in recruiting or retaining teachers (and other staff) at your school? (please feel free to provide details of practical experiences)

My school is located in a very rural area. Probationers often have to stay in the town which does not offer any amenities or any high quality social life that an academic mind would seek. After their year or years of probation, they soon apply to other schools – mostly in or near the Central Belt or outside Scotland.

My school is very small with next to no opportunity to collaborate with another subject specialist. Activities such as cross-marking or moderation require release from school and travelling to other schools. The workload for sole teachers at a small school is also a reason for young teachers to leave for bigger schools where they might get an opportunity for promotion sooner than in our area.

However, this workload is the same for all other teachers who are still teaching in my school.

**Q8** Which particular subject specialisms/support roles face the greatest challenges with recruitment or retention?

As a German teacher and PA for Higher German with insight knowledge of candidate numbers for the 2017 exam diet, I can clearly say that my subject has been hit by CfE and by failure to recruit teachers.

Although many of my colleagues are dual qualified and some actually prefer to teach German as it is their stronger subject, their schools do not offer German as the curriculum has been slimmed down due to CfE.

A recent study by Dundee University (Dr J Scott) has shown that academic subjects have lost 50% of their uptake since CfE. I believe that Dr Scott has given evidence to Parliament about the results of his study.
Care must be taken that young teachers/all teachers of German are getting the opportunity to teach their subject to secure German teachers for the future.

As for our school, pupils gravitate to “soft” Highers and practical subjects despite an ability to study more academic subjects. The free choice they have makes that possible. Stronger guidance and even a government policy to include certain (academic) subjects in a set of N5 qualifications or simply more choice in schools rather than just five subjects could help the matter.

Having attended ISTP2017, I was very pleased to hear a possible return to a knowledge-based curriculum with evidence that teacher-led cohorts perform better than non-teacher-led cohorts (Danish research mentioned at ISTP2017).

Q9 Do you have any suggestions for how challenges with recruitment and retention might be addressed?

As suggested to the Deputy First Minister during a GLOW session, I feel that a salary review is absolutely essential to reflect the enhanced workload, enhance responsibility and to attract the best graduates into teaching.

Care must be taken that Scotland does not repeat a Swedish scenario. To this end, there needs to be a difference between the pay of a primary teacher who teaches max 33 pupils a week and reports once or twice with no formal assessment responsibility and a secondary teacher who teaches up to 220 pupils a week, reports five times a year on T&M as well as twice a year in full and has SQA responsibility, prelims, exams and at least one subject specialism.

Being a single mum, my disposal salary has shrunk significantly over the last ten years due to increase in costs elsewhere but no pay rise. Teachers in Scotland do not receive a holiday bonus (to support the costs of holidays during school holidays) or a Christmas bonus (as a token of appreciation). Promotion opportunities have become very rare and would not necessarily resolve the issue of workload versus pay.

It is also necessary to prevent teachers to seek employment outside Scotland for salary reasons. We must be very aware that Modern Language could lose staff due to Brexit. The Scottish Government needs to prevent this from happening as it would hit all languages hard and would certainly have an effect in other subject areas taught by EU staff.

Q10 Have any measures been put in place as a result of changes to staffing numbers in recent years at your school (examples include multi-school headship/leadership teams, composite classes, changes in the use/availability of support assistants)?

If so:

• What are these measures?
• How well are they working?
• Are these changes a permanent or a temporary measure (ie is it covering vacancies at present or is it to reflect the number of teacher/other posts has reduced?)
Our school has become a cluster school with one Head Teacher for three schools (one secondary and two primary schools). We have had staffing cuts in all subjects and secondary staff.

Our school has a large number of composite classes in the primary and the secondary sector which adds to teacher workload. There have been significant cuts in learning support assistants which have led to SEN pupils not receiving support in every lesson.

Cover is a major issue since all teachers are on maximum with only few exceptions. Release from centre proved to be difficult in the past despite SQA paying for their appointees to be released. Reasons given to question release is inability to provide cover and lack of supply teachers.

Our timetable has been changed from six to seven periods a day in secondary school to make more savings. To this end, the number of pupils taught by each teacher has increased, the number of classes has increased with a direct impact on workload. It is my very personal view that these seven periods a day are unsustainable because ten periods a week are 40 minute periods where teachers have lost even more teaching time in BGE. I also consider these seven periods a day a main reason for workload issues and issues of teachers’ health and well-being.

Our secondary school has two DHTs, each primary school has one DHT. There are three Faculty Heads and one PT Pupils support as well as three PTs +1 with responsibility for different aspect of school life in secondary school. I am not sure how many PTs there are in the primary schools.

I would not like to comment on this leadership model on this occasion.

**Q11** Are there any subject choices or other opportunities that are not available to pupils as a result of staff shortages that you consider would be valuable? (please specify)

Given the 1+2 policy of the SG has to be in place by 2020, this is not an option for pupils in my secondary school. There is room on the timetable for only one MFL which is German.

The previous French teacher (and PT MFL) retired and was not replaced. The PT post was not replaced either.

The previous PT Maths was approached to retire. The PT post was not replaced either. Currently, my school lacks experience in the Maths Department which has resulted in a high number of pupils seeking private tuition.

Pupils are limited in their choices in S2 and S3; some parents are unhappy and some parents have removed children from our school to send them to nearby Carlisle schools (England) due to CfE restrains in choices.

I consider Physics an option that pupils should have/must have as a sustainable and reliable subject choice. Our school needs support to retain Physics in the curriculum. I would also like to see ICT and the teaching of keyboard skills to come back into BGE/ the school curriculum.

**Q12** How would you describe general morale among staff (very good / quite good / quite low / very low) and what are the key factors that influence it?
Staff morale is very low at the moment due to changes that have achieved saving money but at the same time have increased workload, bureaucracy, additional responsibilities unpaid and unrecognized in any other way.

As a union rep, I am aware of all matters relating to teachers’ health and well-being as well as the battle for promoted posts to increase a dwindling salary. I will refrain from going into further detail as this would be inappropriate.

It is much appreciated that the SG is taking steps to get a clear picture of the state of the teaching profession. I wish the committee and the Deputy First Minister all the best on their journey to improve Scottish Education.

ANONYMOUS 32
Q1 What type of teaching role do you have

I am a 56 year old non-promoted secondary school teacher of Physics. I have been in the profession since 1991.

Q4 What are the positives that keep you in the teaching profession?

I enjoy thoroughly enjoy teaching physics and science in a Curriculum for Excellence context.

Q5 Do you consider that you will teach until you retire or do you consider leaving early or for alternative employment? (If you consider leaving, please specify why if it relates to your enjoyment of your role)

I am looking forward to retiring in. Although I love my job the reason I am looking forward to retiring is due to a profound dissatisfaction with Scottish Education in general, which I believe is failing thousands of children every year.

Q6 What would encourage you to seek promotion to senior management, including to headteacher level? What would discourage you from seeking promotion.

This position has to be reformed.

Witnessing the performance of senior management figures for many years I have come to the conclusion that these posts are for proper managers and not teacher cum managers. These posts should be open to competent individuals in all sectors; private and public. In my experience senior managers, including head teachers are, at the very best, modestly skilled managers with modest communication skills and modest leadership attributes and as such are not fit for our current purpose. The argument that people outside the profession do not understand educational principle or the workings of a school and therefore are unsuitable is a conceit. I have yet to come across a senior manager who has more than a rudimentary knowledge of curriculum planning. This lack of knowledge has been brutally exposed by Curriculum for Excellence. There needs to be tension between everyday realities and educational principle and currently there is none. Open senior and middle management posts to all of Scotland and many of our deep rooted problems will be solved at a stroke. A career structure for teachers should be built around learning and teaching.
Q7  What do you think are the main challenges, if any, in recruiting or retaining teachers (and other staff) at your school? (please feel free to provide details of practical experiences)

The challenges of recruiting high quality graduates or professionals and retaining them are profound and unless deep reforms are made it is simply not going to happen.

I suggest we launch a recruitment drive to encourage successful people working in other sectors into the profession. They will need to be paid at least at the top of the scale. The best graduates also need to be encouraged and again they must be paid at the top of the scale. Then they need to be further incentivised by performance related pay. If unions or other vested interests challenge this then our politicians must robustly and courageously challenge them.

But retaining high quality individuals will take more than money. Let me give you an example why. Suppose you are keen to enter education and you decide to attend a meeting among teachers convened for some reason or other. This is what you will observe. During the question-answer debate you will see; cynicism, indignation, back slapping, sneering, gloating, self-interestedness, moaning, blame gaming and sarcasm. You will also see windbags and toadies. All of whom know that they are right. If you go home and read the online responses to an article on some educational matter, then you will come across the weakest, pointless and most ridiculous drivel imaginable. And all of the contributors know that they are right. What you will not see is people with insight constructively and sharply challenging the system, its methods and its structure. No intelligent person would want to hang around for too long in such a system.

The intelligent person will also notice how governing institutions have nurtured a culture of dependency that teachers in schools readily comply with. Endless support sessions are offered by institutions and endless requests for them are made. Sharing good practice is an excellent principle but this has been high jacked and the young intelligent teacher will see needy teachers who lack the independence and problem solving skills to work out for themselves what is needed. This grotesque state of affairs does not produce the independent, confident and knowledgeable individuals we need to support and inspire the next generation of teachers. So they leave.

If a young teacher finds themselves in a challenging school where the leadership is weak then we should expect to lose them, and especially so if the teacher is intelligent and resourceful. Unfortunately, the challenging schools receive less applications for promoted posts and absences due to stress are greater. The circle is vicious and although councils have the power to move teachers around, they do not possess the necessary courage and leadership to do so. I suggest we identify the best teachers, pay them very well and move them to schools where conditions are difficult. This can be fitted into a career structure and the status of those in these schools will rise, because only they are able to successfully teach the most disadvantaged. They must be the best paid teachers in Scotland though. It makes sense because the children of modest means need the best teachers and citizens of...
a country that champion social justice will fully agree. It is these measures that reduce attainment gaps, impress young dynamic teachers and solve predictable recruitment issues.

Start a recruitment drive for graduates over 25 with good degrees and successful careers. And paying them well and give them status is the place to start. Think about delaying the entry into education for all graduates until they have worked in the real world for a few years. There are too many teachers that went from nursery-primary-secondary-university-college –and back to school. Many of these individuals are profoundly institutionalised and challenge less than teachers who joined at a later age. Unfortunately no one can articulate the system better and promotion follows. Try to break that cycle.

Q10 Have any measures been put in place as a result of changes to staffing numbers in recent years at your school (examples include multi-school headship/leadership teams, composite classes, changes in the use/availability of support assistants)?

If so:
• What are these measures?
• How well are they working?
• Are these changes a permanent or a temporary measure (ie is it covering vacancies at present or is it to reflect the number of teacher/other posts has reduced?)

We regularly have to ask, and often pressure, long time retired teachers to fill in. Currently there is a chap well into his sixties who retired many years ago and he is covering a maternity. He told me it was not what he wanted.

Q12 How would you describe general morale among staff (very good / quite good / quite low / very low) and what are the key factors that influence it?

In general I am happy at my work and enjoy the mechanics of the job and the opportunities to develop. The boys and girls are generally well behaved and largely co-operate. It is very rare that behaviour among the children causes me stress. I can say the same about most of my colleagues.

By far the main factor in influencing my morale is the quality of leadership and management decisions. There are many nights I have went home unhappy and lost sleep and peace of mind over the quality of a management decision or an example of poor leadership that has directly affected me This is extremely problematic and the blame lies with incompetent leaders and the methods used to select them. The competitive educational interview, including the processes that lead to it, is surely education’s greatest farce. If a skilled satirist worked in a Scottish school for a year and wrote a farce about life and leadership in a Scottish school, the audience would be rolling in the aisles for years. I have saw countless examples of cronyism, money wasting, poor planning and evaluation, outrageously pretentious CPD, eye wateringly weak CPD, petty jealousies and box ticking. And we are so profoundly
institutionalised that we have now lost our ability to know what is right and what is wrong. We let the system keep us right where right and wrong are concerned.

Additional comments

As things stand there is little to encourage people into education.

Yes, Scottish education is a hive of activity. The GTC, SQA and Education Scotland provide us with excellent opportunities to develop further and able people will take full advantage however the sum of these activities have amounted to little. Often these activities represent luxuries that we have no moral right to indulge in. We have addressed the needs of the less able and less fortunate for many years yet we have one of the worst attainment gaps in the developed world. Our young learners are not impressing employers, too many are dropping out of university and approximately twenty percent of the population are functionally illiterate. These facts indicate deep malaise in a mature and sophisticated system that has little structural flaws that I can see. And if I am right then we need to look at the person who cannot be criticised and that is the teacher. It is my view that the notion that the teacher upholds the highest professional standards is only correct up to a point. The Scottish teacher has mainly technical skills that are useful in a classroom setting but the intellectual skills needed to take forward a philosophy based curriculum in a modern day democracy are desperately lacking. The policy makers must understand the limited nature of the Scottish teacher and on no account should they believe in the empty rhetoric and mythology that is always present whenever the Scottish teacher is mentioned.

Our CPD records are probably among the most impressive in the world but evidently we are not among the world’s best teachers, managers or leaders. Look, for example, at many of our expensive chartered teachers and their attitude towards additional responsibility in line with their status. Gavin McCrone sensibly ditched this wasteful programme but nevertheless it should give you an idea of the worth of luxurious CPD where the Scottish teacher is concerned. If the Chartered teacher represents the best of the best then what must the rest of us be like? The chartered teacher experience should tell us that this will bring the profession no benefits with the current teacher. I predict, with no pleasure, the funding for the attainment challenge will also be fruitless. Money should be used to encourage and pay the brightest and best who are not yet teachers.

We are currently failing in Scotland because what our best minds at governance level conceive our lesser minds at school level are incapable of delivering. And what we do deliver is so poorly understood, so weakly implemented and poorly managed that it does little good. And if governance changes something to offset our circumventions (even if it is unwitting), we shriek with incredulity. If ideas are to be properly implemented then the ability gap between our institutions and schools must be bridged. If not we will all work harder and fail even harder.

Despite the brilliant Curriculum for Excellence, the GTC standards, impressive websites, excellent GTC publications, numerous commissioned reports (all studiously diplomatic) and the NIF, no progress with respect to learning and teaching has been made and will ever be made. A steady and constant personnel transfusion is necessary for that to happen. If questionnaires like this or the recent governance review lead to unchallenged, non-controversial, union friendly reforms
then every third December, starting in 2019 when the OECD PISA results are released, expect our performance to steadily fall to the level of countries that pay a fraction of what the Scottish taxpayer pays to educate its children. Our children are becoming the worst educated in the world and our brilliant people per head of population will fall because of stunted human development. We must now encourage brilliant people into schools. While we still have them.

That, then, is environment into which you are trying to recruit and retain our brightest and best.

ANONYMOUS 33

Q1 What type of teaching role do you have

Secondary, Mathematics

Q4 What are the positives that keep you in the teaching profession?

I like the job, I enjoy teaching and working with pupils, interacting with pupils, both challenging and non-challenging behaviour wise, both academically able and not so.

It is a varied job.

Pay is reasonable but falling behind other similar professions.

Holidays are good.

Q5 Do you consider that you will teach until you retire or do you consider leaving early or for alternative employment? (If you consider leaving, please specify why if it relates to your enjoyment of your role)

I am likely to teach to the end of my working life, but have considered seriously alternative work options to get away from the constant stress.

Q6 What would encourage you to seek promotion to senior management, including to headteacher level? What would discourage you from seeking promotion?

I have had promotion to middle leadership. In our environment this position is effectively a ‘death knell’ from going further. It is the ‘removal of opportunities to enhance application forms’ and ‘direct comments’ that have clearly relayed this message

Q7 What do you think are the main challenges, if any, in recruiting or retaining teachers (and other staff) at your school? (please feel free to provide details of practical experiences)

The constant criticism of Maths Teachers currently – statistics show that Maths is a ‘harder exam (alongside STEM)’ than other subjects, but this does not stop the pressure being applied to Maths teachers.

CfE has been a disaster, numeracy standards have crashed in primary, now being recovered, but the impact of this is felt by Secondary staff...

Dealing with pupil behaviour and the effects of ‘inclusion’ is a big driver from people that I have spoken to about this. To be a teacher in a ‘tough school’
you now need to expect to face significant abuse on a regular basis. However, exclusions are reducing so we must be imagining it!

Pay is an issue, it is not now comparable to other similar professions.

Promotion has been significantly limited by the removal of posts post-mccrone.

Q8 Which particular subject specialisms/support roles face the greatest challenges with recruitment or retention?

I do not have the data to really answer that question, but just now my education authority cannot access almost any cover staff. A massive shortage of Maths teachers to select from when appointing a job.

Q9 Do you have any suggestions for how challenges with recruitment and retention might be addressed?

Pay needs to move back to a comparable level. Regular 1% pay rises, if lucky do not sell the profession.

The inclusion agenda needs to be reviewed. My education authority applies inclusion as not excluding anyone. Exclusions (which many of which I agree did not work) are reduced, but behaviour has not improved……I wander what is going on there….! Inclusion is about removing barriers, allowing and encouraging access to classrooms and learning. Not dumping poorly behaved kids, pupils with no English, etc in classrooms and hoping all goes well!

Q10 Have any measures been put in place as a result of changes to staffing numbers in recent years at your school (examples include multi-school headship/leadership teams, composite classes, changes in the use/availability of support assistants)?

If so:

- What are these measures?
- How well are they working?
- Are these changes a permanent or a temporary measure (ie is it covering vacancies at present or is it to reflect the number of teacher/other posts has reduced?)

Reduced support assistants – less support for teaching staff to deal with inclusion issues in classrooms.

Permanent measure as staffing/money decreases.

Q11 Are there any subject choices or other opportunities that are not available to pupils as a result of staff shortages that you consider would be valuable? (please specify)

Home Economics.
Q12  How would you describe general morale among staff (very good / quite good / quite low / very low) and what are the key factors that influence it?

Low. Staff are generally positive about their profession and interactions with pupils, but negative about behaviour issues, criticism from politicians, issues with pupil attendance, etc.

Pay is a driver, but increased pay alone, while appreciated would not solve the problems.

Additional comments

The HMIE document, HGIOS5 are starting to be written in ‘gibberish education speak’. They seem to be digging themselves into a ‘self-serving hole’ and not engaging staff in schools. Staff obviously engage during an inspection, but not otherwise – a (slightly) different direction is needed.

The standards for full registration are a similar issue. Some are almost indecipherable to the normal adult reader! Get the clear English campaign involved!

ANONYMOUS 34

- What are the main challenges in relation to teacher recruitment and retention?

Pay / Conditions / Re numeration

Salary has dropped away from alternative professional occupations. People can get much higher levels of remuneration by entering industry or the commercial sector.

Yes teachers have a 35 hour per week contract – very few will stick within that time frame during a normal week. There are many studies and survey that highlight the extent of unpaid overtime completed by teachers.

One key benefit of teaching, the level of annual leave, no longer makes up for this lower level of salary. I have always felt that a teacher's salary was more than just the pay cheque at the end of each month. It was the pay, holidays and the pension as a package. Yes we work beyond the limits of our contracts, but the remuneration package as a whole made up for it. But as real-time pay drops, pensions are eaten into, is it such a good deal?

If you know a teacher you will be aware that the summer holidays are vital to let people recover from a high intensity and high pressure job. And don’t forget the benefits and learning experience children have by simply being children.

Real-time devaluation of salaries, consistent pressures towards volume of annual leave and the removal of pension rights and deterioration of pension conditions from existing teachers has a huge impact on people staying in the profession and puts people off joining the profession.

Working to 67 – How will an average 66 year old be able to relate to an 11 or 12 year old pupil? We want to engage and inspire our youth to great things. Is having your Gran or Grandad standing in front of you the way to go? I look forward to 65 year old PE teachers taking basketball (maybe Zimmer frame or wheelchair), I look forward to teaching Games Design to kids playing the latest games when we are using mind control computers and 3d hologram screens.

YES this is a light-hearted comment but there is a point to be made here – yes we are living longer and more healthy etc etc BUT it will be problematic if staff cannot retire while still being able to engage pupils. This will be a challenge with an aging staff group to get engagement and enthusiasm from pupils.
School management structures – simply there are too few ways to progress in schools. The removal of middle management has limited opportunities for career progression and resulted in people leaving the profession. Curriculum leaders across mixed departments removed subject expertise and damages overall quality management and assurance. Curriculum leader have limited the number of people in positions to apply for Depute and Headteacher posts, resulting in many people in promoted posts as they were the only ones to apply or could apply – the staff pool to select the best to run our schools has become limited.

Subject PTs must be reintroduced to create a career path for classroom teachers and also develop a greater pool of potential candidates for DHT and ultimately HT posts. This will also benefit departments and schools, experienced staff supporting new teachers, wider opportunity for Quality Assurance etc.

Broadening of the Teacher pay scale with additional points to allow the skilled classroom practitioners to remain in the classroom. Many people come into teaching to work with young people, not to become managers. Increase the highest pay point for classroom teachers and broaden the payscale being able to reach your top salary after only 5 years! A 10 or 15 year scale pathway with a higher top end may encourage people to stay in the classroom. Because of this people now look at teaching and say – is it worth it? Am I happy with the pay, well……it is OK but I could do better, am I happy with the holidays…..well yes but I am working so much at other times I really need them to recover, am I happy with the career outlook…….many are now saying no.

Education System
Also there are huge challenges within education, the frequent changes that follow poor consultation…….5-14 this took years to form into a working system despite warnings from staff. As soon as it was starting to work it was scrapped for CfE. Warning from the ‘chalk face’ were ignored
CfE Still a mess, poor structures, poor documentation, poor pathways for pupil development. How can we deliver a strong national educational standard across the country when schools within miles of one another do things in completely different ways? Warnings from the ‘chalk face’ were ignored
Move to Access, Int1, Int2, NQ Higher. Initially a disaster. Warnings from the ‘chalk face’ were ignored. To resolve this opinions were sought, were listened to and, in general, the Access, Int1, Int2, NQ Higher course were a good structure, appropriate content and depth. Well assessed – not over assessed. Enough internal content to display real skill while retaining and external exam that gives people faith in a national standards. These qualifications should have been the standard for moving forward. Yes some content needed updating – it always does – but not the structures. Huge levels of time and money were wasted destroying something that really worked!
The current N4 / N5 / CfE Higher. What a mess - Warnings from the ‘chalk face’ were ignored. Poor qualifications, poor structure.
In my subject area – Computing – the change from 2 subjects (1. Information System 2. Computing Science) to 1 (Computing Science) has killed interest in the subject. Female uptake has dropped dramatically from around 45% to
between 5-10% in our school. Just look at the SQA stats on this. There is a national trend here.
I know that I wrote to Mike Russell, as did many other Computing techers, describing our fears for the future. We were all told the new subject would be great and female uptake would not be impacted. **Warnings from the ‘chalk face’ were ignored.**

So we are now revamping N4 / N5 / CfE Higher. Was there consultation – some – but this has been limited. Do they appear to be listening to concerns – NO. Last time we fixed Int1/Int2/HQ Higher teachers were listened to and we ended up with good qualifications, but unfortunately **warnings from the ‘chalk face’ are ignored.** In computing our courses need focus and thinned out. We do not need bigger exams and more depth of content! The courses or so broad and lacking focus they are difficult to teach making exams more lengthy an adding additional content is simply wrong. **Warnings from the ‘chalk face’ are being ignored.**

**Morale and atmosphere in schools**
I have never, in my 20 years teaching, seen so many demoralised and fed up colleagues. People leaving the profession as they do not feel they can perform their jobs to a level they desire. Workload and change are destructive and pushing people out of education and making people think twice.
I have seen some top quality staff, utterly committed to classes reach points where they have left teaching. We have lost some great staff to early retirement, staff that who 10 years ago would never have left early need to get out. They are leaving because that cannot face further botched changes and fear for their pension rights. Additionally the increased stress and workload are pushing more and more to leave teaching. What will happen to the new entrants who need to work to 67, 45 years of teaching with current workloads and stresses, many won’t make it that long.

- **Do you have views or insight into the process for recruiting the right number of teachers to satisfy the demand for teachers in Scotland’s schools (including the availability of up to date information such as on supply and demand)?**
  The new Primary MA programme offered by Edinburgh University is a big mistake. Placements should be done every year of the degree. You will get to year three and find people leaving the course after 2 ½ years or 3 years. If placements happen earlier those who feel teaching is not for them will be identified earlier and additional students can be recruited more quickly to fill that gaps.

- **What are the factors that influence whether teaching is considered an attractive profession compared to other professions by those that might consider a career in teaching?**
  Like any job, salary, holidays, pension and conditions. What was considered by some to be great benefits in the past are seeing the truth.

Pay is OK, holidays are good, pension is a shambles and nowhere near ‘gold standard’!

Workload is also a significant consideration. Teachers are overworked and under-rewarded. Some extra hours each week can be expected. But teachers
regularly doing 45 and 50 hour weeks to simply survive. That is not acceptable and puts people off.

Are there patterns or key reasons why some trainee teachers do not complete courses, or do not choose to go into teaching having qualified?

Limited experience in the classroom until late in courses. This means people don’t experience the job until well into qualifications, some will continue until complete to avoid wasting time and use the qualification elsewhere. It is vital the at every stage of training some level of classroom contact is involved.
People very quickly realise the workload and the negative work/life balance that can develop within teaching, as mentioned earlier do the current rewards amply make up for the challenges. Many now say no.

- What is the impact of teacher shortages in certain parts of Scotland or in specific disciplines?
  Significant – it is far too common that year groups are brought to a hall / assembly point to be supervised on mass as there are not enough teachers to cover all lessons.
  This is completely unacceptable.

  Supposedly vital subject areas vital for the future of Scotland are dying. Computing as a result of limited staffing is shrinking, loosing profile in as a result numbers are dropping. Some councils making decisions to close computing departments. Many schools working without staff. The education authority have at least 3 FTE Computing jobs available on a permanent basis. We then have to do our best to teach the children with one teacher down. Not great for the pupils or the teaching staff.

- How effective are the various approaches taken to cover shortages of teachers in schools?
  If there were teachers to take cover the processes in place would work. The other challenge in this area is that schools will initially focus on making use of any non-contact time across existing staff (Which is perfectly reasonable) But the optimisation of school timetables has had a negative impact – school staffing becomes inflexible and cannot cope in situations of absence. Schools are now reliant on external cover in almost all situations. Previously the inbuilt minor inefficiency od staff use would actually deal with much of this. Schools are now needing to access cover teachers to simply have teachers in the classroom as schools do not have any inbuilt slack. Sometimes a small level of inefficiency actually is good in unusual situations of unexpected absence. It is not acceptable that schools are, on a fairly regular basis, gathering large groups of pupils in assembly halls to be supervised on mass by Headteachers and Deputes as it is the only way to meet the legal requirement for supervision within the school day.

- What factors influence teachers deciding whether to stay in the profession or to leave?
  I know this does not help but the reason I stay in my job is because I enjoy it.
It concerns me that as a professional I do now feel somewhat devalued, my salary has reduced in real terms, I now lag behind other professional with Degree and Post Graduate Degree qualifications. My Pension which was promised to me 20 years ago is being significantly changed from underneath me, reduced terms and conditiona and needing to work longer to reach my pensions. Now this may not be bad for new entrants. They know where they stand, they can plan ahead and make additional payments. I cannot go back 20 years and start to make additional payments. I started an AVC and was paying the maximum allowed to allow me to reach full pension by my retirement age. This has all been thrown up in the air. I cannot go back and fix this challenge by paying small amounts, I am now having to make significant additional payments to try and recover. I appreciate schemes change, but removing / modifying conditions from underneath existing members is daylight robbery. If I stay in education can I have faith / trust in the system not to change again? Uncertainty is dangerous. So much for the Gold Standard teacher pension people talked about! Maybe if there are other options they may be worth considering. Some people are leaving teaching due to uncertainties like these. People are able to get better core salary and pension in industry, many businesses are now offering 10 weeks annual leave. The overall renumeration package for teaching is no longer as attractive. Combine this with flexibility of taking holidays whenever suits you (Normally for far less cost) working outside of education is growing in appeal to graduates and existing teaching staff.

- What factors influence teachers when deciding whether or not to apply for promotion to senior management / headteacher level?
  Can I do the job in the time available. People have professional pride and don’t want to get into situation where jobs become almost impossible to effectively due to time and resource restraints.

  I fundamentally believe in the Principal Teacher model for departments. Curriculum Leaders can never provide appropriate support to new and developing classroom practitioners OR support subject level development as effectively as specialist Principal Teachers of subjects.

  I would love to be able to run my own department, past experiences of maternity covers and acting posts, have given me the experience of running a subject group. Personally my principals mean that I will not apply for Curriculum Leader posts as I feel that these are fundamentally wrong. Cutting of my nose despite my face – possibly one interpretation. BUT I will not apply to take on board a position that I fundamentally disagree with.

  I personally feel a review of school management structures is vital. At present there are NO real career pathways for classroom teachers. The Principal Teacher route are not very limited and Curriculum Leader posts are often filled as a result of restructuring.

  I feel people no longer see a clear pathway for promotion so simply don’t apply. Also this image will discourage people to enter teaching. Why join a career where
there are no opportunities to make intermediate steps into management. That is what ‘rationalisation’ of management structures has done. I feel this is already contributing to the challenges faced when trying to appoint quality candidates as Depute and Headteachers. There are simply no people out there with appropriate experience.

This will only get worse and worse as there are fewer and fewer individuals gaining management experience as Principal Teachers. This vital role that was dismissed so quickly was / should be the breeding ground for our next Deputes and Heads. But there are no seeds being planted. If people feel that it is challenging to appoint quality now – we are approaching a real challenge in the very near future.

ANONYMOUS 35

I am emailing in regards to the post I saw on Facebook asking for feedback.

I have worked for 16 years but have recently handed in my notice to leave teaching. I feel qualified to comment on some of the questions posed in the Facebook post.

- Are there patterns or key reasons why some trainee teachers do not complete courses, or do not choose to go into teaching having qualified?

I think the actual job is wonderful and the desire to work with young people, teaching, educating them is a real passion for new teachers. However the teaching training is very hard on many levels. Having supported many students through the years I believe schools aren’t always supportive of them. Lack of time, resources and knowledge of teacher training styles is to blame. Having our own classes and managing that workload plus a student who is usually needy contributes to this. I think then students are disillusioned about what teaching is in reality v their ideas of it. Especially those who have limited experience working with young people. I am a drama teacher so those who come with theatre school background cope better.

- How effective are the various approaches taken to cover shortages of teachers in schools? They aren’t. Staff have been off in my school over the years and it’s not always easy to get a cover/supply in that subject and the rest of us have to make do. In my current job two members of my faculty have been off long term at various points, but getting subject specific replacements have been next to impossible. Those months/years of extra work for me and my colleagues has contributed to me wanting to leave (amongst other factors).

- What factors influence teachers deciding whether to stay in the profession or to leave?

To leave -

Working more hours than what I am paid. Over the 16 years as a drama teacher with school shows, rehearsals, extra curricular events I am burnt out.

Curriculum changes - the NAT 4/5 courses have ultimately over worked me, stressed me and my students and this has been a large factor for why I am so tired and stressed and need to leave the profession.
Indiscipline - pupils behaviour isn't the same as 16 years ago and I find there are fewer consequences meaning I have lots of low level disruption during the day, which is exhausting.

Pay - I get paid less today than I did 5 years ago. Not by much, but I have worked very hard - more so now with all the changes and it is demoralising.

Lack of job opportunity/promotion.

Lack of support from line manager. Not necessarily their fault - a consequence of over worked staff and cuts.

What factors influence teachers when deciding whether or not to apply for promotion to senior management/headteacher level?

I have not applied for promotion for the pay. I don't think they are paid enough. I have wanted a challenge, know my strengths are in administration and leading people. Job satisfaction of leading a team would be another reason why I have gone for promotion. However I know that because people are over worked in promotion it has made me think carefully about each post I go for.

Teaching was a profession I worked hard in. I have spent many hours developing my skills in theatre and education. I love teaching and have enjoyed most of my 16 years in the job. I wish I could be more positive today, However in recent years for various reasons (some above) I don't feel I can continue in the post without serious damage to my health. I hope that the government really do consider what to do to help teachers with the work load, pay and stress/emotional factors. Sadly the job is definitely not the same as it was 16 years ago.

ANONYMOUS 36

In this submission, I can only comment on my own experience of teaching and, therefore, although it is anecdotal, I do believe it is typical of many. It also answers many of the questions raised in the committee’s consultation. I first qualified in 90’s, but there were no teaching vacancies in secondary English at that time. I had gone to complete teacher training after working in another sector for some years and was a mature, married student with a mortgage. When I could get nothing post qualification apart from odd days of supply teaching posts, I was forced, because of lack of funds, to go back to working in my previous role. My first foray into teaching was, therefore, unsuccessful.

Undeterred, when I was made redundant from a company 11 years later, I began reapplying for teaching posts as I had some financial support from my redundancy package whilst doing so. I was living in central Scotland at that time and managed to secure a teaching job but it was not local. By this time I now had a family (and an even bigger mortgage) and commuted to work. All was going well, so we decided to move closer to my school, switch our daughter’s primary school and buy a house in the town where I taught. That was in October 2009. By spring 2010, I had been made “excess” and was up for compulsory transfer to anywhere in that authority. It is a big authority and I had a child at a local school (who we had moved only recently). The only sweetener for the move was extra travelling costs if the new school were
further away than that to which I currently travelled. The travelling was the least of my concerns but my child’s after school care and general life disruption most certainly was. This was my second attempt to kick start my teaching career. Undaunted I took the transfer – luckily it was to a nearby school but this time the problem was school management. Bullying and intimidation was the order of the day and, yet again, I had to move. I now teach at another school, but my faith in teaching and its managers is fading. As I mentioned earlier, I worked for many years for another sector, supposedly in the most cut throat of all occupations, but I did not witness any of the poor management, disorganisation or generally poor treatment of staff I have witnessed in my teaching career.

To recap:

- I couldn’t get a full time post after qualifying;
- I was compulsorily transferred after moving my family en masse to be closer to my work and after being at a school for 2 years;
- I then had to leave the school to which I was transferred as I couldn’t bear the poor level of management and staff support.

And there is concern that the teaching profession can’t recruit and keep teachers? My own daughter is about to go off to further education. She tells me she would never go into teaching as she sees how tired I am and how demoralising a lot of my time in education has been. My colleagues’ children feel the same. This is the situation before my comments on the abuse that I face in my place of work.

In my previous school I was sworn at, threatened with rape and murder and generally subjected to a level of abuse that had it happened in the street, would have resulted in the police being called and charges being levied. Add to that, increased teacher workload and the continuous pressure from school management for higher results year on year with no resources – in my last school I couldn’t even photocopy – the pressures are horrendous.

We have school children with many, many learning difficulties but fewer pupil support assistants and limited resources. I had precious few full sets of class books in my previous school but there was money for fancy signage and posters. We have many school children with many, many behavioural difficulties, but no robust strategies for dealing with them. Even after exceptional levels of poor behaviour – violence, extreme verbal abuse – these pupils are back in the classroom causing difficulties for themselves and others straightaway. Teaching should be a great job – but it simply isn’t. I very rarely enjoy my job day to day and haven’t since I left my first teaching post. It is a trial with all but the best classes and support from management isn’t sufficient to do the job well. All of this is why we can’t retain teachers. This is why it isn’t an attractive profession. I suspect experiencing a lot of this in schools during teacher training is another reason why students don’t pursue teaching on qualification.

I was earning more 11 years ago than I am now. Despite promoted posts paying more, I would not apply as the standard of management I have experienced has been very poor and I believe that consequently, poor managers recruit poor managers and so it continues. There is no specific management training for teachers as there is in other organisations, so poor management is not unexpected.
The Scottish Government has staked its reputation on education and narrowing the attainment gap. For all the reasons above, I fear that this is unlikely to happen with teaching as it stands.

ANONYMOUS 37
Q1  What type of teaching role do you have
    Secondary School – Additional Support Needs Teacher (ASN)

Q4  What are the positives that keep you in the teaching profession?
    Seeing pupil’s flourish and knowing that I had a role to play in their development and the support of my department.

Q5  Do you consider that you will teach until you retire or do you consider leaving early or for alternative employment? (If you consider leaving, please specify why if it relates to your enjoyment of your role)
    No I will not teach until the retiral age of 68. I believe the stress and pressure faced within the job would force me to retire or change career by my early 50’s. I believe, especially in ASN that a teacher needs to be alert and be able to act quickly, especially with the increasing numbers of complex needs pupils. There are many incidents of violence and aggression within the job and as you get older you are less likely to have the stamina to put up with the pressure. Additionally as a teacher you are dealing with constant changes to the curriculum and considerable planning / differentiation in order to get it right for every child.

Q6  What would encourage you to seek promotion to senior management, including to headteacher level? What would discourage you from seeking promotion?
    Pressures and responsibilities.

Q7  What do you think are the main challenges, if any, in recruiting or retaining teachers (and other staff) at your school? (please feel free to provide details of practical experiences)
    Bad publicity, stress, workload pressure, SQA (lots of paperwork).

Q8  Which particular subject specialisms/support roles face the greatest challenges with recruitment or retention?
    Not entirely sure however after speaking to colleagues: Maths, Business Studies, English and the Sciences.

Q9  Do you have any suggestions for how challenges with recruitment and retention might be addressed?
    More positive publicity within the news. There appears to be considerable coverage regarding pay, violence and aggression and paper heavy workloads. There are never any widely heard positive stories about the impact we have as a profession.
Personally, the number of hours I actually work is not reflective of what is written in my contract and this could be said for numerous colleagues. As a dedicated teacher you want to provide the best for your pupils therefore you put in extra hours. We also, at times, pay for our own resources as there is not enough in the budget.

Q10 Have any measures been put in place as a result of changes to staffing numbers in recent years at your school (examples include multi-school headship/leadership teams, composite classes, changes in the use/availability of support assistants)?

If so:
- What are these measures?
- How well are they working?
- Are these changes a permanent or a temporary measure (ie is it covering vacancies at present or is it to reflect the number of teacher/other posts has reduced?)

Unsure in general, teaching staff numbers have been reduced in our department despite increasing number of complex needs of pupils. Puts pressure on department.

Q12 How would you describe general morale among staff (very good / quite good / quite low / very low) and what are the key factors that influence it?

Quite good

ANONYMOUS 38

Q1 Secondary teacher permanent.

Q2 Moray council

Q4 I love teaching. Working with kids, helping the pass exams.

Q5 No I will not teach until retirement.

Although I enjoy teaching I am ambitious and I have nothing to aim for. I don’t feel valued.

Q6 I would not like to be promoted out of the classroom. I enjoy teaching and wish to make a difference to pupils lives by teaching not as a depute or head.

Q7 Main challenges are recruiting teachers to move North.

Retaining teachers is hard as there appears to be no concern for teacher welfare. My personal experiences of returning to work after maternity leave have highlighted this for me. No time given to reintroduction, no allowances for parent evening and putting a baby to bed, choice of classes on return provide little career progression.

Decisions about timetabling are ruled by parents not research.

Q8 Subjects where working in private sector gives a much higher salary as standard or more opportunities for career progression.
Q9 Prioritise teacher welfare and publicise this. Make teaching a respected profession again.

