



**Children and Families Overview and
Scrutiny Committee**
10 September 2008

**Report from the Director of Children
and Families**

For Information

Wards Affected:
ALL

Trends in Teacher Recruitment and Retention

1.0 Summary

- 1.1 The recruitment and retention of high quality teaching staff remains a priority for Brent schools.
- 1.2 Pressures on the supply of teachers remain. The teaching workforce, particularly in senior positions, is ageing but to counter this, the numbers of places available for trainee teachers has increased. Overall, the pressures faced by most local authorities are in the recruitment and retention of senior managers in schools.
- 1.3 Vacancies in Brent Schools remain stable, at about 1.1% of the teaching workforce, which is average for the London region.
- 1.4 Retention of newly qualified teachers compares favourably with other London authorities, but retention rates for primary teachers fell between 2006 and 2007. Strategies are in place to enhance retention of the schools' workforce.

2.0 Recommendations

- 2.1 That Members note and comment on the contents of the report.

3.0 Background

- 3.1 The School Staffing Regulations (2003) and the Teachers' Pay and Conditions documents place the power to make decisions on recruitment –

how it is carried out, who is recruited, what salaries are paid (within national frameworks) - and how individual school workforces are structured, with schools.

- 3.2 The role of the Local Authority has been to work with individual schools, helping them to meet their overall recruitment needs, ensuring that there are no areas of shortage amongst Brent schools and to provide a bought back recruitment service, offering schools a value for money alternative to external providers.
- 3.3 At the request of schools, this service provides a pool of primary phase supply teachers and staff available for short term through to permanent appointments. Schools, additionally use external providers for both supply cover and longer term appointments while secondary schools have a co-operatively operated supply and recruitment service.
- 3.4 Recent years have seen a number of factors impact on the supply of school teachers with an overall shortage of teachers being amongst the most important. Local Authorities, including Brent, have had to take significant action to ensure that schools have a sufficient supply of teaching staff to continue to provide a high quality education for children in the borough.
- 3.5 To counter the shortfall in numbers of UK trained teachers, overseas recruitment took place on a significant scale in 2002 and 2003 (when the teacher vacancy rate reached 4.3%). These recruitment campaigns offered a short term solution to the requirements of the time and provided Brent with a suitably experienced workforce. A protocol agreed between Commonwealth Governments now prohibits the operation of these recruitment drives. While ad hoc recruitment of overseas trained teachers continues to play an important part workforce provision, particularly in respect of short-term placements and supply, focus has shifted, nationally and locally, to the supply of UK trained classroom teachers
- 3.6 Nationally, the supply of school teachers is increasing. The Training and Development Agency for Schools, which controls the supply of places on the various routes into teaching, has over recent years provided increased funding and improved the supply of newcomers to the teaching profession.

4.0 Trends and issues in Brent

- 4.1 Schools' devolved powers of recruitment, and some schools' use of external payroll providers, mean that only partial and fragmented information is available on recruitment and retention in Brent. However, most Primary schools buy into some aspect of the teacher recruitment service and this gives an impression of issues in the teaching workforce. The People Centre also carries out surveys of schools which, while response rates are generally only around 50%, indicate areas in which there are concerns for schools.
- 4.2 The annual school workforce return (618g) to the Department for Children Schools and Families shows that vacancy rates in Brent are in line with those of other London boroughs. The latest return, from January 2008, shows a vacancy

rate of 1.1%, which compares with Brent's ten year average of 1.75% and which is significantly lower than the 4.3% rate from 2003.

