OXFORDSHIRE COUNTY COUNCIL

Notice of a Meeting

Education Scrutiny Committee
Monday, 12 December 2016 at 10.00 am
Rooms 1&2 - County Hall, New Road, Oxford OX1 1ND

Membership

Chairman Councillor Mark Gray
Deputy Chairman - Councillor Gill Sanders

Councillors:	Kevin Bulmer	John Howson	Sandy Lovatt
	John Christie	Richard Langridge	Michael Waine
Co-optees:	Richard Brown	Mrs Sue Matthew	
By Invitation:	Ian Jones	Carole Thomson	

Notes: *Date of next meeting: 13 March 2017*

What does this Committee review or scrutinise?
- a focus on the following key areas:
  - work in relation to the education strategy, and including review of an annual report on progress;
  - constructive challenge on performance issues highlighting issues where the Committee can support the improvement dialogue;
  - reviewing the Council's education functions including early years, Special Education Needs and school place planning;
  - reviewing the progress of, and any issues emanating from, the School Organisation Stakeholder Group with regard to admissions patterns and arrangements;
  - reviewing issues raised by the Schools Forum.
- assists the Council in its role of championing good educational outcomes for Oxfordshire's children and young people;
- provides a challenge to schools and academies and to hold them to account for their academic performance;
- promotes jointed up working across organisations in the education sector within Oxfordshire.

How can I have my say?
We welcome the views of the community on any issues in relation to the responsibilities of this Committee. Members of the public may ask to speak on any item on the agenda or may suggest matters which they would like the Committee to look at. **Requests to speak must be submitted to the Committee Officer below no later than 9 am on the working day before the date of the meeting.**

For more information about this Committee please contact:

Chairman	-	Councillor Mark Gray
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		deborah.miller@oxfordshire.gov.uk

P G Clark

Peter G. Clark
County Director

December 2016

About the County Council
The Oxfordshire County Council is made up of 63 councillors who are democratically elected every four years. The Council provides a range of services to Oxfordshire's 678,000 residents. These include:

schools	social & health care	libraries and museums
the fire service	roads	trading standards
land use	transport planning	waste management

Each year the Council manages £0.9 billion of public money in providing these services. Most decisions are taken by a Cabinet of 9 Councillors, which makes decisions about service priorities and spending. Some decisions will now be delegated to individual members of the Cabinet.

About Scrutiny
Scrutiny is about:
- Providing a challenge to the Cabinet
- Examining how well the Cabinet and the Authority are performing
- Influencing the Cabinet on decisions that affect local people
- Helping the Cabinet to develop Council policies
- Representing the community in Council decision making
- Promoting joined up working across the authority's work and with partners

Scrutiny is NOT about:
- Making day to day service decisions
- Investigating individual complaints.

What does this Committee do?
The Committee meets up to 6 times a year or more. It develops a work programme, which lists the issues it plans to investigate. These investigations can include whole committee investigations undertaken during the meeting, or reviews by a panel of members doing research and talking to lots of people outside of the meeting. Once an investigation is completed the Committee provides its advice to the Cabinet, the full Council or other scrutiny committees. Meetings are open to the public and all reports are available to the public unless exempt or confidential, when the items would be considered in closed session.

If you have any special requirements (such as a large print version of these papers or special access facilities) please contact the officer named on the front page, giving as much notice as possible before the meeting

A hearing loop is available at County Hall.

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recycled paper

AGENDA

1. **Introduction and Welcome**

2. **Apologies for Absence and Temporary Appointments**

3. **Declarations of Interest - see guidance note of the back page**

4. **Minutes**

   To approve the minutes of the meeting held on 26 September 2016 (**ESC4**) and to receive information arising from them.

5. **Petitions and Public Address**

6. **Recruitment and Retention of Newly Qualified Teachers in Oxfordshire Schools** (Pages 1 - 86)

   10:15

   Dr Mary Wild, Head of the School of Education, Oxford Brookes University and Dr Katherine Burn, Oxford University Department of Education will present a report of research undertaken by the University of Oxford and Oxford Brookes University for the Strategic Schools Partnership Board.

7. **Education Attainment Report (Secondary) 2016 - Provisional Results** (Pages 87 - 98)

   11:00

   The report presents an overview of the provisional educational outcomes of children and young people in Oxfordshire secondary schools for the academic year 2015-16.

   The Education Scrutiny Committee is RECOMMENDED to note the 2015/16 provisional Education Attainment Outcomes as detailed in this report.

8. **Elective Home Education Annual Report** (Pages 99 - 108)

   12:00

   Rachel Etheridge, Senior County Attendance Officer will present the Annual Report on Elective Home Education in Oxfordshire.

   The Education Scrutiny Committee is RECOMMENDED to consider and comment on the report.

9.   **Effectiveness of the pupil place planning process** (Pages 109 - 120)

12:30

Oxfordshire is experiencing rapid growth and this is having a significant impact on the demand for, and supply of, school places. Effective pupil place planning is essential to ensure the needs of Oxfordshire families are met, and a crucial component of strategic planning for growth across the county.

The report sets out the pupil place planning process in Oxfordshire, summarises current pupil planning data, and comments on specific issues relating to pupil place planning.

The Education Scrutiny Committee is asked to consider and comment on the report.

10.   **Forward Plan and Committee Business** (Pages 121 - 124)

An opportunity to discuss and prioritise future topics for the Committee, potential approaches to its work and to discuss the schedule for future meetings.

CLOSE OF MEETING

1.00 pm.

Declarations of Interest

The duty to declare…..
Under the Localism Act 2011 it is a criminal offence to
(a) fail to register a disclosable pecuniary interest within 28 days of election or co-option (or re-election or re-appointment), or
(b) provide false or misleading information on registration, or
(c) participate in discussion or voting in a meeting on a matter in which the member or co-opted member has a disclosable pecuniary interest.

Whose Interests must be included?
The Act provides that the interests which must be notified are those of a member or co-opted member of the authority, **or**
• those of a spouse or civil partner of the member or co-opted member;
• those of a person with whom the member or co-opted member is living as husband/wife
• those of a person with whom the member or co-opted member is living as if they were civil partners.
(in each case where the member or co-opted member is aware that the other person has the interest).

What if I remember that I have a Disclosable Pecuniary Interest during the Meeting?
The Code requires that, at a meeting, where a member or co-opted member has a disclosable interest (of which they are aware) in any matter being considered, they disclose that interest to the meeting. The Council will continue to include an appropriate item on agendas for all meetings, to facilitate this.

Although not explicitly required by the legislation or by the code, it is recommended that in the interests of transparency and for the benefit of all in attendance at the meeting (including members of the public) the nature as well as the existence of the interest is disclosed.

A member or co-opted member who has disclosed a pecuniary interest at a meeting must not participate (or participate further) in any discussion of the matter; and must not participate in any vote or further vote taken; and must withdraw from the room.

Members are asked to continue to pay regard to the following provisions in the code that *"You must serve only the public interest and must never improperly confer an advantage or disadvantage on any person including yourself"* or *"You must not place yourself in situations where your honesty and integrity may be questioned….."*

Please seek advice from the Monitoring Officer prior to the meeting should you have any doubt about your approach.

List of Disclosable Pecuniary Interests:
Employment (includes *"any employment, office, trade, profession or vocation carried on for profit or gain*".), **Sponsorship, Contracts, Land, Licences, Corporate Tenancies, Securities.**

For a full list of Disclosable Pecuniary Interests and further Guidance on this matter please see the Guide to the New Code of Conduct and Register of Interests at Members' conduct guidelines.
http://intranet.oxfordshire.gov.uk/wps/wcm/connect/occ/Insite/Elected+members/ or contact Glenn Watson on **07776 997946** or glenn.watson@oxfordshire.gov.uk for a hard copy of the document.

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Recruitment and Retention of Newly Qualified Teachers in Oxfordshire Schools

Report of research undertaken by the University of Oxford and Oxford Brookes University for the Strategic Schools Partnership Board

Katharine Burn, Mary Wild, Emma Klose, Tracey Martin-Millward

June 2016

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Executive Summary

Rationale for the study

The study was commissioned by the Strategic Schools Partnership Board for Oxfordshire in November 2015 in response to increasing evidence from schools within Oxfordshire and concerns expressed by head teachers and governors about the challenges involved both in recruiting sufficient new teachers to Oxfordshire schools and in retaining those staff that were successfully recruited.

The local concerns that had prompted the commissioning of the research were confirmed by a report of the National Audit Office[1], published in February 2016, which acknowledged that:

- The DFE had missed its targets for filling training places over the past 4 years, with the margin of failure increasing from 1% in 2012-13 to 9% in 2014/15. Secondary places had proved particularly difficult to fill.
- Only around 80% of trainees who commenced a (final) year of training in 2013/14 were known to have been recruited to teaching in England within 6 months of qualifying (of which an unknown proportion were working in independent schools).
- The recorded rate of vacancies and temporarily filled positions in state-funded schools had doubled between 2011 and 2014 from 0.5% of the teaching workforce to 1.2% (a figure which the DFE accepts is unlikely to reflect recruitment difficulties fully).
- Nationally, of teachers newly qualified over a 10-year period approximately 12% left state-funded schools within one year of joining while 28% had left within five years.

Research aims

The main aims of the study were to map patterns of recruitment and retention of newly qualified teachers across the county: to determine both the extent and nature of the difficulties faced by primary, secondary and special schools in attracting and retaining staff; and to identify the key factors that contribute to early career teachers' decisions to stay or leave employment within the county. Specifically the study sought to address the following questions:

1. What attracts NQTs (in different subjects/phases; and from different training routes/locations) to work in Oxfordshire schools?

2. What obstacles are there to the effective recruitment of NQTs in Oxfordshire?

3. Why do many early career teachers in Oxfordshire primary schools leave the schools to which they were recruited as NQTs?

4. Why do some primary teachers recruited as NQTs to Oxfordshire schools choose to continue working in the school and what might induce others to stay?

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[1] National Audit Office (2016) *Training New Teachers* [HC 798 SESSION 2015-16 10 FEBRUARY 2016] available online at: https://www.nao.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2016/02/Training-new-teachers-Summary.pdf

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Research design

The study comprised three main elements:

1. a questionnaire survey sent to all state-funded primary and secondary and special schools asking about the appointment and subsequent employment trajectory of NQTs appointed within the last three years;
2. a series of interviews with teachers recruited as NQTs who have remained within the county for at least three years;
3. a series of interviews (conducted in small groups or with individuals) with teachers from each sector responsible within school for induction support.[2]

Findings

Underlying themes across all phases

Detailed findings from the project concerning primary, secondary and special schools respectively are presented separately in the main body of the report. However one of the most striking findings to emerge was the similarity in themes emerging from each of the strands of the study. This may be partly a facet of the methodology which did not, for example, yield sufficient responses for each subject area to allow us to interrogate the data for any particular idiosyncrasies that may have been more pertinent to the secondary phase. Nevertheless, the recurrence of the themes noted here across all strands was notable and provides some potential principles that may underpin more effective recruitment and retention of teachers.

The importance of local connections

A major theme that applied to all types of school and was confirmed by all the different sources of data was the significance of teachers' existing connections to the locality and in some cases to individual schools as a key factor in attracting new teachers.

The specific influences of economic factors

Economic reasons were less directly fore-grounded than the researchers had anticipated at the start of the project, but there is an important caveat here, in that the extent to which existing connections to Oxfordshire (and the region more widely) could be a partial proxy for economic issues. New teachers with existing links to the area are less likely to experience significant economic upheaval or challenge if they choose to remain somewhere they have already established connections through their training, or if they remain within, or return to, a family base in Oxfordshire for their first appointment to a teaching role. There was some evidence, particularly from secondary respondents that economic reasons were more likely to surface a couple of years into an individual's career and for all phases the importance of securing promotion and effective career progression was seen as important for retention and this too may be partly allied to economic imperatives.

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[2] In a number of cases written responses to the same questions were provided as an alternative to interviews

Anticipating and acknowledging the (ongoing) demands in providing appropriate support

The importance of career progression and personal professional development was another key theme to emerge across all phase and strands. In seeking to retain teachers, it is important to ensure that new teachers are consistently supported in the early stages – *before* and *after* as well as *during* their NQT year. In particular, the study identified the need both to enhance teachers' awareness within their training year, of the range of demands that they would face and to provide support mechanisms during the NQT year – including realistic expectations of what they could achieve – that would strengthen their professional resilience and scaffold the development of coping strategies. It was widely acknowledged that no training programme could fully prepare new teachers for all aspects of the job – many of the teachers who stressed the demands that they had faced as NQTs, also insisted that they had been well prepared to take those challenges on. The message essentially seems to be about acknowledging how much more NQTs have to learn and how many different things they are learning to handle simultaneously, even as they acquire the specific contextual knowledge that they need of new policies and systems. In response it is important to create as much space as possible for individual development as well as providing new teachers with appropriate support, targeted where possible to their particular needs.

Accentuating the positive aspects of teachers' professional identity and commitment

More positively there was clear evidence from the teachers involved in the study that the motivation to persist was rooted in a powerful sense of professional, or indeed, vocational commitment that could be effectively nurtured by paying attention to three fundamental issues: teachers' sense of worth – assuring that them that are valued for what they do; the profound enjoyment to be found in teaching – a facet of professional practice that needs to be reinforced and celebrated; and the importance of professional agency – giving teachers' scope to make pedagogical and curricular choices and involving them in collective rather than unilateral decision-making.

Specific findings

The importance of local connections

- Local connections were highly significant across all phases and sectors. The majority of teachers recruited to Oxfordshire schools as NQTS had either trained locally or had moved into the county to be near existing family members.
- A number of recruits had developed a specific commitment to a particular school through undertaking part of their training in the school.
- The definition of local is permeable, however, with new and early career teachers often identifying the locations where they might teach in terms of their accessibility and the possibility of commuting, rather than because of loyalty to any particular county.
- With few exceptions, new teachers do *not* tend to mention specific characteristics of the county that might make it an attractive place to work.

Challenging contexts

- Particular schools sizes and locations and high proportions of FSM do not *necessarily* create problems of recruitment and retention. There are many examples of schools that buck expectations in this respect.
- While some teachers may find some characteristics off-putting, different teachers are inspired by different aspirations and even schools in challenging circumstances can create a positive narrative by emphasising the scope for professional learning

The demands of teaching as they are experienced by NQTs

- Initial training providers may need to acknowledge the demands of the profession more explicitly and be more active perhaps in counselling some trainees who are struggling out of the profession.
- Initial training providers may also need to consider how they can make trainees aware of the *range* of demands that they will face in the first year of teaching; while they cannot equip them to tackle them all effectively from the very beginning, they may be to promote more realistic expectations that promote greater resilience and prevent new teachers from feeling overwhelmed.
- Teachers in special schools face perhaps the most extreme demands in the sense of teachers being unprepared for what they will encounter; but (perhaps because they are fully aware of the range of challenges they know that beginners will face) some of them seem particularly successful at reassuring new teachers, enabling them to take pride in what they are doing and to strive for improvement without feeling oppressed by all they have yet to learn.
- There is *some* evidence of new teachers' need for more guidance or support in relation to behaviour management, but this only seems to relate to specific students or particularly challenging classes, rather than being a more general concern.
- Another aspect of practice highlighted as a focus for more guidance and support was related to the needs of students with special educational needs and to the processes of differentiation. (This was associated with the assumption of greater responsibility for student progress.)
- Assessment was the other most frequent concern (in both primary and secondary sections) with teachers struggling with the full range of processes from marking and feedback to recording and reporting students' achievement in appropriate ways

The value of ongoing support

- New teachers required and benefitted from *ongoing* mentoring, provided not just in their NQT year, but also in relation to new professional responsibilities which tend to be assumed quite quickly.
- There is considerable variation between schools in relation to the extent to which (and ways in which) they sustain provision of tailored support into the second year of teaching. Where support ceases abruptly teachers can feel that they have been 'dumped'.

- Clear developmental pathways associated with career progression are important to retention.
- Informal collaboration and collegiality plays a vital role alongside formal NQT provision and in supporting the retention of teachers – within specific schools as well as within the profession
- Many teachers tend to have a positive, vocational commitment to their profession .Many have very strong feelings of loyalty that can be nurtured, especially if they feel they are valued.
- Teachers also want scope to enjoy what they are doing and opportunities to exercise their professional agency as individuals and through shared processes of decision-making.

Recommendations

In relation to recruitment

1. Schools and local providers should be **proactive in forging prospective links** from an earlier point in the training year. Such collaboration should focus not only on recruitment but on helping trainees in developing their understanding of the requirements of the job and of specific contexts.

2. Schools should **think regionally as well as locally** about recruitment. This means ensuring that advertisements about distinctive features of the county's provision, as well as details about specific vacancies, are effectively communicated through providers in neighbouring counties as well as through recruitment drives within OTSA, OBU and OUDE.

3. Schools and local providers both need to 'sell' the **advantages of Oxford/Oxfordshire as an area steeped in education with a deep commitment to teachers' continued professional learning and career development.** This principle applies equally to retention. It is important to promote the specific attractions of the school and of the locality to the teachers that *have* been recruited. They may have other reasons for taking the job and may remain unaware of what the area (the universities, OTSA) has to offer.

4. Advertising should thus include a strong **focus on the scope for continued professional development** and the variety of opportunities offered within a developmental framework. Many schools already present their CPD programmes in this way and OTSA has a similarly well-framed developmental package supporting teachers at different stages of their career. There may be more scope to make this visible at the recruitment stage, offering teachers the prospect of career development rather than simply a job.

5. Where there is a negative narrative about a particular local context, it may be helpful to counter this by **stressing opportunities for learning rather than support in facing the challenges.**

6. The provision of **additional financial support** would obviously be welcomed by teachers, but it may be more useful to focus what funds are available on the retention of teachers at the point they become more concerned about the costs of living. Funds might, however, be made available to support teachers' travel costs (if they are commuting) as part of a recruitment package.

7. Include more **opportunities within initial training programmes for teachers who may be interested in working in special schools** to gain experience of working with students with special needs alongside the necessary theoretical understandings of the particular barriers to learning that they face.

In relation to retention

1. All staff in school and initial teacher training providers should **recognise the scale of the demands** that NQTs are facing. However well prepared teachers have been, it may help them – and those supporting them – to acknowledge the inevitable impact of an increased timetable and greater responsibility for students' progress. Given the scale of attrition in the first two years of teaching it is worth investing, where possible, in additional time for new teachers to absorb these demands. More attention could also be paid within initial teacher education to establishing realistic expectations and building resilience.

2. Senior leaders and those responsible for induction in mainstream schools could usefully **explore the scope to learn from successful practice in special schools**, many of which seem to prove very effective in nurturing new teachers, despite the range of additional demands that teachers face in such contexts. Key factors may prove to be linked to a widespread commitment (across the whole staff) to supporting new teachers as well as clear messages that everyone is continuing to learn how to provide effectively for their students.

3. School leaders (at middle and senior levels) and induction tutors should **recognise the importance of both the formal provision that is made for NQTs and the informal factors associated with collaboration** within and across subject departments or year/phase teams. While genuine collegiality cannot be mandated, it is possible to ensure that planning, for example, is a collaborative endeavour, with existing schemes of work and lesson materials effectively stored on staff networks so they can be readily accessed and new teachers are engaged in *joint* planning for new schemes/lessons. Given teachers' views of the variability of some of the formal sessions provided for them it is important to evaluate these carefully and to exploit the value of other kinds of activity – such as the opportunity to observe other teachers.

4. Induction tutors (and those responsible for CPD provision) should also appreciate the value of providing both **internal and external forms of support**. Not only do the latter widen the range of teachers' knowledge, they also provide welcome opportunities for social and professional networking.

5. School leaders responsible for induction and CPD should seek to provide **a programme of tailored support through the early career stages** that develops out of the NQT provision offered in the first year. It is important that second year teachers do not feel abandoned at that point. Continued mentoring in relation to their new role may be the priority for those teachers who have assumed new responsibilities, but other forms of provision should allow teachers to develop subject or phase specific professional expertise that reinforces a sense of pride in their professional identity.

6. For small schools in particular it may also be appropriate to make **arrangements for external mentoring** as well as offering internal support and guidance. It is important that new teachers know how to seek help (beyond their own context if necessary) if they feel that they are not being offered adequate mentoring.

7. School leaders are already very aware of the importance of securing early promotion to teachers who would like to be able to remain within the county. While it may not always be possible to offer them paid positions of additional responsibility, try to **provide scope for professional development that will also enhance their career prospects**. Where scope is limited within a particular school, multi academy trusts or local partnerships may be able to offer establish some kind of exchange programme that could widen teachers' knowledge and expertise.

8. Senior leaders within schools should **acknowledge and nurture the sense of vocation and commitment** that sustains many teachers and the sense of loyalty that many feel to their students and to the school. It is important that teachers continue to enjoy their work, which they will not do if they feel under constant pressure, and that they feel their professional knowledge and expertise are valued and respected. This means that they need to be involved in decision-making and feel that there are certain spheres of practice within which they can exercise their own agency.