Q12 Staff morale is low as we don't feel valued.

Previous good will is not noted, rewarded or considered when decisions are made.

ANONYMOUS 39
What has happened with the SQA changes this year? We have combined National 4 and National 5 classes, where the National 4 pupils feel like second-class citizens, as they do not have to sit examinations. Outcomes for both levels are different, but if you are lucky you may have units which articulate between National 4 and 5. Last year, 60 hours was spent on assessment for a National 5 Accounting class. Teachers regularly work more than there 35 hours week. If they did not do this, the pupils would not pass the courses. Teachers want pupils to pass courses and be the “best they can be”. Education Scotland did not listen to Business Studies teachers, and have published Benchmarks for digital learning – not taking any notice of suggestions which were offered by experienced professionals. This is very often the case – no one is listening. Either it’s “pass the buck” or “we’ll cross that bridge when we come to it”. There is no forward planning or contingency planning.

I very rarely make protestations such as this, but feel very strongly that the profession is being eroded. I have 3 adult children and would not encourage teaching, as it is at present, as a career. Someone needs to listen to teachers and if necessary, get into their workplace. Walk a mile in their shoes. Someone needs to.

ANONYMOUS 40
I am an experienced secondary teacher and have been teaching since 2005. I have recently began looking for alternative employment despite having a genuine passion and enthusiasm for teaching and learning. I wish to express my views regarding teacher recruitment and retention for consideration in your teacher workforce enquiry. Please do not publish my name or views (as I may be identified from this information). I am happy to express views in person:

- What are the main challenges in relation to teacher recruitment and retention?
  Lack of career prospects and progression. For experienced teachers there are very few opportunities for promotion. As a class teacher there are 2 routes; Faculty Head of subjects or Principal Teacher of Pastoral Care. As a result of the shift from principal teachers to faculties there are much fewer opportunities for promotion to Faculty Head. I have been applying and interviewing for Faculty Head posts for over 5 years now. I have attended in excess of 20 interviews. I have extensive experience, additional courses and qualifications including mat cover acting Faculty head, mat cover acting PT Pastoral Care, Postgraduate certificate in Professional Excellence, Project Leadership accreditation and qualified to teach across 3 subjects (History, Modern Studies & Psychology) and currently studying towards a fourth in RE. Yet, I am still unable to secure a permanent promoted post (I have exemplary references from all of my head teachers and consistently good feedback from
interviews). I would say that over the past 5 years there have been only 2 occasions where the successful applicant has not been the internal. I find it incredible that in over 90% of available promoted posts, the most suitable person, with the greatest experience and skills, happens to be the internal candidate. This has 2 consequences. The first, that there are in deed very few opportunities for teachers such as myself to progress within the profession unless I am fortunate enough for a vacancy to become available in my own school despite making every effort to provide the highest standards of teaching and learning and seeking every leadership professional development opportunity I can access. The second consequence is that schools across Scotland are being denied the opportunity to improve at a faster rate because they are not able to recruit/benefit from the individuals with the highest skills - I would suggest a possible solution to this would be to introduce a formal qualification for Faculty Heads and Principal Teachers.

Additionally, the removal of the chartered teacher structure removed further opportunity for progression.

- What are the factors that influence whether teaching is considered an attractive profession compared to other professions by those that might consider a career in teaching?
  Salary and career progression opportunities.

- Are there patterns or key reasons why some trainee teachers do not complete courses, or do not choose to go into teaching having qualified?
  In my experience of student teachers, most are very hard working and often struggle to secure a permanent post with general supply being the pattern of employment for the first few years. This is simply through lack of permanent posts available. I understand this year that one institution has recruited 20 Psychology student teachers yet there are very very few Psychology teaching posts available. I believe I have seen 1 in recent years. I am concerned where these teachers will secure permanent posts after probation year. I fear they may fall into general supply and become disillusioned with the profession over time with lack of permanent post. At times, the impression I have had from some student teachers is that they have come into teaching after graduating from undergrad and not having a clear career plan or specific employment opportunity related to their degree. Perhaps if recruitment at teacher training institutions was more thorough retention would be better.

- What is the impact of teacher shortages in certain parts of Scotland or in specific disciplines?
- We have not experienced difficulty with recruitment in subject specialists although it can be difficult at times to secure supply cover. The consequence of which is that teachers cannot attend professional development meetings to improve skills.
- What factors influence teachers deciding whether to stay in the profession or to leave?
  Opportunities for career progression in future and Salary.
- What factors influence teachers when deciding whether or not to apply for promotion to senior management/headteacher level?
Whether there is an internal applicant!

ANONYMOUS 41

Q1 What type of teaching role do you have

Secondary, PT of Art & Design (conserved). I underwent a management restructuring in North Lanarkshire Council and I have a 3 years conserved salary which ends in Aug 2017. I have been unable to get a job due to the Faculty situation that has been created. However, I am still doing the job and will continue to when my salary runs out – because there is no one else to do the job. My Faculty Head delegates everything.

Q4 What are the positives that keep you in the teaching profession?

Pupil relationships, love of subject, staff, the possibility to make a difference, interested in how children learn, improving the lives of young people despite their economic background.

Q5 Do you consider that you will teach until you retire or do you consider leaving early or for alternative employment? (If you consider leaving, please specify why if it relates to your enjoyment of your role)

I hope to leave the teaching profession. I am retraining in the hope to move to another career. These are the reasons below:-

• Being swore at and name called on a weekly basis.
• Aggression and violence. Regularly ‘squared up to’, I have been spat on, things been thrown at me, classroom door has been kicked and the glass smashed, a fist has been drawn at me.
• Level of aggression against female staff and it is allowed to happen.
• No sanctions because the government is putting pressure on schools not to exclude students.
• Lack of progression. Faculties have reduced the chance of moving on with your career, particularly in certain subjects.
• I am exhausted.

Q6 What would encourage you to seek promotion to senior management, including to headteacher level? What would discourage you from seeking promotion?

See Above.

I was a principal teacher but my post has been made obsolete, even though I am doing the job. I was intending to progress to depute but I cannot get a job at PT Art & Design. I have since retained as a Guidance teacher to continue my career, however, I do not intend to be in the teaching profession for the rest of my career.

Q7 What do you think are the main challenges, if any, in recruiting or retaining teachers (and other staff) at your school? (please feel free to provide details of practical experiences)

• Lack of respect
• Aggression, violence and threats
• Lack of career development
• Salary
• It is exhausting
• Work load
• Lack of autonomy in the curriculum
• Lack of support

Q8 Which particular subject specialisms/support roles face the greatest challenges with recruitment or retention?
Art & Design. Normally now in a Faculties which usually will be music who is the head.

Q10 Have any measures been put in place as a result of changes to staffing numbers in recent years at your school (examples include multi-school headship/leadership teams, composite classes, changes in the use/availability of support assistants)?
If so:
• What are these measures?
• How well are they working?
• Are these changes a permanent or a temporary measure (ie is it covering vacancies at present or is it to reflect the number of teacher/other posts has reduced?)

See Above. Secondments are not being filled also because there are not enough staff to fill the position for the secondment duration. Female teachers are suffering the most. The glass ceiling. The faculty system multiplies this.

Q11 Are there any subject choices or other opportunities that are not available to pupils as a result of staff shortages that you consider would be valuable? (please specify)
I have witnessed students not being given the option to take a subject because there are not enough staff to run it. That would be in the Art & Design and Photography. I have also witnessed subjects not running at Higher because the Depute does not like a member of staff.

Q12 How would you describe general morale among staff (very good / quite good / quite low / very low) and what are the key factors that influence it?
Very low.

Additional comments
If you have any other comments please include them below:
The worst idea was taking on the recommendations of the McCrone report such as faculties. They do not work. The work that a PT should be doing is delegated to the rest of the staff. This means that there is no direction or leadership steering the vision of education. Art & Design is being eroded from the curriculum. This is really unfortunate. It enhances creativity and problem solving, it improves children’s health.
& wellbeing and it helps them make articulate the world that they see. Faculties increase the glass ceiling. Female staff suffer the worst. If you are going to have a family, you are pushed further behind. Age, particularly for female is also an issue.

The continual change to certificated subjects does not promote autonomy – it promotes the opposite. The Nat 4 award means nothing. It has no credibility. The levels at Nat 5 are not consistent. It is guesswork every year. CfE good idea if it was executed properly.

Staff do not have time to spend with children to allow them to flourish. As a result, things are done in half measures. You are wanting a silk purse out of a souse ear.

Eradicate the charity status for independent schools then everyone will be on an even playing field. Independent schools encourage inequality. Get rid of them!

Staff use their own money to fund their subjects. This is shameful. Books, materials, time, all paid for by staff. Shameful.

Staff are not paid for supported study, trips Saturday mornings – all on the good will of the staff. Shameful.

Give staff who are wanting to do masters programmes funding and time off to do it.

Support teachers when they are being abused by pupils. The aggression and violence, particularly against female staff is wrong! Staff need to be supported. They should never be put in a situation that they have to continue teaching the pupils if they have been abusive. There should be programmes for the students to be involved in to help with anger management. I do not agree with exclusions, but there has to be other measures in place.

Improve the health & wellbeing of pupils, parents and staff – it has to start with that! Mindfulness is the key!

Scottish Education is being eroded.

ANONYMOUS 42
Q1 What type of teaching role do you have

Full-time Permanent Secondary Teacher of Business Education

Q4 What are the positives that keep you in the teaching profession?

I love my job! I get huge job satisfaction out of working with young people aged 12-18. It is genuinely a privilege to see how they grow and mature into young adults and to actually play a part in the development of the person that they become. I enjoy seeing them succeed and recognise their achievements no matter how great or small. I have genuine enthusiasm for my subjects and my pupils respond well to that enthusiasm. For many pupils, I am the one they turn to in times of need. I take pleasure out of the fact that I am inspiring people to go into careers in the administrative and business fields.

My colleagues are a real plus. We work very well together as a team and motivate and encourage each other. They create a hugely supportive environment in which to work.
Q5 Do you consider that you will teach until you retire or do you consider leaving early or for alternative employment? (If you consider leaving, please specify why if it relates to your enjoyment of your role)

I have always thought that I would teach until I retire but I would be lying if I said it never crossed my mind. There are times when I would like a job with ‘regular’ hours which teaching certainly isn’t regardless of our ‘35-hour working week’.

Q6 What would encourage you to seek promotion to senior management, including to headteacher level? What would discourage you from seeking promotion?

I have in the past sought Faculty Head positions but I feel that they are few and far between. As a mother of young children, travelling outwith my local area is not an option. Since we moved to the Faculty structure there are very little opportunities for promotion. The removal of subject PT’s, APT’s and Senior Teachers has meant many un-promoted staff doing the jobs of the roles which have disappeared for no extra time or money. The level of workload I see my own Faculty Head drowning under has definitely made me question whether I want to put my own physical and mental health under that strain. I honestly don’t think that I can do that to my family.

Q7 What do you think are the main challenges, if any, in recruiting or retaining teachers (and other staff) at your school? (please feel free to provide details of practical experiences)

We are underpaid for the work we do. A graduate with a Business degree often now gets a starting salary of £30,000 pa. This salary will increase and the number of people who have £100,000 salaries in the UK has quadrupled over the last 20 years.

I know very few teachers who only work 35 hours per week. We do a huge amount of marking and preparation in our own time.

We are no longer considered to be a “profession” by insurers and we are also categorised by them now to have a dangerous job. The abuse both verbally and physically that teachers take on a regular basis is disgusting. With little or at times no sanctions given. This should be actively encouraged! We are trying to educate our young people for life as well as work and the reality is that if they were physically or verbally abusive up in the High Street they would be charged.

The public perception of teachers is now very low. I am sick of parents believing every word that comes out of their children’s mouths and blaming the teacher for their child’s poor progress. When often the case is that the child has poor attendance, attitude and behaviour.

Morale in the profession is currently at the lowest I have ever known it to be. We are basically over worked, under-valued and definitely under paid. The constant barrage of change, without taking on board the views and opinions of teachers is demoralising.
Q8  Which particular subject specialisms/support roles face the greatest challenges with recruitment or retention?

Science and Technologies. In my Faculty we have been short staffed every year from January – May in either Business Education or Design and Technology for the last 14 years. The bottom line is we are nowhere near being paid enough to attract people from Technological backgrounds into the profession.

Q9  Do you have any suggestions for how challenges with recruitment and retention might be addressed?

Increase pay by at least 25%. We are all graduate's with degrees, therefore we should be remunerated as such. This will allow us to be seen by graduates as being a credible profession again.

Actually reduce the workload, and the constant paper chase which is now education. I am finding myself having to carry out more administrative tasks which are not my job but due to cutbacks to office and other auxiliary staff as it is the only way they will get done.

Come up with effective behaviour strategies and if that means staff and pupils are safer if a pupil is excluded for longer then that is what happens. We do have more seriously challenged and challenging pupils who would be better served by being educated in Units rather than in a comprehensive setting. Money needs to be invested in having more places available in alternative educational establishments which will better meet the needs of some of our pupils.

Stop rushing into educational change! Curriculum for Excellence was a fabulous idea, but as successive Scottish Governments have rushed it through, under-resourced it and provided minimal training for teachers then it has not met expectations. Once again John Swinney has rushed in and made poor decisions eg no fall-back position for Nat 5 pupils who sit the exam and fail. We need to take our time, consult teachers, educationalists and all stakeholders before we come up with a strategic plan that will bring about improvement in all of the National Priorities. If you consider even the timing of this survey. During the Easter Holidays, staff only returned to school on 18 April but the closing date is 20 April! We have also only found out about this survey through word-of-mouth. Every teacher in Scotland should have been emailed directly. Do you really want our views or is this just consultation to say we have been consulted?

Q10  Have any measures been put in place as a result of changes to staffing numbers in recent years at your school (examples include multi-school headship/leadership teams, composite classes, changes in the use/availability of support assistants)?

If so:

- What are these measures?
- How well are they working?
Are these changes a permanent or a temporary measure (ie is it covering vacancies at present or is it to reflect the number of teacher/other posts has reduced?)

Due to my local authorities overspend, we have seen horrendous cutbacks in auxiliary support eg administrative staff and support for learning assistants. If Councils had been allowed to increase Council Tax by even 0.5% each year the situation would not be as dire. This means more administrative tasks are being pushed on to teachers, eg updating spreadsheets, databases with monitoring and tracking data, filing etc. As I already mentioned we have more challenged and challenging pupils in schools than ever before and less resources with which to support them in terms of materials as we can't afford to photocopy them and fewer Support for Learning Assistants to support them in class. This means that these pupils disengage and disrupt the learning for all. Obviously this impacts on the attainment of all.

In terms of Business Education, Computing and Design & Technology these departments which are the more vocational ones in schools are being reduced and in some cases done away with as they cannot be staffed. This means that instead of schools being able to tailor their curriculum and offer more vocational courses as proposed in the Wood Report, the opposite is happening.

Q11 Are there any subject choices or other opportunities that are not available to pupils as a result of staff shortages that you consider would be valuable? (please specify)

As I have mentioned above in terms of Business Education, Computing and Design & Technology these departments which are the more vocational ones in schools are being reduced and in some cases done away with as they cannot be staffed. This means that instead of schools being able to tailor their curriculum and offer more vocational courses as proposed in the Wood Report the opposite is happening. We have lost Accounting & Finance and Economics as we have been left short staffed between January to May on so many occasions that we have been reduced from having 5 full-time staff members to 4. This meant that we could no longer run these courses. I would like to be able to offer Retail Services, Financial Services and ECDL which are all vocational courses which will increase pupils’ employability but due to staffing constraints I can't.

Q12 How would you describe general morale among staff (very good / quite good / quite low / very low) and what are the key factors that influence it?

Morale in the profession is currently at the lowest I have ever known it to be. We are basically over worked, under-valued and definitely under paid. The constant barrage of change, without taking on board the views and opinions of teachers is demoralising. I am going to repeat myself here but maybe then someone will actually take on board what I am saying.

We are underpaid for the work we do. A graduate with a Business degree often now gets a starting salary of £30,000 pa. This salary will increase and the number of people who have £100,000 salaries in the UK has quadrupled over the last 20 years.
I know very few teachers who only work 35 hours per week. We work in our lunch times, after the end of the pupil day and at weekends – I would go far as to say we are very rarely ‘off’.

We are no longer considered to be a “profession” by insurers and we are also categorised by them now to have a dangerous job. The abuse both verbally and physically that teachers take on a regular basis is disgusting. With little or at times no sanctions given. In my school it is frowned upon for you to phone the police to get a pupil charged. This should be actively encouraged! We are trying to educate our young people for life as well as work and the reality is that if they were physically or verbally abusive up outside school they would be charged.

The public perception of teachers is now very low. I am sick of parents believing every word that comes out of their children’s mouths and blaming the teacher for their child’s poor progress. When often the case is that the child has poor attendance, attitude and behaviour. I do however, acknowledge that there are some teachers who should never have been allowed to enter the profession. We need to be far more honest with individuals in Teacher Training institutions and say “you are not suited to the profession”. Instead I have had instances when people have been sent to my school to undertake a Probation that they are either not ready for or will never be ready for.

**Additional comments**

If you have any other comments please include them below:

I would like to raise my concerns about the Technologies E’s and O’s not including Administration & IT. The consultation carried out on all of the Experiences, Outcomes and Benchmarks was flawed – it did not get to teachers! There is a great deal of anger amongst Business Education teachers that given that there has been a Parliamentary debate on the ICT skills gap amongst School, College and University leavers that it seems a bit ironic that Administration and IT which is now the only ICT course available in Scotland, is not recognised in the final Technologies E’s and O’s. When you factor in the STEM agenda it seems even more ludicrous. Also apparently as the Primaries didn’t feel that the words “administration and IT” were necessary they were taken out. Given the fact that Primaries will have very few pupils who are Level 3 in Digital Literacy or the use of the full Microsoft Office Software by Primary 7 – including MS Access and more advanced features of MS Excel, I am not sure that their views from Level 3 onwards should have been considered.

**ANONYMOUS 43**

**Q1** What type of teaching role do you have

I am a PE teacher, currently working 3 days a week as a specialist PE teacher and 2 days a week as a PE teacher in a mainstream secondary.

**Q4** What are the positives that keep you in the teaching profession?

Being able to make a difference in the lives of young people by providing relevant and meaningful lessons and opportunities for them to thrive via extra
Q5  Do you consider that you will teach until you retire or do you consider leaving early or for alternative employment? (If you consider leaving, please specify why if it relates to your enjoyment of your role)

I love my job, but I can’t see myself being able to maintain the high standard of teaching that the children deserve when I am in my 60’s to 70’s.

In my present role, I would prefer not to teach until I retire as my own teaching employment situation is devoid of opportunity for development or progression. There is an inconsistent approach across Scotland in providing opportunities for progression and job satisfaction for teachers who do not wish for promotion. There should be a more flexible approach in allowing experienced teachers to seek a fresh challenge without having to endure a gruelling application and interview process. Indeed, there should be more respect for experienced, unpromoted teaching staff who work on the ‘front line’ of education. Their dedication and experience should be recognised and rewarded.

The job is becoming more demanding, with increasing challenges due to key specialist and support services not having been replaced since the start of the recession. This has led to inadequate support for teachers to help teach pupils who have needed additional learning or behaviour support in class or via a support base or alternative service. In classes with 30 pupils, this has placed a huge strain on teachers to try and cater for a wide range of challenges in class, some of which affect teacher safety and health and wellbeing of others in the class. The pressure to produce results in this sort of environment can place a huge stress on teachers. This stress is in a big part down to the fact that teachers can see what pupils need but aren’t always able to provide this due to the challenges put in front of them or the teaching environment they have to work in.

In addition, despite a nationwide campaign to cut unnecessary paperwork and bureaucracy, many schools still demand far too much repetitive and needless planning and assessment ‘evidence’ despite teaching union and Education Scotland advice to the contrary.

I love teaching, and it has always been my vocation. But the factors mentioned above have led me for the first time in 13 years to consider alternative employment. If things continue as they are, I fear for my own health, wellbeing and job satisfaction being affected to the point that I might not get near retirement age in teaching.

Q6  What would encourage you to seek promotion to senior management, including to headteacher level? What would discourage you from seeking promotion?

I have never been interested in becoming a head teacher. However I have applied for Pastoral care jobs as I believe that it is a role that suits my character, experience and knowledge. Unfortunately these jobs are becoming highly competitive, and the appointment of some teachers in these roles has
become less about the experience and skills that you have, and more about how well you can remember buzzwords and phrases in interviews. The interview process for teaching in general lacks transparency and fairness, and has led to many quality teachers being denied non promoted jobs as well as promoted jobs.

There should be a fairer and more objective system that helps to adequately prepare teachers for stepping up the teaching ladder to promoted positions and that allows more opportunity for all, not just a selected few.

I have witnessed teachers who have been given management roles before they have had sufficient teaching experience and experience of being able to work with and manage individuals effectively. As a result they lack the interpersonal skills to effectively manage people, many of whom have more experience and in some cases more ability.

For me personally and for some people I have worked with over the years, this over competitiveness and ‘race to get ahead’ quickly has put genuinely credible candidates off entering the application process for such jobs as the persistent applying and rejection can be exhausting and have an effect on your confidence.

Q7 What do you think are the main challenges, if any, in recruiting or retaining teachers (and other staff) at your school? (Please feel free to provide details of practical experiences)

- The ‘conveyor belt’ nature of the NQT year.
- A lack of permanent contracts being offered
- Teachers already teaching in a school having their contract severed due to being ‘surplus’ during exam leave
- Teachers in a temporary post having to apply for permanent jobs, or even apply for the job that they are currently doing.
- The lack of security/pay for supply work often not making it worth pursuing (eg due to childcare costs etc)
- Application forms being inconsistent across authorities
- The limited opportunities for teachers seeking promotion or development opportunities meaning teachers have to move on to progress.
- A one dimensional application and interview process which doesn’t favour the majority of applicants.

Q8 Which particular subject specialisms/support roles face the greatest challenges with recruitment or retention?

From what I gather, there is a challenge with recruiting maths teachers. However I would say as a general point that the problem is not necessarily recruiting teachers as there are a lot of teachers out there without a permanent contract. The issue is authorities or schools not having the money or positions to keep them. This in turn leads them to moving authorities or leaving teaching completely due to them needing a permanent job for a mortgage or personal security.
Q9  Do you have any suggestions for how challenges with recruitment and retention might be addressed?

- A standardised application form and process across Scotland meaning one application/CV is sufficient for all jobs. This could be a GTCS approved form.
- A change to the application process in teaching – focusing more on teaching abilities and experience rather than how good you are at remembering facts and answering questions in front of a panel.
- A better development system whereby NQT’s are automatically placed on the local supply list for the authority they have just worked in.
- Making sure that teachers who have sought and have not yet been given a permanent position after 2-3 years are contacted and supported in gaining permanent employment in a school.
- More permanent supply jobs being issued for different subjects to provide jobs for teachers without permanent work and also to help cover for teacher absences which leave certain subjects without a specialist teacher.
- More flexible movement between schools in the same authority for experienced teachers without having to go through the same application process as new applicants ie an approved voluntary transfer system.
  If for example they are allowed to apply for a transfer to another school for a valid reason, eg to seek more development opportunities then this will free up opportunities in the authority for teachers looking for work.
- In the ASN Sector, offer easier opportunities for those qualified as instructors to progress to a fully qualified teacher. Many instructors are ready-made teachers and would be an asset to the profession.
- More time and financial support for teachers wishing to improve their employability in teaching and for promotion by seeking additional Professional Learning opportunities.

Q10 Have any measures been put in place as a result of changes to staffing numbers in recent years at your school (examples include multi-school headship/leadership teams, composite classes, changes in the use/availability of support assistants)?

If so:

- What are these measures?
- How well are they working?
- Are these changes a permanent or a temporary measure (ie is it covering vacancies at present or is it to reflect the number of teacher/other posts has reduced?)

I have, in my experience, seen in the ASN Sector, instructors having to pick up substantial workloads outwith their remit or pay due to the school being unable to recruit staff. This should not happen.

Q11 Are there any subject choices or other opportunities that are not available to pupils as a result of staff shortages that you consider would be valuable? (please specify)
I am of the understanding that there are several courses that aren’t available to pupils due to staffing. This changes from school to school.

However one concern about teacher shortages across all subjects is the fact that some teachers could be teaching two different levels of pupil in one class on their own (eg National 4 and National 5) without adequate support put in place.

Q12 How would you describe general morale among staff (very good / quite good / quite low / very low) and what are the key factors that influence it?

At present, I would say that general morale among teachers is quite low. Obviously this can vary from school to school, but the excessive demands and strains being placed on teachers are at bursting point. The chopping and changing of SQA National courses is just the latest thing that will add to teacher workloads. I know of a lot of teachers who feel under huge pressure, and others who don’t feel adequately supported when dealing with behaviour issues, some including verbal and physical abuse. This is affecting the health and wellbeing of a number of teachers, and in many cases their safety and confidence as they are teaching in very challenging environments.

Teaching is undoubtedly about the pupils first and foremost, and ensuring their quality education and nurturing of their health and wellbeing. However teacher health and wellbeing is being neglected, and if teachers aren’t healthy and happy in their jobs then the quality of learning and teaching is affected. Instead of blame and demand placed upon teachers, more should be done to adequately support them and act on the concerns that they have expressed time after time.

Are there patterns or key reasons why some trainee teachers do not complete courses, or do not choose to go into teaching having qualified?

Finances/Workload pressures

Those doing a one year PGDE year are presented with an extremely challenging and stressful year of study. On top of the study and assignment submissions necessary to qualify through the University, students have to essentially become a full time teacher, with a huge workload requirement in order to provide evidence and lesson plans in order to pass their placements. In addition, many students who come from a range of ages and backgrounds, will probably have to do part time jobs in order to fund their studies or to pay the bills. This leaves little or no breathing space for trainee teachers and for many, may put a strain on their health and wellbeing.

Lack of Support in schools

While there are many schools out there who are extremely supportive of students and who do a great job in supporting trainee teachers, there are also many schools who place a lot of undue pressure on students, with unrealistic expectation and unsupportive, micromanaging attitudes. This is possibly in part down to the pressures of their own job, the expectations placed upon them, and perhaps sometimes, a lack of understanding of where the student should be in their development.

I am aware of in school issues that student teachers have had with staff in schools, with some teachers unwilling to accept new ideas, some teachers
trying to impose their authority in the wrong way, and some teachers behaving unprofessionally by scolding students in front of pupils rather than working with them to help them develop the necessary skills and confidence required to pass and succeed. The fact that this varies from school to school is a concern. There should be a more consistent approach, and schools shouldn't see students as a hindrance, but as an asset. They should be looking not for countless faults, but for strengths. Some schools see failing a student as a badge of honour in terms of their 'high standards' but sometimes these standards mean that good people, hardworking individuals with potential are turned off proceeding into the teaching profession.

ANONYMOUS 44
Q1 What type of teaching role do you have
Secondary English
Q4 What are the positives that keep you in the teaching profession?
Engaging with young people on a daily basis. The feeling that what we do may make a difference in their lives. Helping them to achieve their potential
Q5 Do you consider that you will teach until you retire or do you consider leaving early or for alternative employment? (If you consider leaving, please specify why if it relates to your enjoyment of your role)
I am due to retire shortly after nearly forty years in the profession. I have never even considered leaving before now.
Q6 What would encourage you to seek promotion to senior management, including to headteacher level? What would discourage you from seeking promotion?
Nothing would encourage me to do this. I find the work of a classroom teacher stimulating and rewarding. I have no wish to be burdened any more than I already am with administrative tasks and find the challenge of discipline quite enough within my own classes without having to deal with the problems of others.
Q7 What do you think are the main challenges, if any, in recruiting or retaining teachers (and other staff) at your school? (please feel free to provide details of practical experiences)
Salary not sufficiently enticing. Discipline. Administrative burdens – nothing more than any other school has to face. My school is actually a very attractive prospect for any prospective teacher, which is why I have stayed here for nearly 36 years.
Q8 Which particular subject specialisms/support roles face the greatest challenges with recruitment or retention?
I don’t know
Q9 Do you have any suggestions for how challenges with recruitment and retention might be addressed?
See above answer to Q7. Salary burdensome administration and discipline. Also, leave the curriculum alone to allow recent initiatives to become established.

**Q10** Have any measures been put in place as a result of changes to staffing numbers in recent years at your school (examples include multi-school headship/leadership teams, composite classes, changes in the use/availability of support assistants)?

If so:
- What are these measures?

Faculty heads instead of individual subject heads/ some multi-level classes

- How well are they working?
  Is this a serious question? They are not helping that’s for sure. Trying to run a department about which you know little or nothing? How can that help? Trying to run several departments at once? Seriously? Use your own intelligence to work out the answer to that one!
  Same for trying to teach pupils at more than one level in the same class. Everybody loses out.

- Are these changes a permanent or a temporary measure (ie is it covering vacancies at present or is it to reflect the number of teacher/other posts has reduced?)

A bit of each. Faculties are a permanent change; multi-level classes determined by pupil choices and staffing

**Q12** How would you describe general morale among staff (very good / quite good / quite low / very low) and what are the key factors that influence it?

Quite low

**Additional comments**

It is a shame that teachers are not awarded the respect that their years of training and dedication deserve. This seems to be a societal shift away from respect for authority and, while it is good that children now seem to have more self-confidence, it is a pity that this has come at the cost of manners.

**ANONYMOUS 45**

**Q1** What type of teaching role do you have

I am a full time class teacher, working in a secondary school. I trained initially as a primary teacher and then specialised in Home Economics

**Q4** What are the positives that keep you in the teaching profession?

I love being able to motivate and encourage my pupils in their learning and help them realise their full potential. I love it when a pupil will come up to me at the end of the lesson and talk about something they have made at home as a result of what they have learnt in class. Passing on life skills is what made
me want to choose my job and the skills I have gained over my own Hospitality Management career and training with the community dieticians. I enjoy the interaction and the pace and challenge of getting pupils to work at their best, be creative and help others too. I love being able to use peer support and build confidence in less academic pupils, through improving their practical skills and increase their chance of finding work within the Hospitality Industry.

Q5 Do you consider that you will teach until you retire or do you consider leaving early or for alternative employment? (If you consider leaving, please specify why if it relates to your enjoyment of your role)

Yes, I am afraid I will be considering retiring early as planned due to the nature of the job changing so much and possibly looking to alternative employment too. The significant reduced amount of classroom support that is available in my subject area now, especially from having no class technician support to help set up or help tidy away to enable me to carry out my job in a safe, hygienic manner is very much a concern. As is the length of the school period too, as a single, 50 minute lesson, with no support to help set up for classes or tidy up after a class has a detrimental knock on effect to my lunch and break times as I am usually left to carry out the work myself or the classes would not be ready. The organisation skills needed for my job are essential and not having any help to carry these out are detrimental to what I am able to teach in class, in the time allocated.

Q7 What do you think are the main challenges, if any, in recruiting or retaining teachers (and other staff) at your school? (please feel free to provide details of practical experiences)

The lack of respect amongst some pupils and their attitude towards both support and teaching staff is having a huge impact on how new staff feel starting in a new post. Not being able to ban mobile phones totally in school is having a significant impact on key learning and teaching that is carried out on a day to day basis and can affect the quality of your lesson. Teachers are unable to carry out lessons, without being continually interrupted by pupils talking over them, being disrespectful to others in the class and general low self esteem and low level disruption. Lack of manners and respect I would say is the biggest problem that new staff face in our school along with the inability of pupils to have the motivation and determination to give their best in a lesson (general lack of apathy and low self-esteem themselves which is inbuilt in their upbringing).

Q8 Which particular subject specialisms/support roles face the greatest challenges with recruitment or retention?

In Home Economics, we are facing a crisis due to the huge number of teachers who are at retirement age and with not enough new teachers being attracted, especially from a Hospitality background. The role of the Home Economics Teacher has changed enormously and needs to fit more in line with what Catering colleges are offering, especially to help with the Developing the World of Work for huge numbers of pupils leaving school in S4 -5 with no life skills. In Hospitality, key life skills are needed to be built...
upon and developed through school Home Economics lessons and the links they can potentially make.

Q9 Do you have any suggestions for how challenges with recruitment and retention might be addressed?
Yes, I would try and change the barriers for entering the subject to enable more people from the Hospitality industry easier entry. I initially trained as a primary teacher. The subject needs to be re-looked at as many of the former skills that an HE teacher required have been replaced by other key skills involving pace and challenge and relevance to the current Hospitality Industry and looking what skills are needed, Home Economics really needs to change with the times and more resources poured into it for it to attract the right calibre of staff. Approaching Catering Colleges and enticing HND / Degree pupils into teaching such a well needed practical subject in school is a MUST.

Q10 Have any measures been put in place as a result of changes to staffing numbers in recent years at your school (examples include multi-school headship/leadership teams, composite classes, changes in the use/availability of support assistants)?
If so:
- What are these measures?
- How well are they working?
- Are these changes a permanent or a temporary measure (ie is it covering vacancies at present or is it to reflect the number of teacher/other posts has reduced?)
Yes when I initially started at this school, it was a Department head of my subject. It has now been replaced by a Faculty Head of PE & HE. Classroom assistant support has been cut back in my subject and we have a member of staff within our Dept 7 periods a week in total for our Home Economic staff.

I feel that a lot of the jobs that the classroom assistant undertook previously are now put onto the class teacher and many are not carried out sufficiently or to a correct hygienic standard in our subject! As a class teacher too, my time is taken away from planning, displaying pupils work and being able to enter pupils into cooking competitions due to the huge impact on my workload due to having to photocopy resources, type up recipes etc etc

Having a Faculty Head, not trained in your subject area is having huge implications on how Nat 4 /5 Unit work is planned and delivered within the school year as they have exams in another subject to prepare for too.

Q12 How would you describe general morale among staff (very good / quite good / quite low / very low) and what are the key factors that influence it?
A lot of new development work has been taking place within our school and it has been difficult for a new HT to get to grips with all the Department, get to know teaching staff and of course, the pupils have had yet another change of leadership style too.

Additional comments
The lack of adequate budget for food spending within our subject is having a big effect on our cooking lessons and how regularly the classes are allowed to cook. This has a huge knock on effect from BGE going into Nat 4/5 qualifications as if the pupils have not been exposed to enough variety of practical lessons with increasing levels of cookery skills and technical processes then they will not have the confidence and relevant skills in S4 to be able to work towards achieving their full potential in my subject.

ANONYMOUS 46

Q1 What type of teaching role do you have

Faculty Head  Secondary education

Q4 What are the positives that keep you in the teaching profession?

The enjoyment of teaching when the students are willing to learn.

Holidays

consider that you will teach until you retire or do you consider leaving early or for alternative employment? (If you consider leaving, please specify why if it relates to your enjoyment of your role)

I plan to leave teaching early due to the added managerial issues,

The continual changes in the education system. (Third change since the nationals began)

Not enough time to manage all the work required.

Budget cuts

Staff cuts

Discipline.

Pupils lack of enthusiasm for learning

Pupil's lack of respect

Pupil’s lack of motivation

Lack of parental support

Continually changing and updating courses.

Constant emails from SQA when there is not enough time to read them.

Lack of good / any supply teachers.

Staff who are poor teachers- the time frame it takes/or doesn’t take to get “rid off them” They seem to have a job for life and it doesn’t matter how many courses, cpd they attend they do not change.

This has a huge impact on the pupils and the damage it does to them   and their education. The impact it has on your subject.
Q6  What would encourage you to seek promotion to senior management, including to headteacher level? What would discourage you from seeking promotion?
   Nothing would encourage me to seek promotion.

Q7  What do you think are the main challenges, if any, in recruiting or retaining teachers (and other staff) at your school? (please feel free to provide details of practical experiences)
   Discipline.
   Pupils lack of enthusiasm for learning
   Pupil’s lack of respect
   Pupil’s lack of motivation

Q12 How would you describe general morale among staff (very good / quite good / quite low / very low) and what are the key factors that influence it?
   Quite Low

Additional comments

Sorry I cannot answer any more of the questions as this is very much a pressurised time with the marking and finishing off of pupils design assignments

ANONYMOUS 47

Q1 What type of teaching role do you have: secondary teacher

Q4 What are the positives that keep you in the teaching profession?
   I enjoy working with the pupils, encouraging them and seeing the results of my work when they pass exams.
   Very fulfilling, contributing to society.

Q5 Do you consider that you will teach until you retire or do you consider leaving early or for alternative employment? (If you consider leaving, please specify why if it relates to your enjoyment of your role)
   I will be – could retire at the moment.

Q6 What would encourage you to seek promotion to senior management, including to headteacher level? What would discourage you from seeking promotion?
   Would never do that – too much work for the money,
   Need a good work/life balance which you couldn’t get.
   Content with what I do at the moment (part-time).
   Too much hassle – new exams, directives, dealing with difficult parents etc.– constantly changing work.
Q8 Which particular subject specialisms/support roles face the greatest challenges with recruitment or retention?

Stem subjects as other jobs they can do with more pay.

No home economic teachers as not training them any more

Technical teachers – lack practical skills for woodwork etc. Other jobs they can do for more money.

Pupils with many problems in large classes with little or no support leading to discipline problems in classes.

Support staff numbers go with free school meal numbers but there are many pupils with dyslexia or other problems which have nothing to do with poorer parents. They therefore get a very bad deal as very few support staff.

Q9 Do you have any suggestions for how challenges with recruitment and retention might be addressed?

Stop changing things all the time eg exam system.

Especially when it is not for the better. Never seen such a poor exam system in my 35 years of teaching.

More thought needs to go into any changes.

They should be for the better, not worse.

Low level discipline can be difficult at times.

Q10 Have any measures been put in place as a result of changes to staffing numbers in recent years at your school (examples include multi-school headship/leadership teams, composite classes, changes in the use/availability of support assistants)?

If so:

• What are these measures?
• How well are they working?

• Are these changes a permanent or a temporary measure (ie is it covering vacancies at present or is it to reflect the number of teacher/other posts has reduced?)

Lack of support staff in our school. With class sizes of 30 all the time and little support it is very difficult to teach 30 lower ability pupils maths.

Was never like this before – lower ability classes were always small and with support.

Pupils with many problems in large classes with little or no support leading to discipline problems in classes.
Support staff numbers go with free school meal numbers but there are many pupils with dyslexia or other problems which have nothing to do with poorer parents. They therefore get a very bad deal as very few support staff.

Exam system very poor at the moment for these pupils. No external exam so they feel unwanted in the system. Very time consuming internal exams which have to be internally marked. N3 and N4 thought very little of as no external exam. At least before we had foundation and general exams to study for.

Pupils are pushed through N4 and therefore all think they can do N5. Very large failure rate in Maths as pupils and parents feel N4 not worth anything and push pupils into N5.

Some pupils will be leaving school with no qualifications due to this new system.

Why change something which was working well before for all pupils?

Very odd broad general education for years s1-3.

Pupils do many subjects but have to choose only 6 for their exams in S4 cutting down choice from 8 as it was before to 6 now (not good). They therefore study subjects for 3 years but get no recognition for these subjects dropped in S3. Why not?

In S5 they then choose 5 out of these 6. Lack of choice now. How is this better?

Composite classes do not work.