- 4.3 Recruitment into shortage subjects, such as Maths and Sciences remains stable, with no vacancies reported in the 618g although, anecdotally, some schools report difficulties in recruiting high quality candidates in these areas.
- 4.4 Following the recruitment drives of 2002 and 2003, there remain a number of Overseas Trained Teachers in Brent schools. A significant number of these have gained Qualified Teacher Status in the UK, while others serve to fill short to medium term vacancies. These teachers provide a substantial additional resource for schools in the borough. They benefit from having been trained in similar pedagogical practice and similar curricula, are recruited into positions on merit and often have high quality training and experience from their home countries.
- 4.5 In common with the UK as a whole, Brent has an ageing teaching workforce. Nationally, 36% of all teaching staff are aged 50 or above, in Brent the figure is 32%.
- 4.6 This position is more marked in headteacher roles. In 2007/8, fourteen headteachers reached or exceeded the age of 60, at which age they can retire with no detrimental effect on their pension. A further 18 headteachers are aged between 55 and 59 with 22 more aged 50-54.
- 4.7 Ordinary recruitment processes, supported by the Targeted Support and Succession Planning programmes, are reversing this trend as younger headteachers are employed as a result of successful recruitment campaigns. Brent governing bodies continue to take a pragmatic 'best person for the job' approach to the recruitment of their senior leaders. This means that new headteachers are appointed at any age – from 32 at one end of the scale to mid-fifties on the other. The average age at which Brent headteachers were appointed to their current posts is 43, which is in line with national figure.
- 4.8 We recognise, however, that age related retirement is not the only causal factor for the resignation of headteachers. Only six of sixteen resignations in the last three years have been for this reason and while it is difficult to plan for other factors, awareness of the possibility of headteachers leaving allows us to ensure that there are sufficient suitable potential replacements for governors to consider.
- 4.9 However, this position is mitigated by a lower than average turnover rate 8.47% in the last 3 years, compared to a national average of 12% and also by an improved ability to recruit to headteacher positions.
- 4.10 Improved planning, better advertising campaigns and the benefits of the Targeted Support programme have almost entirely removed the need for headteacher positions to be re-advertised. In the three years previous school years, 75% of headteacher positions required a second attempt at recruitment, in 2007 no primary schools recruited first time to their vacant headteacher post. However, in the current year there have been seven schools advertise for a new headteacher, and only one has been unable to make an appointment.
- 4.11 The school workforce continues to be diverse. In the 2008 618g return, the ethnicity of over 90% of Brent teaching staff was recorded. Of these, 42% recorded themselves as White British and 33.8% recorded themselves as being from BME groups. This makes Brent's teaching workforce amongst the most diverse in the country.

5.0 Recruitment and Retention work in progress

- 5.1 To promote retention within all levels of staffing the Authority provides a wide range of highly regarded continuing professional development (CPD) opportunities. These complement the schools' own training and development programmes and access to external training providers. These CPD opportunities play a key role in schools' performance management processes and the school improvement agenda.
- 5.2 Succession planning is of particular importance. The School Improvement Service runs a number of programmes designed to assist teachers in taking the next step in their careers, such as preparation for middle leadership and deputy headteacher roles, and these are both popular and well regarded, and prepare teachers for leadership positions.
- 5.3 In conjunction with the National College of School Leadership a programme of targeted support was undertaken in the current school year. Twenty two senior staff who had completed the National Professional Qualification for Headteachers were provided with a tailored programme of training and mentoring to maximise their chances of success in becoming Headteachers. Eight of the cohort have become Headteachers (permanent or interim) or Associate Headteachers in federated schools.
- 5.4 It is likely that this programme will be repeated in the coming school year and it is envisaged that this will help to counter the issue of the ageing Headteacher and Deputy Headteacher workforce and build leadership skills for the future.
- 5.5 In addition to work aimed at securing succession within schools, the People Centre recruits annually to a pool of Newly Qualified Teachers (NQTs). All schools are able to access this pool, although it is significantly more popular amongst primary teachers than secondary. This year saw 114 primary NQTs appointed to the pool and 52 of these appointed to teaching positions in Brent primary schools. However, only 4 secondary phase NQTs were appointed to Brent schools.
- 5.6 Alongside the recruitment pool, significant induction and development opportunities are provided for Brent's NQTs through the national statutory induction support programme, which is monitored by the Local Authority, and a programme of CPD provided by the School Improvement Service
- 5.7 Data on NQT retention has been collected annually since 2006 (see Tables 1a, 1b, 2a and 2b below). The 2008 survey will be carried out during September and October.
- 5.8 Retention rates after one year were high in the 2006 survey – 90% for primary teachers; 84.3% for secondary teachers. However, in 2007, primary retention after one year of teaching was significantly lower – 73.5%, whilst secondary retention improved slightly – 86.2%. The percentage of teachers moving to a school outside Brent after one year increased between 2006 and 2007, whilst the percentage of teachers leaving the profession decreased.