Chapter 1: Summary of findings related to primary schools

1.1 What attracts primary NQTs to work in Oxfordshire Schools?

Local connections

Our data suggest that many of those choosing to take primary phase jobs in Oxfordshire often do so because they have a local or family-based connection here already. In many cases this existing connection includes the fact that they trained locally. In some cases the decision to train within the county or nearby was taken because they were already based here; in others they had moved to the area to train but then chose to stay because of the local knowledge and connections they had thereby established. In both cases, the evidence suggests that connections between local providers at the recruitment stage should be maximised.

It is worth noting that 'local' does not mean just Oxfordshire; the evidence suggests that the county borders are relatively porous in all directions. It is therefore also important in maximising recruitment to build links and advertise with other providers cross the region and to be aware of what other authorities or school partnerships in surrounding counties may be offering to attract teachers.

A sense of loyalty to particular schools recurred in interviews. Cultivating such loyalties early on e.g. during training as well as beyond might therefore support recruitment. Reinforcing continuities from training though to successful recruitment is worthy of further emphasis but this could conflict with Ofsted requirements for the training to be diverse in terms of types of school, age phase, etc.

Economic factors

There is some evidence in relation to recruitment that what counts as 'local' is influenced not just by location, but by accessibility. Looking at factors such as typical commuting times and routes to the school and providing information about this might be helpful in recruitment, as might the provision of financial support with the costs of commuting.

Respondents did not directly mention economic factors (operating as a *disincentive*) as much as might have been anticipated. Nevertheless there was an emphasis in some interviews on the teachers' need to make rapid progression in their careers, in order that they could meet the high living costs they faced. It may therefore be important, particularly in recruiting those already committed to the local area to emphasise promotion prospects and the scope for professional development linked to career progression.

1.2 What obstacles are there to the effective recruitment of NQTs in Oxfordshire?

Size, locality and the demography of schools

Some factors such as size and location of school could operate both positively and negatively. There was evidence that many primary teachers valued small, community-oriented schools where they had a more obvious presence and the ties of loyalty could be strong. However, for some respondents small schools were seen as being too isolated, in both personal and professional terms. They were thought to lack social opportunities and to provide insufficient scope to take on new career challenges or to develop new aspects of professional practice.

Although the data show that schools with higher than average numbers on roll and/or higher proportions of students eligible for FSM were more likely to have more vacancies and a high turnover of staff, there was not an inevitable linear link here. Some large schools with high proportions of FSM students were more likely than some smaller schools to hold on to staff. Responses from the interviews show that applicants have differing aspirations and operate with different imperatives in terms of the type of school they seek. Since it is in the interest of schools not only to attract but to retain staff in the longer term, it would seem sensible to highlight the particular positive experiences and opportunities that each school can offer, making a best fit between schools and applicants more likely.

A prevailing negative perception of a local area (of significant deprivation) was noted in the study as having a detrimental impact on recruitment. While it can be difficult to counter an existing and sometimes entrenched narrative of this sort, re-couching the elements of the story in terms of the opportunities for professional learning and the scope for leadership development that it presents could be beneficial at recruitment. In contrast, there was some indication that messages that over-emphasised the provision of support in such an environment could be construed as negative messages about the challenges facing a school and therefore proved counterproductive at the recruitment stage.

Economic factors

As noted, there was *less* evidence than expected of housing costs or the cost of living being directly cited as a negative factor. Although a few references were made to such factors in accounting for colleagues who had left, it seems likely that our data sources may have masked the full extent of its influence (since respondents to the survey were more likely to recall NQTs who had stayed than those who had left). The indirect influence of housing costs as a factor was essentially evident in the fact that most of those interviewed (all of them teachers who had remained in their original post) had strong connections with the area – family links that could provide perhaps a home base or forms of support that helped to offset some of the expense.

Professional and personal development

Teachers' responses generally gave a strong message that schools need to be clear at the recruitment stage about the specific opportunities for development that would be available to them. While teachers also wanted to be confident that they would receive support, there were some intriguing signs that simply being transparent about offering support in challenging circumstances was less effective than emphasising the development opportunities inherent in those kinds of context.

The pressures facing teachers, including those connected to policy changes and to inspection requirements, were noted by some respondents. While little can be done to remove these external forces, perhaps more could be done *before* trainees seek employment – i.e. during their training – and continuing into the early stages of their careers, to reinforce teachers' ability to withstand these pressures and to offer them advice on coping strategies. In keeping with the previous point regarding unintentional messages, keeping this guidance realistic but also positive is a key challenge.

1.3 Why do many early career teachers in Oxfordshire primary schools leave the schools to which they were recruited as NQTs?

Locality and economic factors

Overall, just under a third of the primary NQTs (31% or 27 teachers) who were reported upon in the survey (87 teachers in total) had left the school that had recruited them, which means that two-thirds of them (69% or 60 teachers had stayed. Over 60% of the 27 teachers who had left after their first year (17 teachers) went to another school; ten of which were outside of the county, while seven who went to other Oxfordshire schools. Whether moving within or beyond the county, the most commonly cited explanation for a move was 'family reasons'. Although the cost of living in Oxfordshire was only cited as a main factor in just two cases, it is possible that moving to be nearer family may mask an underlying economic rationale, especially if the family's location is in a less expensive region. The importance of family as a reason for moving further underlines the significance of existing personal ties in determining the career choices of many teachers and suggests that finding ways to build on an underlying commitment to the region where it already exists may yield benefits in terms of retention.

The demands of teaching

The data show that the greatest attrition point came at the end of the first year (which is when 44% of those reported as leaving their school had departed), although this was predominantly to move to another school or area. Eight teachers chose to leave the profession altogether. While this is not a large proportion overall, there was some indication that unhappiness with the job and its demands was emphasized as a key factor in their decision. Interestingly, in the teacher interviews, which were of course with those who had stayed in the profession, the majority (9 out of 12) had

considered leaving teaching at some point but had persevered. This emphasises the need to try to reinforce teachers' resilience during their training and early career stages.

There was a sense that some new teachers had felt unprepared for the challenges they would face as NQTS. They tended to couch this in terms of the sheer demands of the job rather than specific areas of knowledge or expertise that had been covered in their training. The more general sense of juggling too many competing demands, managing workload and responding to external pressures such as policy changes and Ofsted were noted by many of those interviewed as factors that had weighed them down as new teachers. For many of the respondents there was a sense of feeling unprepared for the multi-faceted nature of the demands that they faced. It may therefore be helpful to acknowledge the impact of these demands and, if possible, provide more ring-fenced non-contact time for teachers in the very early stages of their careers.

There is an argument that teacher training should not only reinforce the personal and professional resilience of those trying to teach but should equally seek to ensure that those trainees for whom a decision *not* to enter the profession is more suitable are actively counselled into other career directions. However, this has concomitant implications for the selection of teacher training candidates in the first instance and the accountability that is expected of providers in regard to retention and course completion rates for trainees.

Limited induction support

While most of those interviewed felt they had received good internal support from their school, in a number of instances teachers reported that the support that they had expected had not materialised. This concern was particularly acute in relation to dedicated mentoring. However, there was also some evidence that teachers would have welcomed more scope to develop those aspects of their practice that gave them a particular sense of professionalism and expertise, in relation to their subject knowledge and subject-specific pedagogy.

Specific challenges

Specific pedagogic challenges cited in the first years of teaching included the need for some continued support around behaviour management and SEN. However this tended to be mentioned when teachers had been allocated to classes where there was a critical mass of challenges in relation to behaviour or significant numbers of children with designated needs, rather than reflecting more general uncertainty or concerns associated with these issues.

Personal and professional relationships

There was also some evidence in the interviews to suggest that interpersonal dynamics and relationships can be crucial in determining whether teacher chose to leave their schools. Arguably the flip-side of close professional communities in primary schools, particularly smaller ones, is that interpersonal tensions might be exacerbated. Making some form of *external* mentoring available might be helpful in counteracting this. It might also provide a forum in which staff could consider wider sector issues and practices, since some respondents cited a desire for further challenges and

experiences beyond the confines of their own school as a factor prompting teachers to leave their existing posts.

Lack of support and appreciation in the second year

Although the steepest fall off in terms of leaving the profession was at the end Year 1, there was also some evidence that Year 2 was significant, particularly in terms of professional development opportunities. Many of the teachers interviewed highlighted the significance that they placed on feeling that they were developing as a professional and on their interest in looking for opportunities for promotion. It should be noted, however, that for some the desire for promotion was strongly allied to an economic imperative. Nonetheless, there was a sense from those interviewed that career opportunities were seen as a marker of being valued and were actively sought by the respondents. This may have implications for the type and longevity of early career development and support that is offered to recently qualified teachers as to NQTs. Rather than discrete training courses often aimed at whole schools a focus on developmental trajectories for individuals might be worth considering.

Additional responsibilities with inadequate support

However, a precautionary note should also be sounded about the form of additional professional responsibility offered to early career teachers. From the survey data it would seem that many schools were alert to the need to provide development opportunities; 59 of the 87 teachers mentioned had secured additional responsibilities within the first few years of qualifying. For some teachers these were was highly valued, although it was notable that the degree of responsibility attached to the role that they had been allocated was highly variable. Many opportunities were leadership of specific, often time-bounded, projects but, some individuals were given leadership responsibility for whole phases or subject areas. It was not clear to what extent the assumption of these roles had been supported by additional training but there was some evidence from the interview respondents that early additional responsibility of this sort could be a double-edged sword, adding to the pressures of an already challenging workload.

1.4 Why do some primary teachers recruited as NQTs to Oxfordshire schools choose to continue working in the school and what might induce others to stay?

Locality and community

 In the interviews with teachers still in the profession the significance of loyalty to particular school communities was again reflected in their responses as to why they remained committed to teaching. This resonates with the earlier finding regarding the attractions of working in particular regions and schools where they already had existing associations. Taken together, these factors suggest that finding ways to cement such ties and relationships in the running of schools and in the approaches that are adopted to professional development could be significant factors in the retention of staff. (This echoes some of the findings related to special schools where the formation of a clear and

strong sense of identity linked to the core purpose and effectiveness of the school was found to be highly important in retaining staff.)

Professional and personal development opportunities

The need for continued support and space for professional development featured heavily in the accounts of the teachers interviewed, many of whom regretted the loss of the kind of on-going support they had experienced as a trainee. Providing such additional support would have cost implications for schools but other aspects could be addressed by a greater degree of communication at the start of the school year or even earlier. A number of the teachers interviewed, for example, referred to the need to be better prepared in a general sense for the combined range of demands that they would face and recommended providing more specific information about school policies and internal systems.

Similarly the value of low-cost but informal support mechanisms was highlighted, including opportunities simply to drop in on colleagues elsewhere in the school and social activities that helped new teachers to feel integrated and valued.

Sustained support beyond the first year

One factor that seemed to be significant for teachers in their second or subsequent years of teaching was the extent to which support was *maintained*. Being able to continue to access support and guidance about how their career was developing was important to all those interviewed and was seen as integral to their decision to remain (both in the profession and in their particular school). The teachers who had stayed in teaching, despite facing early challenges that had sometimes prompted them to contemplate leaving, reported that they had valued the opportunities they were given to develop as well as the ways in which they had been supported in talking thorough their particular needs with senior colleagues in school, and seen their requests and interests acted upon.

Personal commitment: a sense of worth, enjoyment and agency

Among all those interviewed an underlying factor in their decisions to stay was their own fierce commitment to teaching; to doing a job that they valued and for which they felt valued. It is easy to focus on the very obvious challenges and demands of the job, but finding ways to continue to value teachers for what they do and giving them the opportunities to shape their careers in their own interests as well as the children for whom they work are positives force that we may sometimes underestimate.

Chapter 2: Summary of findings related to secondary schools

2.1 What attracts secondary NQTs to work in Oxfordshire schools?

Local connections

Most secondary NQTs who take up posts in Oxfordshire have trained locally; in Oxford or Reading-based partnerships, with some from other nearby counties. They usually have specific reasons for seeking employment in the area, based on existing family relationships, including the employment or academic study of their partners. Unfortunately, while some teachers are prompted to apply for local posts because of their positive experiences in a particular school or because they are looking for some stability as they embark on their NQT year, this can mean that they have paid little attention to the cost of housing in relation either to their salary or other areas of the country and only come to consider these issues at a later point.

The limited influence of other features of local provision

While individual schools may prove attractive to those who undertake some of their training within them, few teachers were aware of any specific attractions or benefits of working within the county. The only distinctive feature of local provision mentioned by any respondents were the opportunities for professional development offered by engagement with the University of Oxford through partnership in the initial teacher education programme or through the Master's in Learning and Teaching.

This would suggest that schools should perhaps take more action to alert the NQTs that have joined them to the distinctive features of the particular school and of working in Oxfordshire. While the scope for professional learning offered through engagement with the local universities could be promoted as a distinctive strength, schools could also do more to develop and make teachers aware of a programme of professional development opportunities within the county linked to career progression.

2.2 What obstacles are there to the effective recruitment of secondary NQTs in Oxfordshire?

Subject differences

The problem of recruitment is such that two thirds of the secondary schools that participated in the survey had experience of at least one vacancy that remained unfilled for three months or more. Although we do not have enough data to draw robust comparisons between different subjects, such vacancies occurred most frequently in English, Maths, Computing and MFL.

The limited influence of levels of disadvantage

There was no evidence to suggest that schools serving more disadvantaged areas tended to have more difficulty recruiting or retaining NQTs than schools serving more advantaged populations. Although some individual schools with high proportions of students eligible for FSM did face particular difficulties, other individual schools in similar circumstances had very different recruitment patterns.

Economic factors

Induction tutors tended to attribute the difficulties of recruitment to the comparatively low level of teachers' salaries in relation both to the private sector and – in the case of Maths and Physics teachers – to the training bursary that they had previously received. The lack of any obligation to repay this bursary if a trainee failed to take up a position in a state-maintained school was seen as compounding this problem.

The difficulties of advertising in a competitive environment

While many schools clearly seek to cooperate with other schools where they can, by passing on the details of unsuccessful applicants once their own posts are filled, there is also an acute sense of competition between schools, which also prompts them to seek advantages over others, for example, by bringing forward planned interview dates.

The cost of advertising was regarded as a significant barrier to more effective recruitment and schools would clearly welcome initiatives (by both central government and OTSA) that would reduce these costs.

2.3 Why do many early career teachers in Oxfordshire secondary schools leave the schools to which they were recruited as NQTs?

The demands of teaching

The data seems to suggest two general trends in relation to teachers' decisions to leave the posts in Oxfordshire schools to which they were originally recruited. The first relates to decisions to leave within the first two years of teaching which seem to owe more to the workload pressures and stresses of the job than to specific concerns about accommodation costs in relation to earnings. The second pattern, reflected more in *established* teachers' explanations of their future intentions, relates to the cost of housing for teachers who are hoping to put down more permanent roots or to start a family. For those teachers who have family ties that keep them in the region, the same pressure pushes them to seek promotion as quickly as possible.

Although the sample of recent NQTs whose experiences were reported by schools in the survey included only 5% who had left teaching altogether, these departures were all attributed to the demands of the job. Another 5% followed a growing national trend in moving to independent schools (one of which was overseas). Among the slightly larger sample of those who continued

teaching in the state sector but left the county only one departure was attributed to the costs of living in Oxfordshire.

Specific characteristics of the school

While around a quarter of the established NQTs referred to colleagues who had left the school because of the cost of living, just as many emphasised specific policies or characteristics of their school that had compounded the pressures that their colleagues faced and driven them away. These specific features were quite varied; deriving, for example, from the split-site nature of certain schools to the imposition of a very particular teaching style or expectations of a commitment to continued professional learning that were thought to be excessive. The challenges of managing students' behaviour did *not* seem to be a significant cause of stress; it was alluded to in only one case.

While little can be done to combat the specific challenges created by a split site, it is important (as discussed more fully below) that the challenges associated with moving between classrooms are fairly shared – or preferably minimised for the newest teachers. While schools may pride themselves on their high expectations of staff, it may be important to check how those expectations are experienced and review the balance between praise and encouragement and the exhortation to do even better. In this respect, there may be much to learn from the practice of some of the special schools within the county.

Economic factors

In reflecting on the reasons why they had at some stage thought about leaving their job, the established NQTs tended to cite workload issues (with only one of them mentioning housing costs). In looking *forward*, however, only one teacher mentioned stress whereas a quarter of them cited the desire to buy a house and put down roots, with slightly more mentioning their interest in securing promotion.

This pattern of decision-making, with concerns about the cost of living having an impact rather later than workload pressures is borne out by the induction tutors' accounts of their experience. While they quickly emphasised the comparatively low pay of teachers, they acknowledged that the cost of housing in Oxfordshire only tended to impact some years into teachers' careers.

2.4 Why do some many secondary teachers recruited as NQTs to Oxfordshire schools choose to continue working in the school and what might induce others to stay?

The quality of induction support

The first year of teaching is undoubtedly a very demanding one, essentially because of the increase in teachers' timetables (and the associated demands that that go with this additional teaching) and the sense of responsibility for ensuring progression that necessitates a greater focus on medium and long-term planning and on appropriate forms of differentiation. Other factors that loomed large in the experience of current NQTs, but that were mentioned less by established teachers looking back,

were the challenges of dealing with poor behaviour (of individual students or specific classes) and the generation, recording and use of assessment data.

However, the teachers looking back on their experience generally claimed that they had been well prepared for the nature of the demands that they would face. The kinds of formal support that they received – a designated mentor, a 10% timetable reduction and a structured programme – essentially matched their expectations, although the value that the teachers attributed to it in retrospect varied significantly, with less than half rating it as essentially helpful. Suggestions made for improvements to this formal provision related to the same issues as those identified above: strategies for efficient and effective marking, differentiation for mixed ability classes and a greater emphasis on behaviour management. The teachers stressed the need to focus on the knowledge and expertise that they needed to do their job effectively rather than simply providing pastoral support for them. They also called for more developmental use of observation of their own teaching (rather than a focus on merely judging or documenting their competence) and more structured opportunities to observe other teachers.

Sustained support in the second year of teaching

There were marked differences between schools in terms of the provision that they made for second year teachers. Accounts of such provision ranged from an acknowledgment that such teachers were essentially 'dumped' to details of programmes specifically designed for teachers at that stage. There was some evidence, however, that the assumptions about professional learning that underpinned the designs of these programmes also seemed to vary quite significantly.

In seeking to retain staff, it would seem sensible for those schools in which tailored support largely disappears in the second year, to pay careful attention to the different kinds of support that are being offered elsewhere. This is important not only in supporting those teachers who continue to experience difficulties and stresses associated with the demands of the job, but also in establishing the secure first steps along a professional development path aligned to the kind of aspirations for career progression (and financial reward) that will begin to drive many of the teachers once they have weathered the early difficulties.

Appropriate support for career progression

By the third year in teaching, most teachers had assumed some kind of additional responsibility and mentoring for these new roles assumed considerable importance. Induction tutors recognised the value of linking the programme of professional development that they offered to a clear model of career progression and some schools had begun to present a CPD menu that was clearly structured in this way.

Career progression was particularly important because of the financial pressures that teachers in Oxfordshire faced. While some use was being made of retention allowances, tutors expressed the hope that proposed changes to the national funding mechanism might result in additional funds for the county. More immediately, the pressures meant that teachers tended to seek promotion very early in their career, which heighted the importance of induction support for those new roles was extremely important (not least because the teachers might thereby lose out on other forms of early career professional development).

Professional collaboration and collegiality

Both teachers and induction tutors stressed the fundamental importance of collaboration and collegiality. While the culture and practices of individual departments were seen as crucial in this respect, evidence of the interest of senior management in the NQTs and scope for them to share practice with others across the school was also valued. A key feature of effective collaboration was located in departments' practice of providing effective online access to schemes of work, lesson plans and teaching resources, and engagement in joint planning. While it might be assumed that this would be the case in all departments, the experience of several of the induction tutors suggested that practice could prove quite variable. Ensuring that up-to-date schemes of work and teaching materials are shared and that new curricular planning is undertaken collaboratively could do much to ensure that NQTs are adequately equipped to take many of the new demands that they face.

Personal commitment: a sense of worth, enjoyment and agency

In addition to genuine collaboration and collegiality, the induction tutors identified two other features of informal support that they believed made a significant difference to teachers' commitment to the school. The first was reassuring the teachers that they were valued, not least by welcoming the expertise and innovative thinking that they brought with them from the university-based elements of their training, as well as demonstrating that they were investing in their future. The second was to provide scope for teachers' professional development, through opportunities for focused observation or by engaging with the local university (as a Master's student or by becoming a mentor within the OUDE Internship scheme). While promotion was eagerly sought by teachers who needed an increased salary to make housing costs more affordable, additional responsibilities or projects were also valued as another source of professional development and of the value attributed to them by the school.

The second strategy that tutors proposed was concerned with exploiting the positive factors that remained at the heart of teachers' interest in the profession, a suggestion that resonated with teachers' own reasons for staying in the profession when they had considered leaving. Enhancing teachers' sense of professionalism could be achieved by acknowledging their subject knowledge and subject-specific teaching expertise and by respecting their agency in making appropriate pedagogical decisions.

The final strategy related to improving teachers' working conditions in order to maximise the time available to them for evaluating and developing their practice in the ways to which they aspired. While it might be difficult to provide adequate time, ensuring that newer teachers did not have to spend more time travelling between classrooms than their more experienced colleagues was seen as a basic issue of fairness. Limiting the number of different classes and subjects that they had to teach was also seen as an important issue in improving their basic conditions of employment.