How can you teach 2 completely different courses in the same class? Never!

Q11 Are there any subject choices or other opportunities that are not available to pupils as a result of staff shortages that you consider would be valuable? (please specify)

Lack of home economic teachers means few do this subject.

As working in a ‘good’ school we can normally get most staff required. We still have shortages in business and computing and home economics.

Q12 How would you describe general morale among staff (very good / quite good / quite low / very low) and what are the key factors that influence it?

Many fed up with constant changes as said before.

ANONYMOUS 48

Q1 What type of teaching role do you have

Secondary Mathematics Teacher and PT Raising Attainment (job share)

Q4 What are the positives that keep you in the teaching profession?
You will get a lot of the same answer here, but it is all to do with the young people and the professional satisfaction derived from seeing them grow and develop with your support.

Q5 Do you consider that you will teach until you retire or do you consider leaving early or for alternative employment? (If you consider leaving, please specify why if it relates to your enjoyment of your role)

No. The latest I will leave teaching is 60 and quite possibly earlier (once my kids are past university). The idea that all teachers will still be effective at 65 and beyond is baffling. No one I have spoken to plans to work till 67 – plans for teacher retention should take account of this.

Q6 What would encourage you to seek promotion to senior management, including to headteacher level? What would discourage you from seeking promotion?

The role seems like a thankless task – I will not be seeking promotion to HT level. It is possible that I may work at DHT level at some point. I believe I could and would make a difference in such a role, particularly with the skills and experience I have developed in my career. Some Senior Management are great – they believe in the kids, support the staff and want to make a real difference. Some are not – their reasons are egotistical and they find it difficult to listen to people beneath them. Teaching is a people profession – the heart of the job is relationships and if you can’t make and sustain them you have no place in charge of a school.

Frankly, what mostly encourages me most is the average salary pension arrangements – a few years at DHT level would make a significant difference to final pension. If that is what the government believes is the best way to incentivise promotion then so be it.

Q7 What do you think are the main challenges, if any, in recruiting or retaining teachers (and other staff) at your school? (please feel free to provide details of practical experiences)

Some subjects (eg STEM areas) have longstanding shortages in teacher training. In my authority, only my school (out of 8) has a complete complement of maths teachers. Too many teachers are currently being ground down by the deluge of conflicting advice about CfE from SQA, Education Scotland, their LA and developments within their own school. I have not seen a great movement to leave the profession in my local area but teachers are not encouraging young people to become teachers.

The long standing erosion of earnings in real terms is also a significant issue – we have a long wage freeze and our subsequent wage rises have not even covered inflation for the relevant year. I recognise that we as teachers are relatively well paid and were in a position to be confident about keeping our jobs during the recession, but if teaching is to become more attractive this must be addressed.

Q8 Which particular subject specialisms/support roles face the greatest challenges with recruitment or retention?

Q9 Do you have any suggestions for how challenges with recruitment and retention might be addressed?

Most graduates in the subjects listed above can earn significantly more in other roles which include exciting opportunities to work internationally. Salary increase would improve the attractiveness of the profession.

Readily accessible international teacher exchange programmes may encourage retention in Scotland. Many young teachers opt to work abroad – they are lost to Scotland, but a programme where a teacher can be allowed to exchange internationally may help (perhaps one year in five). It is likely that teachers would take advantage of this early in their career, but less so once they start families.

Q10 Have any measures been put in place as a result of changes to staffing numbers in recent years at your school (examples include multi-school headship/leadership teams, composite classes, changes in the use/availability of support assistants)?

If so:

• What are these measures?
• How well are they working?
• Are these changes a permanent or a temporary measure (ie is it covering vacancies at present or is it to reflect the number of teacher/other posts has reduced?)

Multi-level classes in the senior phase. In many classes in the school, the teacher must work with National 5 and Higher classes. Instruction can be provided, but much of the other work of a good teacher (individual discussion, rigorous formative assessment, a variety of activities) is difficult to deliver due to lack of in class time.

Q11 Are there any subject choices or other opportunities that are not available to pupils as a result of staff shortages that you consider would be valuable? (please specify)

I believe there are, but I can’t be specific – my school does its best to keep subject choice wide, but there are shortages in technical areas.

Q12 How would you describe general morale among staff (very good / quite good / quite low / very low) and what are the key factors that influence it?

Quite low. Workload, erosion of conditions, lack of support from Senior Management when dealing with parental and pupil complaints.

Relentless changes from ScotGov, SQA.

Continual negative press reports about schools and teachers.

ANONYMOUS 49

Q1 What type of teaching role do you have
Secondary – full time – Chartered

**Q4** What are the positives that keep you in the teaching profession?

Working with young people can be very refreshing and rewarding – and my colleagues are exceptional people.

**Q5** Do you consider that you will teach until you retire or do you consider leaving early or for alternative employment? (If you consider leaving, please specify why if it relates to your enjoyment of your role)

I intend to retire at 60 – at the latest. I could not maintain the pace of work that I have endured since CfE for much longer with classes organised as they have been – ie tri level teaching.

**Q6** What would encourage you to seek promotion to senior management, including to headteacher level? What would discourage you from seeking promotion?

The responsibilities are colossal – and the job is about so much more than education these days. The rights of the child has led to the rights of the teacher being much undermined.

**Q7** What do you think are the main challenges, if any, in recruiting or retaining teachers (and other staff) at your school? (please feel free to provide details of practical experiences)

Behaviour and expectations of students can create very unpleasant classroom environments. No one should have to endure the conduct that we are obliged to deal with whilst delivering the curriculum. The status of teaching in many students’ opinion is very low and whilst there may be support in school for staff, in reality we do not have any real authority.

**Q8** Which particular subject specialisms/support roles face the greatest challenges with recruitment or retention?

Maths/ HE / Business/ drama

**Q9** Do you have any suggestions for how challenges with recruitment and retention might be addressed?

Support with housing may be helpful - more staffing should be available in schools for absence cover and more staffing should be available for counselling and training for students with extreme needs – including behavioural and literacy.

**Q11** Are there any subject choices or other opportunities that are not available to pupils as a result of staff shortages that you consider would be valuable? (please specify)

All of these shortage subjects ought to be offered to students – including additional support needs.

**Q12** How would you describe general morale among staff (very good / quite good / quite low / very low) and what are the key factors that influence it?
Our staff are amazingly resilient and dedicated – but there are many times that we are under extreme stress and we are unable to carry out the plans that we had put in place. The hard work and good intentions prove futile and can be very demoralising.

**Additional comments**

If you have any other comments please include them below:

It is imperative that educated teachers who perform to a code of conduct set by a national standard are able to influence conduct and standards in schools. It is absurd that standards are being threatened by the minority – because they can. If the attainment gap is to be reduced, we must allow teachers to teach without distraction with relevant resources

It is that there is no range of career path for teachers other than through the PT route. Not all teachers choose to manage a Department - others would prefer some other leadership route. This situation used to be satisfied by the Chartered Teacher route. This pathway has been closed for too long now.

**ANONYMOUS 50**

Q1 What type of teaching role do you have?  
Secondary teacher

Q4 What are the positives that keep you in the teaching profession?  
I love the job in itself. I think it is a worthwhile activity. I am never bored and sometimes challenged.

Q5 Do you consider that you will teach until you retire or do you consider leaving early or for alternative employment?  
Yes because I cannot think of an alternative.

Q6 What would encourage you to seek promotion to senior management, including to headteacher level? What would discourage you from seeking promotion?  
Nothing. I do not like paper work and you have got less contact with the pupils.

Q7 What do you think are the main challenges, if any, in recruiting or retaining teachers (and other staff) at your school?  
Teachers are not valued. We are just numbers (but this is also the case in other jobs, I am aware of that). Increasing and forever changing work load (despite promises of the contrary), lack of respect, teachers having to justify themselves and their results (the humane factor is not taken into consideration when discussing exam results) pressure on teachers and not as much on pupils are the main challenges. Too many reforms ( I feel that changes are made for the sake of changes and not because it is helpful to the pupils)

Q9 Do you have any suggestions for how challenges with recruitment and retention might be addressed?  
What needs to be addressed: Discipline or lack of it, the pressure put on school to minimize the number of suspensions etc… (because those numbers
do not reflect well on the schools, councils), lack of funding, number of pupils per class

Q10 Have any measures been put in place as a result of changes to staffing numbers in recent years at your school (examples include multi-school headship/leadership teams, composite classes, changes in the use/availability of support assistants)?

The appointments of head of faculties instead of a head of department is not working.

Teaching three level classes is a mission impossible. No matter what, a professional teacher CANNOT do justice to all the levels. From personal experience I can tell you that there is a huge amount of frustration, of worthlessness. There is certainly no job satisfaction because you know that you have not given your best to each individual pupil because you simply can't.

Staff shortage is a huge problem.

If so:

- What are these measures?
- How well are they working?
- Are these changes a permanent or a temporary measure (ie is it covering vacancies at present or is it to reflect the number of teacher/other posts has reduced?)

Q12 How would you describe general morale among staff (very good / quite good / quite low / very low) and what are the key factors that influence it?

Extremely low

Additional comments

I was absolutely disgusted by the fact that SQA raised the % to get an A and a B, etc in Modern Languages in 2016.

We (pupils and teachers) worked extremely hard to raise our standards and what do we get for it: the % to get a grade is raised whereas in other subjects it is well below the 70% (for an A). We get penalised for doing a good job!!!!!!! I can assure you that this affected me as well as my colleagues.

ANONYMOUS 51

Q1 What type of teaching role do you have

Secondary – Modern Languages (French, Spanish and Italian)

Q4 What are the positives that keep you in the teaching profession?

Sharing my passion and knowledge about my subject with pupils.

Q5 Do you consider that you will teach until you retire or do you consider leaving early or for alternative employment? (If you consider leaving, please specify why if it relates to your enjoyment of your role)

I am considering leaving early, if allowed to do so under teacher refresh, in the short term, but to continue teaching in a supply capacity. There are many
reasons for this – the continual changes to which class teachers are subjected are proving to be mentally draining. In addition, rising and in many instances unreal, expectations of many “stakeholders” (pupils, parents, FLs and SMT), mean that the enjoyment of my role is seriously diminished. These expectations are in the main fuelled by Government initiatives – GIRFEC, changes to the focus of Senior Phase, introduction of Benchmarks, subject specific initiatives (1+2) whose funding and resourcing is aimed in the main at the Primary Sector and management decisions/interpretations of these policies which have contributed to the erosion of status of my subjects, unless it is to fulfil a temporary and unstained measure to fill time on timetables.

Q6 What would encourage you to seek promotion to senior management, including to headteacher level? What would discourage you from seeking promotion?

Class teacher – ineligible to apply for senior management posts.

Q7 What do you think are the main challenges, if any, in recruiting or retaining teachers (and other staff) at your school? (please feel free to provide details of practical experiences)

Financial pressures.

Lack of long term / strategic planning – decisions are taken based on the current situation.

Q8 Which particular subject specialisms/support roles face the greatest challenges with recruitment or retention?

My impression is that many subjects face recruitment challenges. A recent article in the TES pointed to the fact that quotas for training places for most subjects, excluding some sciences and humanities, had not been met. If there are not enough entrants to the teaching profession, and many leave within a short time span, it is only a matter of time before the system collapses.

Q10 Have any measures been put in place as a result of changes to staffing numbers in recent years at your school (examples include multi-school headship/leadership teams, composite classes, changes in the use/availability of support assistants)?

If so:

• What are these measures?
• How well are they working?
• Are these changes a permanent or a temporary measure (ie is it covering vacancies at present or is it to reflect the number of teacher/other posts has reduced?)

The dwindling number of FTE within my subject in my school was brought about by the introduction of restrictive measures – reduction of time, reduction of choice of language studied (L3 being demoted to elective status), not replacing staff who retired, went onto secondment, composite classes, in
several instances tri-level in the Senior Phase, lack of support staff to carry out administrative duties are all impacting negatively on many aspects of teaching and learning. These changes are permanent, as staffing overall has been reduced and there is not new recruitment.

The introduction of faculties has proved to be detrimental, particularly given that the FL is not a subject specialist. This means that much of the FL’s remit has been pushed downwards onto class teachers to deal with. Given that class teachers are not given management time and have more class contact time, this is not practical, however, the practice continues and year on year, “initiatives” and demands encroach ever further on BGE and Senior Phase, further squeezing teaching time, and putting additional burdens on teaching staff.

Q12 How would you describe general morale among staff (very good / quite good / quite low / very low) and what are the key factors that influence it?

I think this is a very subjective question. I cannot presume to know what every member of staff feels. My morale is low, influenced by the constant changing demands of my job, coupled with rising demands on me as an individual. There is an ever-increasing lack of support.

ANONYMOUS 52

Q1 What type of teaching role do you have

Secondary School Teacher (French and Spanish)

Q4 What are the positives that keep you in the teaching profession?

When pupils react positively to you/class/opportunity and you are able to make a difference to their lives and future.

Q5 Do you consider that you will teach until you retire or do you consider leaving early or for alternative employment? (If you consider leaving, please specify why if it relates to your enjoyment of your role)

If I could, I would find alternative employment. With changing circumstances over the next few years I will be in a better position to do so.

Being a teacher is the only thing that I ever wanted to be, and absolutely loved the first 10 years. The next 10 has seen the enjoyment and job satisfaction almost completely disappear. I would hate to think of myself still being in a job where each day was so difficult. I don’t think physically or mentally it will be possible.

Q6 What would encourage you to seek promotion to senior management, including to head teacher level? What would discourage you from seeking promotion?

I had the opportunity to act as assistant principal of the department (to cover a maternity leave) about four years into my career, which I loved, and where I thought I made a difference and was able to learn valuable skills. All levels of leadership within my subject specialism have been removed (APT, ST and PT). I have no wish to lead people in subjects that I know nothing about. I
have seen through personal experience how all Faculty Leaders do is give ordinary teachers more and more work from their own remit, that they are unable to do down to the lack of subject knowledge. I have no intention of being that person. I would be encouraged to become promoted if it were within my own subject, and if there was a staged approach. Taking on more responsibilities in my school comes down to taking on responsibility for something (in addition to all your own responsibilities for which there are not enough hours in the day), from someone senior to yourself (therefore lightening their load), with no extra time to do it in.

“If you don’t like working here, then you are free to go elsewhere.”

**Q7** What do you think are the main challenges, if any, in recruiting or retaining teachers (and other staff) at your school? (Please feel free to provide details of practical experiences)

Lack of discipline from the pupils, and lack of support in dealing with incidents. We are expected to work in an environment where we are frequently sworn at, and have to listen to swearing all day long as “That is how our young people speak”. Mental abuse, threat and teacher bullying are rife. It feels like ordinary teachers are the only people who have no rights in the system, only responsibilities.

Constant change, to the curriculum and National Exams, with no subject specialist to lead. Pupils I taught 10-20 years ago had much better knowledge and much better life skills than those I teach now. This can only be down to CfE and the change in management in schools.

There are not enough hours in the day. I cannot do everything that I need to do and also have a life of my own. It is just impossible. I have tried to make a conscious effort to scale back the amount that I do at home over the last two years, but it is incredibly difficult knowing that you are dealing with children’s futures. The alternative really is just to find different employment where you can also have a life outside your work.

**Q8** Which particular subject specialisms/support roles face the greatest challenges with recruitment or retention?

I don’t know. I know that I have never seen so many jobs advertised for Mod Languages as I have seen of late.

**Q9** Do you have any suggestions for how challenges with recruitment and retention might be addressed?

Reinstate APT/PT in the promotion scale, in order to have better leadership/management and someone who is responsible for a lot of the day to day necessary admin that ordinary teachers are having to take on due to lack of subject specialism.

Sort out the BGE. Instead of having S2 only treading water, we now have everyone treading water for the whole of S2 and S3, followed by a complete mad chase for the academic pupils to get where they need to be in half the time. It’s miserable.
Value subject status. In our school pupils can spend 5 periods per week on what is seen by the pupils as a waste of time (PSE, ACE, L2L, Tracking & Mentoring…). That’s one whole other subject (at least) that could be being studied. Pupils used to achieve qualifications in 7/8/9 subjects in S4. Now they can get 5/6?

Manageable amount of levels within one class. Teaching 2 Advanced Higher Spanish (with Higher under their belts), 4 Higher Spanish (one crash previous study German only, 1 crash having studied Spanish but not sat any exams and 2 having sat Nat 5s) and 3 Intermediate 2 (2 crash – 1 having studied French and 1 having studied German, and the other coming from a school in England), makes for an extremely challenging teaching environment.

Q10 Have any measures been put in place as a result of changes to staffing numbers in recent years at your school (examples include multi-school headship/leadership teams, composite classes, changes in the use/availability of support assistants)?
If so:
- What are these measures?
- How well are they working?
- Are these changes a permanent or a temporary measure (i.e. is it covering vacancies at present or is it to reflect the number of teacher/other posts has reduced?)

S4, 5 and 6 come as a block. In my subject this has reduced the amount of S5/6 uptake at Nat 5 level, as they do not want to be in with the S4.

Teachers not qualified in the subject (who have extra periods on their timetable, or are in on supply) are used to ‘babysit’ classes for 1 period out of 3. Lack of teaching has a huge impact on attainment, behaviour and motivation.

S1 classes were made bigger as they couldn’t be staffed.

Spanish option in S2 was dropped from one half of the school as it could not be staffed. Pupils were told that they should change register class if they wanted to study the option of Spanish 2 periods per week. The vast majority chose to stay with their register class, not change and not study Spanish.

Q11 Are there any subject choices or other opportunities that are not available to pupils as a result of staff shortages that you consider would be valuable? (Please specify)

Certain needs that pupils should have, and that they are not getting, come from other areas too. Continuity of staffing is very difficult in our school apparently due to timetabling constraints. There may be 2 or 3 classes in our whole department who only have one teacher three times per week. All others are shared between two teachers, and on several occasions this year we have a couple of S1 and S2 classes who have three different teachers (a different teacher every time they come to French). Pupils would make more progress and be more settled if they could have the same teacher 3 times per
week (this would also cut down on a lot of extra work for teachers who have to liaise with others to ensure continuity and progression).

**Q12** How would you describe general morale among staff (very good / quite good / quite low / very low) and what are the key factors that influence it?

General morale is very low.

This is due to workload, lack of discipline (pupils’), poor treatment/bullying (from SMT), lack of support, constant change to the curriculum/National exams which have actually led to a decrease in attainment/enjoyment in our schools.

**ANONYMOUS 53**

**Q1** What type of teaching role do you have

Secondary Modern languages teacher

**Q4** What are the positives that keep you in the teaching profession?

Working with young people, creativity, being part of public services, my colleagues, the holidays and security of employment.

**Q5** Do you consider that you will teach until you retire or do you consider leaving early or for alternative employment? (If you consider leaving, please specify why if it relates to your enjoyment of your role)

I could definitely leave the profession as pressures are increasing particularly when the pay and generally our terms and conditions are being attacked.

**Q6** What would encourage you to seek promotion to senior management, including to headteacher level? What would discourage you from seeking promotion?

I am absolutely discouraged already. The money is not worth the pressures. The only promotion I would be interested in would be Principal teacher of my subject (M Languages) but since the restructuring of promoted posts and the faculty models (which is not a model that works either) around 2010, there are far too little opportunities for young teachers like me.

**Q7** What do you think are the main challenges, if any, in recruiting or retaining teachers (and other staff) at your school? (please feel free to provide details of practical experiences)

- The lack of permanent job prospects. Temporary contracts are used and people do need security of employment if they are going to invest in the school.
- Lack of support to supply teachers regarding discipline procedures. People are far too often left on their own to deal with the challenges.

**Q8** Which particular subject specialisms/support roles face the greatest challenges with recruitment or retention?
Languages (should be compulsory until end of S4 for most pupils if we want to be competitive in Europe)

Business Education

Q9 Do you have any suggestions for how challenges with recruitment and retention might be addressed?
Financial incentives, provide more support.

Q10 Have any measures been put in place as a result of changes to staffing numbers in recent years at your school (examples include multi-school headship/leadership teams, composite classes, changes in the use/availability of support assistants)?
If so:
- What are these measures?
  Restructuring of promoted post. PT languages now responsible for English and Modern languages department which means 15 staff!
- How well are they working?
  Not well, former PT still doing most of the tasks that need to be done for a smooth running of the department without being paid for them. Also, on a personal level, very demotivating to be treated this way as a professional.
- Are these changes a permanent or a temporary measure (ie is it covering vacancies at present or is it to reflect the number of teacher/other posts has reduced?)
  Permanent

Q11 Are there any subject choices or other opportunities that are not available to pupils as a result of staff shortages that you consider would be valuable? (please specify)
Many pupils find themselves with 2 non subject specialists teachers as a result.

Q12 How would you describe general morale among staff (very good / quite good / quite low / very low) and what are the key factors that influence it?
Quite low at the moment and this is a generally positive cohort...

ANONYMOUS 54
I am a secondary school teacher in Scotland who has been teaching a non-practical subject in the state sector for 10 years. I am writing in response to the request for teacher feedback.
- Main challenges with teacher recruitment/retention.
Stagnating wages (real terms cut in pay) and worsening conditions/increased workload. People from outside teaching perceive the job as increasingly stressful with little back-up or support. Graduates think they will be better rewarded for less effort elsewhere. Calibre of candidates is not high enough - frequently trainee or newly qualified teachers lack the subject knowledge, skills and qualities required to become a good teacher. These people will
leave after a year or 2 as the job is too difficult or they perceive a lack of support. There is a lack of leadership/promotion/development opportunities for competent experienced teachers so they leave to pursue development in other areas.

- Patterns/Key reasons why trainees do not complete or do not become teachers.
  Some trainees are just not suited and do not have adequate skill set. After a year training they find the job is too challenging and there is more money elsewhere. Lack of understanding about what the job actually entails before entering. Lack of development/promotion opportunities.

Effectiveness of approaches to teacher shortage.

What can I say here? Management try to secure cover or supply but this is thin on the ground or non-existent. Maternity leave posts are advertised but do not attract any applicants at all. This is in the central belt not a rural/remote area. Part time teachers are often asked to come in on days they aren’t contracted for. Ends up in classes being merged, courses being cut and provision being reduced. In the longer term the profession must make itself more attractive in order to attract high calibre individuals.

- Which factors influence teachers staying/leaving.
  Since the removal of PT/APT posts in secondary there is a serious lack of development and promotion opportunity for teachers. In general teachers find the faculty system ineffective and frustrating. There is a lack of PAID opportunity to develop leadership skills - varies widely from school to school. If teachers want to develop it is too often down to them personally to find opportunities and pay for them themselves. The removal of chartered teacher has contributed to this too. Increasing paperwork, poor management of new qualifications, bi-level and tri-level classes, constantly being short staffed and under pressure.

- Factors affecting teachers applying for promotion/management.
  Faculties - people don't want to be in charge of subject areas they know nothing about. There is a lack of scaffolding towards becoming a faculty head too - as there are no PT positions people feel it is a huge leap from being a classroom teacher to becoming faculty head. In general salaries at senior level are not reflective of salaries at the same level outside teaching.

I hope someone, somewhere may find this insightful or useful.

ANONYMOUS 55

Q1 What type of teaching role do you have

Secondary school - Principal Teacher Pupil Support

I teach English and Social Education

Q4 What are the positives that keep you in the teaching profession?

The young people! The ones who want to attain good qualifications and I support young people who need help. I have good holidays when my daughter is also on holiday from school. I think people forget teachers are parents, too.
I have a relatively short journey to school (6 miles)

Q5 Do you consider that you will teach until you retire or do you consider leaving early or for alternative employment? (If you consider leaving, please specify why if it relates to your enjoyment of your role)

I'll teach now until I retire. I may seek early retirement and then look for an alternative activity once my daughter is at university or beyond.

Q6 What would encourage you to seek promotion to senior management, including to headteacher level? What would discourage you from seeking promotion?

I have tried and not been successful, despite my best efforts. I don't believe interviews are the best way to judge whether someone can do the job or not. I attained a Diploma in Management and Leadership in Education, but have received no recompense either in promotion or earnings.

I was acting DHT for two and a half years in my present school. I have had 2 secondments of 6 months.:) I enjoyed both of these experiences thoroughly and I believe these kind of experiences are fulfilling. They allowed me to re-charge and gain new skills. I returned to teaching with a fresh outlook. I believe this is important in a teaching career.

Q7 What do you think are the main challenges, if any, in recruiting or retaining teachers (and other staff) at your school? (please feel free to provide details of practical experiences)

The lack of recognition for supporting pupils and their welfare. Teachers generally are often treated as political football, instead as professionals. This constant media barrage about standards does nothing for pupil or parent respect for the profession.

Some subjects require more marking than others and there is not enough non-contact or preparation time, especially for guidance teachers.

Distance from main cities may discourage some teachers from coming to teach in more rural areas.

Q8 Which particular subject specialisms/support roles face the greatest challenges with recruitment or retention?

Pupil Support / Guidance teachers are not being treated fairly in the present pay structure as we have an onerous middle management role with daily parental contact and liaison with staff and other agencies, but PTs Curriculum are paid more than us without the child protection and welfare issues. I have at times more responsibility for pupil safety and welfare and yet this role is not being given enough time in school or being recompensed properly compared to other roles in school. Since job-sizing, I haven't had a pay increase in my current role for 10 years. In fact, my salary has decreased for the same role.
There is no incentive apart from being a professional and doing the best job I can for pupils.

Q9 Do you have any suggestions for how challenges with recruitment and retention might be addressed?
A better promotion structure would give motivation to staff. The present structure is far too flat and there is little opportunity for younger staff to gain management experience. The removal of the APT position means young teachers are thrown in at the deep end as PT, sometimes with only voluntary experience. There is no recognition in financial terms for people like me who have done other qualifications to enhance my career and benefit the young people.

Q10 Have any measures been put in place as a result of changes to staffing numbers in recent years at your school (examples include multi-school headship/leadership teams, composite classes, changes in the use/availability of support assistants)?
If so: There are more classroom assistants, but these people are not teachers. Sometimes classes have been covered by SMT themselves and as big groups in our "street" area.
The PT English in my school has covered a number of classes herself because a colleague is on maternity leave. In our ASN department, I hear of shortages in staff and classroom assistants.
Temporary changes are being made to try and make sure young people always have some sort of teacher, even if not a specialist for that subject. I know of a retired teacher from another authority, who was rejected by this authority without a reason given. She was only wanting to do some supply work.

Q11 Are there any subject choices or other opportunities that are not available to pupils as a result of staff shortages that you consider would be valuable? (please specify)
I am not aware of option choices not being met, but there is always a need to make sure class sizes do not exceed maximum class sizes, so some pupils do have to change their subject choice sometimes. This is normal, but parents do not always pay attention to teachers' recommendations about levels.

Q12 How would you describe general morale among staff (very good / quite good / quite low / very low) and what are the key factors that influence it?
Quite low - there has been far too much change and not enough consultation with teachers. Changes to Curriculum (CfE), change to levels, SQA courses and assessment have created a huge workload. This has increased stress on teachers and the pupils who care about their education/qualifications.
In my opinion, the variety of curriculum structures is detrimental as children transferring or moving between schools often cannot get their option choices.

Additional comments
I think it is time for the Scottish Government to stop expecting teachers to create positive destinations as schools cannot create job opportunities or college places for young people. We strive to get young people to have the qualifications and skills for work, college, etc. We have a whole term of UCAS applications with full, detailed references to be written. We assist pupils with applications and references. In capturing the snapshot of destinations it is not compared to the job/ career opportunities actually available in a given area. In our rural communities, a lack of opportunities and transport can be barriers.

ANONYMOUS 56
Q1 What type of teaching role do you have
Secondary School PE teacher

Q4 What are the positives that keep you in the teaching profession?
Teaching the pupils that I work with and the positive experiences it can bring. Going home to my own house every night. Not working weekends apart from voluntary extracurricular.

Q5 Do you consider that you will teach until you retire or do you consider leaving early or for alternative employment? (If you consider leaving, please specify why if it relates to your enjoyment of your role)
Depends what opportunities come my way in teaching.

Q7 What do you think are the main challenges, if any, in recruiting or retaining teachers (and other staff) at your school? (please feel free to provide details of practical experiences)
Poor pay for the amount of work the job entails, Lack of promotion opportunities, lack of resources and to large class sizes in schools.

Q9 Do you have any suggestions for how challenges with recruitment and retention might be addressed?
Increase pay and limit class sizes to 25 pupils.

Q12 How would you describe general morale among staff (very good / quite good / quite low / very low) and what are the key factors that influence it?
I would describe it as ok but not as happy as we all could be.

ANONYMOUS 57
What are the main challenges in relation to teacher recruitment and retention?
Teaching allocations have been cut down in recent years to the absolute minimum to accommodate budget cuts. There is no now slack within the timetable to accommodate the needs of teachers off sick, on development
courses, facilitating school trips etc.. All teachers are on minimum non-contact and as a PT I am taken below my ‘notional’ contact time every single week – by picking up an extra class each week in my own department and further cover across the school. I have to rely on doing much of my PT remit after school, at lunchtime and in the evenings. This is having a massive impact on my home life and mental health.

- Are there patterns or key reasons why some trainee teachers do not complete courses, or do not choose to go into teaching having qualified?

Having mentored several students and probationers in the last couple of years, I feel that probationers are put into a very pressured environment. They are expected to do too much and the evidence collation is unreasonable and unnecessary. As well as the heavy burden put on them to produce evidence, the constant changes to National qualifications and courses means that they are not being supported well as those supporting them are stretched to their limits to keep up, making it difficult to pass on knowledge with confidence.

- How effective are the various approaches taken to cover shortages of teachers in schools?
At present in our council staff are transferred between schools to cover shortages and discard extra teachers. However, often teachers are moved when only part of their time is surplus, leaving a deficiency in the school they are leaving. This constant movement of staff negatively affects staff morale, commitment to the school and working relationships with colleagues.

The Senior Leadership Team regularly have to collect and supervise multiple classes in a central location as the pressures put on them by the council’s short-sighted approach to staffing means as we simply cannot staff cover when too many teachers are absent, as there is simply not enough staff to cover classes and supply teachers are in too great demand across the authority. Many of these are also choosing not to continue with supply as the stresses associated with being in on supply are simply not worth the benefit.

- What factors influence teachers deciding whether to stay in the profession or to leave?
I want to be satisfied that I am doing a good job and that is next to impossible at the minute as there is a never-ending list of things to do and nothing feels completely done or done well due to constant changes and unreasonable workload. Too many of the resolutions being put in place are knee-jerk, short-sighted reactions that give no consideration to the long term effects. For example, while unit assessments in the NQ have been recognised as an issue, the solution to remove them with very little consideration as to how they will be replaced, or the deficit addressed, leaves us in an uncertain position. Just as we have developed methods to cope with one issue, it changes.

Constantly feeling inadequate is the thing that is most likely to push me towards another career.
-What factors influence teachers when deciding whether or not to apply for promotion to senior management/headteacher level?

As a PT, currently the only move I would consider is back to an unpromoted post as at every level of teaching the demands are unattainable. In just over a decade of teaching, it has changed from being a profession I enjoyed to one where the pressure feels like it has consistently been mounting over the last few years to the point where there are very few, if any, teachers who are satisfied and fulfilled by their job. Most teachers still say that they enjoy the actual teaching, but unfortunately, while in many cases it is lauded as the focus, there are so many other demands on time that it is learning and teaching that suffers the most. We need more teachers, a halt to constant changes in qualifications to allow us to consolidate our courses and a reduction in paperwork. Most of my friends are astonished at teachers’ working conditions when they are explained. For example, they are incredulous that we have constantly changing courses with few resources written and restrictions on budgets to be able to write and produce our own resources. I feel like I could write on with multiple examples and issues but this late on a Friday, I still have a long ‘urgent’ to do list before I can walk into my weekend feeling once again inadequate that I didn’t clear the decks before I left.

I apologise for the negative tone of this submission but it is very frustrating to have to consider whether I can mentally and physically survive another few years, never mind to retirement, in a job that I essentially love.

**ANONYMOUS 58**

**Q1** What type of teaching role do you have

Secondary Teacher

**Q4** What are the positives that keep you in the teaching profession?

My engagement with my pupils and the opportunity to support pupils but especially those from SIMD backgrounds to succeed and change their life trajectory.

**Q5** Do you consider that you will teach until you retire or do you consider leaving early or for alternative employment? (If you consider leaving, please specify why it relates to your enjoyment of your role)

I am eligible to leave the profession at 60. I still love teaching my pupils, however, having taught for 30 plus years- for the same Local Authority- and given my commitment and energy to my pupils and loyalty to the local authority, they have demonstrated their loyalty to me by reducing my salary by £600 per calendar month. Time to go.

**Q6** What would encourage you to seek promotion to senior management, including to headteacher level? What would discourage you from seeking promotion?

I had the opportunity to seek promotion at DHT level and decided not to pursue promotion above my role as Principal Teacher – a role that was
subsequently taken away by the Local Authority-. It was apparent that the nature of the job was different; the higher up the promotion ladder you climbed the further away from the pupils you became. It was not the prospect of school management that got me out of bed, but the prospect of engaging with and teaching my pupils.

Q7 What do you think are the main challenges, if any, in recruiting or retaining teachers (and other staff) at your school? (please feel free to provide details of practical experiences)

- Salary, teachers are paid less than pipe fitter, less than crane operators, we are 91st on the list of salaried employees.
- Stop meddling with education. Each successive Government makes education their personal crusade. There is never any time for consolidation and reflection: the norm is permanent flux permanent change. During my career I taught: SCOTVEC, Standard Grade, Intermediate 1&2, Higher, New Higher, Revised Higher, Higher Still, CfE, National Qualifications and each course with its own distinctive requirements and revisions
- ITE courses should focus more on students developing the skills required to teach. It seems to me that increasing amounts of time is given to research and pedagogic philosophies, not that these are unnecessary, rather than providing students with the foundation required to take their place in the classroom. Students are invariably unprepared for the challenges that arise in the classroom.
- Stop making teacher’s either the panacea or the scapegoat for the ills of society. You are asking the impossible and anyone with any inclination to join the profession would wisely seek some other form of employment that does not burden them with responsibility of solving the needs of society.
- Lack of promotional prospects: Gone are the heady days of: Principal Teachers, Assistant Principal Teachers, Depute Headteachers, Assistant Headteachers Headteacher. Ambitious and talented staff are leaving the profession to take up posts where there is much greater possibility for promotion.

Q8 Which particular subject specialisms/support roles face the greatest challenges with recruitment or retention?

RMPS: A subject are that is still the Cinderella who has never gone to the ball. Home Economics, Maths and Sciences.

Q9 Do you have any suggestions for how challenges with recruitment and retention might be addressed?

See Q7 bullet point 5. Why would ambitious and talented students commit themselves to a profession that offers almost no prospect for progression and paltry pay?
The profile of the profession must be elevated, the public and prospective teachers are aware that teachers and the teaching are invariably vilified. The public must see that teacher's voice and experience matters, that they are treated as professionals.

Q10 Have any measures been put in place as a result of changes to staffing numbers in recent years at your school (examples include multi-school headship/leadership teams, composite classes, changes in the use/availability of support assistants)?

If so:
- What are these measures?
- How well are they working?
- Are these changes a permanent or a temporary measure (ie is it covering vacancies at present or is it to reflect the number of teacher/other posts has reduced?)

See Q7 bullet point 5. In addition the implementation of the Faculty System which effectively demoted promoted staff and made it almost impossible for future promotion. Reduction in the number of classroom Assistant has had a negative impact on the educational experience of the pupils. Increasing numbers of pupils with SEN are joining mainstream classes, where teachers are untrained to meet their need. Without support assistants you can forget about closing the poverty and educational gaps in our society.

Q11 Are there any subject choices or other opportunities that are not available to pupils as a result of staff shortages that you consider would be valuable? (please specify)

RME is grossly understaffed with the vast majority of teachers ploughing a lone furrow. It is impossible to offer the range of opportunities in the subject so pupils are unable to take up National 4&5 RME courses.

Psychology and Modern Studies are also understaffed.

Q12 How would you describe general morale among staff (very good / quite good / quite low / very low) and what are the key factors that influence it?

Disillusioned, and very low. Many teachers would leave the profession today if they had a viable alternative

Additional comments

If you have any other comments please include them below:

As stated above, I have been a teacher for 30 plus years and have thoroughly enjoyed-still do- teaching my pupils. Subsequent Governments have however clearly had an agenda to impact the teaching profession. Unfortunately this meant de-professionalising teachers. Despite our experience and protest, initiatives have been foisted upon us, and even as we were in the process of making sense of them, the demands are changed and the rules changed. Coupled to this is the fact that teachers are now one of the lowest paid profession in Britain, and so while our pay decline-to the point where it has now fallen well below the pre McCrone payment-
demands from National Government and Local Authorities become increasingly onerous. Work harder for less. This will not do anything to encourage a future generation of ambitious students to become responsible for the education of the future Scottish young people.

**ANONYMOUS 59**

**Q1** What type of teaching role do you have

0.8 FTE Biology Teacher.

**Q4** What are the positives that keep you in the teaching profession?

These have become fewer and fewer recently. I was a research scientist before training as a teacher and would have said previously that it was the best decision I ever made. I doubt that I would say that now. I still enjoy the interaction with pupils and that is what has kept me in teaching.

**Q5** Do you consider that you will teach until you retire or do you consider leaving early or for alternative employment? (If you consider leaving, please specify why if it relates to your enjoyment of your role)

I will be 60 in January and always thought that I would teach beyond that as I loved the job. I am now looking to retire as soon as possible.

**Q6** What would encourage you to seek promotion to senior management, including to headteacher level? What would discourage you from seeking promotion?

I have never sought out promotion. I was always happy being in the classroom teaching. I did undertake the chartered teacher programme as my interests lay in classroom practice and improving pedagogy.

Whatever motivates people to become headteachers at the moment is NOT producing effective leaders of our schools. Prior to SQH etc, we had some excellent headteachers who knew how to deal with children, staff and parents. The “new breed” are simply skilled in the theory and struggle when faced with doing the actual job.

**Q7** What do you think are the main challenges, if any, in recruiting or retaining teachers (and other staff) at your school? (please feel free to provide details of practical experiences)

Workload is probably the main problem. The expectations placed on teachers are unrealistic. We are expected now to, not only teach but, also be social workers, health professionals etc. I have always fully taken on my pastoral role with the pupils in my care and, I think, interacted effectively with other professionals who deal with children with difficulties. But, we are teachers and cannot solve all of society’s problems.

Within my own authority, the constant “review” process within schools is demoralising and ineffective. Staff feel that individuals from the authority come into the school with the sole purpose of criticising the teachers. This is completely ineffective as these individuals are not respected, it is not done in a constructive manner and therefore we do not value the comments.
Within my school, ineffective leadership and poor pupil behaviour have resulted in large numbers of staff looking for other jobs (teaching and support staff). I personally worry for the safety of more vulnerable children in my school as I feel that, because of the appalling behaviour that isn’t being tackled, some child will be seriously hurt.

Q8 Which particular subject specialisms/support roles face the greatest challenges with recruitment or retention?

Maths, science and technology seem to be the most difficult.

Q9 Do you have any suggestions for how challenges with recruitment and retention might be addressed?