5.9 After three years of teaching, retention rates were comparable in the two surveys- 60.3% compared with 59.2% for primary teachers; 55% in both years for secondary teachers. The majority of teachers who left after three years moved to a school outside Brent.

Whereabouts of NQTs after 1 Year

Table 1a

2007 Survey	Still at school	Left for another Brent school	Left for school outside Brent	Left teaching
All Schools	81.99%	1.86%	10.56%	3.73%
Primary	73.53%	1.47%	17.65%	2.94%
Secondary	86.25%	2.50%	6.25%	5.00%

Table 1b

2006 Survey	Still at school	Left for another Brent school	Left for school outside Brent	Left teaching
All Schools	85.40%	0.00%	6.57%	8.03%
Primary	90.00%	0.00%	4.00%	6.00%
Secondary	84.34%	0.00%	6.02%	9.64%

Whereabouts of NQTs after 3 Years

Table 2a

2007 Survey	Still at school	Left for another Brent school	Left for school outside Brent	Left teaching	Not known	Left other
All Schools	56.21%	1.18%	28.99%	10.65%	0.59%	2.37%
Primary	60.32%	1.59%	31.75%	3.17%	0.00%	3.17%
Secondary	55.00%	0.00%	28.00%	15.00%	1.00%	1.00%

Table 2b

2006 Survey	Still at school	Left for another Brent school	Left for school outside Brent	Left teaching	Not known
All Schools	55.34%	2.91%	29.13%	11.65%	0.97%
Primary	59.18%	2.04%	26.53%	12.24%	0.00%
Secondary	55.10%	2.04%	28.57%	12.24%	2.04%

- 5.7 Support is also provided for those undertaking employment based routes into teaching. We recruit to a pool of Teaching Assistants, whose details are then made available to schools. Six of these potential TAs have been appointed to Brent schools. Development programmes, such as the Specialist Teaching Assistant Certificate (STA) programme and training and assessment for Higher Level Teaching Assistant (HLTA) status are also available to TAs via the School Improvement Service. Support is also given to STA graduates who wish to complete foundation degrees in learning support. Such programmes increase the skills and abilities of these members of staff, providing a more flexible workforce, and improving the likelihood of their retention.
- 5.8 Brent works closely with training providers and schools to provide opportunities for staff to attend the Overseas Trained Teacher (OTTP), Graduate Teacher (GTP) and Registered Teacher programmes. Each of these routes allows those working in schools the opportunity to gain Qualified Teacher status, increasing the numbers of suitably qualified and experienced people available from which schools can recruit. In 2007/08, 12 candidates have completed the GTP and 18 the OTTP.
- 5.9 Other initiatives to enhance retention have been developed through the school workforce remodelling agenda including policies on 'Dedicated Headship Time', seminars on work-life balance, and financial and officer support for schools wishing to take part in the national Wellbeing Project. 25 schools had joined the Wellbeing Project by July 2008.
- 6.0 Future Plans**
- 6.1 To provide improved management information locally we are consulting on introducing an exit Interview policy for Newly Qualified Teachers through the Workforce Development Partnership. Additional information will also become available from the School Workforce Census, which will begin to be implemented in 2009.
- 6.2 To focus the NQT pool for 2009 on the attraction of secondary trained candidates and to work with schools and the Brent Secondary Supply service to adopt a more co-ordinated approach to recruitment in this phase.
- 6.3 To continue to work with training providers to secure places for those who wish to become Teaching Assistants, and those support staff who wish to become teachers, in addition to explore further programmes such as Teach

First and Future Leaders to ensure that schools have the widest available options in recruitment.

- 6.4 To continue the successful 'Targeted Support' programme, enhancing the chances of Brent schools recruiting successfully to leadership positions.
- 6.5 To continue the work begun with the Department for Children, Schools and Families as an 'early adopter' authority for the proposed national shared recruitment frameworks for both temporary and permanent staff in schools, ensuring that schools are provided with value for money, quality assured services whether these are provided by Brent or other, external, partners.

Background Papers

2008 – 618g statistical return

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