Chapter 3: Summary of findings related to special schools

3.1 What attracts NQTs to work in special schools in Oxfordshire?

Local connections

The pattern of local recruitment is even stronger in special schools than it is for the mainstream schools within the sample. The vast majority of the teachers recruited already lived locally and had trained with local providers, including one who had followed the GTP route after several years working as a Teaching Assistant. In some cases, like this one, the teachers had specific knowledge of – or prior experience in – the particular school, and knew that was where they wanted to work. All of the teachers had wanted to secure jobs where they were already living and several had family commitments that made it impossible for them to move anywhere else.

3.2 What obstacles are there to the effective recruitment of NQTs to special schools in Oxfordshire?

Lack of specialist training for special educational needs within most training programmes

Unlike the mainstream schools, the special schools that responded to the survey did not report any long-term, unfilled vacancies, which suggests that they have relatively few difficulties recruiting the teachers that they need. The only evidence that might indicate a difficulty is the fact that all the teachers recruited as NQTs commented on the lack of provision within their training programme for work in a special school. While this was addressed within the school-based training that made up the bulk of the GTP programme for the one trainee who had followed this route, the university-based training had followed a more generic structure, and so had not offered any additional guidance related to the specific challenges that they faced.

3.3 Why do early career teachers leave the special schools to which they were recruited as NQTs?

Fewer problems of retention than in mainstream schools - despite the specific challenges

It is not possible to make very confident generalisation about teachers' reasons for leaving since we only collected survey data relating to eight NQTs recruited to special schools, and only two of these were teachers who had since left the school. In one case, the teacher was said to have lacked the necessary resilience and in another the move was attributed to the cost of living in Oxfordshire. Where teachers were recalling their colleagues' reasons for leaving, the moves were attributed

either to a difficulty in securing further promotion or to personal circumstances such as moving closer to family members. The specific costs of living in Oxfordshire was thus cited only once as the reason for a move. Since most teachers seem deliberately to have taken a position in the area in which they were already living, it is unlikely that the cost would prove to be a decisive issue for them. Moreover, since the teachers also stressed the scope for promotion to middle leadership that had been open to them, it also seems likely that teachers who are seeking additional income can secure it relatively easily – at least at the lower levels. It was only those seeking more senior promotions that were prepared to contemplate a move.

While the teachers acknowledged the very particular demands of working in a special school and generally felt under-prepared by their initial training programme for the work that they would be doing, the demands of the job did not, in general, seem to prompt a large number of resignations, although they do account for one of the resignations noted in the survey.

3.4 Why do some secondary teachers recruited as NQTs to special schools in Oxfordshire choose to continue working in the school and what might induce others to stay?

Scope for early career professional development and promotion – more limited at senior levels

Although the data suggests that NQTs experience very specific kinds of demands in special schools – for many of which they feel essentially unprepared when they start – there is little evidence that they tend to leave the school because of those demands. Across the survey data (completed for six different special schools) and the interviews with four long-serving teachers, only one account was given of an NQT who left because of the demands of the job.[3]

There is also little evidence of teachers moving away for personal or family reasons. Although one or two teachers may have considered moving elsewhere because of the cost of living, the fact that most teachers in special schools take up posts in the area where they are already living means that they have already found ways to manage the cost of housing. The few teachers who do leave seem to be more experienced teachers who are seeking promotion, particularly into positions of senior leadership. While special schools seem able to provide good opportunities for early promotion, the stability of their staffing tends to make it difficult to move for teachers seeking to move into the higher levels of school leadership.

High quality induction support

The fact that NQTs do not seem to be deterred in the early years of teaching, despite the demands that they face and the lack of specific preparation for them within most training programmes, points

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[3]It should be acknowledged, however, that at least one special school in the county does not recruit NQTs, precisely because they recognise the demands of the role.

to the quality of the induction support that special schools seem to provide, including excellent mentoring and plentiful opportunities to observe and consult with other staff. Opportunities for observation are mentioned much more frequently than in mainstream contexts and although new teachers wrestle with the range of curriculum demands that they face (alongside all that they are learning about teaching students with special needs), they also appear to be extremely well supported by subject leaders across the school who recognise the obligation that they have to guide them.

Personal commitment: a sense of worth, enjoyment and agency

The positive attractions of teaching as a vocation and the sense of loyalty and commitment to students operate powerfully (as they do in other contexts) to persuade teachers to stay where they are, but some of the special schools included within this study also seem to balance an obligation for continual reflection and improvement with ensuring that teachers have realistic expectations of themselves and continue to find joy in what they are doing. There may be much that mainstream schools can learn from the special schools in this respect. The two schools represented in our small interview sample also suggest that teachers' on-going commitment can be secured by ensuring that decision-making is a collective process and that senior leaders are seen to be working *with* their colleagues rather than operating as a hierarchy. Again, respect for teachers' professional expertise and scope for them to take forward initiatives of their own are important in ensuring them of their value and securing their loyalty.

More specialist provision within initial training and induction

While there seems little that could realistically be done to retain more experienced teachers seeking promotion elsewhere, two kinds of improvement might minimise the risk of losing NQTs within the first year or so. The first would be to include more specific training for work in special schools within their initial training programme. While school-based training routes obviously provide considerable scope for this, it is important that practical experience and context-specific guidance is supported by appropriate theoretical understandings of particular barriers to learning and the ways in which they can be overcome. The second would be to ensure that external induction programmes, such as that offered by OTSA, also include some tailored provision for staff working in special schools.

Chapter 4: The design of the research

4.1 Summary

4.1.1 Research questions

The research was initially designed to address three key questions:

1. What attracts NQTs (in different subjects/phases; and from different training routes/ locations) to work in Oxfordshire schools?
2. Why do many early career teachers decide to leave Oxfordshire schools?
3. Why do some teachers recruited to Oxfordshire schools choose to continue working in the county and what might induce more to stay?

As the data was being analysed it became clear that a fourth question should be included to allow us to report on the extent of the problem of recruitment as in impacted in terms of unfilled vacancies and to reflect induction tutors' analyses of the difficulties that schools faced. An additional question was therefore inserted (which became Question 2):

- What obstacles are there to the effective recruitment of NQTs in Oxfordshire

4.1.2 Methods of data collection

The original research design included three key elements:

- a questionnaire survey sent to all state-funded primary and secondary and special schools asking about the appointment and subsequent employment trajectory of NQTs appointed within the last three years (target: responses related to 100 teachers; received responses related to 163 teachers);
- a series of interviews with teachers recruited as NQTs who had remained within the county for at least three years (target: 30 interviews; conducted interviews with 32 teachers) ; and
- a small number of group interviews with teachers from each sector who were responsible within school for induction support (target: interviews with at least 5 induction tutors in each case primary and secondary phase; achieved responses from 6 primary and 13 secondary tutors using a combination of group and individual interviews and individual written responses to the same questions).

It was also decided (at a point when recruitment to the survey was progressing very slowly) to invite a number of secondary NQTs who were attending an induction course at OUDE to complete a short

questionnaire providing relevant details about their own career trajectories and experience so far. Nine such questionnaires were completed and the data has been used, where relevant, particularly in fleshing out reports about the challenges of the NQT year and teachers' perceptions of different kinds of induction support.

All the data was collected during Terms 3 and 4 of the academic year 2015-16.

4.2 The questionnaire survey

An online survey (administered through Survey Monkey) was set up, with separate versions for state-funded primary, secondary and special schools within Oxfordshire, asking for information about the employment and career trajectory of any NQTs appointed to their school since 2012.

OTSA and Oxfordshire County Council both advertised the survey through their regular newsletters. Members of the research team in each university also used their existing contacts with teachers' responsible in school for initial teacher education and induction to encourage completion of the survey and direct it to the most appropriate person. The team also attended the Oxfordshire headteachers' conference in order to publicise it further.

The survey included two sections - a short series of questions about the number of NQTs employed by the school in the last three years, any unfilled vacancies in that period, and the number of teachers recruited as NQTs who had remained in post for more than three years. This final section was also used to invite the respondents to nominate appropriate teachers for the interview phase of the study.

The second section included a series of questions to be answered by senior leaders or administrative staff responsible for Human Resources (HR) in relation to each NQT appointed within the last three years. These questions relate to the NQTs' training route; their teaching qualification (e.g. subject specialism); the post to which they were recruited; and any subsequent moves/promotions within or beyond the school/county. While schools were invited to complete these questions for all relevant NQTs, those with very large numbers from which to choose were asked to provide details for a minimum of three teachers.

The aim was to secure survey responses for at least 100 teachers. Records from OTSA and Oxfordshire County Council suggested that in the last three years just over 1000 NQTs had been appointed (589 in primary schools, 455 in secondary schools and 10 in special schools), so this represented a minimum sample of approximately 10% of NQTs.

Questionnaire data was returned from 38 primary schools, with responses related to 87 teachers recruited as NQTs; from 19 secondary schools with responses related to 67 NQTs and from seven special schools with data related to eight NQTs. This meant that data was received in relation to 163 NQTs although some of these individual records were incomplete.

4.3 Telephone interviews with teachers recruited as NQTs who had remained in post for more than three years

Our original intention had been to conduct telephone interviews with 16 primary teachers, 12 secondary teachers and 2 teachers working in special school who were recruited as NQTs and who had remained in post for at least three years. This target was almost achieved in one case and slightly exceeded in the other two: 15 interviews were conducted with primary teachers, 13 with secondary teachers and four with teachers in special schools.

Potential participants were identified both through the school survey as explained above and by the Principal Investigator in each university asking colleagues working in partnership with local schools through their PGCE programmes to suggest further names of teachers known to them who were appointed as NQTs more than three years ago.

The research officers contacted potential participants by email initially providing details of the project and an opportunity to ask questions about it. Once consent had been given arrangements were be made for the telephone interview, which generally lasted between 15 and 20 minutes, at a mutually convenient time. All the interviews were recorded.

The interview questions asked both about the teachers' reasons for taking a post in Oxfordshire and for remaining in the school. They were asked about the support that they had received in their early years in teaching as well as the challenges that they had faced at different points and the particular factors that had prompted or might prompt them to consider leaving. Respondents (especially those recruited from ITE programmes based in the county) were also asked about any peers training with them who had chosen to seek work elsewhere and/or colleagues who had chosen to leave – asking what they thought the reasons were

4.4 Focus group/individual interviews with teachers responsible for NQT induction, supplemented by individual questionnaires

Our original intention had been to hold two focus group interviews with teachers responsible for induction - one primary and one secondary, involving a minimum of five participants. We had intended to hold these discussions in Oxford Brookes University and in the University of Oxford, respectively, scheduling them to follow existing meetings that brought such teachers into the university in connection with their work on the PGCE programmes.

In practice, it proved difficult to accommodate group interviews with the appropriate personnel. Although we succeeded in bringing together four induction tutors within the secondary phase, it was decided to increase the pool of responses by offering to conduct individual interviews with relevant senior leaders or to invite them to provide written responses to the same questions if that proved easier for them.

Eventually responses were obtained from 6 primary and 13 secondary teachers responsible for

induction.

4.5 Additional data sources

It was also decided (at a point when recruitment to the survey was progressing very slowly) to invite a small number of current NQTs to provide further details about their experiences. This additional data was collected as the opportunity presented itself and although it ultimately proved less important as we succeeded in recruiting to target we have chosen to include the additional insights gained from these sources where they are relevant.

At primary level, two newly-qualified teachers in one school were interviewed by telephone about the challenges that they were currently facing as NQTs and the training and support that they were receiving. They were also asked about the likelihood of leaving their current post within the next two or three years and any motives behind their response to this question.

At secondary level those NQTs who were attending an induction course at OUDE (as part of an OTSA/OUDE programme) were asked to complete a short questionnaire providing relevant details about their own career trajectories and experience so far. The NQTs were invited to respond to a paper-based survey that explored specific questions about the challenges that they were currently facing as NQTs and the training and support that they were receiving. They were also asked about the likelihood of leaving their current post within the next two or three years and the reasons behind their response to this question. Responses were received from nine NQTs: two teachers in each of the following subjects: Science, Maths, English and MFL, and one in history.

4.6 Full details of the data collected for the primary survey

4.6.1 Survey responses from primary schools [responses from 38 schools related to 87 NQTs]

Thirty-eight primary schools (including one MAT, representing three primary schools as a single response) provided data about recent recruitment of NQTs, with some of them also reporting on the career trajectories of up to three individual teachers who had been recruited to their school during the course of the past three years.

Specific data was provided for 87 individual teachers appointed across three primary phases (Foundation, Key Stage 1 and Key Stage 2). Figure 1shows how the different phases were represented, while Figure 2 shows the representation of schools across all districts within the county. One-third of responses (32%) were from schools in South Oxfordshire. As shown in Figure 3, nine schools were community schools and 18 had a faith affiliation. Eleven schools were academies (including one MAT, and two academy faith schools). Seventeen out of the 38 schools were designated as rural.[4]

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[4] https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/rural-primary-schools-designation
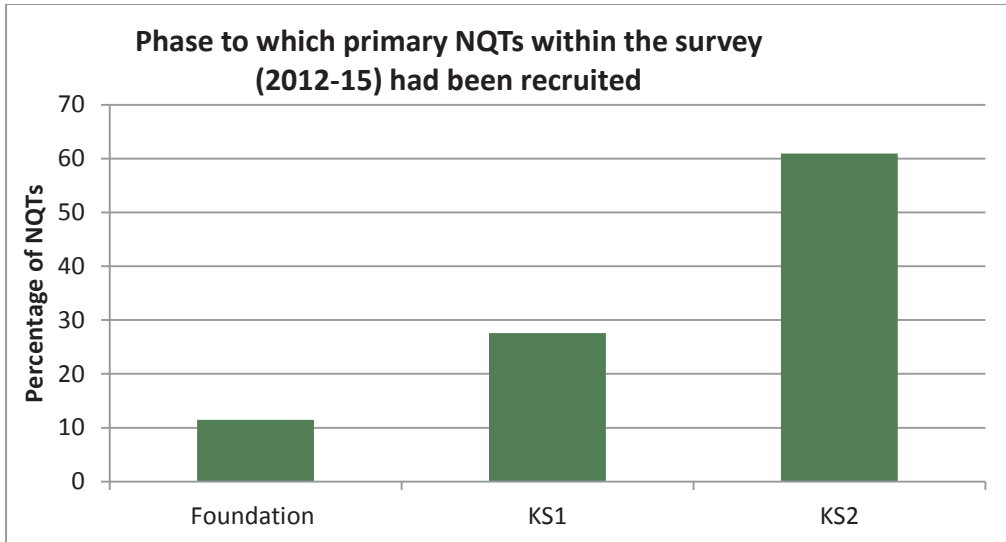
Figure 1: Percentage of NQTs (2012-15) included within the primary survey recruited to each phase
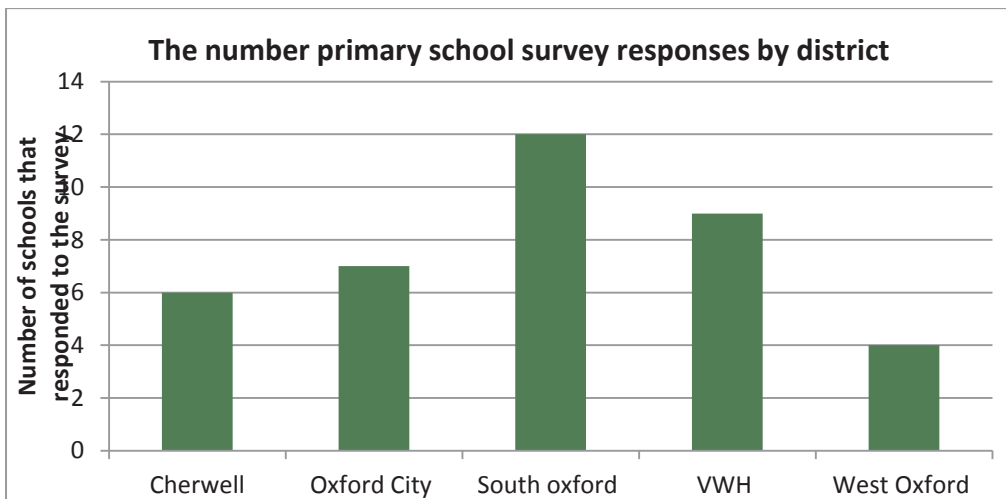

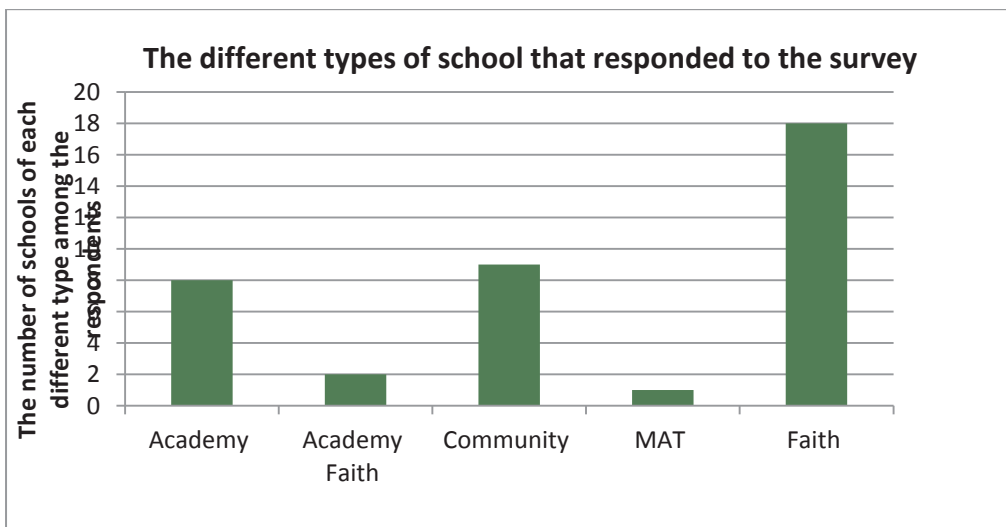*Figure 2: The number of schools within each district that responded to the survey*

Figure 3: The nature of the schools that responded to the survey

4.6.3 Telephone interviews with primary teachers recruited as NQTs who had remained in post for more than three years [15 interviewees]

Fifteen primary school teachers, who were originally recruited at ten schools as NQTs, were interviewed by telephone. (All districts were included in the sample except for the Vale of the White Horse). The interviews varied in length from 9 - 36 minutes. Many of those interviewed had been nominated by the teachers completing the school survey or through approaching head teachers (directly to ensure all districts had been covered). Some others had been recruited via recommendations by staff at OUDE. Six of the schools represented were faith schools. Five schools were below national average size in terms of the number of students on roll; five were above. All but one school had lower than the national average %FSM (26.3%). Interviewees had joined their schools between 2001 and 2013.

Teachers had a range of current teaching responsibilities: three were Reception teachers, five taught in KS1, five in KS2, and one worked across KS1 and 2 (providing planning, preparation and assessment (PPA) cover two days per week). One of the interviewees had a non-teaching role in school (SENCO).

4.6.4 Individual interviews with teachers responsible for NQT induction, supplemented by individual written answers to the same questions

The focus group interview was unable to proceed as planned. Instead individual interviews were conducted by telephone with three tutors responsible for NQT induction (one of whom was employed by a MAT specifically to work across the three primary schools in the chain), supplemented by responses from three paper questionnaires in the same format as the focus group discussion. These had been obtained from delegates at the county primary HT conference.

Responses were received from teachers in six different primary schools across four districts (excluding West Oxfordshire) to questions about the career trajectories of NQTs recruited in their schools and the nature of the support that they provided for them along with questions about their perceptions of the challenges that such teachers faced, the effectiveness of the support offered and ways in which it could perhaps be improved.

4.6.4 Telephone interviews with current NQTs [2 interviewees]

To flesh out our understanding of the challenges experienced by NQTs and their perceptions of different kinds of induction support, two newly-qualified teachers in one school were interviewed by telephone about the challenges that they were currently facing as NQTs and the training and support that they were receiving. They were also asked about the likelihood of leaving their current post within the next two or three years and any motives behind their response to this question.