Teachers’ salaries have fallen behind the ideals of McCrone and it is no longer very attractive to be paid what we get for the work expectations and the behaviour we need to deal with.

On a personal level, it’s the level of pupil behaviour that I find the biggest motivation to leave and not salary. With some classes, it is impossible to teach and it is simply a “policing” exercise.

Q10 Have any measures been put in place as a result of changes to staffing numbers in recent years at your school (examples include multi-school headship/leadership teams, composite classes, changes in the use/availability of support assistants)?

If so:

- What are these measures?
- How well are they working?
- Are these changes a permanent or a temporary measure (ie is it covering vacancies at present or is it to reflect the number of teacher/other posts has reduced?)

As a science teacher, our biggest problem is being faced with classes in which Nat 5 and Higher is supposed to be taught together. This is impossible as the courses are content driven and completely different (this is not just biology but physics and chemistry too). This is not temporary but, has been happening for several years now.

I have no support in any of my classes and yet I have classes where there are pupils who definitely need support. This is because of two things: firstly a reduction in the number of support staff: and the increase in the number of pupils with complex medical needs, requiring one-to-one attention all the time. We have pupils who should be cared for in a specialised facility and not in a mainstream school. They are not receiving the type of care and stimulation they need with us and, they are using up vital resources.

Q12 How would you describe general morale among staff (very good / quite good / quite low / very low) and what are the key factors that influence it?

Morale in our school in very, very low. This is because of:
Cfe

The poor skills of pupils from the primary sector (literacy, numeracy and concentration skills)

Poor management

Poor pupil behaviour with no support from management

Workload

ANONYMOUS 60

Q1 What type of teaching role do you have

Faculty Head at a secondary school.

Q4 What are the positives that keep you in the teaching profession?

A passion for teaching and working with young people - providing them with opportunities to achieve.

Q5 Do you consider that you will teach until you retire or do you consider leaving early or for alternative employment? (If you consider leaving, please specify why if it relates to your enjoyment of your role)

Working until I’m 68 is not an option for me. I will not be able to commit the same energy and enthusiasm at this age as I currently do and would therefore not feel I was delivering a quality education. By this age, I will have been working in education for 46 years. In addition, having been promoted at a relatively young age, I will spend most of these years in a position which naturally carries more stress. Each year the workload and subsequent stress increases. Although I have not taken time off because of this, at times, I have felt that my health has been affected by the levels of stress I experience and I certainly have a very poor work/life balance and I would not want this to continue until my late 60s. On average, I work 65-70 hours a week to keep on top of admin, marking, lesson preparation etc. and this cannot be sustainable until I am 68. Therefore, with regret, I would definitely consider changing career. Alternatively, my partner and I have been assessing how to save additional money so that we don’t have to stay in teaching until retirement age. However, to not receive our full pensions for the years of service we will have given by the age of 60 seems grossly unfair.

Q6 What would encourage you to seek promotion to senior management, including to headteacher level? What would discourage you from seeking promotion?

I may be encouraged to apply for a depute post in the future to be able to have greater influence in a school and to experience an alternative remit. However, the pay increase from Faculty Head is not significant and after tax, the monthly additional pay may not reflect the additional level of responsibility. I would not be interested in applying for Headteacher posts.

Q7 What do you think are the main challenges, if any, in recruiting or retaining teachers (and other staff) at your school? (please feel free to provide details of practical experiences)
For those not in teaching, I think the level of media attention on workload issues is starting to filter through and discouraging people from applying. Most people know a teacher and unfortunately the vast majority of teachers I know would all discourage people from entering the profession. The perks of the long holidays is now not enough to encourage people into teaching especially when pay has not matched increased living costs. In addition, workload and subsequent stress is the main issue for teachers choosing to leave the profession. It is also becoming difficult for female teachers to negotiate career breaks or temporary part-time contracts in their own school following maternity leave. I also know of four teachers who have moved to international schools due to the reputation they have of being better paid positions and less work-load. These teachers all remark on the positive difference this move has had on their life/work balance.

In addition, while teacher numbers may not have been cut, support staff is being cut meaning that the work that they completed is being passed to teachers and middle/senior management. Again, this discourages teachers as not only are they not gaining the same support but workload has increased.

Q8 Which particular subject specialisms/support roles face the greatest challenges with recruitment or retention?

In addition to the subjects being documented in the news, there should be concern regarding the retention of teachers in subjects which naturally have more marking – English, Social Subjects etc. Teachers in these subjects are spending hours every night and weekend completing marking as time during the school day is limited and admin has increased which is adding to stress and workload amongst these teachers.

Q9 Do you have any suggestions for how challenges with recruitment and retention might be addressed?

Reduce teacher workload, increase support staff, limit Higher class sizes for subjects with significant marking, increase salaries, provide better pensions and a reduced pension age.

Q11 Are there any subject choices or other opportunities that are not available to pupils as a result of staff shortages that you consider would be valuable? (please specify)

Yes, I would like to see more curricular choices available for less able pupils which would help reduce class sizes to give these pupils more support. Higher pupils would also benefit from a greater variety of subjects which could complement their interests and skill set e.g. Politics and Environmental Science.

Q12 How would you describe general morale among staff (very good / quite good / quite low / very low) and what are the key factors that influence it?

Unfortunately the general morale is low. Teachers are always very good at trying to ‘lighten the mood’ etc., however, teachers are fed up. In particular, this is due to the very poor delivery of CfE in secondary schools. Teachers will always work hard to make the most out of resources provided; however,
significant errors have been made by SQA and Education Scotland. Teachers are constantly second guessing the information given to them and this has been very problematic for National Qualification classes. Every year, more changes are announced as the SQA and Education Scotland try to rectify problems and failings, resulting in further work and stress for teachers.

Additional comments

If you have any other comments please include them below:

I genuinely feel that we are at a critical stage with education which is upsetting. I come from a family of teachers and the workload that myself and my sister have to commit to is not at all comparable with the work of my parents who are now retired and this could further discourage excellent and skilled teachers out of the profession. I am fully aware that teaching has to evolve and I have welcomed many aspects of the theory behind CfE. However, there is now clear evidence that this is has not been successful as indicated by the Pisa results. This is of great concern and changes have to be made to empower teachers (showing respect through an appropriate pay and pension plan) and to allow them to deliver a curriculum which provides pupils with appropriate challenge and opportunities to achieve and attain. The scrapping of exams at N4 level is a clear step away from this and the vague and ever-changing guidelines for examinable NQs are limiting the opportunities for our pupils to achieve maximum levels of attainment.

ANONYMOUS 61

Firstly I generally love my job, I enjoy working with pupils and staff on a daily basis and I enjoy seeing people excel in my subject area. Job satisfaction, support and feeling valued is a key element to keep teachers in the profession. I feel now however that some teachers are turned off or walk away from the profession due to workload and life balance, pay, politics within institutions, workload etc. I know numerous members of staff who have been off school sick with stress or long term mental illness due to the environment, workload, everyday pressures etc. I do feel a change over the years in expectations, more emphasis on teacher performance and pressures to pass pupils. I do love my job and cope very well with the constant changes however I do understand why others perhaps do not.

Changes were made to SQA courses to help benefit children, again we are currently on another round of changes. I feel this is not beneficial in some instances. For example they are trying to decrease teacher workload by removing units however the pass marks for remaining elements are potentially changing which will in PE mean it may be more difficult for pupils to achieve in a practical subject as it is more heavily weighted to the written work, which in turn will mean more prep, more emphasis on the written element which is currently where the problems lye for many pupils (14/40 and 22/40 were country averages for Nat 5 portfolio) and staff workload/ homework/marking has increased majorly, may not reduce as much as SQA expect. This is something that will put both pupils off picking the subject and put staff under stress and potentially walk away from teaching, as many currently struggle across subject areas.
I have swayed on promotion as I do not want to lose contact teaching time with the pupils as this is what I enjoy most about my job. 
I feel there is an underlying pressure to look for promotion or move up the ladder, senior managers/councils question why certain staff are not looking to achieve this.
I am swayed between job satisfaction, wages and pathways.
If there were still PT posts I would be more inclined to look for promotion however the Faculty system if I'm honest puts me off a little or has me second guessing myself, again due to workload, lack of actual subject teaching time. Even with Faculty posts the opportunities for promotion are very slim as there are fewer posts and more people going for each post therefore it makes it difficult.
If I wanted to stay more classroom based and have greater school responsibilities I would have considered going down the route of the chartered teacher scheme however when I looked into this it was the final year and was told it was not worth my while starting.
Being a good subject teacher with extra responsibilities in the school is something I currently do (various areas) however the benefits of the scheme and pay rise would be advantageous to me. due to various elements in life, cost of living, starting a family etc.
There are currently many chartered teachers in schools who are not used to full capacity and do the same job as other staff however are on wages which are a lot higher.
I feel there has to be better pathways for teachers to get promotion, more options available or combined roles. The wages and workload need to be addressed as this would impact massively on staff who are considering leaving the profession or those wishing to join the profession.
The cost of living is increasing all the time however wages in the teaching profession are not, there are people who do not work who are better off than me by the time my contribution, pension, NI etc are deducted, this at times can be disheartening especially when teachers are in school doing above and beyond the normal working hours with clubs, prep, marking, supported study etc ( supported study in our council is unpaid if numbers are limited!!). We used to be in higher rankings of teacher wages across Europe however I am now led to believe we are ranked something like no.13. Work rate/ cost of living etc is something that needs to be revised by government.
Before wages and holidays were seen as a major perk for teaching staff and it encouraged people into the profession, especially females who have families and had similar breaks as their children, as this helped child care issues however these costs have risen and it is not beneficial for some to return to work full time as it cost this so much in child care in relation to wages and cost of living.
I would encourage anyone to become a teacher as I love my job, I feel it is very rewarding and worthwhile profession.
I do think however that some people are put off by staff who share their stresses and worries. People who don't feel supported or struggle in the current times and work conditions. Many staff in our council have been off sick due to stress etc, I feel there needs to be a greater support system for staff. We have excellent facilities and outlets for pupils however staff health, well being and mentality is equally
as important as without enhancing or supporting this staff then go off sick and in turn it is the pupils and other teachers picking up the workload who are effected.

I have been off very little in ten years and had to get a back to work meeting and file created, I felt guilty being off and did not like having my colleagues pick up the extra work however there is then staff who go off sick and decide to stay off longer due to absence of leave issues/ system which I totally appreciate as you do not want the dreaded three absence meeting/warnings etc this system needs to be reviewed. There is hard working staff who are at school all singing all dancing all the time who then feel bad for being sick. Within our school/council we have a please take system to help cover classes for absent staff, if you are above minimum time you can cover classes for staff. This is an appropriate way to cover however at times it can be strained do to amount of people off at one time, drop in staff numbers within the school who are available for cover can then mean classes being amalgamated or pupils being displaced etc.

With regards to trainee teachers and as someone who has went through this process I feel more time physically in schools would be more beneficial and realistic, you learn valuable information at University however there is certain elements that you don’t really use when actually teaching and scenarios experienced are not necessarily true to the every day running of a school therefore some students are a little taken aback or not fully confident when they enter schools. More hands on in school at the appropriate stages of learning would benefit trainee teachers more.

We have had several post grade students (some with no prior Subject-PE knowledge until that year) who come into school and work really hard, they are motivated and eager to learn however they are sent in at certain times in the year when they have not yet covered content needed to deliver some classes on our time table therefore a better link or timing in delivery would help students more.

For example we have had students come to school and it is prelim time/exam prep however they have not covered enough content to take class themselves via Uni however are expected to lead/teach they classes as it is their focus?! this can put them under major pressure and schools are not necessarily going to hand over these classes fully at these vital stages/time. They then return to Uni after placement and that is their focus. so to reduce stress and make more beneficial for all it would be better if focus and timing is taken into greater consideration. This would make it more enjoyable, more advantageous and be less likely to put trainee teachers off.

Greater support, less blame culture/stress and emphasis on exam marks/statics, improved workload and wages would alter many people’s opinions and their decision to opt out.

I do genuinely live my job, I work hard and abive and beyond the recommended working time agreement to ensure pupils experience and results are improved upon enjoyable and worthwhile. I personally at this stage would not leave the profession however more pathways, workload, wages etc need to be revised.
One final point regarding pathways and staff staying in the profession, a good possibility for promotion or help with would be availability of part time subject and guidance posts. I know some council still offer this however my local council do not.

ANONYMOUS 62
1. Secondary
2. Enjoy working with colleagues, enjoy planning and delivering lessons, too late to try anything else
3. Teach until retire – fortunately quite close
4. Dislike paperwork – dislike meetings – too much responsibility for the extra money
5. As a mainstream teacher with 28 years of experience I am now earning a mere £5000 a year more than the average student leaving university. A trainee teacher starts on far below the average graduate starting wage. The stress suffered and hours required by new entrants to the teaching profession far exceed those in other walks of life – except those hugely better paid.
6. I believe Maths, Physics and modern languages face the greatest supply problems – so many better paid and more rewarding generally jobs available in these sectors.
7. Pay teachers a wage to match the graduate status, the post-graduate qualification and responsibility of the job, simplify the needlessly complicated exam structure in Scotland, support teachers more when dealing with unruly pupils, allow teachers to teach and not have so much time taken up with form filling and social work, improve attendance at school by actually doing something about those who either do not attend or attend on an irregular basis, stop having new initiatives so frequently.
8. Teacher shortages have led to increased class sizes, far less support staff – resulting in a poorer experience for the children and more work and stress for staff
9. Not known
10. Staff morale fluctuates greatly. Generally there is a constant feel that we are not valued by society – except as a free babysitting service. Parents as a whole do not respect our professional opinions – insisting that pupils are entered for courses which are inappropriate for them- etc. Before exam deadlines staff morale dips decidedly as we attempt to push pupils – many with a poor attendance and attitude – through assessment units. A great number of colleagues are simply counting down the days until retirement.

To improve teacher recruitment and retention
   Pay us at a rate that reflects our levels of qualifications and social importance
   • Trust us to do our job without constantly monitoring and publicly undermining us
   • Stop bringing in new initiatives so frequently
   • Do more to promote the benefits of education
   • Give councils the power to fine parents who do not send their children to school on a regular basis and make the process easy for the councils to implement.
• Listen more to practicing teachers before implementing changes.
• Too many initiatives are fine in theory but wholly unworkable in practice

ANONYMOUS 63
Q1- Secondary Principle Teacher HE

Q4- Positives- Challenge/ Dynamic- working with young people and helping them to a better future/ professional development ( if you seek it!)

Q5-Teaching until I retire may prove to demanding with workload/ amount of stress that can affect you at key points of the academic session. I may have no choice – difficult to imagine other roles.

Q6- I am undertaking a PGC at university to help me gain a wider understanding of my role and that of Senior Management- I am very keen to seek promotion- I came late to teaching and although highly motivated I feel my age would go against me. I was rejected onto the pilot course because I was only an experienced P.T rather than a faculty leader- ( so not seen as a key Middle Leader. I had to complain – apparently EU were the ones who did not see the credibility. I am now paying £1000 to sit a two year course. It has been tough juggling family/ study and running a department as well as teaching and working on school committees- where is the time? More support in school would be nice- everyone is too busy to coach/ encourage and read over any work.

Head teacher role- again does not intimidate me- BUT- it seems to be role nobody wants- why? I think the changes in approach to head teacher training have been essential but it’s not promoted as a goal within your professional development- it should be encouraged. SCEL doing a great job but again you need to know where to look.

Q7- Staff turnover is quite high- many issues with the HT just giving out temporary contracts- good teachers come and go- a high level of internal cover which zaps staff energy- and impacts of student experience. I am staggered by the amount of trips at key points in the year- great to widen experience but it has a knock on effect. In my three years the HT role has changed 4 times due to illness- staff moral and the vision and SQIP is fluid because of the changes in leadership- again difficult to build a cohesive approach.

Q8- In my subject Home Economics we are really struggling- clearly the new course will be great but you need a degree in HE- Not enough promotion in schools as the crisis has hit the subjects standing in both the parents and pupils eyes where the subject may have been lost / or simply taught by another teacher from a different subject. How can we encourage youngsters to pursue this if it’s not prioritized? The subjects image and status needs improved and better understood.

Q9- Better conditions for teachers- pay is an issue and also the expectations of how much parenting we need to do in schools concerning discipline. The
changes in SQA and NQ have had a big impact on teacher workload- have we not just gone back to 5-14? I personally loved the challenge of CfE and learning to teach all these amazing new qualifications- a few years in an it’s all change again? Many in the profession don’t like change!

Q10 Loss of some qualifications due to no teacher to teach it! Real lack of pupil support due to budgets, again impact on learning, trying to recruit for some subjects impacts on pupil experience profoundly.

Q11- Some subjects have been affected more than others- modern languages- PT had to take all Spanish classes as NQT could not teach it for example.

Q12 Staff morale is quite low at points- consistent leadership- better CPD and more support

ANONYMOUS 64

Q1 What type of teaching role do you have

- PT English: secondary school.

Q4 What are the positives that keep you in the teaching profession?

- The majority of the pupils I teach are enthusiastic and generally want to learn. They are great kids and a credit to their parents.
- There is a lot of job satisfaction in both the light-bulb moments and seeing pupils achieve at the end of the senior phase.
- There is a lot of job satisfaction in encouraging pupils to be the best they can.
- There is a lot of personal satisfaction in sharing my subject and helping pupils understand how important it is to be able to communicate effectively; to appreciate the themes in literature that are common to humanity and to see them develop an understanding of how English (and Scots) is important to their sense of self and their place in the world.
- I enjoy the PT role and the planning of courses that will bring out the best in all pupils, regardless of ability levels.
- I love the actual teaching bit!

Q5 Do you consider that you will teach until you retire or do you consider leaving early or for alternative employment? (If you consider leaving, please specify why if it relates to your enjoyment of your role)

- It is likely that I will work until retirement, unless any further huge changes are made to the curriculum and the already overloaded expectations upon teachers. I am in my 25th year of teaching.

Q6 What would encourage you to seek promotion to senior management, including to headteacher level? What would discourage you from seeking promotion?

- I have no wish to be a Head nor do I have the time to jump through the hoops / undertake the courses required. Such a role leaves no time for a work-life
balance and frankly, teaching is a professional employment, not a monastic vocation.

Q7 What do you think are the main challenges, if any, in recruiting or retaining teachers (and other staff) at your school? (please feel free to provide details of practical experiences)

- Rural location and no allowances made for travel costs / distances / very poor road infrastructures and rotten, albeit expensive and very patchy, public transport.
- Winter driving is a nightmare – no idea why we can’t start / finish an hour later when the clocks go back. That simple little thing would make a huge difference when driving on icy, unlit, twisty single-carriage A roads, let alone the labyrinths that are the B and C roads. Add the winter darkness to this and you can understand that travelling to school under those conditions is neither pleasant nor safe. Moving the school day from 8.45 – 3.20 to 9.45 – 4.20 in winter has got to be safer for rural locations surely?
- Heavy NQT focus on recruitment in the central belt from universities, therefore NQTs available are creamed off before schools outwith the central belt can compete on equal terms. Perhaps the French system of allocating NQTs to schools could be a solution to this?
- Over-emphasis on pupils’ ‘rights and entitlements’ and nothing much on their responsibilities. It’s out of balance.
- Parental choices too vocal at times and allowed to over-rule professional judgement and expertise.
- A small but inordinately disruptive element who would be better served by PRUs and on whom too much time and energy is wasted cajoling and chivvying them along. This is generally at the expense of pupils who want to learn.
- Continuous public negativity about teachers / teaching and the perception that ‘anyone’ can do it. No appreciation of the education required for the role, even at the most basic NQT level. No appreciation that without teachers, not one other job or profession could exist. Countering this negative perception would be one way of attracting more people in to teaching – and retaining them once they qualify.

Q8 Which particular subject specialisms/support roles face the greatest challenges with recruitment or retention?

- English
- Maths

Q9 Do you have any suggestions for how challenges with recruitment and retention might be addressed?

- Courses for Headship and similar as secondments to university for a time, not something else to be coped with in the working week.
- A realistic understanding / expectation of what can be achieved in the working week.
- Salaries that reflect qualifications and experience.
- An appreciation that experienced teachers are a valuable resource.
- Desist from the apparent expectation that teachers are ‘on duty’ 24 hours and have no right to a personal life, having to be role models all the time in the way some parents aren’t.
- Focus on the roles of parents and some kind of sanctions on those who disrupt their child’s life chances.
- Stop expecting teachers to be social workers / fix what is broken in society. We did not create the rise in one-parent families, poverty, lack of expectations etc. – politicians and bankers did that. We can help ameliorate some of these effects (and hopefully close the attainment gap) but it is neither fair to blame teachers for the results of decades of the political gerrymandering of Scotland nor is it realistic to expect us to have a magic sticking plaster for these problems.
- Ensure all children have a mid-day meal in school. Too many are not adequately fed – and that is one situation where social workers should be stepping in. If GIRFEC is to have any teeth, it needs to be seen to be working.
- Rural living allowance.
- Accept that introducing faculties / the removal of many promoted posts have led to an overload on teachers and review the sense of these moves.
- Adjust the balance between parents and professionals. It is irritating that the public would not dream of telling doctors or lawyers how to do their job, but this seems to be accepted in teaching.
- Review how well inclusion truly works and make alternative arrangements for the small, disruptive elements.
- Zero tolerance of abuse, similar to that insisted on by almost everywhere else that has a public-facing role.
- Admit that the SQA exam changes have not worked and bring back Standard Grade. Better still; bring back the Scottish Examination Board. Teachers are not employees of the SQA but that organisation is the cause of much repetitive work and stress for teachers.
- What is the point of the GTCS? It is not run by teachers for teachers. It does not represent the profession in the way the Law Society or GMC do theirs.
- What is the actual point of Education Scotland? It’s an organisation that deluges teachers with paperwork, contradictory advice and a mountain of gubbings that no-one who’s doing actual teaching has the time to plough through. Quite a substantial sum could be saved by streamlining it and being very specific about its role.
- A recognition of staff who have completed Masters / Ph.Ds. in their subjects, not just those who complete M.Eds or similar. The former group bring much to the table in terms of their subject specialisms, which benefits pupils enormously, yet there is absolutely no recognition or differentiation between those teachers with low-level undergrad degrees and those with higher level / post-grad qualifications.
- A campaign to counter the very negative public perception of teaching.
- Continuous public negativity about teachers / teaching and the perception that ‘anyone’ can do it. No appreciation of the education required for the role, even at the most basic NQT level. No appreciation that without teachers, not one other job or profession could exist. Countering this would be one way of
attracting more people in to teaching – and retaining them once they qualify. (Repeated point, but really relevant in my opinion.)

Q10  Have any measures been put in place as a result of changes to staffing numbers in recent years at your school (examples include multi-school headship/leadership teams, composite classes, changes in the use/availability of support assistants)?

- Timetable adjustments.
- Changes to support in classrooms.
- Use of staff outwith department to plug gaps.
- The above work and work well, but this is down to the goodwill and professionalism of the staff involved.

Q12  How would you describe general morale among staff (very good / quite good / quite low / very low) and what are the key factors that influence it?

- Morale is generally okay but there are points where it falls as some staff members do not always feel valued.

Additional comments

If you have any other comments please include them below:

- The lateness of this response is down to your communication not being received until today – the closing date for submission. Perhaps this was an oversight due to the Easter break? However, I trust this response will be included.
- I do apologise if there are any typos in this, but it is now 9.45pm and this is my first opportunity to complete this today.

ANONYMOUS 65

Q1  What type of teaching role do you have


Q4  What are the positives that keep you in the teaching profession?

The personal impact I have on pupils. Being at the forefront of education and teaching young people about a subject I am passionate about. Encouraging young people to work at their best and supporting them to be well educated in all things related to computing science.

Q5  Do you consider that you will teach until you retire or do you consider leaving early or for alternative employment? (If you consider leaving, please specify why if it relates to your enjoyment of your role)

At this point I hope to be in teaching for as long as I can. I enjoy my job as a classroom teacher and being in front of classes. However, I cannot imagine being the same teacher in 40 odd years when I retire as I am today. Especially if the workload then is the same as it is now.

Being a part of a small department trying to deal with constant changes to the curriculum is very stressful and difficult. My subject is one that changes all the time due to advances in technology, which I have been fully aware of my
career in such a fluid subject. To try and deal with any more major curriculum changes on top of constantly updating courses due to other factors, may force me to leave teaching a lot earlier than I intend at the moment.

Q6 What would encourage you to seek promotion to senior management, including to headteacher level? What would discourage you from seeking promotion?

If I knew that the teachers of the school were strong and had good leadership in faculty/department heads, and if I had good role models to look up to and/or mentor me through the process then I would possibly consider promotion to senior management.

However, I am deeply discouraged to even apply for PT roles as I see first hand the pressure of department heads coming from the senior management team including the headteacher. I feel that my school has a very hands off approach to problems, especially recruitment and more recently, pupil discipline which both used to be phenomenal.

Q7 What do you think are the main challenges, if any, in recruiting or retaining teachers (and other staff) at your school? (please feel free to provide details of practical experiences)

A probationer and a part timer working at the school had very little teaching experience or knowledge of our subject. Our area cover had been with us from August 2015, he had completed his probation year successfully in June 2015. We later found that during his time as a postgraduate student and a probationer he did not get any experience of marking, taking any certificated classes and he was basically left to his own devices and nobody really checked up on him. Our probationer completed the B-ED and was very much in the same boat when he arrived with us.

I feel that the recruitment process into the PGDE is the beginning of the problem for our subject as there are far too many people being accepted with very little knowledge of the course content or the willingness to want to learn the content. The perception of what a teacher is and the full scale of the job is wrong too as a lot of students and probationers I have worked with over the years don’t seem to realise what the job entails before they apply to teaching or they don’t get enough time to adjust and build their skills as a student.

The recruitment process for qualified teachers is unfair also. As we have recently lost staff and as pupil numbers grow in our subject, we require a full time member of staff. As the position has been left empty for so long (since mid February and is being covered by non subject specialist cover teachers) and the school did not advertise separately, we join a pool of other schools at council wide interviews. The other panel members are from schools who all require additional staff in computing from August. I believe that the candidates who have applied are misrepresented as many teachers don’t want to go to council wide interviews to be placed in a school they don’t want. If we advertised a position in our school, which has a great reputation, we would receive applications from a different set of people who are interested in working in our school. Not just the council.
We are at a major disadvantage to this. Other schools have advertised positions in their department throughout the year and have ended up with excellent applicants. There is no consistency across councils at all.

Q9 Do you have any suggestions for how challenges with recruitment and retention might be addressed?

Councils and head teachers need to communicate more with the departments who need teachers in order to find out the skills and qualities needed for a good teacher in a particular subject. Teachers of English or Maths should require a different skill set from each other and other subjects throughout the school.

A ‘one size fits all’ approach is not appropriate and it is disgraceful that some department heads have no input into recruitment along with senior management.

Q10 Have any measures been put in place as a result of changes to staffing numbers in recent years at your school (examples include multi-school headship/leadership teams, composite classes, changes in the use/availability of support assistants)?

If so:

- What are these measures?
- How well are they working?
- Are these changes a permanent or a temporary measure (ie is it covering vacancies at present or is it to reflect the number of teacher/other posts has reduced?)

I have experienced a 20 pupil, tri level class this year made up of National 5, Higher and Advanced Higher. This is a measure only applied within our department and was supposed to be temporary as senior management thought that ‘pupils will drop out the subject’. We have a very positive pupil retention record and this has never been the case of pupils dropping.

I have received very little support from senior management regarding this and all my pupils have been disadvantaged in that class.

The problem existed from a lack of staff and timetable issues.

Q11 Are there any subject choices or other opportunities that are not available to pupils as a result of staff shortages that you consider would be valuable? (please specify)

In the past our numbers have been capped and pupils moved to other subjects due to not having enough staff.

Q12 How would you describe general morale among staff (very good / quite good / quite low / very low) and what are the key factors that influence it?

Within large departments, morale is low, within smaller departments morale is even lower. Changes to the curriculum over the last few years and unfairness in the amount of work some subjects are expected to do for free (such as assignment marking) has caused major problems amongst staff.
Small departments, such as a department of 2, are still expected to deal with the same workload as large departments that may consist of 10-15 people. Hearing large departments complain about issues to workload adds a little resentment to smaller departments also.

**Additional comments**

If you have any other comments please include them below:

Recruitment and staffing problems start from as early as student teachers as there is a lack of consistency in expectations and a lack of support for mentors. There is also a lack of support for probationer mentors when problems and concerns arise about probationer progress.

There is also a lack of consistency for recruitment techniques throughout councils with some requiring all schools to advertise separately and others requiring council wide recruitment. Communication between councils and recruitment panels should be more open also to allow departments to approach their head teacher with

**ANONYMOUS 66**

**Q1** What type of teaching role do you have

I am a secondary school teacher of Computing Science

**Q4** What are the positives that keep you in the teaching profession?

Feeling like I’m making a difference by helping young people enter Scotland’s Young Workforce and into suitable careers.

**Q5** Do you consider that you will teach until you retire or do you consider leaving early or for alternative employment? (If you consider leaving, please specify why if it relates to your enjoyment of your role)

I have seriously considered leaving for the last few years. This has been for various reasons but the prime reasons are:

- **Workload**
  - For the last four years, since the introduction of the new National qualifications there has not been a year of stability. With specific reference to the Computing Science courses there have been substantial changes made year on year and very little time to implement these for delivering in the classroom.
  - In order to feel secure in delivering the materials I have had to use my own personal/family time as the school has been unable to provide adequate time in the working time agreements for course development.

- **Lack of progression**
  - The move to the faculty structure in the majority of the country has been used as a cost cutting exercise and takes no account educational benefit

- **Poor management**
  - The faculty head / PTC role has made the role of a manager near impossible to do, PTCs don’t have enough time to effectively lead learning and teaching as well as challenge behaviour issues.
Q6  What would encourage you to seek promotion to senior management, including to headteacher level? What would discourage you from seeking promotion?

Since the introduction of Faculty head posts there are less promotion opportunities and those posts that do come up have lots more involvement than simply leading a faculty. Any promoted posts that come up come with too much added responsibility.

Q7  What do you think are the main challenges, if any, in recruiting or retaining teachers (and other staff) at your school? (please feel free to provide details of practical experiences)

Regional – Schools in more remote areas really struggle to attract teachers as people are not willing to travel/commute for long times

Salary – Our once competitive salary structure needs to be addressed. Lack of inflation matching rises and ever increasing cost of living does not make teaching an active profession.

Progression – Once teachers reach the top of the pay scale there is no incentive to improve.

Q8  Which particular subject specialisms/support roles face the greatest challenges with recruitment or retention?

This has been an issue in Computing Science for at least the last 10 years and I don’t think it’s going to get better any time soon.
In terms of teaching in general I think most specialist secondary subjects will struggle to recruit high quality graduates.
Specific difficulties exist in Health and Wellbeing / Home Economics

Q9  Do you have any suggestions for how challenges with recruitment and retention might be addressed?

Increase the duration of Probationary / NQT year to 2 years, this would allow new teachers to have two consecutive years in the one school and a good chance to establish themselves.
Schools should not be allowed to have NQTs replace NQTs, the idea that NQTs are an addition not a requirement needs to be reintroduced. This could be allowed under special circumstances i.e. failure to recruit in remote areas.
Don’t require teachers to work so many ours over their “35 hour week” just to make the job manageable.
Restart the chartered teacher scheme.
Q12 How would you describe general morale among staff (very good / quite good / quite low / very low) and what are the key factors that influence it?

<table>
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<th>Very low</th>
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<td>Too many changes, too much work and lack of respect.</td>
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**ANONYMOUS 67**

Q1 What type of teaching role do you have

Principal Teacher Guidance. Teach Social Education and Modern Languages.

Q4 What are the positives that keep you in the teaching profession?

The feeling that I am supporting and making a difference to the young people in my guidance group

Q5 Do you consider that you will teach until you retire or do you consider leaving early or for alternative employment? (If you consider leaving, please specify why if it relates to your enjoyment of your role)

Am seriously considering whether or not to continue in my permanent post or whether to leave and do supply in Modern Languages. There are several reasons for this: the job sizing tool-kit does not take into account the particular job that both Guidance and SMT do. The awarding of the points in the job sizing tool kit are for courses run, staff you are responsible for etc this does not serve us well or reflect our particular responsibilities and as a result PT Guidance staff are only on point 2 of the salary scale in the Council losing out on thousands of pounds per annum compared to our subject faculty head colleagues (and less of a pension) despite having much more responsibility regarding the welfare of pupils, GIRFEC, being the Named Person and the implementation of the Child’s Plan. It has now got to the stage that most Chartered teachers who have no extra responsibilities are earning more than I am and all they have to do is teach their timetabled classes. I work well in excess of the 35 hours and in addition to teaching SE, looking after a caseload of some 200 pupils I have to teach 6 periods a week of my degree subject with all the marking and preparation which this entails. I do not have the time to everything that is expected.

In addition I have suffered financial hardship through an actual REDUCTION in my salary. I began my PT post in 1995 and when the Mcrone agreement came in the understanding was that my salary would be have lifetime conservation as protection. This was swept away. The ending of conserved salaries was primarily meant to deal with those who had formerly been Principal Teachers of a subject dept who were no longer in post as they had been replaced with a Faculty Head. Those ex head of depts were doing the job of an ordinary classroom teacher but being paid on a PT salary and had lifetime conservation. Despite still doing the exact same job as PT Guidance I was treated in the same way as these ex PTS and my lifetime conservation was ended – totally unfair and not what was agreed in the Mcrone agreement. My salary of 43,725 was frozen for several years and in April 2016 was reduced to 40,602. My husband was in a similar position. Our mortgage arrangements etc were all based on our previous salaries and we have suffered real financial hardship as a consequence. This reduction in salary
has also had a knock on effect on our pensions. As we continue to be part of the old pension scheme where the pension is based on the best 3 consecutive years out of the last 10 we would both have to retire sooner than we anticipated earlier than we might have anticipated or we would end up with less pension but having paid in much more in contributions when our salaries were higher.

In a number of instances schools and Guidance staff are doing work which is very clearly the role of social work but we are being constantly told that they either do not have the resources or they " do not see a role for SW" but someone has to pick up the pieces to support that child.

Q6 What would encourage you to seek promotion to senior management, including to headteacher level? What would discourage you from seeking promotion?

There is no way I would encourage anyone to apply for a senior management post unless they were single and childless and didn’t mind working long hours in the evenings and at weekends for a not very good salary.

Q7 What do you think are the main challenges, if any, in recruiting or retaining teachers (and other staff) at your school? (please feel free to provide details of practical experiences)

Lack of qualified teachers in certain subject areas, people preferring to go part time to achieve a work/life balance that is not possible when working a supposedly 35 hour week. Staff leaving the profession because they have simply had enough. Society has changed and the way in which some parents believe they can be verbally abusive and aggressive towards teachers would not be tolerated in any other workplace. Behaviour of pupils in some cases has drastically deteriorated and with the movement towards a no exclusion policy schools have to accommodate these pupils with no extra resources. The activities, staffing and function of the ACC Inclusion Team requires close scrutiny as outcomes for pupils in terms of support etc do not seem to have improved.

Q8 Which particular subject specialisms/support roles face the greatest challenges with recruitment or retention?

At the moment the Sciences, Home Economics and Maths but it is clear from the ads in TES that shortly this is going to become a problem in all subjects as staff retire.

Q9 Do you have any suggestions for how challenges with recruitment and retention might be addressed?

The obvious one is pay a decent salary, take SMT and Guidance out of teaching in the classroom and abandon the non exclusion policy and ensure that the Inclusion Team actually can support schools in concrete terms with regard to providing staff to work with individual pupils etc as opposed to simply attending meetings.

Q11 Are there any subject choices or other opportunities that are not available to pupils as a result of staff shortages that you consider would be valuable? (please specify)
Pupils do not have access to the same number of subjects at subject choice because there are no specialist teachers, especially in HE and Technical. Subject choice sheets are sometimes put together knowing that a certain subject cannot appear because the school does not know if they will be able to recruit a teacher in that subject over the holidays or they know that so and so is retiring next year so cannot allow pupils to start a 2 year course in BGE if they don't know if there would be a teacher for that 2nd year of the course. There is a problem too at ADV H level despite the council running city campus and consortia arrangements.

**Q12** How would you describe general morale among staff (very good / quite good / quite low / very low) and what are the key factors that influence it?

Staff morale quite low due to pay and conditions, behaviour of pupils at times and parental attitude. Pupil Report cards make staff fearful to actually state what the true behaviour and attitude of the pupil is for fear of parental backlash. Staff are on their knees by the end of each term due to workload and stress.

**Additional comments**

Staff who have been teaching for a number of years are also quite angry re golden hello proposals to new staff as they feel that the staff already in post are undervalued by society and underpaid. Unless conditions are drastically improved for current staff the numbers leaving the profession will increase year on year.

I am employed as a Guidance teacher by the City Council but the workload differs between the individual schools for the same point 2 salary. Many of my city colleagues as PT Guidance have NO subject commitment other than Social Education yet I and the others in my school have 6 periods of our own speciality plus all the marking, tracking, report writing etc that that entails. Where is the fairness in that?

**ANONYMOUS 68**

I have a family member considering leaving teaching after 2 years! She teaches Maths, were there is a reported shortage, yet cannot get a permanent post.

Head teachers can chose to use temporary contracts to save on budgets.

This teacher has to get a summer job as she is not paid for holidays including Easter and Christmas. Degrading!

She thought she had a career for life but is now considering her options, even though she loves teaching.

One local authority wrote to parents asking if anyone with a degree could come and help out in school. Disgraceful.

It angers me to see and hear recruitment ads when those already trained cannot get permanent jobs.
ANONYMOUS 69  
Q1 What type of teaching role do you have  
Retired Secondary Chemistry and Science teacher and occasional supply teacher.  

Q4 What are the positives that keep you in the teaching profession?  
To support kids and colleagues mainly and the money is handy too. I found the increasing workload and the nonsense from the SQA as regards to a lack of clarity in things like Assessment a prime factor in my decision to retire from teaching in Scotland. I went abroad to teach in the International Baccalaureate (IB) system for two years. This has provided me with many points of comparison.  

Q5 Do you consider that you will teach until you retire or do you consider leaving early or for alternative employment? (If you consider leaving, please specify why if it relates to your enjoyment of your role)  
I had wanted to leave for years, ever since I was Acting PT Chemistry. I found I had to work 50-60h per week to learn about and keep on top of the job. It was when CfE required a huge input from staff and HGIOS3 was all the rage.  

I think if I was coming into the profession now there is no incentive for promotion as there is no time in the present large jump structure to learn your trade. When there were senior teachers, APTs and PT subjects teachers had the scope to get paid for added responsibility in realistic increments. Now if you are a teacher you have to do work you’re not paid for to learn a more managerial role. If you don’t promotion responsibilities are overwhelming.  

Enjoyment? What a strange question. This shows you have absolutely NO idea what it is to be a teacher, in Scotland, at the moment.  

Q6 What would encourage you to seek promotion to senior management, including to headteacher level? What would discourage you from seeking promotion?  
Nothing.  

