Supplementary evidence to the Education and Skills Committee - Workforce planning in Scotland’s schools: Teach First - June 2017

Introduction
Teach First welcomes the opportunity to provide the Education and Skills Committee with further supplementary evidence following our initial submission to the Committee’s call for evidence on Teacher Workforce planning for Scotland’s schools on 25 April 2017. We have provided this supplementary evidence in the context of numerous mentions of our charity’s work over the last number of weeks in the Committee, the Chamber and the Scottish media. Given the Committee’s busy evidence diary, we were unable to provide our own oral evidence in relation to some of the particular citations of our work, but we feel it is important the Committee has a complete picture, and an evidence base, when considering these issues.

Our purpose
Given the numerous mentions of our work during the Committee’s inquiry, we feel it is worth restating the charitable purpose of our organisation. Our mission to end educational inequality drives everything we do - all of our work involves partnerships with universities, schools, charities, businesses and individuals who share our vision that no child’s success should be limited by their background. We train and support committed individuals to become inspirational classroom leaders in low-income communities across England and Wales, and across 40 other countries around the world through the Teach for All global network.

The quality of our training
- Teach First participants spend significant time in school before the beginning of the school year, which puts them on an accelerated path. In the coming year, participants undertaking Teach First will have planned, taught and had feedback on 10 lessons before starting teaching in September. This is significantly more teaching practice than other trainees receive on other programmes. Much of this time in school will involve an academic from the University. This is a similar approach as deployed by the University of Glasgow's model in education (in turn based on medical training) where the academic is in school alongside the trainee and the teachers within school, which evidence suggests brings more rapid progress for trainee teachers.
- Last year, Teach First was inspected by Ofsted in each of our local areas (and their partnership with universities and schools). The quality of teacher training was judged to be Outstanding by Ofsted across England in 41 of 48 categories (and good in the remaining categories).1
- The positivity of schools’ experience with Teach First is reflected in the anonymous surveys that are conducted with them each year. This year 89% of partner headteachers said they would recommend partnering with Teach First to another school and 92% are satisfied with the contribution of our participants to their school. 91% of in-school mentors rate our initial teacher training as good or better.
- Training to be a new teacher requires academic rigour, a detailed understanding of the research and practice of learning and training at the highest level. It is for this reason that we have worked with eight universities to collaboratively design our rigorous and high-quality programme. Eight universities have worked with us to develop the only two year Post Graduate Diploma in Education in England, which they help deliver and accredit as part of our two years of training, in which all gain Qualified Teacher Status. The award is worth double the academic credits of a standard PGCE in England.

Our impact
- Independent evidence of Teach First participants (i.e in their first two years) by the Institute of Education, researched by Dr. Rebecca Allen, shows that, despite still working towards their qualifications, they are increasing the GCSE results of students. A GCSE student in a school with our teachers improved by one grade overall across their eight best GCSEs.2

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1 The nine Ofsted reports can be found here: https://reports.ofsted.gov.uk/inspection-reports/find-inspection-report/results/any/any/any/any/any/Teach%20First/any/any/any/0/0#search1
The research also looked at the impact of Teach First teachers on individual departments within schools. Here it found that our teachers could be adding as much as 30% of a grade per student compared to other teachers within the same department. The research concludes that as this impact is so significant, it is likely that the increase in pupil performance is not simply down to the teachers’ direct impact on their students. Instead it is suggested that the presence of Teach First teachers “also raises the teaching standards of those who teach alongside them in the same department”. It is therefore very likely that Teach First teachers are not only having a direct impact on improving pupils’ results, but may also be helping to raise the overall standard of teaching within their school department.

Dr Allen’s research found that departments within schools without Teach First participants achieved 9% lower GCSE grade performance compared to other departments in the same school before partnering with Teach First. Within two years of partnering, these departments outperformed other departments in the same school by 16%.

In addition, for the last three years, Teach First asked their teachers to anonymously track the progress their pupils are making in one of their classes. In both their first and second years of training, the participants are making above nationally expected progress with their pupils every year.

Recruiting for our programmes

- Since placing our first cohort in London in 2003, we have recruited nearly 8,700 teachers and now partner with schools serving low-income communities in every region of England and in Wales.
- In 2003 our training programme entered the UK Times Top 100 Graduate Employers at number 62, moving to 19 in 2005. Now, more than ten years later, our programme which focuses teaching in low-income communities is the fourth (2017) most prestigious career choice for new graduates.
- We recruit around 5% of all new teachers in England and around 20% of new teachers in low income areas.
- Our programmes are very popular, with schools’ demand exceeding supply. We have a rigorous assessment process in place to ensure we recruit only the most talented graduates, with the necessary talent and skillsets, to work with the young people most in need.

Retention

- A further independent study by Dr Rebecca Allen and Education Datalab showed that Teach First teachers are most likely to teach in, and stay teaching in, low income schools.
  - Four years after starting in teaching 82% of those Teach First trainees still in the profession, are in the schools serving the most deprived communities, compared to less than 50% of teachers from other routes.
- Teach First believes to tackle such an entrenched problem as educational inequality, leaders are needed across schools but also across all of society who are committed to this issue and know what it’s like to work in a challenging school.
  - 56% of all the teachers trained by Teach First since 2003 are currently teaching, with 68% working directly in education.
  - All Teach First teachers commit to teaching in a low-income school whereas, in 2015, Ofsted found that just 15% of teachers in England would look for a future role at a school more challenging than their own.
- Another piece of independent analysis by Dr Rebecca Allen looked at what happened to participants when they have finished the two-year programme. The research found those recruited and developed through Teach First are:
  - Seven times more likely to be in senior school leadership positions
  - Taking on more additional responsibilities and middle leadership positions, demonstrated by them earning, on average, £3,000 and £6,000 more by years three and five in teaching, respectively
  - Three times more likely to be teaching in schools serving low income communities three years after starting to teach
  - Working in schools in challenging circumstances; the majority teach in schools rated by Ofsted as Requiring Improvement or Unsatisfactory.

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3 The full report can be found here: https://www.teachfirst.org.uk/sites/default/files/The_careers_of_Teach_First_Ambassadors_who Remain_in_teaching.pdf