4.7 Full details of the data collected for the secondary survey

4.7.1 Survey responses from secondary schools [responses from 19 schools related to 67 NQTs]

Nineteen secondary schools provided data about one, two or three NQTs who had been recruited to their school during the course of the past three years. Specific data was provided for 67 individual teachers recruited across 11 different subjects. As Figure 4 shows, all districts within the county were represented, although the spread was somewhat uneven, Figure 5 shows that while some subjects (DT, Geography, Psychology) were only represented by one NQT, there were two or more teachers for each of the other subjects, with the highest numbers for Science (17, representing 24% of the sample), Maths (15, representing 22%) and English (11, representing 16% of the sample).
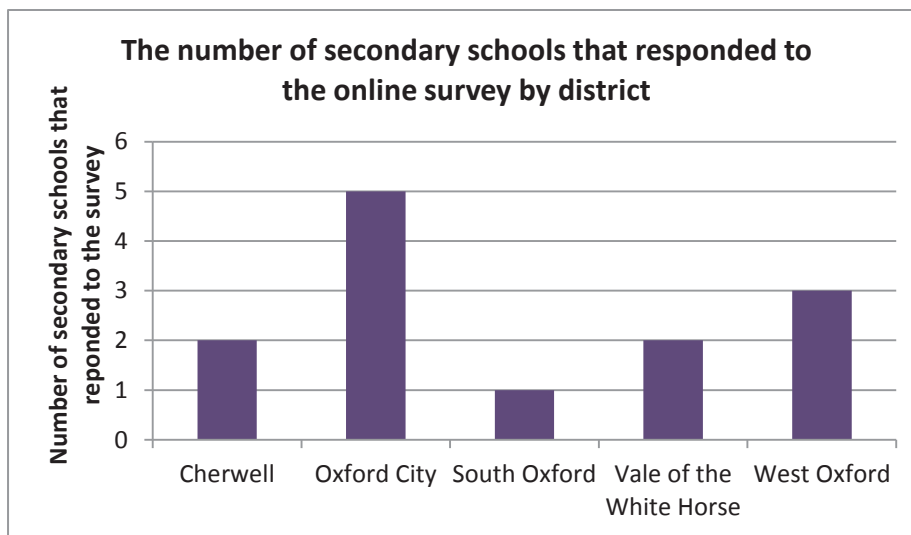

Figure 4: The number of secondary schools that responded to the survey by district
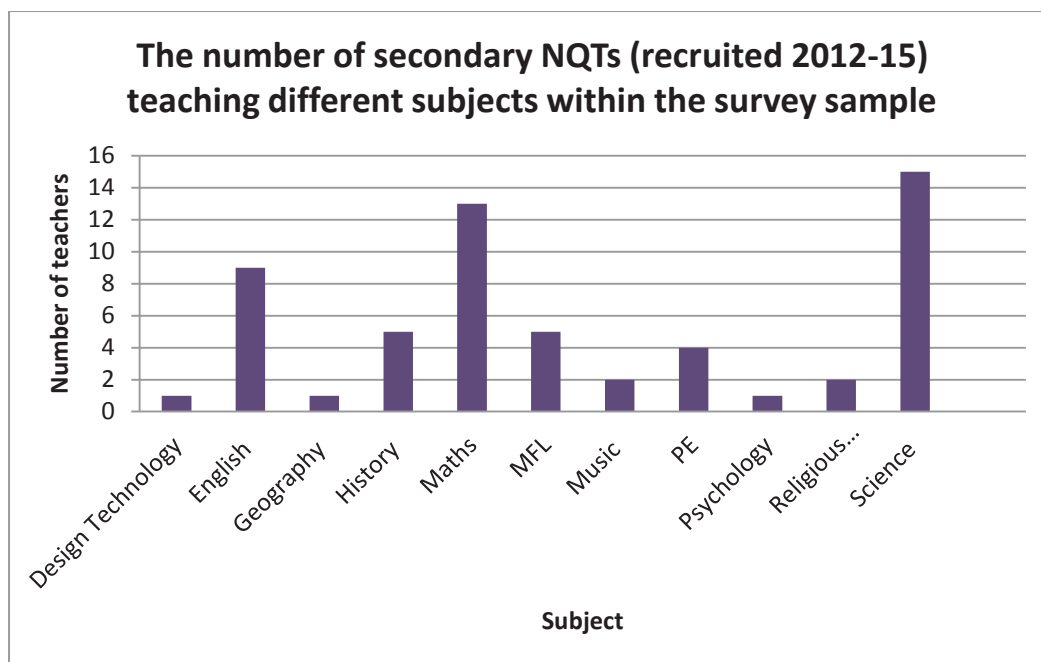
Figure 5: The number of NQTs (2012-15) within the secondary survey sample recruited to teach each subject.

4.7.2 Telephone interviews with secondary teachers recruited as NQTs who had remained in post for more than 3 years [13 interviewees]

Telephone interviews, lasting between 15 and 20 minutes in most cases were conducted with 13 secondary teachers, originally recruited to their schools as NQTs. Most of them had been nominated by the teacher who had completed the school survey, but one or two additional interviewees were suggested by subject tutors at OUDE in order to ensure inclusion of all the different districts within the county and of a range of subjects. The group of 13 included three Science teachers, two teachers in each of English, Maths, History and MFL and one PE teacher.

4.7.3 A focus group discussion with teachers responsible for NQT induction, supplemented by individual responses to the same questions [13 respondents]

Only four teachers responsible for induction attended the focus group discussion that had originally been planned. To strengthen this data, tutors who were unable to attend the meeting were invited to complete a questionnaire that followed the same format as the focus group discussion. Nine questionnaires were completed which means that we have responses from teachers in 13 different secondary schools to questions about the career trajectories of NQTs recruited in their schools and the nature of the support that they provided for them along with questions about their perceptions of the challenges that such teachers faced, the effectiveness of the support offered and ways in which it could perhaps be improved.

4.7.4 A paper based survey completed by NQTs undertaking the OTSA-OUDE Induction programme [9 responses]

The newly-qualified teachers undertaking this programme were invited to respond to a paper-based survey that explored specific questions about the challenges that they were currently facing as NQTs and the training and support that they were receiving. They were also asked about the likelihood of leaving their current post within the next two or three years and the reasons behind their response to this question. Responses were received from two teachers in each of the following subjects: Science, Maths, English and MFL, and one response came from a history teacher.

4.8 Full details of the data collected for the special school survey

4.8.1 Survey responses from special schools [data from seven schools relating to eight NQTs]

The invitation to participate in the survey was sent by email to all special schools within the county and seven schools responded. One school explained that they had a policy of not recruiting NQTs; the other six schools provided data relating to one or two teachers recruited to their school as NQTs during the course of the past three years. Specific data was thus provided for 8 individual teachers, some of whom were described as teaching students at a particular key stage while others were described as teaching a number of different subjects. Although most of the six schools tended to span both the primary and secondary age span, half of them focused predominantly on one or the other.

4.8.2 Telephone interviews with teachers recruited to special schools as NQTs who had remained in post for more than 3 years [4 interviews]

Telephone interviews, lasting between 15 and 20 minutes in most cases, were conducted with four special school teachers, originally recruited to their schools as NQTs. They came from two different schools and had been nominated by the teacher who had completed the school survey. Although the sample was obviously a small one, it was significantly different from the sample of teachers recruited for interview from the surveys of primary and secondary teachers in mainstream schools in that all the teachers had been in post for at least six years (and some considerably longer) and in that three of the four were quite senior teachers within the school. The pattern of long-term retention and promotion of teachers within the schools that these figures seem to reflect is, however, entirely consistent with the impressions of the schools given by these teachers in interview.

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Chapter 5: Detailed findings for primary schools

5.1 What attracts primary NQTs to work in Oxfordshire Schools?

5.1.1 Findings from the survey data about the trajectories of recent NQTs

The survey, which was completed by senior teachers or administrative staff responsible for recruitment and induction arrangements, included data about the previous training of 76 teachers originally recruited as NQTs. As Figure 5 shows, of these 76 teachers, 57 (75% of the total) had trained in Oxfordshire or Buckinghamshire. (These two counties were grouped together in order to accommodate the Graduate Teacher Programme which was run jointly across the two counties.) Another eight (a further 11%) had trained in directly neighbouring counties, such as Berkshire and Warwickshire, while two more trained in or near London. Two were recruited from the East of the country and two from the North. One teacher trained in Wales and another was an overseas trained teacher. This pattern would seem to suggest that the vast majority of teachers who are recruited as NQTs to Oxfordshire schools are those who have existing links with the area. They may be staying simply because they are now familiar with the area through their initial teacher training programme; or they may have chosen to train locally because they have existing connections with the area.
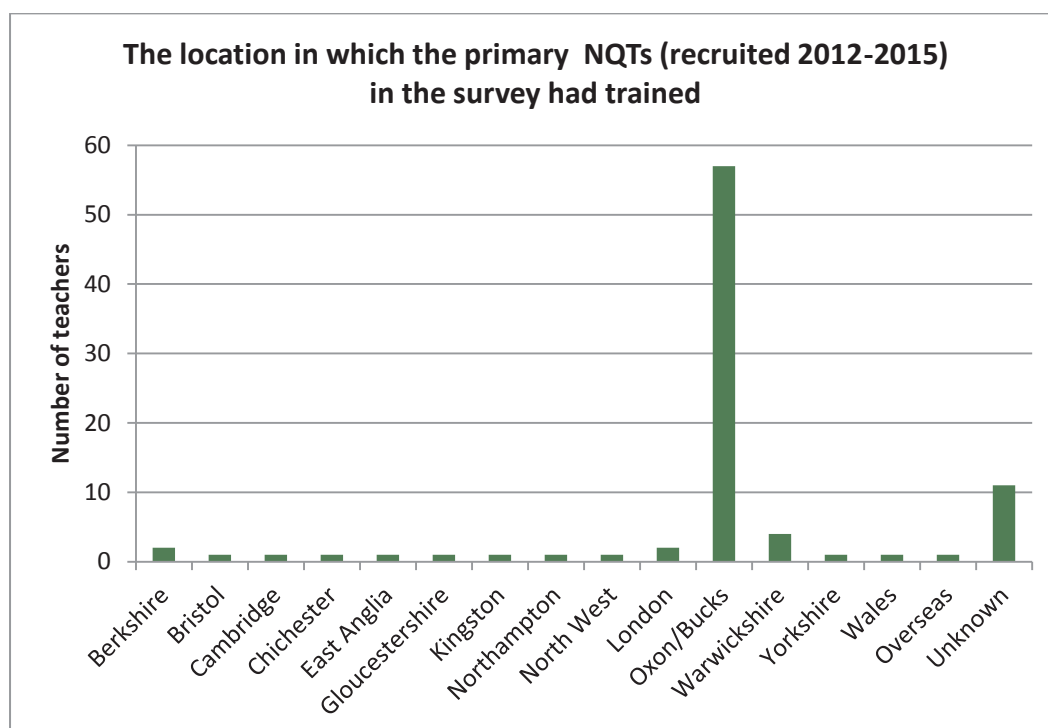

Figure 5: The locations (where known) in which the secondary teachers recruited as NQTs had trained

Figure 6 sets out the different training routes that these teachers pursued, but it is obviously difficult to draw useful conclusions for the future from teachers' past trajectories in terms of the role that

different training routes might play. The very recent and rapid expansion of School Direct means that its full impact cannot yet be clearly seen.
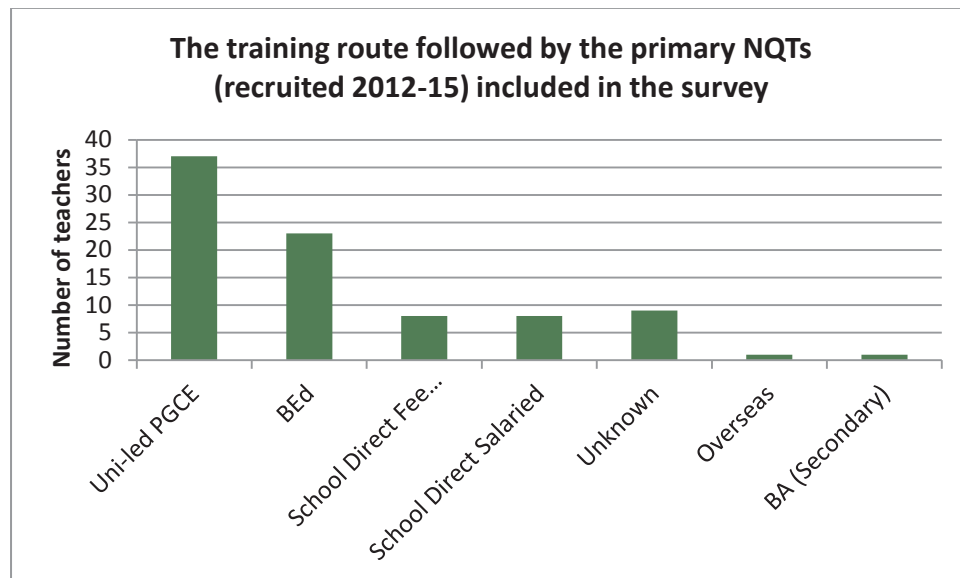

Figure 6: The training route followed by the primary NQTs included in the survey

5.1.2 Findings from interviews with teachers recruited as NQTs (still in post after 3+ years)

Of the 15 teachers interviewed, nearly three-quarters (73%) had trained **locally**, with eight from Oxford Brookes University (OBU), and three from Reading. Others had trained at Gloucestershire, Kingston, Cheltenham and Hertfordshire. Of these four, one was already living in Oxfordshire (completing a flexible post-graduate certificate of education (PGCE)), one relocated to Oxfordshire to be with their spouse, one had previously completed undergraduate study in Oxford (so was returning), and the fourth had conducted a search over the four counties neighbouring where they lived. Two-thirds of teachers (10/15) had followed a PGCE route to qualification, three studied a three-year BA/BEd programme, and two had qualified through the graduate teacher programme (GTP); one of these was salaried.

For those who had trained locally, reasons for remaining in Oxfordshire included the fact that they already lived in the county (or close to county borders); *'It wasn't that I was drawn to Oxford, I was already here and had no plans to leave at that point'* (interview 10), or that they had family within the area (either parents or their own children, whom they did not wish to relocate). In one case, the teacher had initially worked as a teaching assistant (TA) in the school, and a training route was offered to them through the GTP. Four teachers lived close to the county borders and had therefore applied for jobs in neighbouring areas. The position in Oxfordshire appears to have been the first one offered; *'I just lived here, I didn't specifically want to work in Oxfordshire, I was looking in Oxfordshire because I'd lived here before, and I was looking in London, and I found a job here first'* (Interview 12). Two teachers were familiar with the school in which they ended up, or with schools

within the vicinity: *'I had been on placement, actually in two of the schools, in the partnership that the current school I work in is, so that was an appealing point to me'* (Interview 13).

None of the teachers interviewed had any serious reservations about taking up a post in the county, and only two mentioned the cost of living. One of these indicated that the financial burden decreased with qualification as a teacher, and through finding friends with whom to share the costs of rent.

5.1.3 Findings from interviews with current NQTs

The importance of existing **local connections** was also confirmed by the interviews conducted with two current NQTs even though both of them had followed a three year BEd / BA primary training programme. One had studied at OBU and had lived in the county for several years; the other had studied at Plymouth and returned to work in Oxfordshire where they had family. Neither expressed reservations about working in the county.

5.2 What obstacles are there to the effective recruitment of NQTs in Oxfordshire?

5.2.1 Findings from survey data about the trajectories of recent NQTs

Eight schools responded with details on 14 unfilled vacancies. (Schools were invited to skip this question if they had no vacancies lasting three months or more). As Figure 7 shows, five schools indicated they had one vacancy (three at KS2, one at KS1 and one in the Foundation stage), with three schools having three vacancies each (six at KS2 and three at KS1). All three of these schools had a greater than the national average (263) number of pupils on roll; however two were considerably larger with 400+ pupils. Two of the three schools had higher than the national average percentage of children taking free school meals (26.3%)[5], however the third had a considerably lower proportion of pupils eligible for FSM. Few firm conclusions can be drawn, however, about the number of vacancies and size of school or %FSM. Cover provision for short vacancies (lasting three to four months) was delivered in equal measure by stable consistent and changing forms of provision, with the longer term vacancies (five-six months and six months or more) utilising changing forms of provision more often than having stable cover.

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[5] Percentages have been rounded to the nearest whole number *except* for %FSM (national average and individual schools)
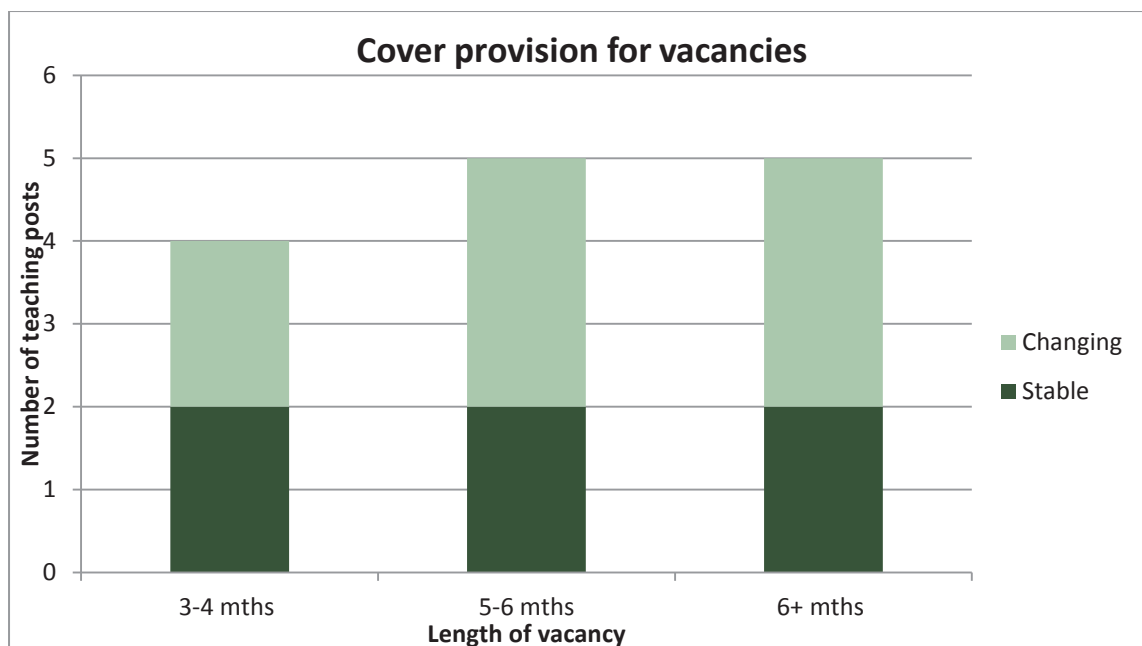
Figure 7: Cover provision for primary vacancies lasting three months or more

As Figure 8 shows, although there is a **positive correlation between %FSM and the total number of NQTs** appointed in the period 2012-2015, a high proportion of FSM does not necessarily create difficulties with recruitment. For example, of those schools appointing seven NQTs in that period, four were below the national average for % FSM, and other reasons may prevail such as that the school with a very low %FSM had undergone recent significant expansion, which might explain the need for additional teachers; additionally, the school with over 60% FSM was a large primary school (over 500 pupils). One school appointed eight NQTs in the period 2012-2015, but had a relatively low % FSM (11.9).

Of the schools with the highest average number of NQTs appointed each year over the four year period, (3), two of these had well above the national average %FSM of 26.3; one had close to the national average, and one was well below. Three schools appointed 0.25 NQTs per year; all of these had a %FSM below 10.0. Those appointing an average of 0.5 NQTs per year 2012-2015 (ten schools) had a %FSM of below 10.0 (except for 2; 12.1 and 14).
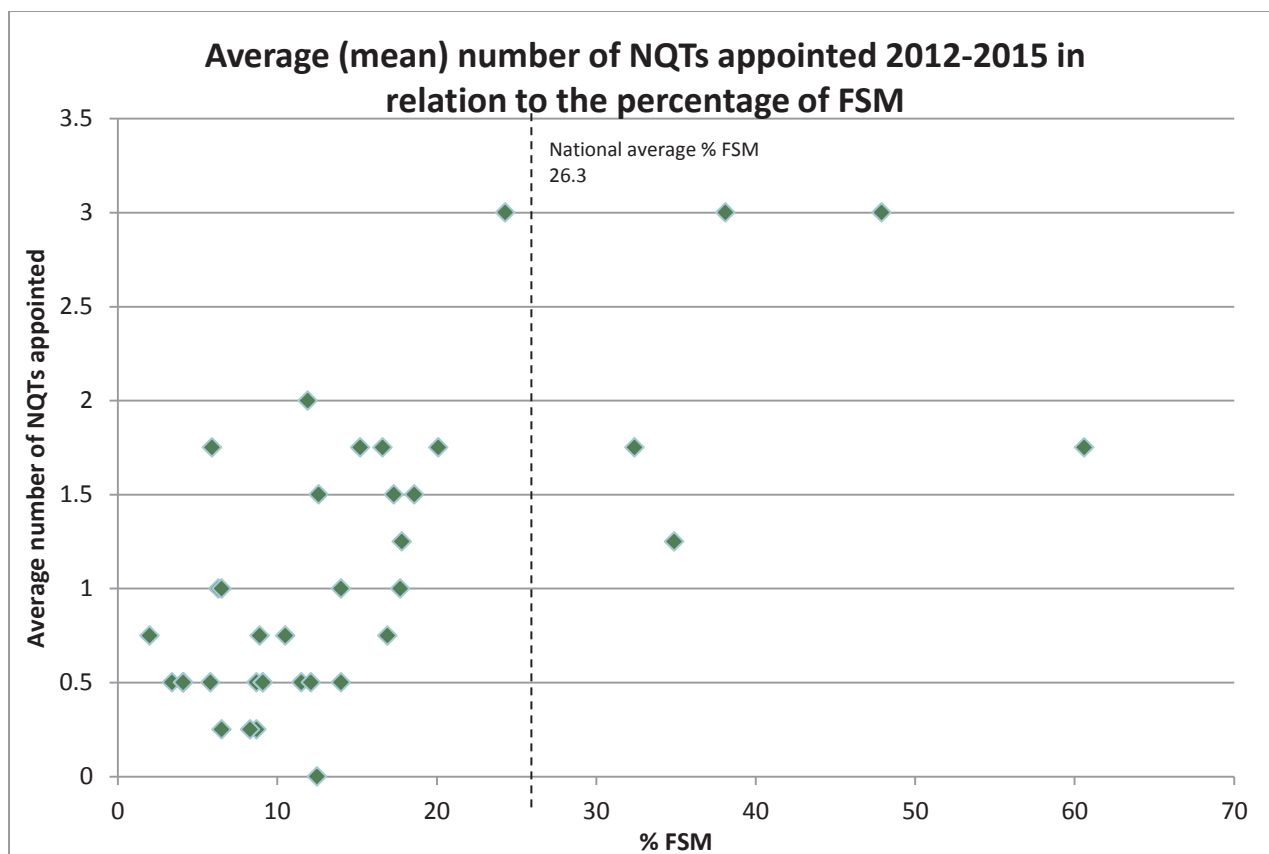
Figure 8: The average (mean) number of NQTs appointed annually in each school over the period 2012-15 in relation to the proportion of FSM students (% FSM)

As Figure 9 shows, there is an **overall positive correlation between size of school and the number of NQTs appointed 2012-2105**, but this is not the complete picture. For example, two schools with less than 100 pupils on roll appointed four NQTs over this period.[6] One of these schools had a change of head teacher (HT) within this time, which might have precipitated a change in staffing; the other had replaced three out of four teachers in 2012 (only two of these were NQTs).[7] One school appointed no NQTs over this period, being a small school with less than 100 pupils on roll. This might indicate a very stable staffing structure, or an unwillingness to appoint NQTs. Additionally, one large school (400+ pupils on roll) appointed only two NQTs within the last three years. Three larger than average primary schools (500+ and 400+ pupils, and one multi-academy trust covering three primary schools) each appointed 12 NQTs over the period 2012-2015. One of these schools began expansion in 2011 which has subsequently continued; this might explain the additional demand for teachers.