Q7 What do you think are the main challenges, if any, in recruiting or retaining teachers (and other staff) at your school? (please feel free to provide details of practical experiences)  
Too much paperwork  
Too much irrelevant assessment 2.2 & 2.3 are absolutely useless.  
The pressure on the students to jump through irrelevant assessment hoops is wasted energy  
Too many cover classes for the permanent staff and too few available supply teachers since the pay scale was changed.  
Lack of competitive salary re STEM subjects  

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Q8 Which particular subject specialisms/support roles face the greatest challenges with recruitment or retention?
STEM

Q9 Do you have any suggestions for how challenges with recruitment and retention might be addressed?
Increased salary
Regarded as a profession worthy of respect
Not using NQTs to plug vacancies
The SQA getting it's act together

Q10 Have any measures been put in place as a result of changes to staffing numbers in recent years at your school (examples include multi-school headship/leadership teams, composite classes, changes in the use/availability of support assistants)?
If so:
- What are these measures?
- How well are they working?
- Are these changes a permanent or a temporary measure (ie is it covering vacancies at present or is it to reflect the number of teacher/other posts has reduced?)
  Travel afternoons decided in in the council with little regard to cost to pupils and time taken to reach the school In 2012-13 several pupils were half an hour late to class because of transport timings. Oh and this was a trilevel class of Higher, Int 2 and Int 1 Chemistry. It was never going to work.

Q11 Are there any subject choices or other opportunities that are not available to pupils as a result of staff shortages that you consider would be valuable? (please specify)
Well, the school I work in doesn’t have a Chemistry teacher at the moment, which is why I’m in doing supply until exam leave for the certificate classes. They haven’t had an experienced Chemistry teacher since myself and another colleague left in 2013. Probationers have been put in the vacancy and with only one Chemistry teacher required they have no in school subject support. They don’t start until August whereas courses begin in May or June. The teacher who has recently left to take up a position in elsewhere came in as an NQT found it very difficult. Whenever I was in doing supply he was delighted that I could provide in situ support. It really isn’t fair to use NQTs as vacancy fillers.

Q12 How would you describe general morale among staff (very good / quite good / quite low / very low) and what are the key factors that influence it?
After being away for two years I see a lowering of morale since I’ve returned.

Additional comments
If you have any other comments please include them below:

The main problem is the introduction to the new curriculum and exams without proper consultation with the very people who will be delivering the courses to our young people.

Every school was expected to deliver its own courses built from the scant information provided. Previously teachers were seconded to build materials on content and assessment prior to implementation.

The crazy differences in course choices in S2/S3/S4 depending on the school. Pupils changing school have major problems.

**ANONYMOUS 70**

**Q1** What type of teaching role do you have

Secondary Teacher of Home Economics

**Q4** What are the positives that keep you in the teaching profession?

There are less and less. I am sorry to say that the holidays are a definite plus point as is the stability/security of the job.

Still get great satisfaction from making a difference to a young person’s life by equipping them with skills and knowledge which will be helpful to them in the future. Love watching pupils learn and flourish at every level. It is very gratifying to see pupils enjoying learning as much as I enjoy teaching.

I thrive in mentoring new beginning teachers and imparting experience and knowledge to ensure sustainability of the subject but this aspect of the job is becoming obsolete due to diminishing numbers of new teachers.

**Q5** Do you consider that you will teach until you retire or do you consider leaving early or for alternative employment? (If you consider leaving, please specify why if it relates to your enjoyment of your role)

I am not sure if I will stay in the profession until retirement. I worked out in industry for 14 years before entering the teaching profession and at that point in time, there were many promotion opportunities and ways to enhance my career prospects within my own subject specialism. This was very attractive to me and indeed swayed me into teaching at the time. Very early on in my teaching career, lots changed i.e. Faculty system was introduced, Charter Teacher training programme halted and changes to how CPD was funded and allocated. As a consequence, ways to progress in my teaching career were limited unless I wanted to manage a faculty or go down the pupil support route.

In addition, it has been very difficult in recent years due to a lack of foresight and forward planning within my subject field to address the decreasing numbers of teachers and with high levels of retirements – both of which are quantifiable. University courses have not been sought or adapted to support entry to the teaching qualification PGDE which would enable teachers to qualify in my subject area. The result is now a dire shortage of qualified teachers and a dilution of our subject within schools. This situation has been compounded by what feels like the subject being belittled and placed way
down the pecking order compared to other subjects, not given the profile at school, local authority or national level. In many schools because of a lack of qualified teachers, departments have cut their timetables and departments and if schools do advertise for positions to be filled, no one applies and therefore opportunities for pupils are massively reduced or removed all together. This is extremely disappointing and frustrating from my point of view as someone who feels passionately about my subject. My subject fulfils a key role in providing pupils with life skills key to a future society which is healthy, sustainable and self-sufficient, in addition, due to the amount of changes to the curriculum over the past few years, I feel I no longer have the freedom and empowerment to teach my specialism in a way which stimulates my pupils, at a pace which suits them and enables progression – time deadlines and an overloaded curriculum is making things very difficult.

Q6 What would encourage you to seek promotion to senior management, including to headteacher level? What would discourage you from seeking promotion?

Difficult to assess as I am not in a promoted post.

My ambition would be to progress & seek promotion within my own subject specialism, mentor new teachers and take decisions to drive forward my curriculum in a way which benefits all stakeholders, to have greater autonomy and indeed be financially and fairly rewarded for the work that I do. Currently this is not possible in my local authority area but I know it is available in other parts of the country. My family circumstances and commitments do not currently enable me to relocate.

Q7 What do you think are the main challenges, if any, in recruiting or retaining teachers (and other staff) at your school? (please feel free to provide details of practical experiences)

As aforementioned, investment, training and recruitment in my own subject area is at a critical level. In my school, it has taken a number of years to build the department up and to see the pupil numbers increase and the staffing level requirements increase however, as soon as there is a period of absence through sickness, maternity cover or a teacher leaves due to a change in personal circumstance, there are no replacements nor supply staff so classes have to be quashed, courses pulled and incumbent staff put under enormous pressure to manage a single person department with all the demands that come with this i.e. reporting, curriculum planning etc. It is soul destroying.

In addition, there is a lack of development and promotional opportunities which is the case across many schools which means that newly qualified teachers, post probation year or those with perhaps a couple of years’ experience, seek these positions elsewhere. In addition, the cost of living in the area is high and staff move away to a cheaper location.

Q8 Which particular subject specialisms/support roles face the greatest challenges with recruitment or retention?
I think there is a problem across the board with regard to recruitment & retention but STEM subjects, Home Economics & Modern Languages seem to be particularly affected.

Q9 Do you have any suggestions for how challenges with recruitment and retention might be addressed?
Lots of suggestions have been aired in different forums i.e. at school, departmental level, network level, letter sent to local authority but no real strategy or vanguard to address the challenges. Action required at the most senior level i.e National Government.

Q11 Are there any subject choices or other opportunities that are not available to pupils as a result of staff shortages that you consider would be valuable? (please specify)
Just a limited BGE experience for pupils due to staffing levels with pupils only experiencing the subject on a rota basis for a few weeks during the academic year. This does not facilitate progressive learning within a practical subject where it is very important to have continuity and continued reinforcement of practical skills without huge gaps between their learning from one year to the next. By the time they return in S2 or S3, they have forgotten what they learnt in S1. In addition, it is not a good springboard towards study in the senior phase with huge gaps in their learning, skills and abilities.

Q12 How would you describe general morale among staff (very good / quite good / quite low / very low) and what are the key factors that influence it?
Quite Low.

ANONYMOUS 71

Q1 What type of role do you have?
Teacher – Support for Learning and Teaching a social subject

Q4 Would you recommend working at a school to friends? If so, why (and if not, why not)?
No – I believe there have been to many changes and that the changes are to the negative, both ion terms of education ie teaching and on pupils

Q5 Which particular roles face the greatest challenges with recruitment or retention?
It seems to me that all staff areas are fairly short in terms of supply and that the recruitment of Senior management is flawed and problematic

Q6 What steps would improve recruitment and/or retention?
Improve pupils behaviour, improve the standing of teachers in senior managements eyes and the publics – education has swung far to far into the welfare of children and not the education of children (I do belive welfare and caring is crucial but is a part and is not one size fits all)
Q7  Are there any roles or time you spend as part of your job that operate on a ‘goodwill’ basis, where this is directly as a result of lower than required number of staff due to vacancies (please give details)?
Lots ie covering staff colleagues on maternity and sick leave – for months

Q8  Have any measures been put in place as a result of changes to staffing numbers at your school (this can include not just classroom teachers but measures at other levels such as multi-school headship/leadership teams)? If so:
- What are they? Clerical staff no longer support us in the guidance base
- How well are they working? = PT’s covering many departmentst despite the LA not having facilities
- Are these permanent or a temporary measures (ie is it covering vacancies at present or is it to reflect the number of teacher / other staff posts have reduced?) both ?

Q9  How would you describe general morale among staff (very good / quite good / quite low / very low) and what are the key factors that influence it?
Unbelievable low, never lower, I would resign or retire (if the age hadn’t been moved some years ago to 55) I shall go immediately. New teachers and older are constantly on their knees while it used to be at the end of terms

Additional comments
It’s not the career it was when I entered it 20 years ago
CFE is an unmitigated disaster from beginning to hopefully end for children and the country – it should be scrapped forthwith
Discipline amongst the pupils has ever been worse
SMT are poor to weak at best and blame teachers and never children
Children need mental health input before they can be taught
I entered teaching to teach in its broad sense and now I feel like a frustrated social worker

ANONYMOUS 72
Q1  What type of teaching role do you have
Secondary school. Teacher of Chemistry and Biology.

Q4  What are the positives that keep you in the teaching profession?
I have been a chemistry/ biology teacher for 23 years. I have taught for 9 years in England and then for 14 years in Scotland.
What has kept me in the teaching profession is:
I enjoy teaching my subject areas and encourage my pupils to enjoy Science. I enjoy seeing pupils learn and progress their knowledge and skills as they go through the years. I get satisfaction from seeing pupils gain knowledge,
qualifications and skills that help them when they leave school. I get satisfaction knowing that I have helped to contribute to this.

**Q5** Do you consider that you will teach until you retire or do you consider leaving early or for alternative employment? (If you consider leaving, please specify why if it relates to your enjoyment of your role)

I have decided to leave the teaching profession in the UK and have just got a job teaching overseas.

I’m leaving because I have got fed up with the succession of pay freezes and then the paltry pay increases (1% and 1.5%) that we have been awarded. The last pay award really being a cut in salary because it meant an increased pension contribution which was more than my pay increase! At a time of constant change and increased demands to treat hard working teachers in this way is an insult to them!

I have also got disillusioned, frustrated, fed up and disgusted with the Curriculum change that has happened. It is not the Curriculum for Excellence! It is a big step back from what we had before (Standard Grade, Intermediate 2, etc) which were 2 year courses (giving pupils time to learn theory and do coursework and provided proper progression from one course stage to another). The present system sees National 4 pupils getting no nationally recognised qualification (employers don’t value it), pupils resitting the same course again (some of which would probably have got a National 5 award had it been a 2 year course), some pupils doing courses that they are just not capable of (professional recommendations by teachers being ignored).

I have also got fed up with the SQA and the constant changes to course details and assessments (which are even happening as we have started teaching those courses for that academic year!), SQA end of unit assessments (UASP’s) that are produced for chemistry teachers to use but are incorrect or the mark schemes incorrect! This has increased chemistry teacher workload as we have to sit and check them before we use with our pupils! Then inform the SQA that their material has mistakes in it and need correcting.

**Q6** What would encourage you to seek promotion to senior management, including to headteacher level? What would discourage you from seeking promotion?

There is a lack of opportunity in the current education system for teachers to get promotion and therefore the experience to move up to senior management stage.

One Head of Faculty and then everyone else is on the main teacher pay scale within the Faculty. Teachers have always worked as part of teams but “collegiality” is being used to take advantage of teachers’ goodwill and get them to do a lot more responsibility without having to pay them for it.

**ANONYMOUS 73**

**Q1** What type of teaching role do you have
Secondary Qualified, Professional Recognition in Leadership - Principal Teacher of Business Education

I also hold a whole school remit for managing skills for work courses, managing IT use within the school and leading digital learning.

Q4 What are the positives that keep you in the teaching profession?

I have a personal love of learning which I enjoy sharing with young people. I enjoy working with young people within a classroom setting which is why I have accepted a Principal Teacher position instead of seeking a more highly paid Head of Faculty (PTC) position in another region. The fulfilment of encouraging young people to find their path in life and to help them develop the skills and knowledge they will need is unique.

Q5 Do you consider that you will teach until you retire or do you consider leaving early or for alternative employment? (If you consider leaving, please specify why if it relates to your enjoyment of your role)

I retrained as a teacher at the age of 30 having previously worked as part of a family business where I ran a large convenience store. Therefore, I am not afraid to make changes such as a change of career should I feel it is the correct thing to do in the future. If (for the reasons outlined below) I feel that I am not delivering the quality of experience that young people deserve in the future then I would consider leaving.

Despite my current love of teaching and my enthusiasm for my role I am worried that in 30 years time I will be too old to be effective within the classroom as I will be too far out of touch with young people. I am also concerned that the relentless pace of change and ever increasing workload will be unsustainable when I am older.

Q6 What would encourage you to seek promotion to senior management, including to headteacher level? What would discourage you from seeking promotion?

Having recently had the opportunity to undertake an position as Acting Depute Headteacher (0.2FTE) this is something which is very much at the front of my mind at present.

I would be encouraged to seek promotion perhaps to Depute level as I enjoyed many of the tasks which were assigned to me during my recent acting experience. Leading others to create policies and develop changes in practice proved to be both challenging and stimulating as it allowed me to question my own values and priorities. It also gave me a much wider view of the role of SMT within a secondary school. I believe I would enjoy the opportunity to help influence strategic direction within a school and also to have a direct impact on the education of a wider number of students. I also feel that my personal skill set is well suited to many of the tasks carried out by a Depute (for example data analysis, creation of policy documents, and engagement with parents). Additionally, promotion is now the only way in which I would secure any sort of salary increase.
However accepting a position as a Depute would restrict my opportunity to work directly with young people and I would be working with them as a larger group rather than in the smaller class setting. I feel at present this is something I am unwilling to give up. In addition my exposure to some of the tasks undertaken has amplified the feeling that SMT within schools are far more akin to administrators than educators – through no fault of their own.

Q7 What do you think are the main challenges, if any, in recruiting or retaining teachers (and other staff) at your school? (please feel free to provide details of practical experiences)

In my current position the rural nature of the school is a definite barrier to recruitment. However more fundamental than that is the current negative atmosphere surrounding the secondary curriculum. I believe that the constant changes being made (not for the better in many cases) are intimidating and this means that experienced teachers who are mentoring and supporting students and probationers are often unable to do so to an adequate level as they themselves don’t know what they are meant to be doing.

Unrealistic expectations of new teachers who believe they should be able to work 8.30 – 3.30 with no work/preparation outwith these times or during school holidays. Whilst I am not advocating that teachers should routinely be working 45+ hour weeks I believe that as a new entrant to the profession there should be some understanding that in the first few years you will need to expect that it will take you longer to prepare lessons than a much more experienced colleague for example.

Poor quality ITE which impacts on both the selection of appropriate candidates and then their preparation for working in education. My own experience at my University was with a tutor who had never taught Business Education in a secondary school. There was NO feedback on written or practical work at any point in the course. This was the subject of a complaint to the University who responded by saying they would review in future years; the course did not run for several years after that. This has also impacted on the quality of probationers in recent years, some of whom have struggled to cope with the reality of teaching and in some cases should not have been allowed to qualify.

Lack of promotion structure as a result of faculties – especially in some subject areas; for example many Maths faculties include Business and Computing – for a Business teacher this further limits promotion opportunities as the reality is that a Maths specialist will be appointed to that PTC post. There needs to be a reintroduction of PT/APT roles to allow the opportunity to gain experience of management roles and to help departments have a specialist lead.

Poor pay – the salary for a top of payscale teacher has again been eroded since the McCrone rises nearly 20 years ago; we are back where we started. In addition in the recent rounds of public sector pay rises teachers alone were forced to accept further changes to pension provisions as a condition of receiving the tiny percentage on offer; this is not attractive to potential recruits!

Q8 Which particular subject specialisms/support roles face the greatest challenges with recruitment or retention?
Business Education and Computing are both chronically short of teachers; this means that these valuable subjects are being eroded in schools.

Q9 Do you have any suggestions for how challenges with recruitment and retention might be addressed?

Improve the quality of ITE and make the probation process standardised and more rigorous; the variation in delivery of probationer CPD for example is huge. Some councils (and schools within councils) provide far more than others. The probationer system needs to be more consistent across authorities and schools – what seems to be an acceptable standard in one school then becomes an issue in another school when the probationer becomes fully qualified and moves to another job.

Q10 Have any measures been put in place as a result of changes to staffing numbers in recent years at your school (examples include multi-school headship/leadership teams, composite classes, changes in the use/availability of support assistants)?

Staffing numbers can be reduced through the introduction of the Senior Phase in secondary schools – this has led to tri-level classes of S4-6 of up to 30 students. Teaching Nat 4 – Higher to students aged 14-18 in the one classroom is a really negative change and has impacted on the classroom experience for students. The Senior Phase has led to larger class sizes in my experience with a direct impact on workload. This has meant a reduction in staff morale in many cases.

Additionally, S1-2 are now taught in classes of 25 or more as opposed to practical ICT sets of max. 20. This is also as a result of lack of available staff in Business/Computing.

Support assistants are few and far between; as a “practical” subject using ICT I get no support, even with the most challenging of students.

Q11 Are there any subject choices or other opportunities that are not available to pupils as a result of staff shortages that you consider would be valuable? (please specify)

I would like to offer Higher Accounting and Advanced Higher Business Management; neither of these will be possible without an additional member of Business/Computing staff. In addition if we are unable to recruit a permanent member of Computing staff we may have to remove National/Higher/Advanced Higher Computing Science from our curriculum permanently.

S1-2 courses are also being limited as without a Computing teacher their coding input is minimal and delivered by a non-specialist.

Q12 How would you describe general morale among staff (very good / quite good / quite low / very low) and what are the key factors that influence it?

Very low.

Workload is a massive issue; since qualifying in 2010 I have taught Standard Grades, Intermediates and Highers. I then had to introduce Nationals, New
Highers and New Advanced Highers; this session I will be delivering a further revised version of National 5. The workload involved in delivering these new qualifications cannot continue; the recent proposed changes will mean I start delivering these courses to students without having seen a specimen of the final exam paper that they will sit. It is completely unreasonable to expect staff to do this. There is no budget or time off timetable to support the further revision of resources; this will need to be completed as unpaid overtime as there is no way that the 35 hour week will cover this level of work.

Poor pay – in the recent round of salary increases most top of scale teachers ended up worse off thanks to changes in pension payments (and some even more so thanks to student loans). This situation was felt to be farcical. Also see comments above regarding the long term erosion of salary.

ANONYMOUS 74

What are the main challenges in relation to teacher recruitment and retention?

In just 11 years of teaching the job has changed an inordinate amount even though learners’ experiences and overall achievements (no. of qualifications and results) has reduced in level.

Low pay in comparison to other similar professional careers – lack of real time pay rises for years – pay increases in recent years have resulted a pay reduction due to increased pension payments (pay at top of teacher scale was increased however pension percentage tiers were not which led to increased contributions and new NI contributions).

High cost of living in NE that has not been addressed.

Moving retirement goalposts by 8 years overnight.

Press teacher bashing and poor parental support.

Unmanageable workload – paperwork and bureaucracy (new GTCS Professional Update/ tracking and monitoring, Units etc.).

No time to prepare good resources for new qualifications – very low non-contact.

Lack of timely exemplification by the SQA and ES

Zero recompense for additional time worked, what other professional occupation would not work without overtime payments.

No time to prepare the lessons that would benefit our pupils the most.

Paying poorly for work that should be completed by SQA (Technologies Assignment marking).

Continual changes in courses and e’s and o’s/benchmarks.

Not being allowed to demonstrate professional judgement and being under constant scrutiny.
Not being listened to by Government/SQA & ES when we advise things won’t work or make beneficial changes to levels of bureaucracy. Consultations that make no difference and steamroll changes without proper thinking/discussion.

Poor behaviour with inclusion for highly disruptive pupils, lack of specialised units/schools.

Apathetic (yet confident) pupils coming out of primary schools with poor numeracy and literacy.

Pupils having too many assessments at one time.

Lack of training opportunities, as due to staff shortages many teachers are not allowed out of school.

Lack of support for Probationers if no subject PT and probationers being put into untenable positions with little relevant support.

Lack of promotion opportunities due to Faculty system

Schools in NE short staffed and Government fine them for this instead of providing/funding proper training and recruitment.

Lack of PGDE training in NE Scotland (Technological Education) at Universities as financially not viable for University without research grants – this should not be the case.

Reduction in hours of technical support to complete tasks out with our remits i.e workshop and reprographics technicians.

Are there patterns or key reasons why some trainee teachers do not complete courses, or do not choose to go into teaching having qualified?

Lack of support as a probationer; being put in situations as the only subject specialist in schools.

Non-subject specialist faculty heads.

Schools that are short staffed.

High cost of living in NE.

Constant changes with curriculum.

School is not the same place they remember; low teacher morale.

Students come into some schools and find the job is unbearable and overly stressful.

Expectation to complete a Masters level qualification on top of an ever changing and over-demanding job.

How effective are the various approaches taken to cover shortages of teachers in schools?
Not very effective in the NE - vast sums of money (tens of thousands of pounds) spent on advertising with little or no impact. The new schemes set up to retrain oil workers, has not been effective. Teaching as a vocation is much more than other professional environments (this is from personal experience).

What factors influence teachers deciding whether to stay in the profession or to leave?

Lack of work/life balance.

Better pay and conditions abroad.

Health problems.

What factors influence teachers when deciding whether or not to apply for promotion to senior management/head teacher level?

Due to the faculty system there is less of a pool of staff to become members of SLT. Faculty head job sizing is large enough with the extra responsibility and accountability. The lack of promotion opportunities are damaging to teachers self-esteem and morale. Interview system is not providing the best candidates for the roles.

ANONYMOUS 75

Q1 What type of teaching role do you have

Specialist Support Teacher as part of Extended Community Team. I support Primary and Secondary schools in an area of my local authority. I provide staged intervention support to pupils, support to parents and CPD to teachers, as required and in consultation with the ASN coordinator in each school.

Q4 What are the positives that keep you in the teaching profession?

Love of learning, access to and opportunities to engage with research to make a positive impact on learning and development of pupils, excellent colleagues to keep inspiring me and keep me sane, working with like minded people, having opportunities to work with parents and multiple agencies to coordinate effective support for children and young people to help them develop and grow, good salary, good holidays, plenty of variety from day to day – rarely a dull moment.

Q5 Do you consider that you will teach until you retire or do you consider leaving early or for alternative employment? (If you consider leaving, please specify why if it relates to your enjoyment of your role)

I would like to teach in my current role until I retire, either at 60 or slightly beyond but I could not work in schools up to 67yrs. Previously, working in a High School, full time, I could not imagine working beyond 60 yrs, or even for up to 60yrs. The reasons would be entirely based on stamina and energy levels required for the job.

Q6 What would encourage you to seek promotion to senior management, including to headteacher level? What would discourage you from seeking promotion?
I did seek promotion a few years ago and was invited to several interviews at PTC and DHT level but I became extremely nervous at the interviews and found them to be like oral examinations. The current interview process is off putting for me as I probably won’t apply again now. Development posts encouraged me to apply for promoted posts as did completing Chartered Teacher status, and working as a union learning Rep.

Q7 What do you think are the main challenges, if any, in recruiting or retaining teachers (and other staff) at your school? (please feel free to provide details of practical experiences)

My perceived experience of recruitment of senior management posts in my previous High school was not a positive experience. The challenges I saw in recruiting senior managers was a lack of experience/ability in applicants and not enough applicants coming forward.

Also, generally, the structure of management in the authority makes the jump up from class teacher to Principal Teacher Curriculum huge and it is not made an easily visible journey for teachers to see if they are considering promotion. Generally again, the applying for promotion and preparing for interviews remained some hidden knowledge which teachers had to find out from others, individually, how to succeed at. Senior Managers may have/make little time to help class teachers prepare for interviews/do mock interviews.

Retention of temp teachers was a challenge as they were not given much of an induction before working in the school. They were also not well supported by a centralised ICT management system so quick access to school server was variable and dependent on individual ICT managers in schools to push and chivvy up central services. One temp teacher taught more than six months in school without having access to emails or school server.

Q8 Which particular subject specialisms/support roles face the greatest challenges with recruitment or retention?

Home Economics – not enough teachers available, ageing workforce.

Q9 Do you have any suggestions for how challenges with recruitment and retention might be addressed?

Break down some levels of management into more easily achievable career development levels. Don’t separate career long learning from leadership and management development. Make it more difficult for teachers to seek promotion at senior management levels until they have accrued many more years’ experience in teaching at classroom and middle management level, or, at least have completed quite a few of the standards of career long professional learning.

Make interview processes similar to those with Education Scotland where a professional discussion takes place; applicants can share evidence of success; applicants are encouraged to take notes.

Tackle the problem of schools becoming more frightened of parents and an unsympathetic media.
Q10 Have any measures been put in place as a result of changes to staffing numbers in recent years at your school (examples include multi-school headship/leadership teams, composite classes, changes in the use/availability of support assistants)?

More composite classes working at three National levels in the one class with one teacher.

If so:

- What are these measures?
- How well are they working? No longer there to appraise.
- Are these changes a permanent or a temporary measure (ie is it covering vacancies at present or is it to reflect the number of teacher/other posts has reduced?)

It’s never known if a change will be temporary or permanent, staffing changes from year to year as new interests dominate in school – ie, we teach drama, then we don’t, then we teach Spanish, then we don’t – not great for continuity to allow experience to build up in departments.

Q11 Are there any subject choices or other opportunities that are not available to pupils as a result of staff shortages that you consider would be valuable? (please specify)

Drama, philosophy, stronger links with vocational course work/work experience from agencies outside school, opportunities to work more closely with vulnerable families in multi agency way, to support pupils’ learning and future outcomes.

Q12 How would you describe general morale among staff (very good / quite good / quite low / very low) and what are the key factors that influence it?

In my current post, morale is generally good. In previous school, very low.

ANONYMOUS 76

Q1 What type of teaching role do you have

Secondary: English

Q4 What are the positives that keep you in the teaching profession?

Supportive colleagues; working with young people; (previously) time to produce resources and lessons and be creative; busy and varied environment; love of own subject and passionate about teaching it to others

Q5 Do you consider that you will teach until you retire or do you consider leaving early or for alternative employment? (If you consider leaving, please specify why if it relates to your enjoyment of your role)

Considering leaving early due to enormous and increasing workload.

Q7 What do you think are the main challenges, if any, in recruiting or retaining teachers (and other staff) at your school? (please feel free to provide details of practical experiences)
Huge workload; unrealistic time to get things done; large classes; lack of resources and less money available; lack of staff so taking on responsibility of other pupils and classes; salary has not increased despite increase in workload and stress

Q9 Do you have any suggestions for how challenges with recruitment and retention might be addressed?

More financial investment in education in terms of salaries, resources etc. Smaller classes. Not changing curriculum and assessment constantly. More interest in teacher voice – we received this request on 19\textsuperscript{th} and deadline is 20\textsuperscript{th}: unlikely to be a big response with only one day. Needs to be a sense that teachers are being listened to and supported.

Q10 Have any measures been put in place as a result of changes to staffing numbers in recent years at your school (examples include multi-school headship/leadership teams, composite classes, changes in the use/availability of support assistants)?

If so:

- What are these measures?
- How well are they working?
- Are these changes a permanent or a temporary measure (ie is it covering vacancies at present or is it to reflect the number of teacher/other posts has reduced?)

Curriculum leaders rather than specialist PTs – less subject specialism; staff losing promoted posts. Less support assistants – difficult to cope with challenging youngsters in large classes. Teachers not being replaced eg long term absence, maternity leave etc. Classes left unsupervised (S5/6) or sent to Assembly Hall in large numbers to be supervised by senior staff but not taught. This is happening for months.

Q11 Are there any subject choices or other opportunities that are not available to pupils as a result of staff shortages that you consider would be valuable? (please specify)

Many pupils are not taught – just supervised or in the case of seniors, given work then unsupervised.

Q12 How would you describe general morale among staff (very good / quite good / quite low / very low) and what are the key factors that influence it?

Very low.

ANONYMOUS 77

Q1 What type of teaching role do you have? (please specify if you are working at primary or secondary school or other, if you are a supply teacher, and any subject specialisms or other roles)
Permanent Secondary Computing and Business Studies Teacher.

Q4 What are the positives that keep you in the teaching profession?
The pupils and my strong belief in Scottish Education and the contribution my subjects will make to each individual for lifelong learning – irrelevant of academic/non-academic route.

Q5 Do you consider that you will teach until you retire or do you consider leaving early or for alternative employment? (If you consider leaving, please specify why if it relates to your enjoyment of your role)

I plan to leave early due to management and authority bullying and lack of opportunities to express opinions or promotion. The role of teacher should include freedom to plan and teach classes but current structure means that we are dictated to and micro managed by line management who have less than 10 years classroom experience between them. We are asked to carry out paper exercises that are irrelevant to teaching and learning and the results are not revealed and no follow through happens. Most of these are time filling rather than productive development. Teaching time for certificate classes is 1/3 short of recommended time by SQA. Recent inspection failed to address issues/concerns raised by staff and bordered on farcical praise for management.

SQA ongoing changes/lack of clarity.

All of above are making my job untenable and clearly do nothing to raise attainment and school, authority and SQA pay little regard to pupils and their needs.

Q6 What would encourage you to seek promotion to senior management, including to headteacher level? What would discourage you from seeking promotion?

This is impossible within my school and authority. A clear ageism policy is in place and majority of promotions are given to staff from one school. No member of staff in this school will be given promotion. Statistics are clear.

Q7 What do you think are the main challenges, if any, in recruiting or retaining teachers (and other staff) at your school? (please feel free to provide details of practical experiences)

Bullying by middle and senior management who lack experience and management skills therefore bully and apportion blame elsewhere to make up for their incompetence. Young staff are almost forced to work well over 35 hour working week and are terrified of losing their job and being told they must attend shows, competitions etc even when some have family events planned.

Lack of communication and basically told ‘just do it’. Unnecessary paperwork, tick boxes and pointless reports to parents which unless you work in education are meaningless and take up a considerable amount of non-contact time.
Teachers want to be left alone to teach and develop courses for their classes – currently this year I have been given 40 mins to write/develop courses.

Teachers have had pay cuts (pensions and national insurance increases have outweighed 1% increases). Teachers are graduates and most have post graduate qualifications as well. Compare our qualifications and experience to industry and pay levels of course we all want out.

Q8 Which particular subject specialisms/support roles face the greatest challenges with recruitment or retention?
Computing which is my main subject has been taken out of some schools curriculum so shortage in this area is camouflaged. Science and maths teachers are in high demand.

Q9 Do you have any suggestions for how challenges with recruitment and retention might be addressed?
A decent pay rise. Control over how schools/authority’s appoint promoted staff. A clear cut anti-bullying policy for staff. Management must have experience and proven ability and not just promoted because they are self-absorbed and have taken promotion at any cost route rather than pupils and teaching.

Q12 How would you describe general morale among staff (very good / quite good / quite low / very low) and what are the key factors that influence it?

Very low – poor leadership

ANONYMOUS 78

Q1 What type of teaching role do you have
Secondary teacher of Biology and Science

Q4 What are the positives that keep you in the teaching profession?
Working with, building rapport with and inspiring young people to do the best they possibly can. Classroom teaching of a subject I love has always been my priority at work and is why I entered the teaching profession in the first place. There is no more rewarding job when only this part is considered and huge potential exists to make a positive contribution to the lives of young people. I care very much about the children in my care and my subject.

Q5 Do you consider that you will teach until you retire or do you consider leaving early or for alternative employment? (If you consider leaving, please specify why it relates to your enjoyment of your role)
Until my retirement age was increased to 69 then I would have said I would teach until I retired. Now I am worried that I will not be able to do my job until then and may look to leave around a far more reasonable 60. Plus I am not sure that young people would want an almost 70 year old in front of them as their teacher. This job is too pressured and stressful to work till 69 and the life expectancy figures of teachers after retirement at different ages back this up.
Q6 What would encourage you to seek promotion to senior management, including to headteacher level? What would discourage you from seeking promotion?

The increase in salary for promoted posts is nowhere near enough to compensate for all of the extra responsibilities and stresses that go with promotion. Anything that takes me out of the classroom would not be something that I would want to do.

Q7 What do you think are the main challenges, if any, in recruiting or retaining teachers (and other staff) at your school? (please feel free to provide details of practical experiences)

Teaching is not well paid. There has been no proper increase in pay for years and coupled with the changes to pensions (work longer, pay more, get less) and the massive increases to national insurance contributions we are worse off than we used to be. The massive issue of workload and unpaid overtime hours (both well documented already) which is getting only worse has had a huge impact on the morale of hard working teachers who are in the no win situation of not being able to do their job in the 35 hours per week they are paid for but not wanting to do less as the very people they care the most about – the pupils will suffer. Teachers are not appreciated by anyone and are treated as anything but professionals. We have to behave with the utmost professionalism at all times (we are not allowed to put where we work on facebook) but accept working conditions that doctors, dentists, bus conductors, shop staff etc would not.

Q8 Which particular subject specialisms/support roles face the greatest challenges with recruitment or retention?

All areas in my local authority

Q9 Do you have any suggestions for how challenges with recruitment and retention might be addressed?

Treating staff better and making them feel valued would help. In general teaching is not seen as an attractive option due to other jobs being better paid and having better conditions. Actually asking staff about morale may help instead of constantly expecting more and more from already exhausted staff.

Q10 Have any measures been put in place as a result of changes to staffing numbers in recent years at your school (examples include multi-school headship/leadership teams, composite classes, changes in the use/availability of support assistants)?

If so:

- What are these measures?
- How well are they working?
- Are these changes a permanent or a temporary measure (ie is it covering vacancies at present or is it to reflect the number of teacher/other posts has reduced?)

We ALWAYS do what is cheapest and NEVER what is best for the children. We have nat 4 and 5 together even though this is clearly not working as they
are different courses written to show progression. No one listens to our professional voice and even though it is flawed we continue to do the same as we can not afford to have separate classes. We have 116 hours per Nat 5 subject instead of 160 but again even though it does not work on we go with more of the same – the only skill you need here is to be able to count. Small classes of advanced higher are not allowed as we can not afford it. These are permanent measures adding to the frustration of staff and worsening of the classroom experience.

Q11 Are there any subject choices or other opportunities that are not available to pupils as a result of staff shortages that you consider would be valuable? (please specify)

We can not offer computing which I think is important. Any subject that can not be offered is far from ideal

Q12 How would you describe general morale among staff (very good / quite good / quite low / very low) and what are the key factors that influence it?

Terrible. We are working ourselves to death trying to constantly change things and complete ever more pointless tasks that if they did not exist would not have any impact. What matters is teaching and learning and we have totally lost sight of this. Inspections are focussed on things that are unachievable and unrealistic. Our unions are not worth the money we pay them as our conditions of service (pay, pensions, workload etc) have got much worse over the years and apart from talking about these issues a lot nothing has changed.

We are constantly battling to understand a badly designed CFE where the goalposts keep changing and the number of versions of documents/mistakes is unbelievable. We have gone from experiences and outcomes to SALS to benchmarks and I have no idea of the point.

The GTC has actually put that one of our requirements to keep our registration is that we are polite and respectful to them when the work they do is not felt to be of value by many and could be done by others. They imposed a large increase in fee recently and wondered why people were upset by this. The fact that this upset exists to such an extent tells me that many people are so hard up that they are struggling to pay this and I would question whether this should be so i.e a pay rise is needed.

Additional comments

If you have any other comments please include them below:

People seem determined to take the job that I love and ruin it for me by asking for ever more time consuming things that are absolutely pointless. We were far better off in the days before CFE and the children were better prepared for all kinds of things. The only reason that implementation was at all possible was due to the good will of teachers putting in countless hours of unpaid overtime. As a profession no one seems happy with the situation as it is. This session will see another round of changes and this will further pressure us. We have no time to review and evaluate as we are constantly updating. Many people are not even going to fill this in due to the
length of it, the fact that many of the concerns it will highlight have already been raised and the fact that we have no confidence that anything will change.

ANONYMOUS 79

Q1 What type of teaching role do you have

I was a fully qualified primary teacher from Aug 2006 - Aug 2015, having moved over to teaching after 15 years as a police officer. The recognition that early intervention was necessary to improve the lives/education of young people prompted this move. Latterly I taught within a nursery setting - I left teaching in August 2015 having become totally frustrated with the profession. I have maintained my registration with GTCS.

Q4 What are the positives that keep you in the teaching profession?

Already left, I enjoyed the interaction and learning with the young people, seeing them develop, building on their knowledge and sharing their success within and outwith the school setting, getting families involved with their child’s learning.

Q5 Do you consider that you will teach until you retire or do you consider leaving early or for alternative employment? (If you consider leaving, please specify why if it relates to your enjoyment of your role)

Already left - some reasons stated below:

Workload – excessive (in order to do what was “required” for my role I routinely worked twice the hours I was contracted for.) Spent more time on paperwork than actually teaching.

Lack of support, in general, and with regards to inclusion particularly behavioural issues which invariably impacted on all in the setting – other pupils, staff and the child themselves. (One of the authorities had only 20 places available within Primary School Support Services, having spoken to peripatetic staff from this service they estimated there was approximately 100 pupils who would have benefitted from this support – I appreciate this is hearsay). I have been assaulted twice and know of many staff who have also been assaulted. Police involvement is always frowned upon/discouraged – despite the police being a partner in GIRFEC. Inclusion should mean inclusion in the provision of support to meet the child’s needs and that does not necessarily mean in a main stream setting.

Too much internal auditing (local authority level) which created more work as opposed to improvement, basically not allowing teachers/staff professional judgement. I have many examples I can site – 1. On a new headteacher taking up post she conducted her own audit of the school and raised her findings with the centre as to what was required to make improvements - it took roughly six months for the centre to follow up on the findings in that they sent a QIO (Quality improvement officer) out to conduct their own inspection of the school, the QIO then shared their findings with the headteacher and was surprised to find out that everything they found had already been raised with the centre by the head teacher six months previously - a total waste of time and resources. 2. Staff were advised by a QIO that they display of the
nursery daffodil paintings was good but it would be better evidenced if rather than having the child’s name on the displayed painting that they were photographed doing the painting and this photograph was attached to the painting. (The inference being that perhaps these paintings were not in fact created by the named child or a child at all!).

I do understand the need for auditing.

Too many new ideas – and never enough time to allow any bedding in of changes before more changes were introduced. I’m all for improvement, however constant change is unnecessary, unsettling and stress inducing.

Curriculum overloaded with E’s & O’s (experiences and outcomes) – to the detriment of literacy and numeracy. This opinion is borne out by the evidence of secondary staff who report on the low attainment levels of literacy and numeracy of pupils arriving at high school. (I sit on the Parent Council of my son’s secondary school.)

Q6 What would encourage you to seek promotion to senior management, including to headteacher level? What would discourage you from seeking promotion?