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[6] Information from cross-referencing with interview data
[7] From cross-referencing with interview data. There had been a change of HT during this period (information from OFSTED reports) but it is unclear when this occurred, and therefore it cannot be related to the appointment of new staff.

Total NQTs appointed 2012-15 against number of children on roll
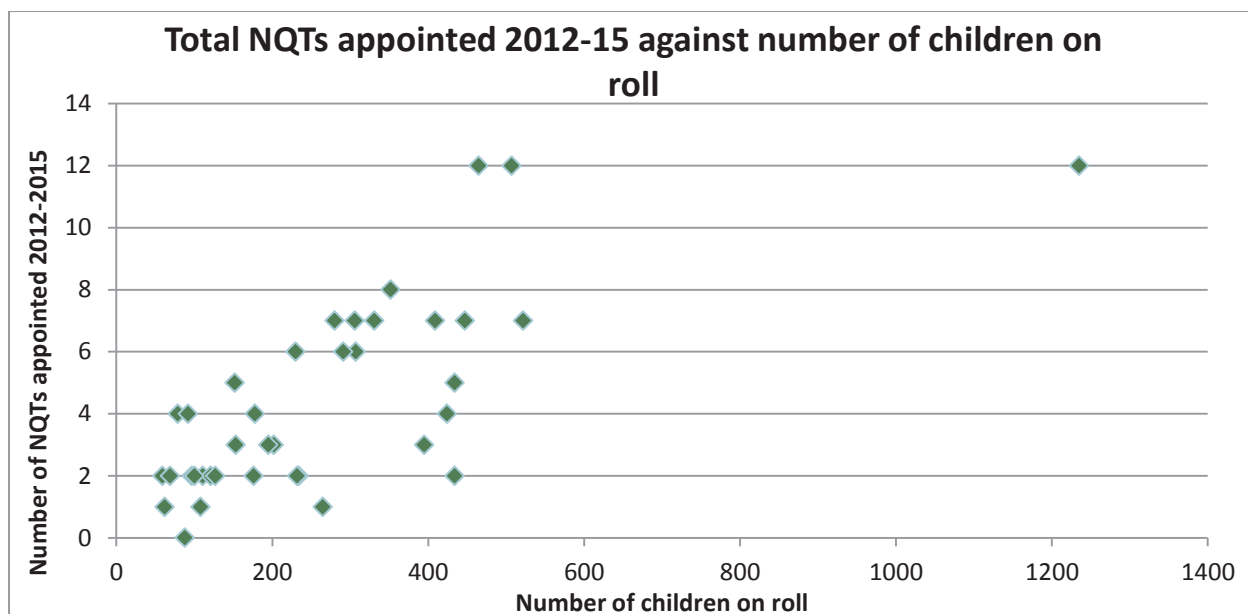
(Multi-Academy Trust (MAT) covers 3 schools with 1235 pupils)

Figure 9: NQTs appointed against size of school (number of pupils on roll)

5.2.2 Findings from induction tutors' focus group and questionnaires

One tutor mentioned difficulties with recruitment in particular, suggesting that a **prevailing negative perception of the local area** (one of significant deprivation) had a detrimental impact. This had led to the creation of a post specifically to work with NQTs and early career teachers, to try and address this issue. However, discussion of the **communication strategies** used to attract teachers in difficult circumstances which prompted consideration of different schools' public communication about development opportunities for early career teachers revealed important variations in emphasis, which might influence NQTs' decisions. For example, one policy document outlined support at different stages of a teacher's career (from NQT to senior leader); the other specifically highlighted the support and training offered to NQTs as a separate element. One was candid about the considerable challenges facing children in the area, while also noting the significant demand of the first year of a teaching career. The extensive support programme offered in response to these challenges was then outlined, but it may be important to consider whether this frank appraisal of the issues might be off-putting for some potential applicants. In contrast, the presentation of the support offered for each stage of a teacher's career implied a progression route, which might be more appealing to some candidates.

Another induction tutor highlighted the significant amount of pressure experienced by young teachers, who were working excessive hours due to **government-induced changes**. This in her opinion was a *'key problem in keeping anybody in the profession at the moment'* (Induction Tutor, Interview 2). One tutor suggested that more NQTs are younger, and have flexibility in their lives, enabling them to move if life changes occur, or new roles crop up. It was also suggested that a village location might be less appealing to younger members of staff to work as there is little going on outside of work.

5.3 Why do many early career teachers in Oxfordshire primary schools leave the schools to which they were recruited as NQTs?

5.3.1 Findings from survey data about the trajectories of recent NQTs

Respondents to the online survey were asked to provide information for up to three NQTs appointed to the school within the last three years. Details on 87 NQTs from 38 schools were given, covering Foundation Stage (eight teachers), KS1 (26 teachers) and KS2 (53 teachers). Of those 87 personnel, 69% (60 teachers) had remained in school, with 31% (27) having left. Of those 27 who had left, 12 (44%) left within the first year, 7 (26 %) left after two years, and eight (30%) left after three years. Although the sample size is very small, the number of NQTs leaving within the first year is much higher than those leaving in the subsequent two years. This data alone cannot provide clear messages about the reasons for teachers' departure from their first school role.

The proportions of leavers overall largely reflected the numbers of teachers in each phase being recruited: two foundation stage (FS) specialists (7%), 10 KS1 teachers (37%) and 15 KS2 (56%) teachers.

As Figure 10 shows, over 60% of those leaving (total 17) went to another school; ten of these were outside of the county (compared with seven to Oxfordshire schools). Eight teachers left the profession (representing 30%); one took up supply teaching, and the destination of one other was unknown.

Destinations of NQTs reported as having left the school, presented by phase
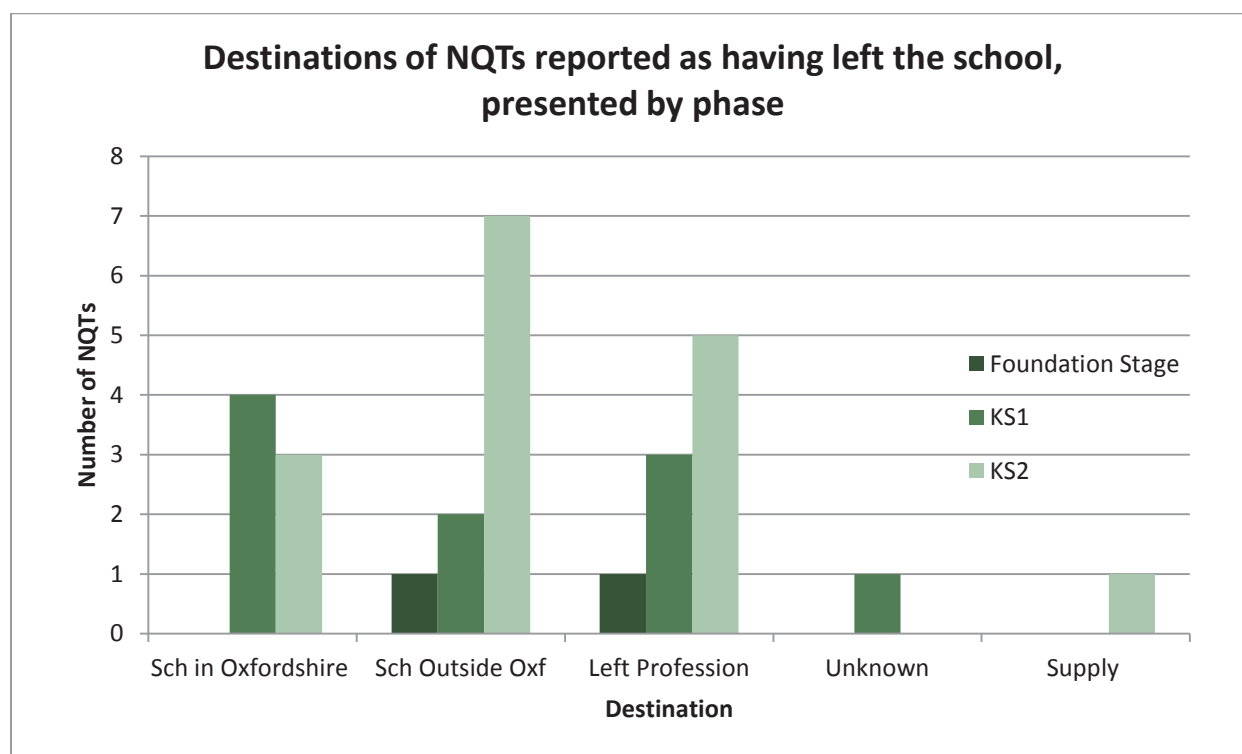
Figure 10: leaver destinations by phase (number of teachers)

Of those leaving the profession (nine), the most cited reason was 'unhappy with the **demands / nature of the job**' (four), followed by **'family'** (three). Other reasons for leaving were to train as an

educational psychologist, personal difficulties, to work as an educationalist, not passing the NQT standards, and to work as a supply teacher. Those leaving to take up another post within Oxfordshire (six) most commonly quoted family (two), and a fixed term contract (two) as reasons for leaving, with one seeking experience in a different school / context, and one citing the cost of living in Oxfordshire. Eleven teachers remained in teaching but sought posts outside the county. 'Family' was given in over half these cases (six) as a reason for leaving, with three teachers leaving due to being unhappy with the demands / nature of the job, or the challenge of the school. Two highlighted the cost of living in Oxfordshire, and two wanted experience in a different school. Others mentioned quite specific reasons: an interest in teaching at secondary level (a specialist subject); a promotion; and the school not being able to accommodate the part-time hours that they had requested.

Survey respondents were asked to identify any **additional responsibilities** for the teachers described; 28 of the 87 had no role beyond that of classroom teacher. For the other 59 teachers, a total of 70 additional tasks were outlined, ranging from senior roles (such as Special Educational Needs Coordinator (SENCO) or early years foundation stage (EYFS) coordinator), to specific projects (such as Forest School leader, management of the school council or leading on 'talk for writing'). Eleven teachers held two responsibilities; four had a core and non-core subject leadership, one teacher had two core subjects to look after, two teachers held senior leadership roles (SENCO or phase responsibilities) in conjunction with other responsibilities; two teachers had responsibility for two non-core subjects, and two were the lead for PHSCE and the school council.

The most often-cited responsibility was that of science coordinator (12), followed by PE coordinator (seven), and music coordinator (six). Fifteen teachers who had held a responsibility additional to their teaching role had left; five of these had left the profession. Only one of these cited being unhappy with the demands of the job (others referred to personal or family reasons or different career opportunities). One teacher holding two additional roles had left, for another school outside of the county. As this sample is very small, no firm conclusions can be drawn about the demands of taking on an additional responsibility early within a teaching career and the rate at which teachers leave, but it is important to be alert to the potential for additional pressure that this creates and to recognised the need for induction support within these additional roles

5.3.2 Findings from telephone interviews with teachers recruited as NQTs

5.3.2.1 **The nature and extent of the challenges that teachers faced as NQTs (including the extent to which they were prepared for the challenges)**

Extent of challenge: Although two teachers suggested that the NQT year was not challenging(with one of them claiming that their current – their fourth – was far more so), other interviewees described the scale of challenge they had faced in variable terms but with a clear message that it was indeed **demanding**: the 'most stressful time' of her life'(one), 'incredibly' (one), 'tough' (one), 'very' (two), 'really challenging' (two), 'pretty challenging' (one), 'quite' (two), and 'challenging' (two).

Nature of the challenge: There was a broad range of aspects that NQTs found challenging in the first year of their career. Largely, these related to **relationships**, **workload**, and the **specific tasks** required of teachers.

With respect to the children; four cited **behaviour** specifically, from a general comment (two), to particularly difficult classes (two). One mentioned behaviour as part of a general reference to the day-to-day routine of teaching. Two identified the level of (SEN) within their classes as an issue. Three highlighted relationships with other adults as demanding: learning to work with others in the classroom, not getting on with their partner teacher, or relationships with parents.

Two highlighted the **challenge of Ofsted inspections** within the first year (one within the first term, which resulted in a lack of support for the individual, as the following quotation illustrates:

> *The setting was a village school with a mixed age class, who had considerable needs; in terms of learning, emotion, social and behaviour. The school received notice (6 week) of an OFSTED inspection, and from then on, everyone concentrated on their own preparation, leaving no support for me, or anyone! I was totally ill-equipped to deal with the level of need and I didn't know how to manage it. The experience was the most stressful of my life.*

One teacher specifically mentioned a lack of support (and training) within the first year, in this case because of other changes in school personnel:

> *As a NQT, I didn't get much support, although I knew the school, and how it would be when I began the year. The school was going through a difficult time with a change of headteacher. I lost my mentor, who was replaced by the interim headteacher. With that head not knowing the school so well, and having a lot to do, I probably received the minimum that was offered. Due to the changes, processes were inconsistent and communication was not great.*

Another teacher, working with a class with a high level of need struggled because of the lack of adequate TA support.

Three teachers mentioned the challenge of working in a **small school**, with one noting the difficulties with teaching a mixed-year class group. Another identified the lack of systems (planning, tracking) in place, which resulted in an 'immense' workload in setting these up, and one described being the sole teacher for a year group as a challenge. Two others identified the demand of having one's own class, from the responsibility of this, to taking ownership of the room. Two interviewees mentioned planning and assessment specifically, with another including this as part of the daily practice. One highlighted the difficulties of developing a sense of familiarisation with the curriculum. Two interviewees highlighted time; with one citing the fragmented nature of the PPA time they were offered (as opposed to being given a block of time). One mentioned 'pace', possibly referring to the overall nature of teaching. Workload was noted in general terms by two teachers. One teacher highlighted the challenge of starting part-way through the academic year, when everyone is settled, in learning school systems and processes

Finally, two personal demands were cited: having high but realistic expectations of oneself, and managing one's own dyslexia.

While some teachers clearly faced significant pressures during their first year of their career, these were all teachers who remained in the teaching profession, and at the schools in which they completed their induction year. This demonstrates considerable resilience to overcome challenging circumstances.

5.3.2.2 Reports on their colleagues' reasons for leaving

All but one (who had been the last NQT appointed at the school) of the 15 teachers interviewed were aware of other NQTs who had subsequently left their first post. Two teachers suggested that NQTs had left their schools but did not supply any further detail about how many, or for what reasons; in total 23 NQTs were identified as having left. One emphasised that they felt their school had a good level of retention, with people leaving through life changes, promotion / higher paid job, relocation elsewhere, part-time hours, retiring, or doing supply teaching, implying that the support provided by the school or school environment itself were not factors in the decision to leave.

Reasons were offered for 22 of the leavers; the most commonly perceived cause was **relocation**, for example, to be with a partner, to travel abroad, or to have a better work-life balance (with one response of each kind given) . One left due to **career progression**, and career opportunities were also cited in a general comment. Two teachers had left to be closer to home (one who was commuting long distance because of house prices in Oxfordshire). Two were thought to have left because of poor staff relationships, one of these being with the teacher in the year group above, who might possibly have provided support in the NQT year; the other due to tensions caused by an early promotion. Two teachers had sought opportunities in larger schools, and two had left the teaching profession (one of these to teach music privately). Other reasons suggested were retirement, family / health issues, and for one NQT, a subsequent change in year group from what they were anticipating, which resulted in them not starting at the school.

5.3.2.2 Reports on their own reasons for considering leaving

All but three teachers (12) interviewed had considered leaving the profession at some point, although they had not been pushed to do so thus far. However, when questioned about whether they anticipated leaving within the next two-to-three years, six indicated yes, with four suggesting 'possibly / maybe'. Five indicated 'no'.

In terms of general reasons for leaving teaching, two suggested a specific alternative career, or seeking a different challenge, while two highlighted the difficulties of working part-time (being unable to keep a teaching and learning responsibility (TLR) allowance, and not feeling as much part of the team). Three people highlighted **government changes**: highlighting the uncertainty; the way in which the changes impact on teachers' lives; and frustration with the lack of understanding about the profession of those imposing the new regimes. All other comments related to the **demands and stress of the job**; six specifically mentioned workload, hours or work life balance; *'workload is becoming almost impossible'* (Interview 7), *'when I get up at five in the morning and then I'm still working at midnight'* (Interview 14). Others highlighted expectations, bureaucracy, and pressure (general, and of the job), three mentioned their children or families. One suggested OFSTED as a

contributing factor to feeling generally overwhelmed. Only one teacher mentioned behaviour, in the specific case of a child with severe needs.

Of those anticipating a move, one indicated that she *was* leaving at the end of the academic year to travel, one was planning to move abroad (and take a break from teaching to bring up a family); one suggested personal reasons as a factor, and three indicated that professional development would cause them to seek a post elsewhere (particularly in a small school, where it was felt all opportunities had been exhausted). Of those possibly seeking a move, two highlighted **career development** as a reason, one indicated frustration with the new curriculum and expectations on the children, and one was about to complete extracurricular study in a related field. For those not contemplating a move, two cited professional development opportunities as potential reasons to leave; others suggested a family-led decision, house prices and personal wellbeing.

5.3.4 Findings from induction tutors' focus group and questionnaires

Nine NQTs were reported as having left five schools in the last three years, and reasons for this were suggested for eight of these. The most commonly cited reason was to be at a school closer to home (four); particularly for one teacher who was commuting to the north of the county by train. Three teachers relocated due to family, including one abroad, where the teaching qualification was not recognised and hence they were unable to continue in the profession. One teacher was 'poached' by a school where they had been on placement previously.

5.4 Why do some primary teachers recruited as NQTs to Oxfordshire schools choose to continue working in the school and what might induce others to stay?

5.4.1 Findings from telephone interviews with teachers recruited as NQTs

5.4.1.2 Nature and effectiveness of support in their NQT year

Support that they had expected: Three interviewees indicated they had few expectations when beginning at their first school, or did not know what to expect. In one teacher's opinion, NQTs have few reference points to judge this until they are further into their career, unless they are able to compare their experience with that of peers at other schools (for example during network or partnership meetings).

In terms of **dedicated personnel**, eight teachers indicated they had expected a mentor, with three suggesting that this would be someone from the senior leadership team (SLT). One mentioned expecting a partner teacher for joint planning in a two-form entry school.

With regards to a **formal support programme**, three interviewees mentioned the opportunity to attend external and partnership (NQT) training. Two suggested being observed by their mentor, with

constructive feedback, or guidance about how to improve, and two highlighted observing others teach. An anticipation of being more closely monitored was highlighted by one teacher, who indicated that she was not disappointed when this did not actually materialise! One expected a framework for coaching on whole school policies. Two teachers specifically suggested the improvement of their own teaching as a focus for a formalised programme. Others suggested getting to know systems and processes within the school, or the chance to observe one's own class. With regards to more tailored opportunities, one teacher identified behaviour management, another highlighted others' understanding of life and family (as a part-time member of staff), and a suitable environment in which to work. For those entering the profession after a previous career, or those balancing the demands of family and working, these two seem particularly pertinent.

There was some expectation of a **reduced timetable** in acknowledgement of NQTs' status. However, only one teacher mentioned the additional NQT time (to PPA entitlement) specifically, although one other referred to time to 'do things'. Nonetheless, some interviewees mentioned the entitlement elsewhere, so the expectation is more universal than this might imply. Two interviewees anticipated previous planning or marking / assessment systems being in place, and one indicated support with planning. One interview highlighted an expectation of encouragement and acceptance that NQTs are learning. (Given two interviewees' experiences of a lack of support in their first year, this appears to be an important consideration when structuring a support programme).