Was never interested in promotion only ever wanted to be a good classroom practitioner. Far too much paperwork not enough time or support for any post never mind promoted posts.

Q7 What do you think are the main challenges, if any, in recruiting or retaining teachers (and other staff) at your school? (please feel free to provide details of practical experiences)

In general (since I am no longer teaching):

Workload – unrealistic expectations of what can be achieved in contracted hours.

Lack of support – insufficient resources/ staff numbers to meet the needs of the pupils.

Overloaded curriculum - as above Q.5

What can feel like constant scrutiny – observations, LA inspections – with unrealistic timescales and insufficient resources to make requested amendments.

Stress levels – because of above.

Q8 Which particular subject specialisms/support roles face the greatest challenges with recruitment or retention?

N/A in primary setting as trained to teach all areas of the curriculum, however the use of specialists in some subjects such as art, drama, music, p.e. definitely enhanced the teaching, as depending on one’s degree/interests - primary teachers have varying levels of competence/confidence with some areas of the curriculum.

Q9 Do you have any suggestions for how challenges with recruitment and retention might be addressed?
Investing more money in education or spend it differently – strip out layers of management to allow for more chalk-face (interactive white board!) practitioners and support staff. Allow headteachers to conduct audits of comparable schools – limits the need for the number of QIO’s – also good way to share/observe good practice.

Ensure inclusion practices benefit all. Sometimes main stream is not the correct environment to meet a child’s needs.

Thin out the curriculum (I am commenting with regards to Primary levels) – CfE was supposed to do this – it didn’t.

Have a transfer list type system where teachers are able to relocate to other schools within the local authority without having to go through a full blown interview process – this would help to enhance the experience of the teacher and exchange skills and experience across the authority. Perhaps rather than leaving the profession some teachers would move to a different environment/setting composite, single stream, dual stream etc. if it were an option.

**Q10** Have any measures been put in place as a result of changes to staffing numbers in recent years at your school (examples include multi-school headship/leadership teams, composite classes, changes in the use/availability of support assistants)?

If so:

- What are these measures?
- How well are they working?
- Are these changes a permanent or a temporary measure (ie is it covering vacancies at present or is it to reflect the number of teacher/other posts has reduced?)

Not really in a position to comment as no longer teaching – however every year was a fight for HT’s to justify the number of support hours they were entitled to based on ASN pupils needs within the school.

Only when a poor HMIE report was received did the centre then allocate support to schools, despite it having been asked for repeatedly by HT.

**Q12** How would you describe general morale among staff (very good / quite good / quite low / very low) and what are the key factors that influence it?

Quite low – when I resigned I was the envy of many staff including my HT.

**Additional comments**

If you have any other comments please include them below:

I fully appreciate the work that school staff/teachers do, I wished the system hadn’t frustrated me to the point of leaving.

HMIE inspections do not get a realistic picture of schools – I’ve experienced schools getting painted in the run up to HMIE coming in! I think they should arrive unannounced as the care inspectorate do for nursery to gain an accurate assessment of schools. Three weeks’ notice, with the arrival of the black box, results in an increase in some staff members stress levels. QIO’s arrive and offer their
advice on how to deal with an inspection and remind staff that an inspection is not an opportunity to air one's dirty laundry – either presuming or meaning they know there is dirty laundry to be aired!

Hope my comments assist and apologies for any comments that have gone off topic.

ANONYMOUS 80

Q1 What type of teaching role do you have

Full time permanent teaching post

Q4 What are the positives that keep you in the teaching profession?

The different we make every day to children's lives. I enjoy the challenge presented in Primary 1 finding the balance between teacher led activities, independent tasks and working in small groups. The staff team are very supportive and I work very closely with my stage partner building positive relationships with other members of staff.

I enjoy the challenge of continually developing the early level curriculum and researching new and exciting initiatives to implement. I find sharing practice a positive experience and enjoy engaging in research and training.

Q5 Do you consider that you will teach until you retire or do you consider leaving early or for alternative employment? (If you consider leaving, please specify why if it relates to your enjoyment of your role)

I will stay in teaching until I retire but intend to look for a promoted post when my children are older.

Q6 What would encourage you to seek promotion to senior management, including to headteacher level? What would discourage you from seeking promotion?

I plan on seeking promotion when my children are older and I can commit to returning to further education in order to gain additional qualifications for a promoted post. The workload and time commitment is discouraging me at this time.

Q7 What do you think are the main challenges, if any, in recruiting or retaining teachers (and other staff) at your school? (please feel free to provide details of practical experiences)

I feel workload and commitment to other school duties are the main challenges. The increase in children being violent against teaching and support staff is having an effect on staff wellbeing and retaining staff. An increasing amount of teaching staff are leaving the profession as a result of violence and challenging behaviour from children which is not handled or dealt with effectively from SLT and local authorities.

Q8 Which particular subject specialisms/support roles face the greatest challenges with recruitment or retention?

Support for learning teachers are often pulled to cover sickness, absence and teachers leaving which affects the children they are appointed to support. Contracts with pupil support assistants affects retention of very effective staff.
Q10 Have any measures been put in place as a result of changes to staffing numbers in recent years at your school (examples include multi-school headship/leadership teams, composite classes, changes in the use/availability of support assistants)?

If so:

• What are these measures?
• How well are they working?
• Are these changes a permanent or a temporary measure (ie is it covering vacancies at present or is it to reflect the number of teacher/other posts has reduced?)

In our school our staffing numbers has gradually decreased to an all time low even though we have a higher school roll of pupils. This has resulted in increased pressures and demands on all teaching and support staff. We have problems with staff retention and a high turnover of staff with staff moving to other schools or other authorities. Even with this the measures put into place has only added to teaching duties and demands. Pupil support staff are required to support children with severe behavioural needs instead of supporting learning in classrooms which is also having an impact on attainment and learning.

Q12 How would you describe general morale among staff (very good / quite good / quite low / very low) and what are the key factors that influence it?

Staff morale in school is quite low for the majority of staff due to demands, workload

ANONYMOUS 81

Q1 What type of teaching role do you have

I am a Support for Learning teacher in a mainstream secondary school.

Q4 What are the positives that keep you in the teaching profession?

I like supporting children, especially vulnerable children.

Q5 Do you consider that you will teach until you retire or do you consider leaving early or for alternative employment? (If you consider leaving, please specify why if it relates to your enjoyment of your role)

I hope to be teaching until I retire.

Q6 What would encourage you to seek promotion to senior management, including to headteacher level? What would discourage you from seeking promotion?

I followed the Chartered Teacher route, which allowed me to gain a Master's Degree (M.Ed.)

Q7 What do you think are the main challenges, if any, in recruiting or retaining teachers (and other staff) at your school? (Please feel free to provide details of practical experiences)
I think people leave the profession to further their prospects elsewhere for various reasons.

**Q8** Which particular subject specialisms/support roles face the greatest challenges with recruitment or retention?

Hard to say! I feel the five roles of Support for Learning have diminished in recent years.

**Q9** Do you have any suggestions for how challenges with recruitment and retention might be addressed?

There is a noticeable rise in pupil indiscipline. Some teachers may say they don’t always feel they are fully supported when they attempt to address it.

**Q10** Have any measures been put in place as a result of changes to staffing numbers in recent years at your school (examples include multi-school headship/leadership teams, composite classes, changes in the use/availability of support assistants)?

If so:
- What are these measures?
- How well are they working?
- Are these changes a permanent or a temporary measure (ie is it covering vacancies at present or is it to reflect the number of teacher/other posts has reduced?)

Support Assistants are being used to support vulnerable pupils in class more and more often. This is a good thing on one level, but surely that should be the role of a qualified teacher who has expertise in pedagogy. Of course, that would cost more MONEY.

**Q11** Are there any subject choices or other opportunities that are not available to pupils as a result of staff shortages that you consider would be valuable? (please specify)

Don’t know.

**Q12** How would you describe general morale among staff (very good / quite good / quite low / very low) and what are the key factors that influence it?

Quite good in the school that I work in.

**ANONYMOUS 82**

**Q1** What type of teaching role do you have

Secondary Science/Biology teacher

**Q4** What are the positives that keep you in the teaching profession?

Interactions with young people

**Q5** Do you consider that you will teach until you retire or do you consider leaving early or for alternative employment? (If you consider leaving, please specify why if it relates to your enjoyment of your role)
I would like to think that I will remain until I retire but I have considered leaving teaching several times due to constant changing in the curriculum and its associated workload and stress. Although I am part time I have worked from home almost full time in the past to help deliver a new curriculum so that our pupils have not been left with a half-baked course. This is very demoralising. Also in house politics and bullying that have led to unnecessary stress.

**Q6** What would encourage you to seek promotion to senior management, including to headteacher level? What would discourage you from seeking promotion?

More leadership CPD opportunities for part time staff (in house and out with school/Authority)

**Q7** What do you think are the main challenges, if any, in recruiting or retaining teachers (and other staff) at your school? (please feel free to provide details of practical experiences)

*Behaviour of pupils*

*Constant change to the curriculum*

*Lack of recognition of teacher led and produced curriculum/course development*

*Lack of respect for the job teaches do by the public*

*A feeling of constantly being told we are not succeeding raising attainment*

*Implementation of too many changes and not allowing time for the changes to become embedded before starting something new.*

*Lack of permanency to some posts (only offering temporary posts)*

*Bureaucracy*

*Lack of funding*

*Disparity between authorities for resources*

**Q8** Which particular subject specialisms/support roles face the greatest challenges with recruitment or retention?

*Sciences*

*ASN*

*Maths*

**Q9** Do you have any suggestions for how challenges with recruitment and retention might be addressed?

Trainee teachers should be given more support.

Financial support for trainee teachers.

Greater support for flexible working opportunities.

**Q10** Have any measures been put in place as a result of changes to staffing numbers in recent years at your school (examples include multi-school headship/leadership teams, composite classes, changes in the use/availability of support assistants)?
If so:

- What are these measures?
- How well are they working?
- Are these changes a permanent or a temporary measure (ie is it covering vacancies at present or is it to reflect the number of teacher/other posts has reduced?)

**Q11** Are there any subject choices or other opportunities that are not available to pupils as a result of staff shortages that you consider would be valuable? (please specify)

Limited opportunities for team teaching especially for poorer ability classes which would allow a more focused approach for improving attainment in subjects. Smaller class sizes in core subjects such as English and Maths and an emphasis on the importance or an additional language.

Opportunities for non ‘academic’ pupils to take part in more practical based skills attainment which would support them into the world of work.

**Q12** How would you describe general morale among staff (very good / quite good / quite low / very low) and what are the key factors that influence it?

Very low – constant change and poor behaviour

**ANONYMOUS 83**

**Q1** What type of teaching role do you have

Secondary FTE

**Q2** Whereabouts do you work?

*East Renfrewshire Council*

**Q4** What are the positives that keep you in the teaching profession?

Pension / The young people in front of you / money. It is a job.

**Q5** Do you consider that you will teach until you retire or do you consider leaving early or for alternative employment? (If you consider leaving, please specify why if it relates to your enjoyment of your role)

Retirement most probably.

**Q6** What would encourage you to seek promotion to senior management, including to headteacher level? What would discourage you from seeking promotion?

SLT jobs are too poorly paid for the amount of work required. Salaries are taxed at 40% and NI contributions are much higher. Promotion often brings a very poor financial gain.

**Q7** What do you think are the main challenges, if any, in recruiting or retaining teachers (and other staff) at your school? (please feel free to provide details of practical experiences)

Poor salary / lack of jobs in some subjects / expectation of long unpaid hours above the 35 hour working week.
Q8 Which particular subject specialisms/support roles face the greatest challenges with recruitment or retention?

STEM subjects. Industry pays more.

Q9 Do you have any suggestions for how challenges with recruitment and retention might be addressed?

Increase salaries at entry levels. Enforce the 35 hour working week. Remove unnecessary paperwork / government interference in teaching. Stop every pressure group saying that their issue can be addressed by adding it to the curriculum. Eventually there will be no time left to teach!

Q12 How would you describe general morale among staff (very good / quite good / quite low / very low) and what are the key factors that influence it?

Very low. Lack of support from SLT / rights of staff being eroded in favour of the rights of pupils / poor support from central government for teaching NOT LEARNING / new SQA courses not of an acceptable standard / changes made to SQA courses have no benefit to teachers but will certainly penalise candidates.

Additional comments

If you have any other comments please include them below:

The removal of Curriculum for Excellence is imperative if the Scottish education system is to flourish. CfE is deskillng pupils in literacy and numeracy leading to poorer end results from the secondary sector. The BGE is unsustainable and is dumbing down the high flying students. It is irrelevant to most pupils to know what level they are studying before entry to the National Qualifications. Too much reliance is made of ‘educationalists’ who have little or no teaching experience when central government is making policies. It would be better to talk to teachers who teach. The SQA is no longer f

ANONYMOUS 84

Q1 What type of teaching role do you have

Secondary FTE

Q4 What are the positives that keep you in the teaching profession?

Pension / The young people in front of you / money. It is a job.

Q5 Do you consider that you will teach until you retire or do you consider leaving early or for alternative employment? (If you consider leaving, please specify why if it relates to your enjoyment of your role)

Retirement most probably.

Q6 What would encourage you to seek promotion to senior management, including to headteacher level? What would discourage you from seeking promotion?

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Additional comments
If you have any other comments please include them below:
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ANONYMOUS 85
Q1 What type of teaching role do you have
Teacher of Mathematics

Q4 What are the positives that keep you in the teaching profession?
Love teaching young people and seeing them develop their potential.

Q5 Do you consider that you will teach until you retire or do you consider leaving early or for alternative employment? (If you consider leaving, please specify why if it relates to your enjoyment of your role)
I will teach until I retire
Q6 What would encourage you to seek promotion to senior management, including to headteacher level? What would discourage you from seeking promotion?

The financial reward does not equate to level of responsibility and the extra hours that promoted staff are required to work. The work-life balance of promoted staff is very poor.

Q7 What do you think are the main challenges, if any, in recruiting or retaining teachers (and other staff) at your school? (please feel free to provide details of practical experiences)

I have applied for numerous posts as an extremely, experienced Teacher of Mathematics, only to find out that Probationers “performed better in interview” (i.e. answered 4 questions. The current interview process is NOT based on merit - it is a financial decision as Probationers are less expensive to employ. This is not just my experience but it is the same story over and over again. This is against the current initiative regarding raising the Attainment of pupils, as more experienced teachers with years of life experience are being rejected in favour of Probationer teachers with a few months teaching experience (not even on a full timetable)

Q8 Which particular subject specialisms/support roles face the greatest challenges with recruitment or retention?

Home Economics

Q9 Do you have any suggestions for how challenges with recruitment and retention might be addressed?

Cross- train other teachers of other subjects. I for example, hold a Professional Cookery Qualification and could probably teach HE, but my ‘academic qualifications are deemed ‘good’ enough. I also have an MBA and could teach business studies and I have over 10 year experience in the IT industry (programming, systems design & analysis and project management) but my Maths qualification doesn’t have enough ‘computing’ therefore I was unable to train as a Computer Studies teacher despite have done this for a living for 10yrs (its wasn’t just an academic exercise, as so many teachers have never worked outside education and any experiences outside education are not valued as most people in education have never had these experiences themselves)

Q10 Have any measures been put in place as a result of changes to staffing numbers in recent years at your school (examples include multi-school headship/leadership teams, composite classes, changes in the use/availability of support assistants)?

If so:

• What are these measures?
• How well are they working?
• Are these changes a permanent or a temporary measure (ie is it covering vacancies at present or is it to reflect the number of teacher/other posts has reduced?)
For HE, each cover teacher had to provide adequate support to these classes as they were not been given ‘quiet work’. The cover work provided was very poor quality and I felt the pupils were being done a dis-service, for example, watching ‘Bake-off videos’ – cop-out by Department PT.

Q11 Are there any subject choices or other opportunities that are not available to pupils as a result of staff shortages that you consider would be valuable? (please specify)
Yes, DoE is not offered as staff are expect to do these activities in their own time

Q12 How would you describe general morale among staff (very good / quite good / quite low / very low) and what are the key factors that influence it?
Quite low because

- Increase in workload from SQA removing Intermediate 1 as a examinable qualification – more work for classroom teachers without any consultation
- I have an S1 class of 22 pupils, 20 of which have additional support needs, such as Dyslexia, Autism etc but only 1 classroom assistant 3 out of the 4 periods per week. I did query this as the needs of the pupils were so great, but was just told to get on with it.
- Teachers are still trying to get familiar with new courses and get appropriate resources for these new qualification, which are still changing, for example marking thresholds have all now changed.
- The amount of admin associated with activities outside the classroom, for examples, letters home to parents regarding outcomes of assessments, parental reporting, additional evening sessions to help parents understand the teaching in the classroom
- Very little support from SMT as they are no longer in the classroom and do not fully understand the implications of implementing new initiatives – STEM, IDL, Numeracy, Health and Well-being etc. For example, we have 10 mins registration every morning which we have numerous activities, such as Poem of the week, pupils have to read books as well as trying to conduct the usual admin activities associated with registration.

ANONYMOUS 86

Q1 What type of teaching role do you have
Secondary classroom teacher Computing Science

Q4 What are the positives that keep you in the teaching profession?
I enjoy teaching. The pupils in my school are very friendly and seem to enjoy school and want to learn. I get a lot of satisfaction from teaching such pleasant people. I need the money.

Q5 Do you consider that you will teach until you retire or do you consider leaving early or for alternative employment? (If you consider leaving, please specify why if it relates to your enjoyment of your role)
I will most likely teach until I retire, although I would like to leave earlier. Due to financial commitments I cannot retire yet and the possibility of getting a job that has the same salary might be difficult in D&G.

The reason I want to leave early is due to the stress of teaching. When I first qualified in 2000 I was aware that it would take 3 to 4 years to get to grips with the courses. However, when Curriculum for Excellence came about I felt that I was worse than back to square 1. The method of the roll out, starting in first year and working up to Advanced Higher was extremely stressful because not only were new teaching materials required each year but every teacher seems to have to make their own up. There was not central resource even a basic set of resources to work from. In teaching work is adapted each year and improved. I would say that only now I have a decent course for the S1/S2 classes and am still improving S3 and certificate courses. This has been a massive undertaking causing a lot of stress and extra work.

On top of this there are still ongoing changes with the courses. In fact for the first couple of years in the certificate courses the learning intentions were not clear and Computing Teachers had to actually fight SQA to ask for clarification. When SQA eventually gave clearer explanations it turned out we were not teaching what they expected us to do in some areas. SQA suggested that we were being unreasonable but Heriot Watt (Scholar) thought it had changed enough for them to rewrite some of their on line Scholar notes. Bright Red Study Guide also brought out a new Enhanced Edition.

There have also been multiple errors in the course works and in the 2016 exam paper.

So all in all it seems that the whole thing had not been thought though carefully enough, far too many changes in too short a period of time and amazingly, no pilot schemes.

So, in summary I have had enough stress, I think it has affected by family life and health, I feel I have given more than enough to this profession and no longer feel motivated. Not to mention the drop in real terms in my salary.

Q6 What would encourage you to seek promotion to senior management, including to headteacher level? What would discourage you from seeking promotion?

Absolutely not, the paperwork and jumping through hoops is far too much. I don’t see the value to teaching in the classroom from the amount of paperwork that goes with the job.

Also there aren’t enough opportunities for staff to ‘learn the trade’ because there are fewer principal teachers, leading to a smaller pool of people. It is too much of a leap. It also means the head teacher has less promoted staff to call on. Work load is far too big.

Q7 What do you think are the main challenges, if any, in recruiting or retaining teachers (and other staff) at your school? (please feel free to provide details of practical experiences)
My school is out in the sticks, so supply staff won’t travel for the amount of money that is on offer unless it is a longer contract. My school does have pleasant pupils, as I have said, but if it wasn’t for that then lack of discipline would definitely have more of a detrimental effect.

There are not enough Home Economics teachers in the region and classes have had to be cut in that department this year.

Computing Science teachers are like ‘hen’s teeth’ here too. People can earn more money in industry. It is looked upon as a 2nd class subject, universities don’t rate it, and even if a pupil wants to go on and study Computing Science as a subject they do not need to have a Higher in it. Lots of schools in Dumfries & Galloway have no computing teachers. This is demotivating in itself.

Q8 Which particular subject specialisms/support roles face the greatest challenges with recruitment or retention?
In D&G: Maths, Home Economics, Computing Science

Q9 Do you have any suggestions for how challenges with recruitment and retention might be addressed?
More money
Better and fairer promotion prospects
Bring back curriculum specialist principal teachers
Chartered teacher
Better discipline in schools – give head teachers more authority and staff to deal with disruptive pupils.

Q10 Have any measures been put in place as a result of changes to staffing numbers in recent years at your school (examples include multi-school headship/leadership teams, composite classes, changes in the use/availability of support assistants)?
If so:
• What are these measures?
• How well are they working?
• Are these changes a permanent or a temporary measure (ie is it covering vacancies at present or is it to reflect the number of teacher/other posts has reduced?)

Support assistants have been reduced.

We have to lose 4.2 teachers next year. The knock on effects will be more classes for less teachers and therefore less time for preparing and marking. It is also tiring taking other teachers’ classes so this will also have a knock on effect.
Q11 Are there any subject choices or other opportunities that are not available to pupils as a result of staff shortages that you consider would be valuable? (please specify)

Our school does try hard to ensure pupils have a good experience in and after school. But this is mostly taken on by the younger staff, who definitely have more energy. This would have been rewarded in the past by the prospect of promotion.

Q12 How would you describe general morale among staff (very good / quite good / quite low / very low) and what are the key factors that influence it?

Quite low actually, people just get on with it, but a lot talk about when they can retire. People really seem shocked at the prospect of having to work until they are in their mid-60s. This is not a job for older people.

The prospect of more curriculum change is a big factor. People outside teaching don’t realise how much effort has to go into a lesson. A lesson that lasts an hour might take 2/3 hours or more to prepare.

ANONYMOUS 87

Q1 What type of teaching role do you have

Secondary school mathematics teacher.

Q4 What are the positives that keep you in the teaching profession?

A sense that I am making a difference to individual young people and a career that fits in with family life and caring responsibilities.

Q5 Do you consider that you will teach until you retire or do you consider leaving early or for alternative employment? (If you consider leaving, please specify why if it relates to your enjoyment of your role)

I intend to teach until (early) retirement but I may then be looking for other work until taking up my pension.

Q6 What would encourage you to seek promotion to senior management, including to headteacher level? What would discourage you from seeking promotion?

More flexibility in middle management roles, including the genuine opportunity to job-share.

Q7 What do you think are the main challenges, if any, in recruiting or retaining teachers (and other staff) at your school? (please feel free to provide details of practical experiences)

In years of plenty, when there are more teachers qualifying than there are permanent jobs, young teachers have a very poor experience so that when there are times with more vacancies many of them have left teaching. The teacher induction scheme is also too inflexible with too little account taken of where an NQT stays in allocating school. This puts off mature NQTs particularly. There is also no opportunity to specify interest in the denominational sector which making recruiting to it especially difficult.
Q9  Do you have any suggestions for how challenges with recruitment and retention might be addressed?

See answers to Q6 and Q7

Additionally, re-introduce full pay for supply staff.

Q10  Have any measures been put in place as a result of changes to staffing numbers in recent years at your school (examples include multi-school headship/leadership teams, composite classes, changes in the use/availability of support assistants)?

If so:

- What are these measures?
- How well are they working?
- Are these changes a permanent or a temporary measure (i.e. is it covering vacancies at present or is it to reflect the number of teacher/other posts has reduced?)

A big reduction in the level of in-class support in the last 10 years.

This has a negative impact on the educational experience of all children, those requiring individual support and those (everyone else) who are their classmates.

Q11  Are there any subject choices or other opportunities that are not available to pupils as a result of staff shortages that you consider would be valuable? (please specify)

Numbers in senior classes are capped so that not all choices are available to everyone. For example, we have had 35 pupils express an interest in advanced higher maths but had to choose a maximum of 30 to start the course.

Q12  How would you describe general morale among staff (very good / quite good / quite low / very low) and what are the key factors that influence it?

Quite low.

Very high workload related to SQA assessment, reporting, monitoring and tracking. In sufficient time for these tasks is allocated within the working week and there is an expectation that the tasks will be completed during weekends and holidays.

Lack of resources. No budget for photocopying essential resources and for purchasing essential equipment. This has a negative impact of pupils’ experience.

ANONYMOUS 88

Q1  What type of teaching role do you have

I am a Teacher of Physical Education

Q4  What are the positives that keep you in the teaching profession?
Job Security.

I left the profession in 2013 to pursue a new career. This was due to me being disillusioned by the profession of teaching. The introduction of Faculty heads are a cost cutting exercise and not educationally beneficial at all. They also limit the chance of promotion leaving very experienced, knowledgeable and capable teachers without a career path making them demotivated.

The new qualifications (Nationals) have been an absolute disaster, only 2/3 years after introduction, they are getting changed. Way too paper heavy, in my higher class of 25 I had over 3000 assessable elements to mark and verify. The SQA have made changing to these courses without really listening to the work force as they are not really any better than the previous version.

The only reason I am back in teaching is because of the Oil crash in 2014/15.

Q5 Do you consider that you will teach until you retire or do you consider leaving early or for alternative employment? (If you consider leaving, please specify why if it relates to your enjoyment of your role)

I am already looking at alternative employment, due to poor pay, poor senior courses written by the SQA, lack of funding to introduce new activities / courses, lack of funding for staff training (I have been refused to go on CPD courses due to lack of money) and decreased chances of promotion due to poor Management structure.

Q6 What would encourage you to seek promotion to senior management, including to headteacher level? What would discourage you from seeking promotion?

I have tried, but experience, ability and knowledge of the job seem to matter very little if you are up against another teacher who is very good at interviews, and can “talk a good game”.

Q7 What do you think are the main challenges, if any, in recruiting or retaining teachers (and other staff) at your school? (please feel free to provide details of practical experiences)

Pay is poor, no real increase in pay since 2010.

Work load issues (3000 assessable elements in a mid size higher class).

Career path limited due to Faculties instead of Departments.

Q9 Do you have any suggestions for how challenges with recruitment and retention might be addressed?

Increase pay, award teachers for undertaking extra work, bring back APT (assistant principal teachers, and Principal teachers phase out Faculty heads)

make Qualifications much more user friendly (less assessment)

Q11 Are there any subject choices or other opportunities that are not available to pupils as a result of staff shortages that you consider would be valuable? (please specify)
Yes. Across the authority many Highers / Advanced highers are not running due to lack of teachers and teacher expertise.

Many pupils are limited in choice and availability of qualifications.

Q12 How would you describe general morale among staff (very good / quite good / quite low / very low) and what are the key factors that influence it?
- Quite low.
- Almost all feel overworked with needless assessment.
- All feel underpaid compared to other professionals.
- Most feel hands are tied with no / little funding to improve enhance courses
- Limited chances for promotion / career path.

Additional comments
If you have any other comments please include them below:
- SQA should listen to practicing teachers needs. Not ones who have been sitting in an office for several years.
- Pay MUST be attractive to attract and keep teachers in profession
- recognise extra work done with financial awards

ANONYMOUS 89
Q1 What type of teaching role do you have
   Teacher of Physical Education, secondary school.

Q4 What are the positives that keep you in the teaching profession?
   - Opportunities to make a positive impact on young learners
   - Opportunities to further my career
   - Job security
   - Opportunity to work with other professionals

Q5 Do you consider that you will teach until you retire or do you consider leaving early or for alternative employment?
   Undecided. If I was offered another opportunity in a different profession that gave me the same benefits as teaching, then I would seriously consider this.

Q6 What would encourage you to seek promotion to senior management, including to headteacher level? What would discourage you from seeking promotion?
   I am not interested in seeking promotion to senior management. I am discouraged because the excessive workload and stress. Currently, I value my family life and other hobbies and interests more than seeking promotion to this level.

Q7 What do you think are the main challenges, if any, in recruiting or retaining teachers (and other staff) at your school?
   Poor school ethos as a result of some weak, unsupportive and unpopular Senior Management Team. Excessive workload with new SQA courses.
Q8 Which particular subject specialisms/support roles face the greatest challenges with recruitment or retention?

Home economics, as far as I’m aware.

Q9 Do you have any suggestions for how challenges with recruitment and retention might be addressed?

Better training provided to SMT in order to more effectively manage staff and deal with growing pupil discipline issues. Properly redress excessive workload issues through consultation with a greater number of class teachers.

Q10 Have any measures been put in place as a result of changes to staffing numbers in recent years at your school (examples include multi-school headship/leadership teams, composite classes, changes in the use/availability of support assistants)? Yes

If so:

- What are these measures? Subjects merging into faculties rather than standalone subjects
- How well are they working? Not as effectively. Eg, A non-subject specific HoF does not usually perform the role of managing another subject/staff/pupils than a subject specific leader. For instance, a head of Health and Wellbeing teacher may often struggle to cope with the demands of running a PE department when the specialist area is Home Economics and vice versa.
- Are these changes a permanent or a temporary measure (ie is it covering vacancies at present or is it to reflect the number of teacher/other posts has reduced?) Permanent

Q11 Are there any subject choices or other opportunities that are not available to pupils as a result of staff shortages that you consider would be valuable? Yes, some areas of Home Economics

Q12 How would you describe general morale among staff (very good / quite good / quite low / very low) and what are the key factors that influence it? Quite low as a result of ineffective senior management in particular areas and excessive workloads

ANONYMOUS 90

Q1 What type of teaching role do you have

Teacher of Mathematics Secondary Education

Q2 Whereabouts do you work?

Glasgow City council

Q4 What are the positives that keep you in the teaching profession?

Daily interaction with children at various level of ability and mind sets. The ability to prepare and help children’s prospects of life, academically as well as emotionally
Q5  Do you consider that you will teach until you retire or do you consider leaving early or for alternative employment? (If you consider leaving, please specify why if it relates to your enjoyment of your role)
I would retire early if financially possible due to stress, work load, lack of support and pressure from management

Q6  What would encourage you to seek promotion to senior management, including to headteacher level? What would discourage you from seeking promotion?
I never considered promotion as this would have taken me away from the classroom

ANONYMOUS 91
Q1  What type of teaching role do you have
Permanent Primary teacher

Q4  What are the positives that keep you in the teaching profession?
The children  Giving children opportunities to achieve to success, to progress and to find purpose and positive destinations.
The staff  Working with a variety of characters who provide a nurturing environment and strive to do the best for children.

Q5  Do you consider that you will teach until you retire or do you consider leaving early or for alternative employment? (If you consider leaving, please specify why if it relates to your enjoyment of your role)
Yes I expect that I would not be able to teach for my full working life. The current workload for teachers is not possible to maintain for a long period of time particularly if you have children, most teachers heavily depend on their families for support with child care.

Also there is a clear attempt by Scottish Government, Education Scotland and GTCS to encourage every teacher to pursue a master’s level education. As time goes on, this encouragement will turn into an expectation of every teacher. Glasgow University are already doing 5 year master course instead of the BEd. Yet while this up skilling of a workforce is quietly pushed as ‘voluntary’ there is no financial incentive. This is likely because within the next 5 years the young workforce will have a masters degree and be on starting salary and the experienced teachers with BEd will be at the top of the salary scale. There will be no way to balance this fairly, as experience should not supersede degree level.

Q6  What would encourage you to seek promotion to senior management, including to headteacher level? What would discourage you from seeking promotion?
I am currently a class teacher, to move to a principal teacher position I would be taking on additional work, on top of an already demanding job and the wage isn’t particularly higher.
Also HT and dht do not have the roles they previously have.
They never get to spend time with children or make real changes to improve school life.

Q7 What do you think are the main challenges, if any, in recruiting or retaining teachers (and other staff) at your school? (please feel free to provide details of practical experiences)
The main challenges are

- Workload is not realistic for working parents
- Authorities do want they want to achieve the numbers for the census. When working in another authority as supply, I was contracted from August until after the census. My supply contract was then reduced from 0.8 to 0.4.

Schools also recruit retired teachers for during the census to avoid the fines.

- There is no supply because they are messed about. They work and do everything they can and then, often jumping through hoops to try and get a job then after 1 year and 9 months they get no work because the authority won't give them a permanent contract. This is happening all over the country. These are real people who have children, financial commitments and lives to plan and they can't because they know that supply contracts will be cut so they don't get two years service.

The government should look at how supply staff are used. If supply staff are in class and not covering maternity or illness, questions need to be asked about why there is not a permanent position in the school. I'm confident statistics would show a teacher shortage.

- Teachers don't feel respected
  Despite being named a profession, many parents have little respect for teacher. Teachers do not get the support from parents that they should.

The media doesn't help with this.

- Overcrowded and underfunded curriculum
  In 2005, seed found 5-14 to be a rigid and overcrowded curriculum. However since Education Scotland published Cfe they have introduced additional initiatives, policy and guidance every year. Initiatives like 2+1, rights respecting school, scots language, digital literacy, sustainability are all introduced with no structure, no resources, inadequate training and unrealistic timescales.

As each of these is introduced, other curriculum areas are watering down as the depth isn’t possible to attain, also these initiatives are being passed on to the class teachers without thought of how to implement it, therefore adding to a yearly increase in workload. Also very few schools keep teachers at the same level each year which means that while teachers are
developing curricular knowledge and expectations, getting to know their pupils and providing for individual needs. They also have years of add ons to develop again.

Q8 Which particular subject specialisms/support roles face the greatest challenges with recruitment or retention?

See above comment regarding initiatives.

The lack of staff means no support for learning.

Q9 Do you have any suggestions for how challenges with recruitment and retention might be addressed?

Give supply teachers permanent contracts. Make it mandatory for authorities to have at least 50% of their supply teacher on permanent contracts.

Have the GTCS monitor supply staff contracts and roles also watch for service cutting behavior from authorities.

Q10 Have any measures been put in place as a result of changes to staffing numbers in recent years at your school (examples include multi-school headship/leadership teams, composite classes, changes in the use/availability of support assistants)?

If so:

- What are these measures?

Due to lack of teachers we have had no pupil support for 2 years and our lowest 20% teacher had to go into a class on a full time basis.

- How well are they working?

That depends on what you would determine as success. Our lowest 20% have not received any targeted support, but a class had the same teacher from sept- April so they had consistency. The teacher's contract finished in April and she's not been able to find work in erc since as there's no supply work available according to council, this is a usual response at the start of the new financial year.

- Are these changes a permanent or a temporary measure (ie is it covering vacancies at present or is it to reflect the number of teacher/other posts has reduced?)

These are currently a temporary measure. It would not be beneficial to continue this way.

Q11 Are there any subject choices or other opportunities that are not available to pupils as a result of staff shortages that you consider would be valuable? (please specify)

Within many schools, clubs are led by teachers, often as an additional role which is not included within their working time agreement. As teachers grow unsatisfied with staff shortages, clubs like this don't happen as teachers are under too much pressure.
Q12 How would you describe general morale among staff (very good / quite good / quite low / very low) and what are the key factors that influence it?
Very Low. Unfortunately teachers are unable happy with their treatment.
Workload expectations are unobtainable.
Government and GTCS and Education Scotland send out different messages of expectations.
Watching colleagues leave because they are working 60+ hours a week and can’t maintain this.

Additional comments
If you want to sort out workload, look at the additional initiatives and resource them.

ANONYMOUS 92
Q1 What type of teaching role do you have
Secondary
Q4 What are the positives that keep you in the teaching profession?
Working with the pupils, the holidays.
Q5 Do you consider that you will teach until you retire or do you consider leaving early or for alternative employment? (If you consider leaving, please specify why if it relates to your enjoyment of your role)
No, I plan to go part time next year. The workload is unmanageable. The administration that is expected of the new CfE and Nationals is ridiculous. Many of our systems are outdated, e.g no centralised Excel for unit passes, this results in us having to complete unit passes on paperwork, repeatedly where in other work places this would be centralised. Our referral system is all paperwork (discipline, homework etc) and takes an age for returns therefore the impact is minimal. We are not allowed to print as we have a no budget. A lightbulb was not replaced in a Smartboard as we have no budget.

Q6 What would encourage you to seek promotion to senior management, including to headteacher level? What would discourage you from seeking promotion?
I would not seek promotion, the best part of the job is working with the pupils and supporting them through the courses. Promotion would limit this part of the job.

Q9 Do you have any suggestions for how challenges with recruitment and retention might be addressed?
Reduce class sizes and administrative workload.
Q1 What type of teaching role do you have

Secondary Maths teacher – full time

Q4 What are the positives that keep you in the teaching profession?

I have an incredible department. We get along and talk about work and outside of work. We are able to laugh. We share ideas/resources.

Working with the children

Q5 Do you consider that you will teach until you retire or do you consider leaving early or for alternative employment? (If you consider leaving, please specify why if it relates to your enjoyment of your role)

I would like to think that I will still be in teaching until I retire but as it is already difficult to manage the workload and marking I wonder if this keeps increasing as my age increases how I will cope.

Also with increasing retirement age I wonder whether a 70 year old teacher will be? Or older.

Q6 What would encourage you to seek promotion to senior management, including to headteacher level? What would discourage you from seeking promotion?

Definitely do not want to be a headteacher. Or higher. I see it as business management- budgets people and you lose touch with the pupils and what actually happens in the classroom. All about cutting budgets and expecting people to do more for less.

Teachers are huge victims of emotional blackmail as we came into the profession to help young people succeed. It takes a hard person to stick to their guns and say enough when they’ve done their time.

The government keep increasing minimum wage/living wage but teachers aren’t getting anymore (neither are other sectors) but this is discriminating us again- our expenses go up but we’re expected to deal with and in-fact increases our workload

Q7 What do you think are the main challenges, if any, in recruiting or retaining teachers (and other staff) at your school? (please feel free to provide details of practical experiences)

Workload and behaviour issues. Lack of support in places. Lack of permanent contracts
Q10 Have any measures been put in place as a result of changes to staffing numbers in recent years at your school (examples include multi-school headship/leadership teams, composite classes, changes in the use/availability of support assistants)?

If so:

What are these measures?

- How well are they working?
- Are these changes a permanent or a temporary measure (ie is it covering vacancies at present or is it to reflect the number of teacher/other posts has reduced?)

Classes are now crammed full to maximum. Where we would usually be able to have smaller classes for pupils who struggle now they are also in bigger classes with more competition to be heard so behaviour escalates.

Head of faculties are being asked to do more and more of a pastoral role when I think additional guidance teachers would be beneficial and to even have social workers, councillors and psychologists permanently based in our school.

Q11 Are there any subject choices or other opportunities that are not available to pupils as a result of staff shortages that you consider would be valuable? (please specify)

Can vary from year to year depending on pupil numbers that pick a subject in senior years.

Q12 How would you describe general morale among staff (very good / quite good / quite low / very low) and what are the key factors that influence it?

Probably more quite low as staff feel undervalued and taken for granted. When pupil issues arise sometimes things happen without teachers being informed. Lack of communication at times.

ANONYMOUS 94

Q1 What type of teaching role do you have

Secondary

Q4 What are the positives that keep you in the teaching profession?

I enjoy working with young people and helping them progress in their learning. Teaching can be very rewarding and it’s great to see a positive impact in the lives of young people.