Finally, two teachers mentioned a **focus on well-being** rather than just developing professional skills. One highlighted a focus on *'holistic care'* (Interview 6), another, the expectation of a positive support network (to help them get through).

Support that they had received: NQTs experienced a wide range of support in their first year of teaching. With respect to **designated personnel**, all but two interviewees indicated they had had a mentor; one of these had met with the HT but considered this a less formal arrangement. One teacher indicated that she considered she had received no formal support in her NQT year apart from the county-led behaviour support programme[8].

Formalised support included access to people, additional non-contact time, and training. For example, teachers received NQT **time** additional to their PPA entitlement (three mentioned these being combined to make a full day off timetable), regular formal observations, weekly in-school training (INSET), regular meetings with one's mentor, opportunities to observe others teach, team teaching, attendance on courses / training, an 'open door' policy, and a buddy (or someone other than the mentor) within school to talk to. One teacher stated a reluctance to attend many courses as she felt it preferable to remain in school to 'get stuck in'.

Provision tailored to the individual included: peer observations with another NQT within the school, joint weekly working with a teacher at a local partnership school, INSET with another school in the local partnership, phonics training (*Read-Write-Inc),* phase meetings, team planning with the three other mixed Year 1/Year 2 class teachers in the school, joint planning with a partner class teacher, a shared (experienced) TA, and the NQT's classroom being located next-door to that of the mentor.

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[8] The NQT left this school within the first term, and started the induction year again at another setting, which they have subsequently remained at.

Other elements of support included: a lack of subject responsibility, the flexibility to work from home or at school during non-contact time, in house INSET, regular staff meetings, and being returned time in lieu, to facilitate report writing. One NQT highlighted being allowed to explore things for oneself. Two interviewees mentioned other teachers helping with specific projects or tasks; running a club, or assessing pupil progress (the formal processes then in play, known as APP).

Value attributed to that support: All teachers were positive about the support they had received.[9] This ranged from 'brilliant' (two) to the support offered being 'minimal'. In terms of whether the formal support programme met NQTs' expectations, only one teacher suggested the support had fallen short of expectations and in six cases, the teachers' reported that it had exceeded them.[10].

4.1.3 Other kinds of informal support that they received in the NQT year

The most widely cited informal support was from other staff within the school (five), which was much appreciated. The NQT cited earlier, who had received minimal support from the interim headteacher acting as mentor, stressed the informal support that she had received from colleagues: *However the staff were incredibly supportive and helpful, and I felt like I belonged to the team. I was allowed to find my feet and make mistakes, and I could talk to anyone at any time if I had problems'* (Interview 3)*.

Additionally, socialising as a staff, support from TAs (two), talking to a family member who was also a teacher, an open door policy, another teacher offering to help with assessment, and a strong friendship formed between the NQT and their mentor were suggested.

A NQT hub run by a local HT provided opportunities to review other schemes, share best practice, or have training on a specific theme

5.4.1.4 Nature and effectiveness of support in their second year of teaching

Two teachers mentioned they had received nothing specific in terms of support going into their second year of teaching. One suggested she had been left rather to her own devices. Another commented on the shock of losing the extra NQT time, and the removal of the NQT mentor was also noted. More positively one teacher considered that their headteacher had allowed them to be more independent in the second year, noting that there was still an open door if needed. One teacher indicated that she had received the same amount of training and support in the first and second years, noting the change in relationship between her and the coordinator to a more equal one, which made her feel valued as a professional.

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[9] One NQT who moved schools after just one term indicated that more might have been done at their second setting, and the comments included relate to this experience, rather than to their first placement. Considerable differences were highlighted between support provision at the two establishments, and highlighted team planning as the most useful support provided.

[10] One teacher indicated that the support had neither fallen short of, nor exceeded expectations. One specific area was cited where the support might have been better. One teacher did not provide an opinion on whether the support received had met expectations, instead suggesting the school was 'fantastic', which was why they were still there.

Support that they had received: In terms of access to dedicated personnel, one interviewee continued with the same partner teacher as in the NQT year, noting the value in an already existing relationship. Another suggested support was still available during the second year, but that the onus was now on the individual to seek it, rather than it being offered.

There appears to be far **less of a formal support programme going in to the second year**. Several people attended training related to additional responsibilities, for example as an assistant SENCO, geography lead, RE lead, or global learning lead. One teacher continued to have lessons observed, and was able to watch others teach.

With regards to tailored, selected opportunities, a number of interviewees mentioned that courses were still available to them if they deemed them relevant. In contrast, one teacher noted the general reduction in access to external training. Two interviewees changed year group which brought fresh opportunities, with a third changing phase. This provided access to specific training since they were new to the Foundation stage. One teacher visited other Year 1 settings in the county to observe (as the school was one-form entry). Others attended courses relevant to their circumstances, for example numeracy for KS2, writing moderation, autistic spectrum disorder (ASD), behaviour, or a 'maths course'. One attended a behaviour support course targeted at NQTs.[11]

For those receiving the same support as everyone else, only one teacher specifically mentioned the loss of the NQT time. In the second year, there appears to be a significant reduction in the amount of support offered, yet some individuals still had access to development opportunities. One interviewee had attended some training courses (planning, behaviour, assessment) delivered by a local special school. Another teacher had attended training arranged through the local partnership. One teacher noted the value in teaching a single year group, and having the previous year's planning as a starting point. Another teacher participated in a residential visit with his phase group.

There was evidence of some entirely informal arrangements for additional support. One interviewee began leading the key stage jointly with another teacher in her second year, as there was no official role. This provided an opportunity work alongside another (mutual support) and to demonstrate / develop leadership skills.

There was no personally arranged informal support identified, although one teacher mentioned that by her second year, she was beginning to find tools and resources to help herself.

Value attributed to that support: People generally valued, and were positive about, the support they had received during the second year, with only two negative comments. One individual suggested that attending external training added to an already considerable workload, while the other suggested that the support was not as helpful as it might have been, without elaborating further. This has implications about the quality of training offered, and how relevant it might be for individuals' requirements.

Comments regarding how this support was perceived ranged from 'brilliant' (one) to 'really helpful' (four), to 'helpful', 'on the whole', 'mixed' and 'quite – not that I can remember'. Two teachers

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[11] As the individual had begun their NQT year in January, they were still eligible to attend the following September

described the benefits rather than indicating the value they afforded the support; for example courses providing lots of ideas and resources, a critical friend highlighting positive practice.

4.1.5 Nature and effectiveness of support in their <u>third</u> year of teaching

Support that they had received: Four teachers noted that they had not received anything very different to the previous year in terms of support and training, and two indicated that they received little. One of these suggested that she was just 'left alone'. Another mentioned the 'usual observations'. By this point, however, five teachers have additional subject or leadership responsibilities, which provided access to sources of support.

In terms of support associated with a promoted role, one teacher participated in a professional development visit to the school's partner school in Africa (as geography coordinator), additionally noting that cover was provided for part of the trip which began before the school holiday. Other opportunities included science coordinator training, design and technology (DT) lead training, SEN training (as assistant SENCO), and leading (with support) global learning training for the local hub.

In terms of **subject-specific support**, there was a focus on those **changing phase or year group**, or new initiatives, rather than development of subject knowledge per se. One teacher attended 'new to EYFS' training (provided by Oxford County Council (OCC)), another, how to teach lower KS2 maths. One other attended baseline assessment provider-run curriculum training for EYFS (to provide exemplification). Only one teacher recalled attending a course related to personal development; 'how to be an outstanding teacher'.

With respect to general reference to CPD, training and support appears to have reduced significantly by this point in people's careers. In a specific set of circumstances; one teacher noted that stability with the SLT in the school brought more investment in terms of internal training and support. Another teacher noted that courses were 'drying up' by this stage in their development, although one suggested she was still able to attend training when she wanted. One teacher noted story-telling workshops as part of school INSET.

With regards to other opportunities, one teacher indicated they had taken more of a lead with Year 2, helping a new partner teacher, although this was not an official TLR. This provided experience and the chance to develop skills. Another interviewee attended a residential visit with his own class as a development opportunity, and one noted a change in partner teacher provided 'resurgence' of energy for planning.

Value attributed to that support: Only one comment was negative, relating to a specific support programme. This, it was felt, was more critical than supportive and suggested developments that conflicted with what OFSTED were looking for. One suggested that they could not remember how valuable the support had been. Five teachers indicated they found the support in their third year to have been 'really' helpful / useful. Two stated that the support was helpful, or 'good for me', while two suggested their support was reasonably helpful (having taken on a core subject lead), or 'OK'. Two said yes; indicating a positive response, and one related improved support to better leadership within the school.

5. 4.1.6 Other kinds of support that they would have welcomed in their first 3 years of teaching

Two teachers did not consider there was any additional support they would have welcomed over the first three years of their career. This might be taken as a positive evaluation of the programme they had received, although given that a number teachers enter their NQT year not knowing what to expect, this might also imply that early career teachers are unaware of what further development they might need. One teacher would have liked a structured network for support in her NQT year, as she considered the support provided to be largely informal and internal. One teacher highlighted the most useful aspects of her support, which perhaps carried an implicit request for more: visits to other year groups, other schools, and NQT network meetings. Two teachers mentioned that they were able to attend courses when they wished.

Essential requests for '**more' training** related to supporting children with special educational needs; either with respect to SEN in general, (two), or specific aspects of SEN, (i.e. specific learning difficulties (SpLD)) (one). Academic, subject focused support covered specific aspects and strategies: phonics, grammar, literacy and numeracy (frameworks), and wider subject areas (RE).

With regard to **specific aspects of teaching**, a range of developmental support was identified. This included: observing how to teach maths in mixed year groups, network meetings for year groups other than EYFS, training on assessment, training on the use of IPADs, how to write reports, how to speak to parents, and behaviour management. One teacher highlighted the value in attending the 'new to EYFS' course, but pointed out that it should be available earlier than the start of the academic year (to allow better preparation).

Only two suggestions were made in relation to the second and third year of teaching in particular; one teacher suggested that more observations beyond the end of the NQT year would be helpful. Another interviewee mentioned that a KS1 leader course would be beneficial in the third year (with respect to their current role); however it was noted that this opportunity was not currently available.

5.4.1.7 Specific factors that <u>induced</u> them to stay when they had contemplated leaving <u>teaching</u>

It is worth noting the main reasons why teachers who had at various points contemplated leaving the professional had actually chosen not to do so. In responding to this question, the teachers demonstrated significant **loyalty and commitment** to their institutions and to the people within them: five people stated that they loved the job / teaching, and four equally suggested that they loved the children and the school / people they worked with. One stated that they had found the job they were meant to do, two indicated job satisfaction was important, while two others suggested they would not know what else to do (other than teaching). Although two teachers acknowledged more practical reasons to remain, noting that having their own children was a factor; *'now I've got children obviously it lends itself to school holidays...it did all make sense to stay there'* (Interview 6), others were inspired to take on more responsibility. Two teachers indicated that the opportunity to take on leadership roles had influenced their decision to remain, while two mentioned money as an incentive (one in relation to other jobs being less well paid, and one who had been internally

rewarded). Other reasons cited were: variety (every day being different), and getting positive feedback.

5.4.1.8 Specific factors that induced them to stay when they had contemplated moving elsewhere

When questioned, eleven teachers indicated that they had considered moving elsewhere. Reasons cited for staying were provided from six interviewees and related to a **sense of community**, their **current school experience**, and the prospect of, or actual **promotion**.

One teacher highlighted the benefits of stability or shared history, mentioning familiarity with children, staff and families, and a sense of belonging in the community. With regards to their current school experience, one interviewee suggested, '*I quite like the people I work with…I quite like where I live'* (Interview 12), while another noted that *'I know it's a really good school…I hear horror stories of people at other schools and you think, hang on a minute, we don't have it so bad'* (Interview 14). One interviewee suggested the children as a reason for staying. With regards to actual, or potential promotion, one teacher noted that she had had good career progression within the school, (and thus stayed), while another suggested he had taken a more pro-active (and successful) approach to development in putting himself forward for promotion without waiting to be asked.

One teacher mentioned highlighted changes in circumstances over time had provided variety, which influenced her decision; for example maternity leave (and subsequently returning), and being a member of the SLT.

4.1.9 Specific factors that they believed might induce them to stay longer

Seven teachers offered responses to this question; one indicated nothing would induce them to stay longer. Others suggested the following reasons, related to **personal development**, a **change in school circumstances**, or **government-induced changes**.

In terms of the prospect of promotion; one mentioned the current lack of a deputy head teacher position, or heads of department role in her school. She indicated that if these positions were available, she might remain longer; another made a more general comment about possibly staying if a 'job' came up at the school. Career development was mentioned by one interviewee, which might relate to opportunities other than promotion.

With regards to other aspects of school life, one teacher noted that a significant number of SLT had resigned from her school. This would bring huge changes to the school, and her inclination was to remain to see what would happen.

Finally, one teacher talked about being valued as a professional; suggesting that if teachers were trusted and listened to by those making policy decisions, this might induce her to remain in the profession.

5.4.2 Findings from induction tutor interviews and questionnaires

5.4.2.1 Extent of difference between support in NQT and 2nd year of teaching

In the first year, support offered to NQTs included additional NQT time, a mentor[12], a bespoke support programme, regular meetings with the tutor responsible for induction[13] and entitlement to all local authority (LA)-provided NQT training.

In the second year, this support was much less specific, although the MAT continued to provide in-class and planning support for those in their second year. None of the schools provided an official mentor into the second year for early career teachers, although one school indicated that the department lead had a remit to support those within the year group, and one other tutor mentioned a 'listening ear' as a form of support. The number of formal observations reduced to three per year, although in one school, there were opportunities for paired ten-minute observations.

5.4.2.2 Induction tutors' reports on strategies <u>already</u> employed that impact positively on retention

Very few specific strategies were noted, with the comments made all quite general. However respondents referred to the support and help offered, providing a sense of **being valued**, opportunities for **professional learning**, and **routes to promotion**.

In respect of support offered, several strategies were mentioned; for example a 'listening ear', the departmental lead having a remit to support all members of their year group (in replacement of the NQT mentor), strong teamwork within the school, and in-class and planning support extended into the second year.

In developing a culture of 'being valued', one tutor suggested that individual interests and strengths were encouraged (but did not explain further); another indicated that teachers were given a choice of year group or specific subject for which to take responsibility. One mentioned more freedom, and having fewer formal observations than in the NQT year (three as part of the appraisal process).

With regards to scope for professional learning; one school required all teachers take on *joint* subject leadership in their second year, which provided the potential for working cross-phase. There were some opportunities to work with others; one school offered paired observations (ten minutes), another, opportunities to observe other colleagues. Another mentioned training for specific development needs, while some mentioned attending courses.

Routes to promotion appeared to relate to encouraging interests in leadership, although one school was careful to note that there were no current management opportunities available within the school.

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[12] In one school the mentor was also the parallel teacher for the year group, with a weekly joint one-hour planning meeting

[13] One tutor was employed solely to work with all NQTs in schools within the particular academy trust.

No specific suggestions were made by induction tutors proposing measures that they were not already using .

5.4.3 Findings from current NQT interviews

These offer a few additional insights into the most challenging aspects of the NQT year (as it was happening). The two teachers were interviewed by telephone both indicated that the NQT year was quite difficult or challenging, with one teacher reporting her sense of feeling overwhelmed at the start getting to know the children, school and policies. However both felt that they were settling into the role by Easter. With respect to specific challenges, assessment, in particular, was highlighted as a challenge, particularly in relation to the way that this was conducted in school.

Both teachers indicated that the support they were receiving as NQTs exceeded their expectations; this included having a NQT mentor, attendance at the OBU NQT course (regular sessions) as well as other external training, weekly 'family group' meetings (across Year3/ Year 4), and a school-led NQT programme of sessions (in the designated NQT time). Neither felt that they were missing specific development opportunities or support. This contrasts with one former NQT's comment that early career teachers do not know what to expect with regards to training and support. With respect to future plans, neither thought they would move within the next two-to-three years. Both suggested that any more might be triggered by their partner, although one suggested that enjoyment of her role might persuade her to remain.

Chapter 6: Detailed findings for secondary schools

6.1 What attracts secondary NQTs to work in Oxfordshire Schools?

6.1.1 Findings from survey data about the trajectories of recent NQTs

The survey, which was completed by senior teachers or administrative staff responsible for recruitment and induction arrangements, included data about the previous training of only 42 teachers originally recruited as NQTs (Training routes for the other 25 NQTs included in the survey were unknown or not provided by those completing the survey.) As Figure 11 shows, of these 42 teachers, 33 (79%) had trained in Oxfordshire or Buckinghamshire. (These two counties were grouped together in order to accommodate the Graduate Teacher Programme which was run jointly across the two counties.) Another three had trained in directly neighbouring counties, such as Berkshire and Warwickshire, while two from other locations in the south (Bristol and Portsmouth). Only three were recruited from further north (one from Sheffield and two from Liverpool.[14] This pattern would seem to suggest that the vast majority of teachers who are recruited as NQTs to Oxfordshire schools are those who have **existing links with the area**. They may be staying simply because they are now familiar with the area through their initial teacher training programme; or they may have chosen to train locally because they have existing connections with the area.
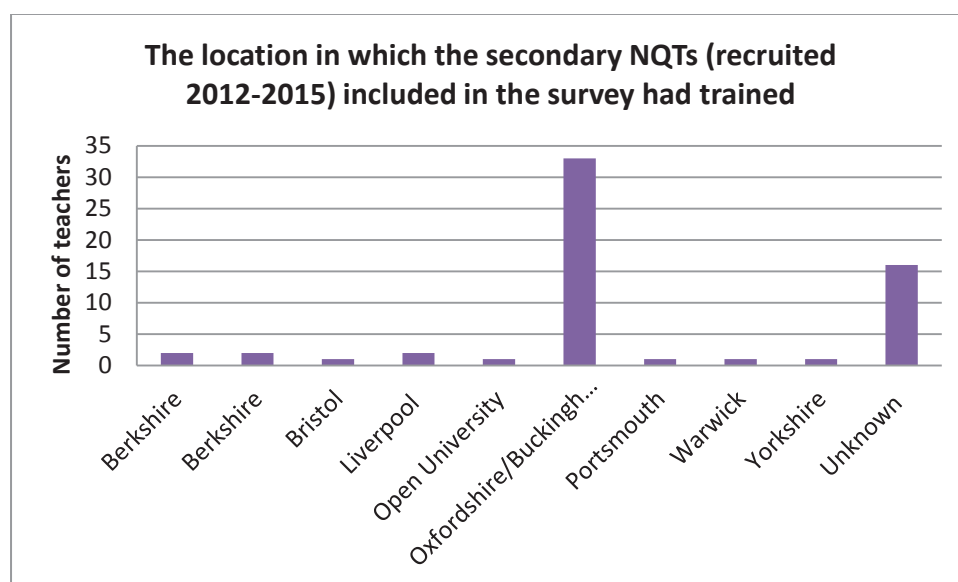

Figure 11: The locations (where known) in which the secondary teachers recruited as NQTs had trained

[14] The location of the training of the one teacher who trained through the Open University is unknown.

Figure 12 sets out the different training routes that these teachers pursued, but it is obviously difficult to draw useful conclusions for the future from teachers' past trajectories in terms of the role that different training routes might play. The very recent and rapid expansion of School Direct means that its impact cannot yet be clearly seen.
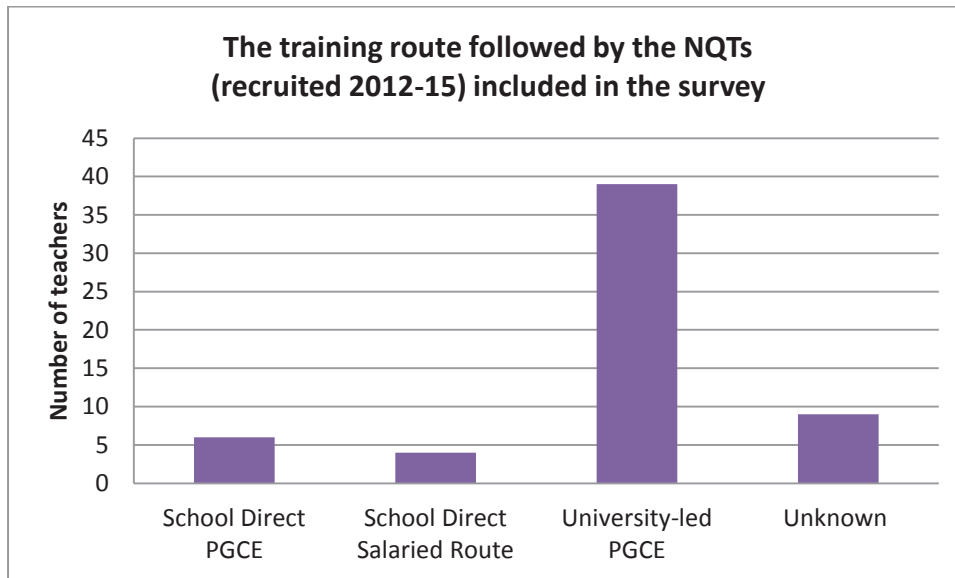

Figure12: The training route followed by the secondary NQTs included in the survey

6.1.2 Findings from interviews with teachers recruited as NQTs (still in post after 3+ years)

Of the 13 teachers interviewed, the vast majority had **trained locally** (six within the OUDE partnership, three with the OBU partnership and one within the Reading PGCE partnership). Those recruited from further afield had trained in Birmingham, Worcester and Durham.

The specific reasons for two of these three teachers moving into the area related to previous or **family connections** to the area (undergraduate study at Oxford or a partner's family living in the county). The third was attracted by the relative ease of access to London where their social life was largely located, but without the challenges of which they had apparently been warned in London schools.

The attractions of the area for those who had been based in Oxford or Reading for their training included an existing family base in the area, previous undergraduate study at Oxford, their current partner's academic study or local employment and a desire not to move again for those who had only recently come to the city for their PGCE programme. In three cases the teachers knew the specific school in which they took up their post, either through their training placement or previous work there as a teaching assistant. In one case a teacher with *all* these kinds of links (a previous TA role and undergraduate study in the city and the chance to share a house with existing friends) seemed to express some regret about not paying more attention at the time of his job application to the longer term financial challenges and the fact that there were probably 'better opportunities elsewhere'. However, none of the teachers suggested that they had any real reservations about

taking up a post in the county and only one mentioned an early concern about how expensive it was – a characteristic that was associated with the south east in general and not specifically with Oxfordshire.

6.1.3 Findings from additional questionnaires completed by NQTs (undertaking the OTSA-OUDE Induction programme)

The same basic pattern of recruitment was found among the nine NQTs who reported on their experiences in response to a paper-based survey. Only two had trained outside the area: one in Bristol and one at UEA (Norwich), both of whom had followed 'university-led' PGCE programmes. Among the seven who had trained locally, five teachers had followed PGCE programmes – four with OUDE and one with OBU – and two had completed the School Direct salaried programme with the Cherwell OTSA SCITT.

6.1.4 Findings from induction tutors' focus group and questionnaires

The induction tutors' reflections tended to echo the findings from the survey and NQT questionnaires that the reasons why NQTs chose to apply for work in Oxfordshire schools had **little to do with specific features of the schools**, except in relation to applicants' familiarity with them (through their training placements or previous experience as a teaching assistant). It was essentially acknowledged that teachers who applied to schools in the region tended to have other reasons for staying or moving into the area; reasons associated with **family commitments or previous connections**. Unfortunately, it was also suggested that the lack of any more specific motive tended to mean that such early career teachers had little to keep them there once they felt more confident in their teaching abilities and had begun to examine the financial realities of their position.

6.2. What obstacles are there to the effective recruitment of NQTs in Oxfordshire?

6.2.1 Findings from survey data about the trajectories of recent NQTs

It is clear that schools in Oxfordshire are experiencing sustained difficulties in recruiting teachers to fill all their vacancies. As Figure13 shows, across the 19 secondary schools, 11 reported that they had recent vacancies that had remained unfilled for more than 3 months. Five of those schools had experienced two such vacancies and three schools had experienced three (the maximum number reported). The most common difficulties were in English, which accounted for five of the vacancies, and Maths, which accounted for four of them. Geography and IT/Computing each accounted for three unfilled vacancies and there were two in MFL. Two-thirds of these vacancies could be addressed with relatively stable measures, providing some consistency for students, but this appeared to be more difficult for vacancies lasting more than six months. These prolonged vacancies that could only be addressed with changing forms of provision over time occurred twice in IT/Computing and MFL and once in Maths and English. There was no obvious pattern in their distribution with multiple vacancies occurring both in the city and across the county.

Cover provision for vacancies
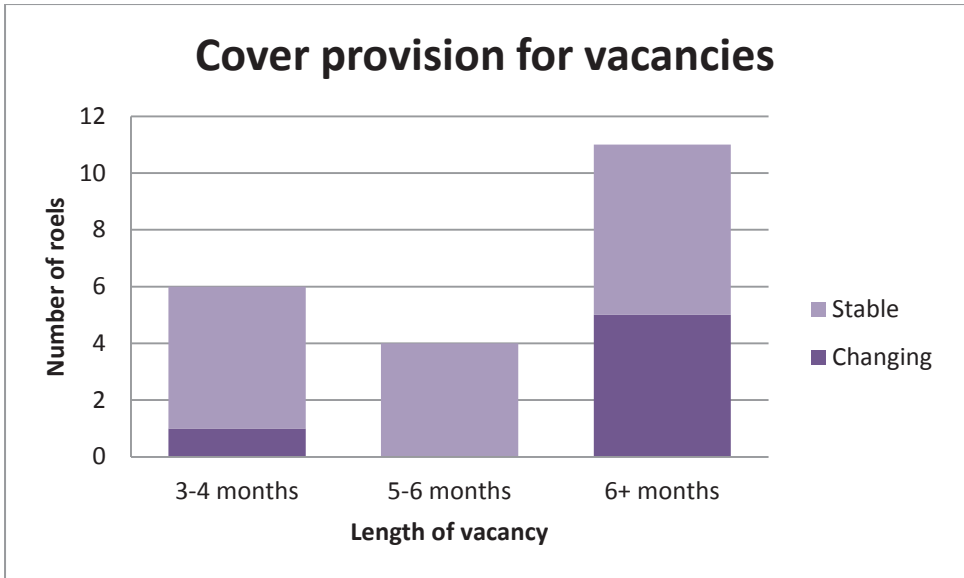
Figure 13: Cover provision for vacancies lasting 3 months or more

In order to determine whether new teaches were seeking out schools with low levels of deprivation in order to avoid teaching in more challenging circumstances, we mapped the mean number of NQT appointments that schools made each year in relation to the proportion of students in receipt of free school meals (FSM). While it is not possible to use data from only 19 schools to establish with confidence whether there is such a correlation, our findings, shown in Figure 14, do *not* appear to endorse the suggestion that secondary schools serving a more disadvantaged population have more difficulties retaining new staff. There are no significant trends across the data, although the patterns of recruitment do highlight some important individual cases that may merit more detailed investigation - either to explore why staff turn-over is so high in a school in which the proportion of FSM students is below the national average, or to examine why staffing is so stable despite the apparently challenging circumstances of schools in which the proportion of FSM students is more than twice the national average.

Average (mean) number of NQTs recruited per year in relation to percentage of FSM
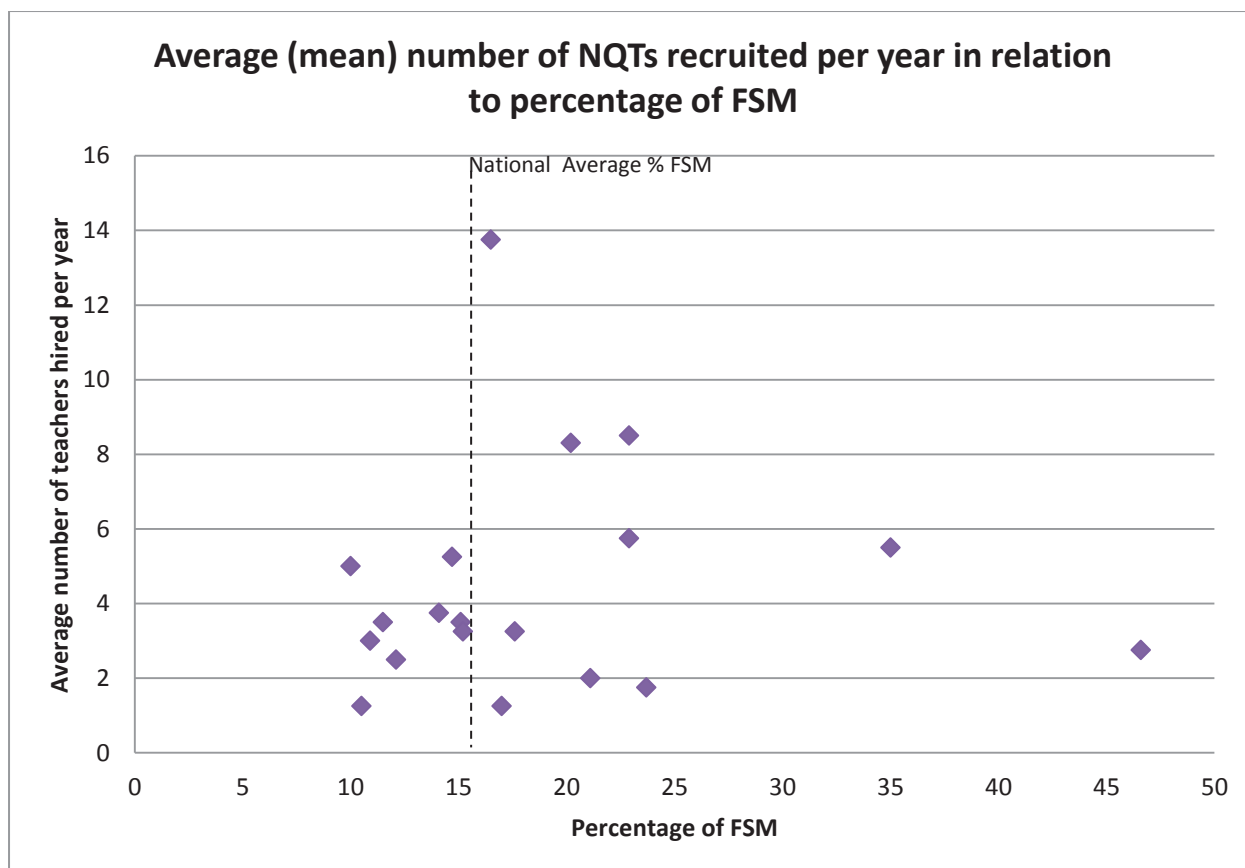
Figure 14: The average (mean) number of NQTs appointed annually in each school over the period 2012-15 in relation to the proportion of FSM students (% FSM)

6.2.2 Findings from induction tutors' focus group and questionnaires

The induction tutors tended to assume that newly qualified teachers were deterred from making applications in Oxfordshire because of the **low salary** received by teachers after seven years of wage restraint, comprising two years of pay freeze and five years with increases of no more than 1%. One teacher contrasted the starting salaries for the state sector with the offer that a current trainee had recently received for a post at Rugby School offering '£38,000 a year plus free boarding as an NQT' which equated to more than double the salary that they could offer.

Teachers' starting salary was also contrasted unfavourably with the bursary payment that Physics and Maths teachers received during the course of their training. Considerable frustration and anger was expressed about training bursaries of £24,000 (rising to £30,000 next year) that failed to include any kind of tie-in clause committing new teachers to work in the profession and to remain within the state sector. The tutors recognised that the bursary attracted individuals who had no intention of going into teaching, or who abandoned the idea once they discovered what the starting salary would be.

Induction tutors reported on the strategies that they used to try to make their recruitment as effective as possible and also shared accounts of practices that were both collaborative but also highly competitive in the attempt to maximise their chances of recruiting effectively within a

shrinking pool of applicants. These included advertising without a defined closing date in order to extend the numbers of applicants, and passing on details of unsuccessful applicants to other local schools known to be recruiting; but also involved deliberately interviewing early, *before* the advertised closing date, in order to get in ahead of other schools that had advertised a similar post.

The problems of recruiting were compounded for schools by the **costs of advertising**, with some schools concluding that for temporary appointments, such as a maternity cover, it was prohibitively expensive, at £2000, to advertise nationally through the *Times Education Supplement.* It was clear that there would be strong support both for OTSA's proposal to provide an advertising service and for the subsequent white paper proposal to provide web-tools that would allow schools to advertise vacancies for free along with a national teacher vacancy website.

6.3 Why do many early career teachers in Oxfordshire secondary schools leave the schools to which they were recruited as NQTs?

6.3.1 Findings from survey data about the trajectories of recent NQTs

Respondents to the survey, who were asked to provide information about up to three NQTs recruited to their school within the past three years, gave details about 67 individual NQTs, but in only 58 cases did they confirm both when they had been recruited and whether or not they were still teaching in the school. Of those 58 teachers, 44 (or 76%) were still teaching in the school and 14 had since left. In one case the respondent did not say *when* the teacher had left, but among those for whom reasons were given five had left within one year of starting at the school, seven had left after two years at the school and only one had left after three years in post. While this is obviously a very small sample, it is notable that the **proportion of NQTs leaving within the first year (9%) or second year (12%) is much higher than that leaving after a third year (2%) in the role**. This data alone, however, can provide few clear messages about the reasons for teachers' departure from their first school.

Half of the 14 NQTs who left the school within three years went on to other teaching posts, but only two of these were within Oxfordshire; the other five went to teach in maintained schools elsewhere. Three of the original NQTs went to teach in independent schools, one of which was overseas, and three left teaching altogether. (The destination of the other leaver was unknown.)

The main reason given for all three of those who left teaching was that they were unhappy with the **nature or demands of their job**. Where reasons were given for moving to the independent sector (at home and abroad) the teachers were merely said to be seeking experience of a different school contexts. Among the five teachers who remained in teaching but left the county a range of reasons was given, only one of which related explicitly to the cost of living in Oxfordshire (as well as to seeking promotion). One cited **family reasons and** the other two were only on one-year contracts. This also applied to one of the two teachers who moved to another maintained school *within* the county. In the other case, the move was motivated by the desire to reduce **commuting distance**.

6.3.2 Findings from telephone interviews with teachers recruited as NQTs

6.3.2.1 Reports on their colleagues' reasons for leaving

All of the 13 teachers interviewed (who had taken up their first posts between 2006 and 1012 and remained in the school) were aware of other NQTs who had subsequently left and two of them referred to the very high turnover of teachers in their school. Only about a quarter of respondents gave reasons for their colleagues' departure that were particular to the Oxfordshire context (the cost of living), but another quarter of responses also identified features that were associated with the **nature or practices of specific schools.** A growing national trend for qualified teachers to take up posts in the **independent sector** (often overseas) is, also reflected in the data.

Among the anecdotal evidence that these 13 teachers gave about their colleagues' reasons for leaving, four references were made to issues associated with the **high cost of living in Oxfordshire**, citing several teachers' decisions to move somewhere cheaper (which might include moving back to their family home). The cost of living was also mentioned in one case as driving the search for promotion after a teacher's NQT year.

Some issues were mentioned that were clearly related to the **characteristics of particular schools or to specific policies** or changes in the schools concerned. These included the demands of working in a split-site school, the prevailing teaching style within the school, demands for a strong commitment to the reading involved in further professional learning and changes that were being made to the distribution of responsibility allowances for particular roles.

In three cases, teachers referred to colleagues who had moved to take up posts in selective or independent schools (at home and abroad).

The recurring negative reasons that applied to teaching *per se* (although they might take particular forms in particular schools) were those related to the **demands of the teachers' workload**: the need for long hours of work after school and at weekends and the stress and pressure that such demands could create. This was sometimes related to a teacher's decision that teaching simply was not appropriate for them.

More positively (although this could be connected to the financial imperative noted above) some teachers left the school for promotion elsewhere (most often as a head of department). Other reasons for moving that would be relevant in any context include the ending of a temporary contract and the decision to join or follow a partner who was in employment elsewhere.

The only alternative to teaching that was specifically mentioned was a decision made in two cases to return to academic study.

3.2.2 Reports on their own reasons for considering leaving

All but one of these 13 teachers reported that they themselves had *considered* leaving the school at some point. Obviously the reasons that they gave had not ultimately pushed them to make this decision, but they are worth noting, not least because seven of the teachers stated that they had at

some point thought of giving up teaching *altogether* while 11 of them thought it was likely that they would leave that particular school within the next two years.

In terms of their *general* reasons for thinking about leaving teaching itself only one teacher mentioned the cost of housing, stating that it would not be possible to buy a home in the south-east on a teacher's salary. In all other cases the focus was on the **demands and stress of the job.** While this was frequently expressed in terms of time demands – for example, '*working 7am-9pm every day*' (Interview 12), or working every evening, or the lack of a work-life balance or scope for a social life, the impossibility of combining teaching with having children on one's own – there were also concerns about the way in which the culture of schools compounded this stress, creating '*unreasonable expectations'* (Interview 7) and a '*culture of martyrdom and overwork'*(interview 2). Other concerns about how the demands were managed were expressed in terms of '*a lack of understanding from senior leadership teams*' and '*a lack of open dialogue, making stress contagious*' (Interview 13). Alongside problems of stress and ill-health derived from the extent of their workload teachers also reported the frustration of being constantly diverted from what they really wanted to do – time consumed in '*marking books, setting homework and filling in reports rather than getting people to love a subject*'(Interview 7). Others referred to conflicting ideas and competing pressures or to the difficulties of balancing different roles within school. One reference was made specifically to the rate of change in education.

It is perhaps worth noting that in only one case was specific mention made of students' poor behaviour (one particularly difficult class) as a source of stress.

In looking ahead, however and explaining why they thought it likely that they might leave their current school *within the next two years* (a claim made by 11 of the 13 teachers), only one referred to the 'incredibly stressful' nature of teaching, expressing an interest in simply 'slowing down and taking some breathing time'. In looking forward, the most commonly cited reasons for contemplating leaving the school were either related to the **search for promotion or to financial issues** (specifically related to the costs of buying a house) and the two were sometimes linked, with promotion an important element in being able to afford housing.

Five of the teachers specifically mentioned their interest in seeking promotion, sometimes as head of department, sometimes in broader terms related to 'more challenge' or professional development'. In some cases there was thought to be some prospect of such a role arising within their current school. In another case, a more general desire to gain more 'varied experience' and different perspective, enriching their understanding and experience, was not necessarily linked to promotion.

Four of the teachers cited their desire to buy a house, wanting to 'set down roots' or to provide for their (actual or putative) children. While one of those interviewed was aware of the city-council equity-share scheme and was '*looking into it'* (Interview 12) another had concluded that it was simply not '*economically viable to stay'* and found it '*heart-breaking'* to contemplate leaving a city about which she '*cared deeply' (I*nterview *5)*.

Other, more individual, reasons for contemplating leaving were linked either to highly specific developments within the school that might change the nature of their current role or to family considerations, such as a partner's potential move.

6.3.3 Findings from additional questionnaires completed by NQTs

When asked whether they thought it likely that they would leave their current school within the next two to three years, two of the nine NQTs who completed short questionnaires gave emphatic replies that they would indeed leave and *all* of the others expressed some uncertainty about whether they would stay. Three of the responses pointed to the **demands of the job** – making one of the NQTs question '*whether I have a life or even should have a life* (NQT 6)'. A sense of disillusionment with teaching was expressed in another's lack of conviction that '*the effort is worth it'* (NQT 8) or that they were actually valued. One respondent was considering leaving to work in the charity sector.

Five others gave answers that emphasised the importance of **securing promotion**, but they tended to emphasise their own ambition and interest in assuming further responsibilities rather than any specific need to earn more money.

Just one of these NQTs reflected the interest noted elsewhere in teaching abroad. Here it was seen as a way of combining enjoyment of teaching with a desire to travel.

6.3.4 Findings from induction tutors' focus group and questionnaires

Induction tutors' reflections on NQTs' destinations on leaving echoed the specific details reported in the survey, including movement to different areas for financial reasons or to accompany a partner and individuals' decisions to teach in the independent sector, which offered a much higher salary and accommodation (either in the UK or overseas).

In explaining why early career teachers left, the most commonly stated reasons were related to **teachers' salaries and to the relationship between salaries and housing costs in Oxfordshire** and the south-east more generally. Some tutors referred to a north-south split while others specifically highlighted the problem of house prices with no compensation equivalent to London weighting. The tutors also reflected more generally on the consequences of seven years of wage restraint and on the budget cuts in the public sector that gave schools little room for manoeuvre. The consequences of low pay were thought to be exacerbated by misleading advertising that seemed to imply that all teachers would rapidly be earning £60,000 and by the specific problem of training bursaries in Maths and Physics that were higher than the salaries that the teachers received when they were fully qualified. Since there was no obligation to repay such bursaries, it was thought to be very easy for teachers in such shortage subjects simply to walk away once the demands of the job or drop in salary became evident. It was also suggested that whereas previous generations of teachers might have been more willing to invest their time out of a sense of vocation, those born more in more recent decades expected financial rewards for their commitment.

It was noted that the issue of Oxfordshire house prices, which might well deter many teachers from applying to the county, only tended to have an **impact after some time in their career,** as teachers began to think about settling down. In this context, the fact that some teachers chose their first job for no other reason than that they were already familiar with the area meant that they only made a

more deliberate decision *after* they had completed the NQT year and felt sufficiently confident to contemplate moving somewhere less familiar.

The lack of **scope for promotion** for those who wanted it was also raised by several of the induction tutors, particularly those working in very small schools.

The tutors also acknowledged the **demands of teaching**, expressed not simply in the hours worked, but in the extraordinary pressures created by curriculum change at *all* key stages and the lack of the lack of agency or professional autonomy that followed from the extent of current prescription in education. They were also alert to some of the specific ways in which heads of department sometimes added to the pressures on NQTs through their timetabling decisions; for example by giving them a preponderance of Key Stage 3 classes thereby increasing the number of different classes that the NQT taught, or by requiring them to move from room to room rather than providing them with a consistent teaching base. While restricting their teaching of examination classes might be seen as an appropriate induction measure, the induction tutors were also aware that preventing early career teachers from taking on A level classes tended to communicate a lack of confidence in the quality of their teaching, which could be profoundly discouraging or provoke resentment.