Q5 Do you consider that you will teach until you retire or do you consider leaving early or for alternative employment? (If you consider leaving, please specify why if it relates to your enjoyment of your role)
I would consider another role, depending on my family situation. I love the experience of teaching and planning but sometimes marking and administration becomes very onerous in spare time i.e. when I was working full time and contracted to 35 hours a week, I consistently worked for 55 hours or more. This increased to around 70 hours at high pressure times i.e. exam times.

Q6 What would encourage you to seek promotion to senior management, including to headteacher level? What would discourage you from seeking promotion?

The amount of paperwork required and the time that this would require. I feel that it is highly reasonable to do many additional hours (especially at a promoted level) but sometimes I feel that the demands of completing profiling, tracking and paperwork would encroach heavily on family life.

Q7 What do you think are the main challenges, if any, in recruiting or retaining teachers (and other staff) at your school? (please feel free to provide details of practical experiences)

I work in a school which has a strong ethos of respect and pupils and teachers work well together. It is a good environment in which to teach. I feel that new recruits may be put off by the high expectations in terms of attainment.

Q9 Do you have any suggestions for how challenges with recruitment and retention might be addressed?

I thought that the Chartered Teacher Scheme gave unpromoted staff a way to move forward in their career and to improve their teaching expertise. It allowed such skills to be of use to the school and it helped unpromoted staff to move forward in their careers. Something like this would act as an incentive for unpromoted staff to continue in their current career and to continually improve their knowledge and skills.

Q10 Have any measures been put in place as a result of changes to staffing numbers in recent years at your school (examples include multi-school headship/leadership teams, composite classes, changes in the use/availability of support assistants)?

If so:

- What are these measures?
- How well are they working?
- Are these changes a permanent or a temporary measure (ie is it covering vacancies at present or is it to reflect the number of teacher/other posts has reduced?)

Teachers are often asked to cover fellow teachers' classes medium term if there is an absence or part of a maternity leave, etc. This would not be in excess of their maximum commitment time but would be in addition to their own timetable.

Q12 How would you describe general morale among staff (very good / quite good / quite low / very low) and what are the key factors that influence it?
Quite good - but morale slips at times of high pressure such as assessment deadlines for SQA Internal assessments. The amount of tracking of attainment and paperwork has a significant effect of staff morale and impacts on time for planning classes.

ANONYMOUS 95

I am writing in response to the Education Committee’s request for thoughts on teacher recruitment and retention. I would like to make the following points.

I am a Classics teacher. The main challenge to recruitment for me is the fact that there is currently no recruitment of Classics teachers in Scotland. I feel very strongly that this is a terrible indictment on Scottish education. I have been teaching Classics in a state school for 38 years and have a very healthy uptake amongst students. I am currently presenting 15 pupils for H Latin and 62 pupils for H Classical Studies. I am the only Classics teacher in the school. Realising that I was nearer the end of my teaching career than the beginning, two years ago my HT asked my age and on this basis decided to remove Latin / Classics from the lower and middle school curriculum. Why did he do this to a thriving and successful subject? The answer - he will not be able to find a replacement teacher when I leave. I now find myself in the insidious position of having to consider retiring because my subject is now only offered in the upper school as it is being phased out. This is a direct result of the refusal of the Scottish government to recognise and support the long tradition and validity of Classics teaching in Scotland, particularly short sighted at a time when Classics is thriving in England and Europe.

New recruits into the profession require careful supervision and support. This is not always offered to probationer teachers who are on occasion placed under the supervision of inexperienced teachers or indeed supply staff who are clearly not in the best position to guide probationers through the initial stages of their career. Probationers now may find themselves in a faculty where the faculty head knows nothing of their particular specialism and is therefore not in a position to guide them or anybody else of a different specialism within the faculty. Probationers need guidance. The faculty system works against quality supervision of probationers. It also works against promotion prospects for all teachers.

Currently staff absences are covered by existing staff. This impacts on teachers’ ability to plan, assess, prepare; not the most effective system!

I feel the greatest single factor affecting recruitment and retention is ethos. People must be nurtured and feel valued. This is not happening for many teachers again due to the creation of faculties where people (faculty heads), who are supposed to be directing the curriculum, do not have the necessary knowledge to do this effectively in subjects which they have no qualification in but for which they have been made responsible. Many subject specialists have been robbed of ownership over their subject as this has been transferred to a specialist from another curricular area who is not equipped to meet the demands of all the subjects they are supposed to look after. The impact of this on the staff of some subject areas has been wholly detrimental and extremely disillusioning as they are expected to manage their own subjects but are given no share of any management time and yet still have to meet all the demands of a full teaching commitment.
I am sure that some people are motivated by the increased salary and status which promotion may bring them but this is not what motivates a classroom teacher. The rewards for staying dedicated to your subject and pupils are non-existent. Again, the creation of faculties has ensured a reduction in promotion opportunities and some subjects are clearly valued more than others which impacts on teachers' morale. The structures within the teaching profession require change if Scotland wants to maintain the broad and balanced education it has previously provided.

**ANONYMOUS 96**

Teacher recruitment and retention:-

Workload is a significant issue for current teachers. Changes keep being made to the way they are expected to work in every area – curriculum content keep growing, instruments of assessment keep changing, class sizes keep growing, while at the same time additional support staff numbers have declined.

I ran a Pupil Support department in a large secondary school. There were several fully qualified Learning Support teachers, two Behaviour Support teachers and ten pupil Support Assistants. After I retired, the number of Learning Support Teachers dropped, and is now nil. The number of Pupil Support Assistants has also shrunk. All this has taken place in a school which has seen an increase in the number of pupils with additional support needs. As a result, classroom management for ordinary teachers, including those with little experience, has become an increasingly difficult job.

The reduction in numbers of subject specific principal teachers has added to the confusion and exasperation of young teachers who need the support and guidance of subject specific staff with experience in both curricular matters and classroom management.

Recruitment:-

Teaching can be a rewarding career but anyone interested need to know what kind of training will be involved. Current Teacher Training courses keep being re-organised, so recruitment remains problematic. Pay scales and promotion prospects are vital for young recruits. Training in schools must be well supported by experienced staff with time to assist and mentor the trainees. There is meant to be such practice in place, but teacher shortages make trainee mentoring a lower priority. Pupils in classrooms need teachers in front of them!

Attracting trainee teachers:-

Much of what has been written above applies here also. Moreover, schools must be seen as attractive places to work. They are often dingy dark places in need of repair and maintenance. Janitorial staff numbers have decreased and teachers often have to resort to "make-do-and-mend" which is a very off-putting scenario for anyone hoping to become a teacher.

Trainees leaving before completing training:-
Some of what has been written above applies here too. Furthermore, for those young people in training, it is vital that they are assessed early in terms of suitability, by staff who recognise the attributes required to be an effective teacher. Interviews are one thing, but seeing a person’s interactions with young pupils is much more important. Too many trainees are allowed to go on with their training even when it is clear they are unsuited to the job.

Teacher shortages:

These create frustration and exhaustion in schools. Take for example a primary school which has 3 members of staff out of 10 absent. There are almost no supply teachers around, so who covers the absent teachers’ classes? Answer, the headteacher/depute if available. Who then deals with emergencies like runaway pupils? Answer, the headteacher/depute, but they are supposed to be covering a class or 2 or 3! This pattern is being repeated in countless primary schools across the country.

In secondary schools, the situation is much the same except that there are specific shortages in several subjects, maths to name but one! In a large secondary school near where I live, there has been a shortfall of 2 Maths teachers since February this year. As the diet of SQA exams approaches this shortage has inevitable led to parental concerns as well as junior pupils being “managed” by non-maths staff. This situation is about to be replicated in the school from which I retired, when three expectant mothers leave a subject department.

Covering teacher shortages:

Supply staff are a rare breed mainly because the pay structure was altered and led to experienced teachers being paid at basic rate. In my own situation, I was on the supply list, but could not work for a while due to the care needs of my elderly father. I was then removed from the supply list without notice. I had to re-apply and be re-interviewed to be re-instated. Several months later I once again could not undertake work due to my father being hospitalised etc, and again I was told I would be removed from the supply list. I have not re-applied again. Furthermore, an experienced colleague of mine, who had recently retired and was asked to consider supply work, agreed to be interviewed but was told he was unsuitable! He had worked for over 30 years in his subject department, and was a highly regarded member staff, but his experience was deemed insufficient to work as a supply teacher.

Such situations are perhaps rare but nevertheless need to be addressed. The other major factor is the lack of any “spare capacity” in teacher numbers in schools. As soon as ONE member of staff is absent, the whole machine begins to grind to a stuttering halt. Other staff cover in the first instance, they become exasperated and tired and they begin to go off sick as well. Supply staff cannot be found. The vicious circle continues.

Staying/leaving/applying for promotion:

Workload is the key point here. Many aspiring leaders do not want the “top job” of headteacher because they see the enormity of the workload. And the
notion of giving headteachers more responsibility to “run their own school” is nonsense. Teachers joined the profession to work with children and educate young minds. They most definitely do not want to organise building control and other associated tasks They require more assistance from business managers, and less time spent away from the children in their care. They already answer to their own staff, parents, social workers, psychologists, council officials, HMI staff, not to mention the children whose education is meant to be their focus. It is hardly surprising that applicant numbers for such posts are dropping.

ANONYMOUS 97

Q1 What type of teaching role do you have
Secondary School Teacher – Computing Science

Q4 What are the positives that keep you in the teaching profession?
Teaching young people is a joy as every day is different. Watching the young people I teach develop into bright and ambitious young adults makes all the challenges worthwhile. I truly enjoy my subject and much prefer teaching it to young people rather than sitting in an office.

Q5 Do you consider that you will teach until you retire or do you consider leaving early or for alternative employment? (If you consider leaving, please specify why if it relates to your enjoyment of your role)
I did expect to stay in teaching when I entered the profession but now I am not so sure. I like new challenges and unfortunately there is little opportunity for development and advancement in schools now. I find it unlikely that I will continue happily in the same role for 20+ years. Professional development is now almost entirely self-led as opposed to the past where there were a range of useful courses that could be attended. Departments have been collapsed into Faculties destroying the role of Principal Teachers, and roles such as Assistant Principal Teachers have ceased to exist. The result is that there are no opportunities to act up in any capacity in my own school and virtually no posts in other schools are advertised. I have been registered with TES and MyJobScotland for nearly two years with a view to moving into a Principal Teacher Subject post but there have been only a handful advertised in that time.

Q6 What would encourage you to seek promotion to senior management, including to headteacher level? What would discourage you from seeking promotion?
As noted in Q5, there needs to be a greater range of opportunities created for advancement and more development made available to support this. The government should consider the middle management structure in schools to both improve education and address a lack of promotion opportunities. A drive to break faculties into departments where educational needs are more targeted and the reintroduction of Assistants Principal Teachers giving the opportunity for staff to be developed for senior roles is desired by teachers. As a non-catholic working in a catholic school I am discriminated against (legally) for many promoted posts such as Pastoral and Depute. Also, there is a strong
perception among many working in faith schools that discrimination may extend beyond that which is legal. The government needs to revisit the issue of employment discrimination in faith schools to ensure genuine and fair promotion prospects for all staff in such schools.

Q7 What do you think are the main challenges, if any, in recruiting or retaining teachers (and other staff) at your school? (please feel free to provide details of practical experiences)

Put simply, workload! The introduction of Curriculum for Excellence has led to massive quantities of course development work year on year as CFE has moved up through the school. This has been most significant in Computing Science which is recognised as having had the most drastic changes of any subject. SQA have produced copious amounts of paperwork all of which refer to each other in circular and confusing ways, and often with little meaning or value. Changes continue to come out of both Education Scotland and SQA constantly. Indeed, since John Swinney’s intervention to remove unit assessments, the tone from SQA has been very combative with it feeling they are hardening courses as a punishment of teachers/pupils for daring to question them under the pretence of maintaining integrity. Again, a specific issue with Computing Science has been the issue of internal marking of coursework which for almost all other subjects is conducted externally by paid markers. This adds around 40 hours of work (a whole week) each year for which no time is freed up and no payments are made. This example of inequity between subjects is one reason why teachers in some subjects may be more stressed and frustrated than others.

Q8 Which particular subject specialisms/support roles face the greatest challenges with recruitment or retention?

Computing Science teachers because of workload in this specific subject which is troubling when we should be promoting digital skills. The workload being produced by Education Scotland and SQA for this subject, more than any other, needs to be brought under control urgently.

Librarians have proved too easy a target for cost cutting in many schools and authorities. The librarian in my own school has had her role split between two schools meaning our library, which is a great resource for many departments and a safe haven for many quieter pupils at break and lunch, is now closed alternating weeks.

Pupil Support Staff are paid a terrible wage for doing an amazing job, often with the most challenging pupils in a school. Like librarians, they are again an easy target when cutting costs. There is now a clear lack of support staff in schools, especially skilled behaviour support.

Q9 Do you have any suggestions for how challenges with recruitment and retention might be addressed?

Future planning needs to improve. Universities are training large numbers of teachers in specific subjects one year then hardly any another year. This is resulting in over supply and new teachers unable to find work and then when schools are looking these people have left the profession as they have had to
find work elsewhere and no newly qualified teachers are available. We should be training the numbers needed.

Teacher pay is good but it is a profession and few other professions experience the lack of pay rises that teachers have accepted over the last 10 years or so. A possible solution might be to introduce a higher salary with an extended pay spine – possibly extending from 5 years up to 10 years so that teachers see regular increments. There is still a galling inequity among staff with the same duties. All conserved salaries need to be abolished to ensure fairness in schools and free cash to recruit additional staff. In particular, the role of Chartered Teacher, which is a title only and carries zero remit or responsibilities, sees many teachers paid in excess of £7,000 more for doing exactly the same work. This is both demoralising for their colleagues and illegal under the equal pay laws. All teachers doing the same work who have reached the top of the pay spine should be paid equally for doing the same work.

Q10 Have any measures been put in place as a result of changes to staffing numbers in recent years at your school (examples include multi-school headship/leadership teams, composite classes, changes in the use/availability of support assistants)?

If so:

- What are these measures?
- How well are they working?
- Are these changes a permanent or a temporary measure (ie is it covering vacancies at present or is it to reflect the number of teacher/other posts has reduced?)

Bi-level classes. Nat 4 and Nat 5 taught together. Avoided wherever possible but when timetabling and teacher availability forces the need it does happen. This undoubtedly impacts the quality of learning as teacher time has to be split between what is effectively two different classes in one room.

Librarian split between two schools. Permanent. Reduced value of library already discussed.

Q11 Are there any subject choices or other opportunities that are not available to pupils as a result of staff shortages that you consider would be valuable? (please specify)

All courses offer good progression for pupils who progress through Nat 5 > Higher > Advanced Higher. Additional teaching staff would allow for more alternate progression routes for pupils who don’t fit that model i.e. less able pupils. More staff could offer a range of vocational courses, non-certificated classes, and lower level awards in upper school for pupils for whom Highers or Advanced Highers are not appropriate.

Q12 How would you describe general morale among staff (very good / quite good / quite low / very low) and what are the key factors that influence it?

Staff morale is generally quite good still but staff are clearly tired from the workload and frustrated by those in charge of education. My colleagues and I
regularly talk about how exhausted we are by the end of the day. There is a
general feeling that the profession is being devalued. Quality of education is
questioned regularly in the media, parents and pupils show less respect for
teachers, and pay no longer reflects a professional role. Education Scotland
and SQA appear to be in a constant state of chaos as they continue to issue
Experiences and Outcomes, Benchmarks, Course

**ANONYMOUS 98**

**Q1** What type of teaching role

Specifications and Assessments that are either nonsensical or riddled with
errors. No one takes any responsibility, and fixing issues is always a
prolonged process, often years. It seems that there is little interaction between
these agencies and actual teachers and that when there is it is simply
ignored.

Principal teacher of Guidance

**Q4** What are the positives that keep you in the teaching profession?

I enjoy working with the young people and being able to help them.
Supportive colleagues.

**Q5** Do you consider that you will teach until you retire or do you consider leaving
early or for alternative employment? (If you consider leaving, please specify
why if it relates to your enjoyment of your role)

I would like to be able to leave early – this is something I did not think I would
do when I first came into teaching. The stress and workload of the job are
ever-increasing and I do not want my mental and physical health to suffer.

**Q6** What would encourage you to seek promotion to senior management,
including to headteacher level? What would discourage you from seeking
promotion?

I no longer wish to seek promotion. The stress and workload issues are too
great and the monetary reward not great enough.

**Q7** What do you think are the main challenges, if any, in recruiting or retaining
teachers (and other staff) at your school? (please feel free to provide details
of practical experiences)

Stress and workload. Young staff have to work so hard. They do not want to
live in a rural area, so will stay for a year or two, then move back to the central
belt.

**Q8** Which particular subject specialisms/support roles face the greatest
challenges with recruitment or retention?

It is beginning to affect all areas – connected to an aging staff and there not
being enough people to replace them. At the moment in my school, it is
science, technical, computing, learning support.

**Q9** Do you have any suggestions for how challenges with recruitment and
retention might be addressed?
Improve the workload issue. Young people no longer see teaching as a good career choice, therefore local youngsters do not stay in their home area for this type of job.

Q10 Have any measures been put in place as a result of changes to staffing numbers in recent years at your school (examples include multi-school headship/leadership teams, composite classes, changes in the use/availability of support assistants)?

If so:

• What are these measures?
• How well are they working?
• Are these changes a permanent or a temporary measure (ie is it covering vacancies at present or is it to reflect the number of teacher/other posts has reduced?)

N4/5/H being taught in one class. Classes being taught at our local college. Pupils going to other schools to access AH courses, or coming to us. Learning support/SLT teaching subject classes. These changes are different every year depending on staffing. They work, but are not satisfactory.

Q11 Are there any subject choices or other opportunities that are not available to pupils as a result of staff shortages that you consider would be valuable? (please specify)

Subject choice is being reduced every year – the number of options and the levels which are available. Classes are getting larger and in some cases, pupils are being told what choice is left for them rather than what is most appropriate.

Q12 How would you describe general morale among staff (very good / quite good / quite low / very low) and what are the key factors that influence it?

Morale is low – stress and workload are the key issues for everyone.

Additional comments

Our staff are very supportive of each other, which makes a very difficult working environment bearable. As a teacher of 30 years service, I would like to be in a position to leave. I fear for the health of younger staff and do not blame them for leaving the profession. We are also missing out on young people who would make excellent teachers who decide not to as they see the stresses involved.

ANONYMOUS 99

Q1 What type of teaching role do you have

Teacher of Physics

Q4 What are the positives that keep you in the teaching profession?

Working with pupils and seeing their progress, support from colleagues, giving back something to the community.
Q5 Do you consider that you will teach until you retire or do you consider leaving early or for alternative employment? (If you consider leaving, please specify why if it relates to your enjoyment of your role)

Most likely work until I retire. However, concerns regarding workload, demand of the job and stress levels make me think this is a job that may force early retirement or moving into a part-time basis.

Q6 What would encourage you to seek promotion to senior management, including to headteacher level? What would discourage you from seeking promotion?

Encourage – 
Increase in salary, learning new skill set and doing a job with different demands and challenges.

Discourage – 
Managing decreased budget for resources to run a department, implementing new policies/teaching strategies based on pedagogy that is often misquoted, not fit for purpose for my school, politically motivated (i.e. ‘flavour of the month’), high workload for low benefit or not given time to become embedded before the ‘next great thing’.

Annual changes in course content/assessments which does not practically address workload, benefits to pupils, show ‘joined up thinking’ between BGE and SQA course or enhancement of teacher’s skills and professional knowledge.

Q7 What do you think are the main challenges, if any, in recruiting or retaining teachers (and other staff) at your school? (please feel free to provide details of practical experiences)

Recruitment – is adequate

Retaining – Adequate number of staff are retained.

Q10 Have any measures been put in place as a result of changes to staffing numbers in recent years at your school (examples include multi-school headship/leadership teams, composite classes, changes in the use/availability of support assistants)?

**Loss of technical support, learning assistants and teaching staff.**

If so:

- What are these measures?

Any loss in support from these areas are covered by teaching staff time – we make do with the current situation to provide our pupils with the best education we can offer

- How well are they working?

Staff are very stressed and limited in what they can do in professional time. Any work to enhance the quality of teaching and learning is carried out in staff personal time.
• Are these changes a permanent or a temporary measure (ie is it covering vacancies at present or is it to reflect the number of teacher/other posts has reduced?)
  These are measures that are temporary for as long as the situation lasts. The only likely change if there is an increase in funding.

Q12 How would you describe general morale among staff (very good / quite good / quite low / very low) and what are the key factors that influence it?
  Quite low

Additional comments

If you have any other comments please include them below:

Key issues as a classroom teacher are:

- The constant changes to courses and assessment at SQA level. Courses are updated too frequently and changes are made which do not alleviate workload issues or provide pupils with an opportunity to achieve what is suitable and applicable to them. There is an impression that SQA are force to make changes that do not seem to be made by people who have practical experience of teaching and the impacts these may have on pupil’s opportunities to learn and achieve something meaningful.

SQA courses are too content heavy for the limited time available to teach, which impacts on the delivery BGE courses. This is an issue which needs to be officially acknowledged so that time and resources can be devoted to resolve these issues instead of the current ‘working solutions’ which pay lip service to the delivery of the BGE courses with more time focussed on SQA courses.

These actions also give the impression that the powers that be (whether political or educational) are ‘papering over huge cracks with tissue paper’. The vision of education presented, whilst praiseworthy and worth investing in, is idealism lacking temperament in practicality.

On a final note, having experience of the English teaching system, I can only hope that Scotland never looks towards that system has an example of ‘best practice’ or worth implementing.

ADDITIONAL SUPPORTS NEEDS SCHOOL – NAMED SUBMISSIONS

TONI CAMERON

Q1 What type of teaching role do you have
  Specialist Support Teacher as part of Extended Community Team. I support Primary and Secondary schools in an area of my local authority. I provide staged intervention support to pupils, support to parents and CPD to teachers, as required and in consultation with the ASN coordinator in each school.

Q2 Whereabouts do you work?
  South Lanarkshire, Rutherglen/Cambuslang

Q4 What are the positives that keep you in the teaching profession?
Love of learning, access to and opportunities to engage with research to make a positive impact on learning and development of pupils, excellent colleagues to keep inspiring me and keep me sane, working with like minded people, having opportunities to work with parents and multiple agencies to coordinate effective support for children and young people to help them develop and grow, good salary, good holidays, plenty of variety from day to day – rarely a dull moment.

Q5 Do you consider that you will teach until you retire or do you consider leaving early or for alternative employment? (If you consider leaving, please specify why if it relates to your enjoyment of your role)

I would like to teach in my current role until I retire, either at 60 or slightly beyond but I could not work in schools up to 67yrs. Previously, working in a High School, full time, I could not imagine working beyond 60 yrs, or even for up to 60yrs. The reasons would be entirely based on stamina and energy levels required for the job.

Q6 What would encourage you to seek promotion to senior management, including to headteacher level? What would discourage you from seeking promotion?

I did seek promotion a few years ago and was invited to several interviews at PTC and DHT level but I became extremely nervous at the interviews and found them to be like oral examinations. The current interview process is off putting for me as I probably won’t apply again now. Development posts encouraged me to apply for promoted posts as did completing Chartered Teacher status, and working as a union learning Rep.

Q7 What do you think are the main challenges, if any, in recruiting or retaining teachers (and other staff) at your school? (please feel free to provide details of practical experiences)

My perceived experience of recruitment of senior management posts in my previous High school in West Lothian was not a positive experience. The challenges I saw in recruiting senior managers was a lack of experience/ability in applicants and not enough applicants coming forward.

Also, generally, the structure of management in the authority makes the jump up from class teacher to Principal Teacher Curriculum huge and it is not made an easily visible journey for teachers to see if they are considering promotion. Generally again, the applying for promotion and preparing for interviews remained some hidden knowledge which teachers had to find out from others, individually, how to succeed at. Senior Managers may have/make little time to help class teachers prepare for interviews/do mock interviews.

Retention of temp teachers was a challenge as they were not given much of an induction before working in the school. They were also not well supported by a centralised ICT management system so quick access to school server was variable and dependent on individual ICT managers in schools to push and chivvy up central services. One temp teacher taught more than six months in school without having access to emails or school server.
Q8  Which particular subject specialisms/support roles face the greatest challenges with recruitment or retention?

Home Economics – not enough teachers available, ageing workforce.

Catholic teachers for senior management roles in Catholic High Schools – not enough applying.

Q9  Do you have any suggestions for how challenges with recruitment and retention might be addressed?

Break down some levels of management into more easily achievable career development levels. Don’t separate career long learning from leadership and management development. Make it more difficult for teachers to seek promotion at senior management levels until they have accrued many more years’ experience in teaching at classroom and middle management level, or, at least have completed quite a few of the standards of career long professional learning.

Make interview processes similar to those with Education Scotland where a professional discussion takes place; applicants can share evidence of success; applicants are encouraged to take notes.

Tackle the problem of schools becoming more frightened of parents and an unsympathetic media.

Q10  Have any measures been put in place as a result of changes to staffing numbers in recent years at your school (examples include multi-school headship/leadership teams, composite classes, changes in the use/availability of support assistants)?

More composite classes working at three National levels in the one class with one teacher.

If so:

- What are these measures?
- How well are they working? No longer there to appraise.
- Are these changes a permanent or a temporary measure (ie is it covering vacancies at present or is it to reflect the number of teacher/other posts has reduced?)

It’s never known if a change will be temporary or permanent, staffing changes from year to year as new interests dominate in school – ie, we teach drama, then we don’t, then we teach Spanish, then we don’t – not great for continuity to allow experience to build up in departments.

Q11  Are there any subject choices or other opportunities that are not available to pupils as a result of staff shortages that you consider would be valuable? (please specify)

Drama, philosophy, stronger links with vocational course work/work experience from agencies outside school, opportunities to work more closely with vulnerable families in multi agency way, to support pupils’ learning and future outcomes.
Q12 How would you describe general morale among staff (very good / quite good / quite low / very low) and what are the key factors that influence it?

Post, morale is generally good. In previous school, very low.

CIARA FERGUSON

Q1 What type of teaching role do you have?

I am a primary teacher within an ASN establishment.

Q2 Whereabouts do you work?

High Blantyre primary school, South Lanarkshire

Q4 What are the positives that keep you in the teaching profession?

Relationship with children and witnessing their development both in learning academically and developing socially.

Q5 Do you consider that you will teach until you retire or do you consider leaving early or for alternative employment? (If you consider leaving, please specify why if it relates to your enjoyment of your role)

No, with the currently level of paper work and stress I cannot imagine being able to continue working to the level I currently do until retirement. The ever changing environment of education and isolation in the classroom has a negative effect on health and well-being.

Q6 What would encourage you to seek promotion to senior management, including to headteacher level? What would discourage you from seeking promotion?

If there was more encouragement within schools for smaller posts to help build up experience and confidence in the area it would nurture the drive and motivation I previously held. I am discouraged by the lack of encouragement and opportunities to gain experience.

Q7 What do you think are the main challenges, if any, in recruiting or retaining teachers (and other staff) at your school? (please feel free to provide details of practical experiences)

Recruiting staff within the ASN base and retaining them has been difficult over the past number of years. There have been high incidents of people leaning through stress and other personal matters. New teachers are never fully informed that they are coming to teach in profound/severe classes and are often disillusioned. Within the mainstream staff, teachers (cover) are being called away, moved to other schools for cover, so I feel as is typical in most schools in South Lanarkshire there is too much movement and uncertainty.

Q8 Which particular subject specialisms/support roles face the greatest challenges with recruitment or retention?

As and ASD specialist provision we have, in the past 5 years seen a lot of problems with teacher retention. This is partially to do with the stress and physicality’s of the job and other issues.
Q9 Do you have any suggestions for how challenges with recruitment and retention might be addressed?

There should be one main substitute register (like northern Ireland)

Schools should hold their own interviews for candidates

Retention: more encouragement and celebration of staff.

Q10 Have any measures been put in place as a result of changes to staffing numbers in recent years at your school (examples include multi-school headship/leadership teams, composite classes, changes in the use/availability of support assistants)?

CCC teacher was moved at the beginning of the school year to cover in another school. Since then Head teacher was covering some CCC. We are now on our third CCC teacher (in my ASD class) which the children have struggled with.

Headteacher got a new job, has been no one appointed to cover so she is having to do part time in both schools. This is difficult within a large primary especially on a DHT has went down to 3 days a week.

Q11 Are there any subject choices or other opportunities that are not available to pupils as a result of staff shortages that you consider would be valuable? (please specify)

Q12 How would you describe general morale among staff (very good / quite good / quite low / very low) and what are the key factors that influence it?

Low: Staff are stressed with increased remits and responsibilities. Lack of motivation to encourage staff to take leadership roles.

Additional comments

Having moved from Northern Ireland I have seen a distinct difference with how schools encourage staff. If we were given an area of responsibility we were numerated for it and this was our leadership role. By taking on these roles, the management culture was shared and progression was encouraged. Here I feel there is a jump from no leadership to PT. I had drive and ambition and I have felt this slowly disintegrate. Although I am currently completing my masters moving to management is off-putting.

ADDITIONAL SUPPORTS NEEDS – ANONYMOUS SUBMISSIONS

ANONYMOUS 100

Q1 What type of teaching role do you have

Additional Support for Learning Teacher

Q4 What are the positives that keep you in the teaching profession?

Love of teaching and helping children to achieve their potential.
Q5  Do you consider that you will teach until you retire or do you consider leaving early or for alternative employment? (If you consider leaving, please specify why if it relates to your enjoyment of your role)

If I was starting out now I don’t think I’d remain as long as I have (27 years) as class teacher and more recently ASLT.

Excessive workload and cuts to service are having a substantial impact on how effective ASL can be and I no longer feel able to make the ‘difference’ to children’s learning necessary.

Think I’ve only stayed so long as I’ve worked part time and so was able to have a better work /life balance.

Now I’m full time again that’s gone.

Q6  What would encourage you to seek promotion to senior management, including to headteacher level? What would discourage you from seeking promotion?

Nothing I have no interest in increasing my stress levels any further.

Q7  What do you think are the main challenges, if any, in recruiting or retaining teachers (and other staff) at your school? (please feel free to provide details of practical experiences)

Anyone who knows a teacher realises the amount of time spent working at home over and above school hours. I encouraged my daughter to complete a work placement as she was considering teaching and after a couple of days she commented ‘Everyone is stressed’. To which I replied ‘Did you think it was just me!’

She chose a different degree and I am relieved.

Q9  Do you have any suggestions for how challenges with recruitment and retention might be addressed?

More respect for teachers as professionals. Bottom up policy making, rather than top down. Managers with no teaching experience need to take advice/listen to those who do the job.

Q12  How would you describe general morale among staff (very good / quite good / quite low / very low) and what are the key factors that influence it?

- Very low.
- Classroom assistant losses.
- Cuts to specialist services.

ANONYMOUS 101

Q1  What type of teaching role do you have

Teacher at ASN school: pupils with severe/complex ASN, communication needs, autism

Q4  What are the positives that keep you in the teaching profession?
Satisfaction gained from working with ASN pupils

Q5 Do you consider that you will teach until you retire or do you consider leaving early or for alternative employment? (If you consider leaving, please specify why if it relates to your enjoyment of your role)

I only have a few years till retirement

Q6 What would encourage you to seek promotion to senior management, including to headteacher level? What would discourage you from seeking promotion?

Nothing – I have always enjoyed working with the pupils in class and never considered other posts.

Q7 What do you think are the main challenges, if any, in recruiting or retaining teachers (and other staff) at your school? (please feel free to provide details of practical experiences)

What could always be a challenging job is becoming much more stressful due to larger class sizes, insufficient ASN support and a lack of relevant experience in the SMT.

Q8 Which particular subject specialisms/support roles face the greatest challenges with recruitment or retention?

All areas in our ASN school.

Q9 Do you have any suggestions for how challenges with recruitment and retention might be addressed?

Reduce class sizes, provide more ASN support, better management.

Q10 Have any measures been put in place as a result of changes to staffing numbers in recent years at your school (examples include multi-school headship/leadership teams, composite classes, changes in the use/availability of support assistants)?

If so:

- What are these measures?
- How well are they working?
- Are these changes a permanent or a temporary measure (ie is it covering vacancies at present or is it to reflect the number of teacher/other posts has reduced?)

Larger classes are NOT appropriate for our pupils, many of whom cannot cope with increased noise, challenging behaviour, decreasing attention from staff.

We have more than 50% pupils who need 1:1 support to participate and learn. This is now not possible and when these pupils are not involved or occupied their behaviour can quickly become challenging.

I believe there are plans for team teaching with classes double sized in August.
Q11 Are there any subject choices or other opportunities that are not available to pupils as a result of staff shortages that you consider would be valuable? (please specify)

Due to the shortage of ASN support and the larger class sizes, there are many occasions in ALL subjects where the quieter or less demanding pupils are neglected as teachers and support staff must prioritise and those pupils with behavioural issues will disrupt lessons if not given staff support.

Q12 How would you describe general morale among staff (very good / quite good / quite low / very low) and what are the key factors that influence it?

Very poor: staff feel unvalued and uninvolved.

ANONYMOUS 102

Q1 What type of teaching role do you have

Teacher of the Deaf

Q4 What are the positives that keep you in the teaching profession?

Providing input to Deaf children to raise their attainment to that that would be obtainable if not deaf. To raise awareness of schools/ staff to deaf needs to help deaf children achieve their place in society. The sense of satisfaction when this all comes together is what keeps me here.

Q5 Do you consider that you will teach until you retire or do you consider leaving early or for alternative employment? (If you consider leaving, please specify why if it relates to your enjoyment of your role)

I am over retirement age and still here – part retired.

Q6 What would encourage you to seek promotion to senior management, including to headteacher level? What would discourage you from seeking promotion?

Am a chartered teacher. I chose that pathway so I could still work with pupils rather than the usual promotion pathway.

Q7 What do you think are the main challenges, if any, in recruiting or retaining teachers (and other staff) at your school? (please feel free to provide details of practical experiences)

There are no incentives to become a specialised teacher

Q8 Which particular subject specialisms/support roles face the greatest challenges with recruitment or retention?

Supporting challenging pupils, be it hearing, vision, or one of the many other obstacles in children’s paths to an education

Q9 Do you have any suggestions for how challenges with recruitment and retention might be addressed?

Incentivise

Q10 Have any measures been put in place as a result of changes to staffing numbers in recent years at your school (examples include multi-school
headship/leadership teams, composite classes, changes in the use/availability of support assistants)?

If so:

- What are these measures?
- How well are they working?
- Are these changes a permanent or a temporary measure (ie is it covering vacancies at present or is it to reflect the number of teacher/other posts has reduced?)

It’s all to do with money. Our service is getting smaller in number and we are stretched further, so the good job we used to do is no longer possible.

**Q11** Are there any subject choices or other opportunities that are not available to pupils as a result of staff shortages that you consider would be valuable? (please specify)

We offered courses in lipreading, listening and memory skills for our less deaf pupils. These are no longer possible.

**Q12** How would you describe general morale among staff (very good / quite good / quite low / very low) and what are the key factors that influence it?

Very low. We are stretched to impossibility, exhausted and no time to plan and dialogue. We also feel undervalued.

**GAELIC SCHOOL – ANONYMOUS SUBMISSIONS**

**ANONYMOUS 103**

Background

The Education and Skills Committee is looking into the recruitment and retention of teachers for Scotland’s schools.

This includes asking:

- What are the main challenges in relation to teacher recruitment and retention?

Teacher numbers being able to meet the demand for GME - We recognise that there is a national shortage of teachers, including GME, at every stage and whilst the numbers of NQT’s qualifying in recent years remains steady – we still require more teachers at Primary, Secondary (Gaelic) & Secondary subject specialists.

Gaelic Initial Teacher Education Courses - There has been an increase in the number of GME Initial Teacher Education courses available in recent years & we welcome the new MA Primary Ed. with Gaelic courses for both fluent speakers & learners at the University of Edinburgh & the new BA (Hons) Gaelic and Education at Sabhal Mòr Ostaig. We do however need to see more courses with specific pathways (specifically designed) for GME student’s courses receive more of their tuition through the medium of Gaelic
to ensure that they are both confident & competent in the language. Only two institutions currently offer Gaelic PGDE courses at Primary & Secondary level: University of Strathclyde & UHI.

Collaborative approach: Some areas within local authorities have surplus Gaelic teachers while other neighboring areas or authorities struggle to recruit & retain teachers. A more collaborative approach would be beneficial; where teachers could work within more than one authority or they could be offered financial incentives to travel or relocate. This would help with the retention of GME teachers currently and provide the flexibility they require to remain working in GME within their area.

More practical & financial support could be made available to teachers who are willing to achieve an ATQ. This would provide the opportunity for more teachers to offer their skills across a broad general education route.

Support within the classroom: GME in specific areas no longer means small class sizes. This can be more challenging, particularly in the initial stages during the immersion phase and it must be considered to providing language assistants in GME classrooms to support language development.

- Are there patterns or key reasons why some trainee teachers do not complete courses, or do not choose to go into teaching having qualified?

It is unclear whether certain courses can provide clear options for professional language development and personal language. There possibly needs clearer Gaelic teaching on these courses to ensure that NQT’s are both competent & confident in the language.

Problems with placements: There has been instances where some students, EM and GM, are not allocated placements during their course, or there is a delay in the allocation of these placements. This can impact on how student’s confidence and it should be a priority to ensure the instances of this occurring are low.

What is the impact of teacher shortages in certain parts of Scotland or in specific disciplines?

There is a national shortage of GME in Teachers at Primary Level, Secondary (Gàidhlig) Teachers & Secondary subject specialists. Areas where there are staff shortages can lead to non GME staff being utilized and entailing the quality of language development is affected. If our aim is to increase the number of Gaelic speakers & increase the number of people using Gaelic we need to ensure our young people are confident & competent in the language.

- How effective are the various approaches taken to cover shortages of teachers in schools?

As stated above where there are shortages it is not appropriate to use EM staff for GME cover and hence better planning or co-ordination across local authorities could alleviate this issue.
What factors influence teachers deciding whether to stay in the profession or to leave?

Work load. Availability of work in the area they wise to live.

SCHOOL UNKNOWN – NAMED SUBMISSIONS

RICHARD WALSH

Q1 What type of teaching role do you have
Supply Teacher – PE and General Cover

Q4 What are the positives that keep you in the teaching profession?
Working with motivated children, seeing children develop and mature into young adults with a positive attitude to work, society and life in general. Allowing young adults to recognise their role and responsibilities in both school and the wider world. Enjoyment and fun in doing the job of teaching young people and the feedback that comes from them.

Q5 Do you consider that you will teach until you retire or do you consider leaving early or for alternative employment? (If you consider leaving, please specify why if it relates to your enjoyment of your role)
Have already retired from my post as Principal Teacher and returned to do part time / temporary supply

Q6 What would encourage you to seek promotion to senior management, including to headteacher level? What would discourage you from seeking promotion?
Having worked for 35 years as a Principal Teacher and had no desire to go further. Further promotion would take me away from the enjoyable part of my job working with young people. Having witnessed the changes in my job description and the practical aspects of my job having changed so much I would not even go for a principal’s post if I was starting my career again.

Q7 What do you think are the main challenges, if any, in recruiting or retaining teachers (and other staff) at your school? (please feel free to provide details of practical experiences)
Personally the main problems I encountered prior to retirement were insurmountable amounts of paperwork, relentless assessments that took away time from actual teaching and learning as well as inset days and meetings that seemed to nothing more than tick a sheet saying staff had been trained or informed on that area or aspect.

Biggest are is lack of discipline r more specifically the reluctance of those in authority to tackle the problem of discipline. Even the word discipline is a blasphemy its is disguise as promoting positive behaviour, getting it right for every child, every child is special etc etc.

Q8 Which particular subject specialisms/support roles face the greatest challenges with recruitment or retention?
Probably all.

Personally I retired early as I was no longer teaching the PE that I had gone into the profession to teach. I watched myself and my staff going to classes with boxes of jotters, papers, pens and assessment sheets.

I was constrained in what and how I could teach practical PE to children who were crying out for physical exercise, enjoyment of movement, the ability to expend energy and most of all have fun.

I was watching performance deteriorate and children’s fitness levels fall through the floor as what had been an 8 period practical teaching block of activity turned into a 6 week teaching block with 2 periods of assessment and child/peer evaluations. I also watched head teachers manipulate the timetable so that 2 hours of active PE became 2 periods of PE and periods went from 60mins to 45 mins and then watched some periods of PE become periods of “activity” which covered almost anything other than physical education.

I watched the benefits of physical education for less academically gifted pupils being eroded as more and more assessments, written work and gradings put them into situations where their problems and shortcomings came the fore rather than accentuating what they could do well and promote a feeling of well-being and achievement.

Q9 Do you have any suggestions for how challenges with recruitment and retention might be addressed?

Remove most of paperwork, reduce assessments, try not to look as if a whole series of measures are about accountability and let teachers actually spend the majority of their time teaching.

In my experience the profession is top heavy in very dedicated and extremely talented teachers who are often being hamstrung by measures and checks that seem to be put in place to identify and motivate poorer teachers.

Myself and my staff were often asked to identify and provide evidence of doing things that I had done as a matter of course and as a matter of good efficient practice. These things were done without having to be programmed or prescribed. Good teachers do good things without being told. The provision of the evidence often again took away valuable time from continuing with other areas of good practice. This also gives the impression that the assumption is that all teachers are poor at self-motivation and need to be led by the hand to get things right.

Discipline needs to be tackled properly and not shrouded in fancy language to disguise the fact that many children are badly behaved and need guidance given guide lines and rules that are adhered to.

Teachers are now being asked to fill gaps in poor social skills and bad parenting skills from society as a whole. By all means educate and develop the whole child and develop their social, moral and other skills but don’t make teachers compensate or pay the price in their working environment for poor
social skills, lack of self-discipline and general attitudes to rules and society at large from their client groups and their parents / carers.

Q10 Have any measures been put in place as a result of changes to staffing numbers in recent years at your school (examples include multi-school headship/leadership teams, composite classes, changes in the use/availability of support assistants)?

If so:

- What are these measures?
- How well are they working?
- Are these changes a permanent or a temporary measure (ie is it covering vacancies at present or is it to reflect the number of teacher/other posts has reduced?)

East Renfrew seemed to have a problem with appointing full time permanent posts and lots of positions were filled with temporary, acting or supply staff. Matter seems to have been addressed very recently.

In my original post in Glasgow main problem is discipline and the lack of any form of sanctions that would work. Sometimes certain subjects would suffer through lack of available staff and either non specialist would have to take class or even timetable was distorted to suit gaps in staffing.

Q11 Are there any subject choices or other opportunities that are not available to pupils as a result of staff shortages that you consider would be valuable? (please specify)

Often the staffing ratios were decided on the priorities coming from the HT and SLT as a result some departments and subjects were seen of more value than others and were often given priority when staffing returns and requests were made. My own department went from 7 staff to 4 in the space of 2 HTs who decided PE was less important than other areas other practical subject suffered too.

Q12 How would you describe general morale among staff (very good / quite good / quite low / very low) and what are the key factors that influence it?

Depends very much on the individual school, attitude and approach of HT and SLT and how the approach and support staff.

In my 40 years teaching I worked in Primary Schools and numerous Secondary Schools. I worked with some wonderful Head teachers and Deputies and worked with others at the other end of the scale.

Basically boiled down to attitude and a willingness of those in authority and power to listen to alternative viewpoints, take on board reasoned and valid arguments and understand people’s points of view even if they are contrary to HTs.

An appreciation that most teachers go above and beyond what is asked and a recognition of such, goes a long, long way to getting staff to continue to do so.

The best headteachers had an abundance of praise and support for staff, knew and identified when staff had gone the extra mile and most importantly
stressed what was given rather than constantly identifying areas of need or shortcomings.

**Additional comments**

If you have any other comments please include them below:

As a former PE Principal – PE in primary schools is a necessity to tackle our growing obesity and lack of exercise problems. All Primary children should be given at least 30mins or exercise and proper physical activity every day. Even at the expense of diverting resources from Secondary PE staffing.

Can I refer you to Linwood Project in early 1980s look at benefits across the board, look at aims and objectives of Curriculum for excellence and compare they are not too far apart.

Discipline is the biggest problem in classroom teaching in my opinion. Standards of behaviour have dropped through the floor in the space of my teaching career. The failure of those in positions of authority to tackle the problem is verging on scandalous. In some instances the conditions that teachers need to work under must break required standards of Duty of Care by authorities. Emphasis seems to lie in giving the appearance that all is well rather than identifying and tackling the problems. Part of problem is tables of exclusion rates etc. identifying “problem” schools. Sometimes this can be an indicator of schools tackling the problems rather than hiding them.

**SCHOOL UNKNOWN – ANONYMOUS SUBMISSIONS**

**ANONYMOUS 104**

There are many reasons why teachers are choosing to leave the profession;
1. Excessive workload that is not manageable in the 35 hour working week, with planning and evaluation paperwork taking a disproportionate amount of time. That is not the daily plans for teaching and learning but the repetitive paperwork demanded by managers that is not always directly used by the teacher for teaching and learning purposes. Most teachers that I have worked with in various schools regularly take work home each night, weekends and during holidays to enable them to manage their workload beyond the classroom. No overtime is paid to teachers, however there exist an unwritten expectation that teachers should work more hours than they are paid for, well beyond any goodwill hours given. In what other profession would this be expected?
2. Inclusion; This policy is failing both teachers and pupils. Inclusion can only work if the correct and appropriate resources and supports are available and in place and this importantly includes support staff, however sadly this is not the case putting teachers under pressure and leaving pupil without adequate supports.
3. Behaviour; Teachers are spending more time dealing with behaviour issues, this has a direct impact on teaching and learning as; it takes up valuable teaching time, it distracts and disturbed the right of other pupils to learn, it is stressful. Teacher's hands are tied in how they can deal with persistent demanding behaviour problems. Lack of discipline and disruptive behaviour have a direct impact on teaching and learning, a negative one.
4. Micro management; Having completed a period of training and a probationary year, teacher’s have gained full qualifications and registration to teach, therefore the culture that exists in education of continuing to analyse teaching practice as if you were still a student is extremely patronising and off putting. e.g. planning files being analysed and written feedback given to meet a management and not teacher agenda. Jotters being monitored and analysed on an on going basis with feedback directed at the teacher. Everything having to be written in detail. Tackling bureaucracy has not made an impact on this so far, formats may have changed but it has not reduced the time consuming workload.

5. Management; Some Head Teachers seem to have little training in adult management often using tactics and language more suited to a child, don’t seem able to differentiate. There also still exist a bullying culture in some schools.

6. Class sizes remain large to cope with the demands of the curriculum and pupil needs.

7. Expectation that teachers will take on additional roles within the school, with it being made difficult for individuals to refuse adding to workload.

8. This all leads to stress and illness. People are leaving the profession due to the above stresses. Time to teach, support resources, respect, some professional autonomy, and a realistic workload for a 35 hour week would encourage more teachers to remain in the profession.

ANONYMOUS 105

Q1. I am a Principal teacher with a senior management role within a school

Q4. What are the positives that keep you in the teaching profession?

Direct pupil contact and opportunity to support pupils in their learning and development.

Q5. Do you consider that you will work in schools until you retire or do you consider leaving early including for alternative employment? (If you consider leaving, please specify why if it relates to your enjoyment of your role)

I would be open to working in schools only if in an education role with more autonomy, less scrutiny and bureaucracy. However, having worked in Highland for the past decade, I am at a point where I am considering leaving to achieve a better experience and achieve my ideals this through self / alternative employment to see me through to retirement.

Q6. Have any measures been put in place as a result of changes to staffing numbers at your school (this can include not just classroom teachers but measures at other levels such as multi-school headship/leadership teams)? If so:

☐ What are they?

The all through school staff is subject to constant challenge and staff turnover for a variety of reasons throughout the year. In secondary each year the school participates in an authority wide annual allocation of staff and this results in a regular turnover of staff, this problem is particularly acute in smaller schools. / Q6 ctd
How well are they working?

In secondary around cover, availability and staff being seriously overstretched taking additional classes (aka please takes). The allocation of staff for the coming session is often so late that the schools are restricted in offering subject choices and allocations to pupils as they have no clear idea of staff compliment for the coming year.

Late allocation has a direct impact on parent choice of secondary school for their child and can further deplete the school roll and fragile sustainability of the school community.

Also with the lateness of allocation it is a challenge to fill vacancies especially if they are of a part time and rural nature.

The local authority at times backfills vacancies with probationer teachers who have the challenge of completing probation as a sole subject teacher with department responsibilities and additional demands placed upon them helping to cover for absence of colleagues.

Throughout the school the lack of continuity in staff impacts on the standards and quality of the school in delivering the curriculum, the school ethos and meeting the learning need of the pupils.

Are they permanent or temporary measures (ie is it covering vacancies at present or is it to reflect the number of teacher / other posts has reduced?)

The teacher allocation fluctuates on an annual basis and this combined with constant change in staff, layers of policy and bureaucracy and scrutiny is completely over stretching staff. Most staff talk of moving on or opting for alternative employment or retirement.

Also the ASN allocation reduction has resulted in a reduction of support staff to school during a period of increased expectation and demand. Class teachers have increased workload to meet the need of pupils in class.

Q7. Would you describe overall staff turnover at your school as low (below 10%), medium (10% to 20%) or high (over 20%)?

I would say very high, this year it could be as much as 40% including support staff.

Q8. Which are the main areas which have seen turnover in the last 5 years (teachers, support staff, senior management etc.)

All areas have seen a turnover in the past five years, often on numerous occasions in secondary.

Q9. What succession planning is there in your school and what upcoming challenges does it need to address?

This is not evident in a strategic or operational sense in school, though the authority is trying to reshape its school estate and have strategic plans to evolve school provision into all through, 3-18 provision. This agenda however seems to be budget driven.

Q10. What do you think are the main challenges, if any, in recruiting or retaining teachers (and other staff) at your school?
Temporary employment contracts, pressure on staff to meet the demands of the role, size of school, current ethos and leadership.

Q11. Which particular subject specialisms/support roles face the greatest challenges with recruitment or retention?

Secondary subjects mainly, not subject specific just now.

Q12. Do you have any suggestions for how challenges with recruitment and retention might be addressed?

Tackling bureaucracy, less scrutiny, permanent contacts, school allocation set for longer periods (perhaps a four year review period), devolved management to head teachers, route to assess competence base of all staff including head teachers, career enhancement opportunities. Improved routes to remove weak / failing staff including head teachers. Investment and trust in professional staff. Incentive, recognition and reward schemes.

Q13. To what extent does your school use supply teachers or support staff and are there any issues in relation to this?

Supply teachers are used constantly to support primary though rarely in secondary. Support staff is often subject to redeployment as circumstances dictate with very limited availability to provide in class support.

Q14. Does your school conduct exit interviews or collate other information on why staff leave the school (or is this collected at education authority level)?

No

Additional comments

If you have any other comments please detail them below:

- Main challenges in relation to teacher recruitment and retention?

Morale, workload, hours, layers of scrutiny, parental expectation / involvement, evolving teacher role in light of GIRFEC agenda, significant blame culture, lack of positive recognition.

- Views into the process for recruiting the right number of teachers to satisfy the demand for teachers in Scotland’s schools (including the availability of up to date information such as on supply and demand)

Smarter workforce planning based on evidence and accurate use of data i.e. projection of pupil numbers….

- Factors that influence whether teaching is considered an attractive profession compared to other professions by those that might consider a career in teaching?

Teaching used to be a well-regarded profession now it is not, the general public has very little respect or empathy for teachers and this combined with working environment, conditions and workload are strong influencing factors in decision making. I, nor the majority of colleagues would choose not to recommend this profession to others.

- Patterns or key reasons why some trainee teachers do not complete courses, or do not choose to go into teaching having qualified?
Morale, workload, scrutiny, compromised if not ‘flexible’ in post and this is reflected in references, vacancies opportunities for continued contracts.

- Impact of teacher shortages in certain parts of Scotland or in specific disciplines.
- Type of contract, age profile of NQTs may want better social life nearer centres of population, partner family commitments, support & friends network,
- Effectiveness of the various approaches taken to cover shortages of teachers in schools

Minimal to no effect.

- Factors which influence teachers deciding whether to stay in the profession or to leave.

Family, personal, financial commitments and responsibilities, quality of life, personal health and wellbeing.

- Factors which influence teachers when deciding whether or not to apply for promotion to senior management/head teacher level?

Vulnerability, more open to abuse, increased pressure and workload, increased expectation, accountability, availability and extension to working hours, impact on family and relationships, low pay, impossible task to deliver on agenda with reduction in resources, ever changing staff, centralised policies, increased expectation for CPD, little or no reward, changing role of education, pressures of ever increasing policies.....

**ANONYMOUS 106**

- What are the main challenges in relation to teacher recruitment and retention?
  
  Recruitment: it is rare to read a positive story about teaching in the press. What they do read about are the problems of pupil discipline, the failings of teachers to get pupils through exams, teachers being struck off for incompetence or unprofessional behaviour, the problems with the curriculum, assessment, attainment, international comparison tables and Scottish schools falling behind. Teachers are blamed for so many things that in many other countries would be regarded as the responsibility of the parents. Who would want to join such a profession where there appears to be little success? Those who are being encouraged to join from other walks of life may have the expertise but that does not mean that they have the ability to teach and those who have been teaching for a long time can sometimes feel undervalued when there is a fanfare talking about new recruits as if “anyone” can teach. There are some who still think primary teachers start work at 9 and finish work at 3 and spend all day playing with little children who hang on their every word. They do not know the amount of planning which goes into helping those children experience a variety of stimulating and relevant learning experiences. They do not appreciate that for every moment in the classroom you are considering each child, responding to them, pre-empting possible problems, juggling different groups and abilities, trying to justify every decision you make, thinking of the next steps - you do not stop from the moment the children come in until they leave. Even during breaks you may have things to set up. At 3pm you have preparation for the next day, marking, paperwork, meetings, training or collegiate activity. Most teachers I know also do work at
the weekends. But, you have long holidays. This is true and are very welcome but are not a good enough reason to go into teaching. Those who were not aware of the true nature of teaching find it difficult to stay because they quickly burn themselves out trying to do all the things expected of them.

Retention: many teachers feel undervalued. They give a lot but do not feel that what they give is appreciated. My experience has mainly been in supply and area cover although I now have a permanent position. The local authority where I work shows very little loyalty to staff who have worked as area cover with them for years. Every year round about March they have block interviews for permanent class positions which they try to fill before summer. You may pass these interviews but if you are not allocated a class position by summer you go back to the beginning and have to go through the whole process again. You are in competition with newly qualified teachers who have just finished their probation year, colleagues from your own local authority and, now, others from out with the local authority. In the meantime, as area cover, you could get sent anywhere and teach any age group/level. In 5 years, I have had varying lengths of contracts in 11 schools. In each new contract, I have started with yet another new age / level and in some schools have been teaching across all ages and levels. I have even been put into a multi-age ASN class with absolutely no training what-so-ever. You get the feeling after a while that you are just a body in front of a class rather than a professional with training and experience behind you. Whilst, I welcomed the opportunity to experience different levels initially, it became exhausting, constantly having to start afresh in getting to know a new school, new staff, new children, different resources. Continuity would also have been beneficial to my own personal development. As would having a clear route to CPD where a school was willing to spend money on you or give you responsibility for an area of learning. Why would they do this if you are just going to be allocated to another school after some months? If you are a good enough teacher to be allocated to any class you are a good enough teacher to be given a permanent class and councils should have a system where after a year or two of area cover you are offered a permanent class post if you want it. I think Glasgow City Council may already do this. Otherwise, teachers will feel demotivated, overloaded with the amount of constant change and new information, undervalued, exhausted by switching constantly among levels and moving between schools even on a weekly basis.

- Are there patterns or key reasons why some trainee teachers do not complete courses, or do not choose to go into teaching having qualified? The 10 month PGDE which I completed was too short and to be honest the lectures did not really correspond to the reality of life in a classroom. Some placements worked well whereas others did not because not all teachers were willing / confident enough to have a student teacher in their class. This is a requirement but if they do not feel able they need support too. Whilst study, reading, assignments are all part of a course, the addition of copious paperwork which often seemed irrelevant took away the fun of actually working with the children. If it were possible to have an 18 month course with more time in the classroom, observing and assisting different classes, I think this would help when actual teaching practice took place. Stress, illness, exhaustion, family circumstances, unrealistic expectations, uncertainty of what to prioritise in limited time are all possible reasons why courses are not
completed. I think the probation year is a great idea to get your teaching hours for registration. Again, the experience depends on your own circumstances, your approach to the year, the support you are given but I think that the programme I followed was a good, if exhausting, indication of what working as a teacher would be like. Teaching is hard work and you always work more hours than you are contracted to do. Often your social life suffers. You use your own money to buy things for your pupils and you spend a lot of money making resources. This is enough to put people off as they may feel they want to have a better work/life balance and not subsidise their workplace.

-How effective are the various approaches taken to cover shortages of teachers in schools?
There do not appear to be any approaches in the local authority where I work where some schools did not have any CCC cover for weeks and this continues now in one of the schools I work in. Perhaps a national audit of teachers through the GTCS and a matching exercise of those looking for work and where there are shortages might be a way to start. Allow head teachers to contact staff themselves rather than go through council offices where some staff seem not to know the areas to where they are sending staff. More flexible working - make it easier for teachers to work only a few days but don’t treat them like second class teachers by offering them a lower hourly rate!

-What factors influence teachers deciding whether to stay in the profession or to leave?
Their health - both mental and physical. Public sector workers are held to ransom and if they voice concerns about pay and conditions and vote for strike action they are told they are letting the children down. Teachers care about the children they teach but who cares about the teachers? Teachers choose to stay because they feel they have a calling to help children and they care about what will happen to them. It is a very fulfilling job and where I work in small rural schools is a great experience both in terms of supportive colleagues and the close understanding you have with the children and their families. Teachers do feel they have a responsibility and do not want to give up because they feel they are letting others down. However, there comes a point for many when they have to think about their own lives and families and what is best for them. Teachers often feel their professional judgement is constantly questioned by people who have not been trained as teachers. Initiatives are put in place which are not feasible in the time we have to teach or in the school environment we teach in. Teachers are not usually consulted about these new initiatives or if they are their views are usually not considered. The timetable has been becoming more and more crowded which means that children cannot consolidate what they have learned before something else new is presented to them. This is unfair on them. More reflective time is needed. Teachers also need time to consolidate their new learning and put new ideas into practice but you can't when you are not given the time to do so. There is often a feeling at meetings of half-finished projects / half-baked ideas which is very frustrating for many teachers who like to complete and evaluate learning.

-What factors influence teachers when deciding whether or not to apply for promotion to senior management/headteacher level?
Is the salary increase worth the extra stress and responsibility? Many teachers came into teaching to teach and work with the children not to be managers or financial administrators. They may feel they have achieved all they can in terms of teaching practice and need a new challenge of managing the bigger picture of the school community and focussing on particular school issues which need addressed.

ANONYMOUS 107

Thoughts about Teacher Recruitment and Retention

I have been a qualified teacher since 2008 and would like to share my opinions on teacher recruitment and retention. I, like many other teachers are contemplating leaving the profession in the next few years due to a great many reasons. Please find my reasons detailed below.

- **Workload** – I truly enjoy teaching but in recent years I find I can no longer be creative, spontaneous or truly responsive to the needs of the pupils in my charge. The reason- paperwork. I feel bogged down with the constant form filling, box ticking, planning, assessing, tracking and monitoring, evaluating, report writing and evidence gathering for inspection purposes.

- **Work/Life Balance** – the hours spent in school/weekends and holidays are unsustainable. I generally spend between 40 and 50 hours a week in the school building, spending more time working in the evenings and at weekends. On paper, the holidays teachers get are excellent but for many this time is spent, planning, marking and doing tasks that there was little time for during term time. This is a profession where you are unable to “switch off” which is leading to teacher burnout early on in teaching careers.

- **Class Sizes/ Lack of Support and Behaviour** – Class sizes have continued to grow in my school and with a lack of support staff, leave me unable to meet the needs of learners, many of which have additional learning needs such as ASD and ADHD. Low level behaviour issues, disrupt many classrooms. Armed with assertive discipline procedures many teachers find themselves having to give in depth explanations/justifications to parents who refuse to support your decision to discipline their children.

- **Curriculum Changes** - The introduction of the Curriculum for Excellence, which proposed to give teachers more autonomy in the classroom, has instead given rise to many hours spent trying to reinvent the wheel only to see this work superseded by yet another top down alteration. I feel overcrowding of the curriculum is a problem too. I would rather teach a few subject areas well than teach so many different subjects which I have had little time to plan and implement properly.

- **Initiative Overload** – Eco Schools, Rights Based Learning, Skills for Life Learning and work, Equity Week and AfL are to name but a few initiatives that seem to be taking too much time away from teaching and learning. All these initiatives have a positive message to convey but they are ‘taking over’ the
day to day routines of the school. If the levels of attainment are to rise then more time needs to be given to actual teaching.

- **Lack of Respect for the Profession** – Teaching was once a respected profession but this is not the case nowadays. The boundaries of what should be the role of a parent and the role of a teacher have become particularly blurred. With teachers faced with ever increasing responsibilities their wages do not reflect this. A lack of support from parents is a contributing factor to low staff morale and commitment to the profession. In recent years, the numbers of parents who use Facebook to rate, criticise and openly discuss teachers have led to an increase in stress, anxiety and depression among teachers thus making the profession a less desirable option.

- **Lack of Trust** – classroom observations, fear of inspection are not conducive to retaining trainee teachers or experienced teachers. The constant need to justify and explain your teaching practise leaves you anxious ‘that you are doing it all wrong’ and that you are the teacher who is letting the school down. Either trust in the teachers who are employed in our schools or don’t and see the numbers leaving the profession increase year after year.

I thoroughly enjoy the teaching part of my job but this seems to be so far down the list of priorities in schools. I am totally dissatisfied with the profession and can only see myself remaining in the profession if changes are made which actually allow me to teach.

**ANONYMOUS 108**

- What are the main challenges in relation to teacher recruitment and retention?

Teacher numbers are lower than ever in schools. In my 20 years of teaching, I now find that there is no ‘slack’ amongst staff. This means that all teachers are on minimum time. As a PT, I am taken below my ‘notional’ contact time every single week. In fact, on many weeks I have the same non-contact time as an unpromoted member of staff. I have to rely on doing much of my PT remit after school and in the evenings. This is having a massive impact on my home/family life.

- Are there patterns or key reasons why some trainee teachers do not complete courses, or do not choose to go into teaching having qualified?

Having mentored a probationer last year, I feel that probationers are put into a very pressured environment. They are expected to do too much and the evidence collation is unreasonable and unnecessary. I can see why this would put off some probationers.

- How effective are the various approaches taken to cover shortages of teachers in schools?

At present in our council we have been told that staff may be transferred to other schools where positions cannot be filled. This is having a massive
impact on staff morale and job satisfaction. Staff apply for jobs in specific
schools for a variety of reasons (location, desire to work in a particular school
etc). Moving schools is a massive upheaval and one that many staff do not
choose to do often. To be forced to move school is having a big impact.

We regularly have to send classes to the hall to be supervised by our senior
management team as we simply cannot staff cover when too many teachers
are absent, as there is simply not enough staff to cover classes.

-What factors influence teachers deciding whether to stay in the profession or
to leave?

Job satisfaction. Feeling like you are doing a good job – which I have to say
feels virtually impossible at the moment. Constant
changes. Workload. Changes to reduce workload that appear to be
increasing workload.

-What factors influence teachers when deciding whether or not to apply for
promotion to senior management/headteacher level?

The pressured environment that exists in teaching now has a major impact on
this. I have been a PT for many years and I would not consider applying for
promotion. If anything, I would be much more likely to consider applying for
an unpromoted post.

This feels like an all-time low in education in the last 20 years. We
desperately need more teachers, a reduction in the constant changes and an
opportunity to focus on learning and teaching without the constant meetings,
pressure to do after school revision, filling in of the same forms over and over,
needless paperwork. I could go on...

This response appears very negative. I love teaching and can think of no
other job I’d rather do. But this last few years have certainly made me
question if it is a profession I want to remain in for the next 20 years.

ANONYMOUS 109
Q1 What type of teaching role do you have
Secondary comprehensive

Q2 Whereabouts do you work?
Fife

Q4 What are the positives that keep you in the teaching profession?
Meeting and being a positive influence on society, young people, their
parents/family/carers and fellow professionals.

Q6 What would encourage you to seek promotion to senior management,
including to headteacher level? What would discourage you from seeking
promotion?
Clear training pathways and opportunities. Support, with good practice being demonstrated by current head teachers, including a healthy work/life balance. Weekly/monthly support meeting aka Social workers. Clear increased salary benefits.

Q7 What do you think are the main challenges, if any, in recruiting or retaining teachers (and other staff) at your school? (please feel free to provide details of practical experiences)

At this coastal, semi rural school travelling distance is an issue.

A few, repeat, few colleagues, are not supportive to others in the school and criticise others. This also includes Support and Admin staff.

Q8 Which particular subject specialisms/support roles face the greatest challenges with recruitment or retention?

My own area, Science esp. Chemistry.

Q9 Do you have any suggestions for how challenges with recruitment and retention might be addressed?

Emphasis the bright welcoming community and the work/life balance activities it offers.

Q10 Have any measures been put in place as a result of changes to staffing numbers in recent years at your school (examples include multi-school headship/leadership teams, composite classes, changes in the use/availability of support assistants)?

If so:

- What are these measures?
- How well are they working?
- Are these changes a permanent or a temporary measure (ie is it covering vacancies at present or is it to reflect the number of teacher/other posts has reduced?)

Fewer Support Staff is a definite disadvantage for all.

Q12 How would you describe general morale among staff (very good / quite good / quite low / very low) and what are the key factors that influence it?

Quite good. We are currently moving to a new building.

Additional comments

If you have any other comments please include them below:

I took advantage of the good, free education in Scotland. My parents wanted more for their two daughters than what they had. They were the best of parents. They both had left school at 14 years of age and were probably grouped as upper working class. Local Libraries supplied our books. They encouraged and supported in us in every way.

My sister and I qualified as teachers. Neither of our four children have become teachers. They all have the ability and personal qualities to do so. However, they do
not want to have to suffer the indiscipline that takes so much of teaching time and wears you down.

I drive 24 miles, passing several others High schools to work in my current school. The main reason being that the majority of children show an interest in learning.

This of course, usually comes from their home.

The country needs another slogan which respects learning.

The country need to respect education.

To recruit and retain the most able of teachers this is the priority.

**ANONYMOUS 110**

**Challenges to teacher recruitment and retention**

The main challenges to teacher recruitment are that the profession cannot adequately compete with other industries in the way that it has in the past and that the profession itself has been devalued. These factors also undermine teacher retention.

Factors which influence the attractiveness of the profession

Pay has diminished in relative terms; working conditions have been eroded; and public trust in the profession is lower than in the past. The environment in which teaching competes with other professions to attract skilled graduates has changed in ways which have compounded the problem. There are more graduates each year leaving higher education than in the past, yet this is not reflected in the numbers joining and being retained by the profession.

Salaries are easily outstripped by those in other sectors. This is reflected in the fact that recruitment and retention have been lower in the STEM subjects, where average starting salaries for graduates are in line with the higher end of the teacher pay scale.

**Insights into the process for recruitment**

The profession would do well to redress the issue of teachers’ pay by realigning it with the rest of the economy. Public sector pay freezes and below-inflation wage rises have contributed to both aspects of the challenge outlined above. Simply put, we cannot expect to compete with other sectors in the same way in which we did in past unless we can offer a package which is at the very least as competitive with those sectors as it was in the past. To redress this imbalance we have lost ground to make up. To fail to address this competitive gulf is to contribute towards its widening.

**Key reasons why some trainee teachers do not complete courses**

1. Some trainee teachers do not have the skills required to perform the job adequately
2. Mature trainee teachers are, by definition, willing to consider other sectors
3. Mature trainee teachers tend to have marketable skills in them
4. Trainee teachers who have just completed undergraduate studies can easily move to other graduate schemes
5. Trainee teachers who have just completed undergraduate studies can see that the top end of the teachers’ pay scale is well below the market value for their skills.

Impact of teacher shortages

The number one impact is that the quality of education provided to learners will fall. Educational outcomes will be adversely affected and successive generations of young people entering the workforce will be increasingly disadvantaged as both the number and the proportion of high calibre qualified teachers decrease.

This will be felt most acutely in the STEM subjects as they are currently at the sharper end of the competitive deficit.

Effectiveness of approaches

Moves to incentivise graduates with golden hellos have served only to reinforce the view that the package on offer is in itself insufficient. Widening the pool of graduates who can access the profession by loosening the entry requirements serve only to devalue the profession further. Not only have these steps been unsuccessful elsewhere, they have shown a tendency to exacerbate the problem and therefore must be avoided.

Factors influencing teachers’ decisions whether to stay in or leave the profession

1. Competition from other sectors
2. Working conditions within the education sector
3. Ability of the individual to leverage better pay and conditions in other sectors
4. Confidence in the profession’s ability to compete with other sectors in the future

Factors influencing teachers’ decisions to apply for promotion

The main issue here is that management is not teaching. Many teachers prefer working in the classroom to performing administrative tasks. Progression does not exist within the teaching profession itself only out of it (be that into administrative roles within the education sector or into another sector of the economy). Attempts to provide alternative pathways to progression for classroom practitioners have been blocked. Therefore attempts to recruit and retain based on the prospect of promotion are not attractive to those who want to be classroom teachers rather than managers. Management and administrative roles themselves exist across all sectors and as such do not represent a strong pull factor into the profession.

ANONYMOUS 111

- What are the main challenges in relation to teacher recruitment and retention?
  Even though the school I am in is only 30 minutes on a train from Glasgow, it is very hard to get a high number of applicants for a post; this is because we are grouped in Argyll & Bute council on myjobscotland and that will instantly restrict interest.

  What factors influence teachers deciding whether to stay in the profession or to leave?
For retention. There can be a lack of job satisfaction, especially when bureaucracy become insurmountable. There is also a narrowing of job progression or development. I am a history teacher and work within a faculty. This means there is only one promoted post amongst 13 members of staff - hardly ideal.

Since the chartered teacher scheme was removed there is little advancement unless you pursue a guidance route. That is not everyone’s desire and can lead to unsuitable people gaining these roles.

An ideal solution would be reintroducing Assistant Principle Teachers in departments and faculties of over 10 staff. It would help the huge workload some PTs have to contend with.

**ANONYMOUS 112**

I would like to see a consistent application process for those aspiring to a promoted post. All local authorities should support an application process where Head Teachers’ Reports are requested ONLY if the candidate is being invited for interview, and not before, which is the current situation. Teachers feel uncomfortable having to tell their HT every time they are applying. Some teachers apply for 10 to 15 jobs before they are successful and their HT has to know about every single application. No other profession works this way.

**ANONYMOUS 113**

- What are the main challenges in relation to teacher recruitment and retention?

There is very little chance of career progression in teaching. In the past each subject had a Principal Teacher with some departments having Assistant PTs too. Now there are only a handful of faculty heads in each school so far fewer opportunities for promotion unless you want to pursue a career in Pastoral Care which isn't for everyone.

The Chartered Teacher scheme has been scrapped so that avenue for progression has also been closed.

We are often treated in a very patronising way by government and local authority. Having been an accountant prior to becoming a teacher I'm shocked at the lack of professional respect and trust in our professionalism that we are shown by our employers.

The amount of change that is going on in scottish education is shocking. I feel like I'm running flat out just to keep up with the changes that both Education Scotland and the SQA seem constantly to be making/imposing. It wouldn't be so bad if the changes were for the better but it seems to me that even in my relatively short time in teaching (about 10 years) we've been through an enormous amount of change (with all the work that has brought) but now seem to be cycling back to the old models.
I am very aware that the lack of respect we receive from employers is mirrored in society at large and many people seem to think that we are work shy or aren't working hard enough. This is connected to a problem where parents seem to hand over responsibility for raising their children to the school. If their children's behaviour is bad, it is the fault of the school and the school isn't doing enough to support the child. We actually need more support from parents and for them to take responsibility for their children.

There is a tendency for pupils to do similar and blame their bad behaviour or poor performance on the teacher. I have heard pupils saying that such and such a teacher 'can't control a class' when they themselves are the pupils causing the disruption.

On top of this, we've had years of pay stagnation meaning real terms pay cuts and the changes to the pension scheme some years ago will also have an impact.

- Are there patterns or key reasons why some trainee teachers do not complete courses, or do not choose to go into teaching having qualified?

Perhaps it is simply seeing the reality of our lives during placements?

- How effective are the various approaches taken to cover shortages of teachers in schools?

- What factors influence teachers deciding whether to stay in the profession or to leave?

Please see my first response

- What factors influence teachers when deciding whether or not to apply for promotion to senior management/headteacher level?

There are so few middle management posts these days there is only a small group of teachers who are in a position to apply for SMT jobs so the pool of potential candidates for the jobs is much smaller than it would have been previously. And the pay differential between a faculty head for a large faculty and a DHT may not be enough to justify the additional responsibility of that role

GTCS

We have no option but to pay fees to this organisation which as far as we can does nothing for us other than complicate the CPD process with their florid standards. You'll probably be aware of the recent outcry against the increase in the fee which goes to show the disdain the GTCS is held in among teachers.

Quality of student teachers

Regarding why some students leave the training process it could be that universities are recruiting inappropriate candidates. Furthmore I've got experience of student teachers who are clearly not up to scratch but are waved through teacher training by tutors who seem to be unable to fail anyone which might explain why retention isn't as good as it should be.
Pay compared to other graduate professions

This refers to the point about the attractiveness of teaching compared to other professions. As I've already said I don't believe we are treated as professionals either by our employers or society generally but the obvious point to make is about pay. Almost all secondary teachers in Scotland have spent at least five years at university, doing their undergraduate degrees then post grad teacher training. For almost all teachers our absolute pay limit is around £35k. Compare that to other professions.

Recruitment for unpromoted and promoted posts

It strikes me as someone who has had a different career before coming to teaching that the interview process adopted by schools is completely bizarre. In teaching you are not interviewed you are given an oral exam. There seems to be no room for interview panels to probe candidates and challenge responses to get a better idea of their suitability for the post or their character. Instead the panels stick to their 5 or 6 pre-chosen scripted questions and the candidate who has been best coached in responding to those questions will be appointed. It appears to me to be a system where those who know the jargon will rise regardless of ability.

I hope this is helpful and provides food for thought.

ANONYMOUS 114

What are the main challenges in relation to teacher recruitment and retention?

My experience of this issue is limited to the Scottish Highlands. I live in a rural area and I know of several schools struggling to recruit and retain teachers. I also know of many local people who hold degrees (and postgraduate degrees) in key subjects who would love to train as a teacher but cannot do so because of the distances involved in accessing the PGDE qualification and the difficulties involved in having qualifications gained abroad recognised. Almost all of these people have children in school in Sutherland, own their own homes and are already involved in the life of the school and wider community. They would make great teachers.

When I did my PGDE (Secondary) training in 2014, my four children were enrolled in two different schools twenty-five miles apart in Sutherland (two in primary, two in secondary). To gain my PGDE, it was necessary for me to travel to Aberdeen every week (outside of school placement weeks) for lectures and tutorials. I left home at 4.15am every Monday to make it to Aberdeen for 9am lectures, staying over one or two nights a week. This was possible only because my partner worked from home.

Arrangements whereby a PGDE (Secondary) could be gained through distance learning combined with placements in local schools would significantly alter the recruitment and retention issue. Working in schools and learning ‘on the job’ is by far the most valuable part of the PGDE. My suggestion would therefore be to create a one-year PGDE (Secondary) which
offered some kind of basic salary and a supported position in a local school or schools. This, combined with home study, would be ideal. So in a sense, more like probation year. Many of the seminars I attended in Aberdeen during my teacher training year on topics such as child protection or autism were repeated during my probationary year. This felt like an unnecessary duplication of effort and something that better planning between local authorities and academic institutions could address.

What are the factors that influence whether teaching is considered an attractive profession compared to other professions by those that might consider a career in teaching?

Progression on a pay scale is attractive, together with the opportunity to be creative in the way lessons are prepared and delivered. There is actually a high degree of autonomy in this profession although it may not appear so from the outside!

Are there patterns or key reasons why some trainee teachers do not complete courses or do not chose to go into teaching having qualified?

I do not believe that the one-year PGDE adequately prepares teachers for delivering certificated courses. Much of the current PGDE is focused on pedagogical theory and BGE with little or no teaching around content, delivery and assessment of Nationals and Highers. Schools assume students are up to speed with course specifications, assessment methods and so on, but this is simply not the case. Also, the quality of teaching and learning materials available in schools seems to be entirely dependent on the enthusiasm and commitment of individual teachers. New teachers are often overwhelmed at finding themselves in the position of having to create new materials and assessment materials in order to deliver the curriculum.

I also believe that struggling with behaviour management is a major reason why teachers choose to leave the profession early. During PGDE, many students wanted to talk about behaviour management but there was a perception that this was an issue for schools, not the university, and also that it was a relatively minor issue. For many new teachers, however, the reality of dealing with persistent low level disruptive behaviour remains the most stressful and challenging aspect of the job. I am very lucky to work in a school where behaviour is excellent. I find that I can teach much more effectively in this environment but I know of other teachers for whom this is a daily struggle.

Finally, the number of class contact hours in a working week is far too high. Time for planning, assessment and CPD is minimal. It is hard to see this as anything other than a cost-cutting exercise (more class contact time = less teachers required). In reality, this means a much greater workload, less feedback for pupils, little opportunity for reflection and eventually, burnout.

How effective are the various approaches taken to cover shortages of teachers in schools?
My experience here is again limited to the Highlands. The approaches used appear to work reasonably well in this area, although there is a lack of specialist supply teachers.

I am aware, however, that the impact of shortages in particular subjects has had a very serious effect on the attainment of some pupils in this area.

What factors influence teachers when deciding whether or not to apply for promotion to senior management/headteacher level?

I enjoy being in the classroom and to give this up for a purely administrative role would be unattractive to me. I also feel that managers or administrative heads who do not teach at all may lose sight of the very real challenges – and joys – of the job. Personally, I feel that all headteachers and members of SMT should be required to spend some time in the classroom each week!