The induction tutors also recognised that a few teachers also left simply because their temporary contract (often for maternity cover) had come to an end. They also pointed out that occasionally teachers left the profession because they were actually **unable to teach effectively**. One tutor referred to a new teacher who was never able to feel comfortable leading from the front of the class; another mentioned the difficulties that two teachers had in considering their subject from the learners' perspective.

6.4 Why do some secondary teachers recruited as NQTs to Oxfordshire schools choose to continue working in the school and what might induce others to stay?

6.4.1 Findings from telephone interviews with teachers recruited as NQTs

6.4.1.1 Nature and extent of the challenges that they faced (including the extent to which they were prepared for the challenges)

Extent of the challenge: In reporting on the extent of the challenge that they had faced as NQTs only two of the 13 teachers interviewed reported that the change had essentially been manageable or well within their capabilities. Half of the teachers described their experiences as 'quite' or 'very' challenging, while two more rated it as 'extremely challenging'. One teacher compared it to a roller-coaster and another referred to it as the hardest thing that they had ever done.

Nature of the challenge: The most commonly mentioned elements in describing the nature of that challenge were related to the **increase in teaching time** (compared with their training year) which had a variety of consequences: the fact that they were teaching more consecutive full days; an increased planning and marking load and problems of time management or difficulties in determining priorities. Not only were they juggling different aspects of the job they were struggling

to secure any kind of sustainable work/life balance. Their more extensive teaching commitments also result in an increase in associated administrative or paper work.

The second most common type of demand derived from their **increased responsibility** for ensuring progression in students' learning, which necessitated more medium- and long-term planning. This sense of responsibility for their own classes also seemed to focus greater attention on differentiation and on the challenges of '*applying subject knowledge in such a way that all students can access it*' (Interview 8). While they felt a considerable pressure to meet the expectations that others had of them, they were also aware that they were actually lacking the regular evaluation of their practice that they had experienced as trainees, which made improvement more difficult.

The other specific challenges, each mentioned by just one of the teachers who were interviewed, were the need to familiarise themselves with specific curricula that were new to them, dealing with students' inappropriate behaviour and dealing the parents.

The extent to which NQTs felt prepared for the challenges that they faced: Despite the specific challenges that the teachers had enumerated and their characterisation of those challenges as making teaching extremely difficult, the majority of those interviewed declared that they felt well-prepared by their initial training programme to be able to face them. Most interviewees not only identified particularly positive features of their training but also pointed out that some aspects of the job could *only* be learned in situ. Some teachers, however, did suggest that they could have been better alerted to the sheer range and extent of the demands that they would face.

6.4.1.2 The nature and effectiveness of support in their NQT year

Support that they had expected: Most of the 13 teachers interviewed had expected had expected a package of support for their NQT year, with **designated personnel** and some kind of **structured programme**, with regular sessions on different aspects of the school. Their views about who would be nominated to support them varied (from a designated CPD mentor or coach to their head of department or named colleague within their own subject to informal 'buddies' in another subject area), but one or two individuals referred simply to the importance of having people to go to ask for help. A few of the teachers expected that they would be required to keep some kind of learning log or portfolio.

Most of the teachers also expected that the demands made of them would be less than those of more experienced teachers. They expected a lighter timetable, with a **10% reduction in contact time** that would give them the opportunity either to focus on their specific interests or to plan collaboratively with colleagues. In addition to this structured programme, a few teachers mentioned the idea of more **specific, tailored opportunities**, addressing their specific concerns and with small '*tweaks and a push*' (Interview 3) in the right direction.   One teacher assumed that he would not be given the most challenging classes in his first year.

The teachers ranged quite widely in their expectations of where the support would be focused. Just one teacher referred to 'support with behaviour' while others mentioned support for subject knowledge development, for general pedagogy and guidance on effective marking strategies and on

ways of developing more student independence. One teacher had expected to be offered ways of reflecting on their own teaching so that they could identify how to improve it.

It should be noted, however, that not everyone welcomed the idea of a carefully structured programme of NQT support. One teacher made it clear that she had expected very little and simply wanted to be left alone.

Support that they had received: The same three kinds of support were all mentioned by the former NQTs in looking back on their induction year. In terms of **designated personnel** six for them referred to a mentor within their subject, two of them mentioned regular meetings with their head of department and only one referred to a 'buddy' drawn from another subject area.

Different elements of a **formal support programme** were referenced by all 13 teachers that we interviewed, including regular meetings specifically for NQTs (11); other kinds of CPD sessions - open to NQTs and others (4); different forms of observation (one mentioned peer observation, while two others referred to 'formal observation) and the support of a Professional Tutor. Only one of the teachers referred to external support provided at the county level, with one formal induction meeting at the start of the year and lots of online support.

Only one of the teachers referred to tailored provision, mentioning the opportunity they had to attend further externally provided CPD responsive to their particular needs and interests. This included five specialist sessions on managing students' behaviour offered through the local authority.

Value attributed to that support: While just under half of the teachers claimed to have found the support that they received 'helpful' - mainly through the camaraderie developed through meeting other NQTs and the reassurance of further guidance if needed - others were much less effusive. Two teachers could remember little about it, and of those who found it unhelpful, one suggested that this was perhaps because they were not actually struggling, while the other found sessions too generic with nothing that could be applied to their own practice. This same teacher suggested that they would have welcomed more contact with a local authority advisor. Three of the teachers emphasised the **variable** quality of the provision, especially timetabled sessions. In most cases the support provided met or exceeded their expectations (although the latter applied to only one teacher). In two further cases their expectations were largely met, but one teacher claimed that there was simply no help available when they requested it: *'It went quite badly, as when I wanted to ask for help, there wasn't really any there. Ask, ask, ask for help and it didn't really appear when I found it really difficult'* (Interview 3).

6.4.1.3 The value attributed to the support received in their NQT year

For most of the teachers interviewed, the informal support networks on which they drew were highly significant and in some cases it was because of the quality of support and advice that they received on an informal basis that they did not see any particular value in the timetabled programme provided for them. For some, this support was firmly located within their subject department and its **subject specific nature** was stressed as something that made it particularly

valuable to them. For others, the emphasis was as strongly placed on a **supportive community that extended across the school**. A few teachers (the most positive ones) tended both elements:

> *My school went above and beyond what might be expected. It's in the nature of schools that teachers help each other a lot. Because the school isn't massive there is a level of informality there; it's easy to approach other practitioners about aspects of teaching and learning. The school has made progress in that area. I can talk to my head of department. My line manager, who is incredibly supportive and very experienced, was brilliant at supporting me with difficult classes, without undermining me, but giving a whole of strategies to try and implement. I bonded really well with teachers in the department and other practitioners too. People always know who are the good teachers in a school, so they always say 'Oh, why don't you go and talk to this person because they are good, for example, at differentiation. I had a lot of resources in that way.* (Interview 2)

In addition to talking through specific difficulties (both subject-specific challenges in teaching particular topics, or particularly 'difficult' students) and being encouraged to observe other teachers, the other kinds of support that were valued included the **exchange of teaching resources** and the chance to check on a teaching idea that they had begun to develop as well as genuinely collaborative planning. Many of the teachers welcomed colleagues just checking that they were basically OK (especially in the first few months up to Christmas.) Several teachers mentioned the friendly concern shown by senior leaders. In one case the NQTs all got together on a regular basis, effectively running their own additional support meetings - with the encouragement of their school.

6.4.1.4 Nature and effectiveness of support in their <u>second</u> year of teaching

<u>Support that they had received</u>: Only three of the 13 teachers interviewed referred to any kind of special provision made for teachers in their second year. The experience of the other ten was essentially similar to that reported below, even if there were still lots of development opportunities within the school:

> *At the time, the thing I found a bit frustrating, post NQT, was that there was no formalised support. In the September, the expectation was that your induction year is done now. There were still lots of opportunities to develop in the school, but there was no formal programme to help you develop up to a full timetable. I now know that is a crucial time for a lot of people, because by that point, you are only observed three times a year.* (Interview 13)

The three who had received some specific consideration as second-year teachers had respectively enjoyed a regular meeting with their mentor that they used for collaborative planning (although the fact that both of them were free at the same time and chose to continue meeting may not have been formally arranged); an additional non-contact period each week to ease the transition to a full timetable; and a specific 'NQT+1' programme that involved specific goals and prevented them from 'resting on their laurels'.

Where they were just treated as regular teachers, most of those in their second year had access to different kinds of CPD provision, alongside the 'standard observations' , regular INSET schedule and ongoing informal support from their departments. Many took part in specific programmes that their schools encouraged them to attend; such as moving from 'good' to 'outstanding' teaching or teaching high-attaining/ 'top-set' students. Several of them attended exam-board sessions related to GCSE or A-level.

 Value attributed to that support: Most of the teachers welcomed the opportunities that they had been given and positive evaluations were offered of provision of all kinds. School-based CPD sessions - or at least some of them - were seen as relevant and practical, while external sessions were valued for the chance to talk to teachers from other contexts. Some input - such as a course on A-level teaching - were recognised as enduring influences on their teaching.

Criticisms were also expressed in relation to both the range of opportunities offered (where these focused more on leadership and less on continuing development in relation to classroom practice) and the nature of certain school-based CPD sessions (condemned for their 'information overload' and the lack of time to implement the ideas presented). In one case a teacher who had participated (in the final term of their second year) in an enquiry-based programme for 2nd and 3rd year teachers offered by their local teaching alliance reflected that it had proved unsuccessful precisely because of the action research element, at a career stage when they thought more structured input was needed.

The teacher who had taken part in a specific NQT+1 training programme really valued the fact that the structured support had continued into the second year.

6.4.1.5 Nature and effectiveness of support in their third year of teaching

Support that they had received: By their third year of teaching eight of the 13 teachers interviewed had taken on some kind of **responsibility beyond their own classroom** (as second in department/pastoral team or subject leaders for a particular key stage) and many of them had received specific support related to that responsibility. Various forms of **mentoring** were offered in relation to the role, which tended to mean regular meetings or close liaison with their team leader (head of faculty/house). The one teacher who had been promoted by that point to Head of Year met weekly with their line manager within the senior leadership team. Several of the teachers had participated in a course for middle leaders, as part of which they had a specific project on which to work.

Limited reference was made to **subject-specific training** with one mention of a A-level training course and another referring to a Prince's Trust teaching course (run over six Saturdays in London) focused on the teaching of different topics. Another specialist course was directed towards eventual qualification to run the Duke of Edinburgh programme.

Reference continued to be made to **generic CPD sessions**, with one teacher reflecting that provision by this point tended to be much more internally focused.

<u>Value attributed to that support:</u> All the teachers' reflections on the support that they had received were essentially positive, with just one exception. Appreciation was expressed for support/guidance of many different kinds including **mentoring** by colleagues, **observation**, **discussion** and **collaborative action**. A gradual approach to mentoring - whereby it became progressively less directive and more about allowing them to check their ideas as they developed - was welcomed. Observation of more senior colleagues was valued for learning new roles, while meetings with senior leaders allowed for effective discussion of ideas. Collaboration seemed to support teachers in identifying and working effectively on issues that had been highlighted by Ofsted.

While most courses were seen as relevant and well-targeted to their teachers' needs, the one negative comment made echoes the importance of relevance since it refers to a course actually intended for NQTs that had been undertaken as a second-year teacher, by which point they felt that it was essentially redundant.

6.4.1.6 Other kinds of support that they would have welcomed in their first 3 years of teaching

When asked about any additional support that they would have welcomed in their first three years of teaching, there was a strong call from some of the teachers for **more** extensive support. Among the requests that were made were suggestions for more mentoring, more regular meetings with their mentor or other colleagues and more information meetings addressing particular aspects of school policy. There was also a request for more opportunities to observe colleagues.

The specific issues on which they would have liked such provision to focus included **strategies for effective and efficient marking; differentiation** for mixed-ability classes; and a greater emphasis on **behaviour management**. There was one suggestion that CPD should run as a drop-in session with staff offered the opportunity to seek advice on specific issues.

On teacher was particularly concerned to emphasise the need to focus on the core issues of teaching and learning - providing focused guidance rather than simply offering pastoral support. The teachers resented observations that were seen essentially as judgements of their competence, or merely the collection of necessary evidence of that competence. They wanted **observations to be genuine development opportunities** with scope for effective coaching.

In welcoming a focus on the needs of teachers in their second and third year of practice, the teachers were concerned that there should be greater monitoring of the **workload** of early career teachers, allowing them time to devote to development and **reflection** and the space to talk about improvement priorities in a more **responsive** way.

6.4.1.7 Specific factors that <u>induced</u> them to stay when they had contemplated leaving teaching

As noted in section 3.2.2. seven of these 13 teachers had at some point contemplated leaving teaching. The reasons that they gave for staying focused overwhelmingly on the positive aspects of their role, although four of them did also acknowledge the **downsides of trying to seek alternative**

employment (more limited holidays and lower pay; a dislike of office work; and fears that they would not know what else to do; the waste of the investment that they had made in securing effective behaviour management that now required a minimal effort to maintain).

At the heart of their commitment was their **enjoyment** of the role and generally of the context in which they worked and a sense of motivation rooted in enabling others to succeed. Stripped of *'all the bureaucratic things'* (Interview 7) teaching was regarded as *'enjoyable'* and *'rewarding'*; teachers enjoyed *'being in the classroom'* and *'interacting with students' (*Interview 10*)*. They were motivated by the *'sense of satisfaction in helping other people do better'* (Interview 6) and seeing *'what differences that makes for their life chances'* (Interview 8). The teachers claimed both to *'like the kids'* and *'love the people'* (interview 5); they found that time flies when they are in the classroom and regard the school as *'a nice place to work'* (interview 12).

In one case this general sense of enjoyment was reinforced by a specific **sense of obligation** or commitment to a particular cohort of students - the tutor group for whom they had assumed responsibility in Year 7 and would like to see through to the end of their GCSEs.

In only one case had a teacher taken any action to improve their particular situation, making the job more feasible by switching to part-time work. The teacher concerned felt that the discussion of her request played an important role in alerting the school to her value, as well as helping the senior leadership to understand better what mattered to her.

4.1.8 Specific factors that induced them to stay when they had contemplated moving elsewhere

Twelve of the 13 teachers interviewed had at some point considered leaving the school, but in only four of those cases had they been considering moving outside the county. A strong reason for staying, cited by three teachers was the **reputation** that they had established, which made it 'easier to stay' because the 'kids have a lot of respect' for them and their teaching. In one case the teacher's allegiance to the school was similarly rooted in their **shared history**: *'I have been on the journey [to achieving an 'outstanding' [judgement] with them and I feel like part of the community'* (Interview 8).

The particular features of their current school that four teachers cited as important were related to **support collaboration and challenge** at the school and/or department level - all brought together in this particular explanation: *'It's a friendly, strong collaborative department that challenges and develops me, so I don't become stagnant in my teaching'* (Interview 7) .

One teacher referred specifically to having 'b*uilt a life in Oxfordshire'* (Interview 2), but the only distinctive feature within the county that was mentioned was the link to the University of Oxford Department of Education, described as '*a big draw'*, which had allowed one of the teachers to undertake the Masters in Learning and Teaching - a process that had *'sparked my brain about teaching'* (Interview 13). The result was not only that the teacher was *'loving my classes a lot more'* but also that it had *'re-injected loads of ideas into my classroom practice'*.

In three cases, the prospect or reality of a promoted post was also a powerful incentive, either when particular post became available, or when the teacher was generally encouraged by their school to begin applying for promoted posts. One teacher who had previously been attracted by the role of

Professional Tutor (within initial teacher education) was unsure whether there would be similar posts available elsewhere. Other specific actions taken by the schools included opportunities to participate in particular kinds of CPD and the financial incentive of a recruitment and retention allowance – which had helped the teacher concerned in saving up to buy a house

Another change that had made a difference to one teacher's plans was the appointment of a new head of department, whom they found much more congenial. Factors beyond the control of the school also played a part such as a teacher's partner securing a new job locally

6.4.1.9 Specific factors that they believed <u>might induce</u> them to stay longer

As noted previously (Section 3.2.2), 11 of the 13 teachers suggested that they might leave their current school within the next two years. When asked what might induce them to stay longer two of them referred to prospects for **promotion or opportunities for career progression**. Three others emphasised the scope for professional development although these were not explicitly tied to formal promotion or increased pay. The teachers referred to the scope for growth and sustained opportunities for professional development or to practitioner research.

Two of the teachers simply emphasised their need for **more income** - essentially to enable them to 'function' - arguing for wages that were proportionate to their living expenses. A third teacher specifically stressed the problem with local house prices, suggesting that they could only be induced to stay if prices were reduced by about 305, bringing them into line with national averages. For another teacher that there were no realistic options: it was simply *'a move that I have to make'* (Interview 7*)*.

One or two teachers pointed to other aspects of school life that might operate positively or negatively, (although not all of them could be influenced by senior managers, since they might depend simply on friendships with other teachers). Involvement in extra-curricular drama was a key source of interest and enjoyment for one teacher; while another felt that they would persist with the job provided that '*they don't let bureaucracy get in the way of teaching and learning'* (Interview 8).

6.4.2 Findings from induction tutors' focus group and questionnaires

6.4.2.1 Extent of difference between support in NQT and 2nd year of teaching

Responses from the induction tutors asked about their provision for teachers in the first and second year of their careers revealed a wide **disparity of practice** ranging from schools that have recognised a need to provide further tailored support for the second year of teaching, and those that acknowledge that in the second year, the teachers are effectively '*dumped*' (Tutor 4). Four tutors reflected that there was effectively no specific provision for the second year (although, of course, the range of provision made for all staff obviously encompassed them.) At the other extreme, are schools that run a formal NQT+1 programme of their own or that ask teachers to engage with established programmes. The approaches of such programmes vary considerably with some offering

sessions based on 'Teach like a Champion' (Doug Lemov), others offering the Improving Teacher Programme (developed by OLEVI), which focuses on the leadership of learning, and others encouraging teachers to engage in specific small-scale enquiries into issues of concern to them in their practice. While some of the schools allocate specific support time to second year teachers each week, most suggest that their second year programme is '*less all encompassing*' (Tutor 2) than that provided for NQTs and that it is much more tailored to the individual's needs. In occasional cases, even where formal support is not routinely offered in the second year, arrangements may be made to continue provision for a teacher who is still struggling.

While some schools had already mapped out a programme of professional development opportunities clearly related to various stages of career progression, others were just beginning to pay serious attention to the particular needs of early career teachers. One induction tutor reported on the fact that they now had an early practitioner learning team that was starting to look at the particular needs of staff with less than five years' experience – which was also drawing attention to the fact that some relatively new teachers were very quickly in positions of responsibility and that such promotions might actually deprive them of the further support they might otherwise receive.

6.4.2.2 Induction tutors' reports on strategies <u>already</u> employed that impact positively on retention

All of the induction tutors could cite specific policies and characteristics of their school culture that they thought contributed to the retention of early career teachers. The four themes that emerged in response to this question were the importance of a **supportive or collaborative culture**; ensuring that teachers **felt valued** (even if they could not be financially rewarded); **scope for professional learning** (which could be provided in a variety of ways) and effective **routes to promotion**.

Collaboration and collegiality was seen as fundamental to the creation of a supportive context and induction tutors recognised the importance of subject departments in this respect. Well-maintained, online collections of lesson plans and resources linked to clearly presented schemes of work were identified as making a profound difference to the experience of new teachers. Effective departments promoted both the sharing of existing resources and collaborative planning.

Reassuring new teachers that they were valued was seen as depending on both on an effective induction period – in which they were not left to work things out for themselves but had systems and procedures carefully explained to them and on appreciation for what the teachers brought with them. As one tutor noted, '*many of our NQTs have come from a year of high-level thinking, so cashing in on their ideas is the way they can bring new thinking to us from the university*' (Tutor 2). While the prospect of rewarding effective second teachers with a promoted post that carried a TLR was seen as ideal, tutors also stressed the value of entrusting such teachers with specific projects even if it was not possible to attach a financial reward to them.

Scope for professional learning could be provided in quite simple ways, such as encouraging new teachers to observe other teachers more regularly – focusing not necessarily on the 'star' teachers but on those whose practice might seem more accessible. Giving early career teachers the chance to become a mentor was seen as valuable not only in sustaining their engagement with the university and thus their connection to new ideas, but also because of the way in which mentoring itself fostered the creation of a collaborative environment. Engagement with the university –

supporting teachers' interest in their continued learning could also be achieved by providing support for their engagement with the Masters in Learning and Teaching.

By mapping their professional development opportunities to a model of career programme, schools also felt that they were encouraging teachers to see the value of what was being offered to them and to feel that the school was investing in their future.

6.4.2.3 Induction tutors' ideas about how to <u>improve</u> retention

The suggestions that tutors made about possible strategies for improving retention could be grouped in three broad areas: addressing the **financial difficulties** that teachers faced in finding accommodation; finding other ways to make them **feel valued**; and giving them additional time where possible by reducing certain sorts of demands.

In terms of funding, one tutor was hoping that changes in government financing of schools to ensure fairer distribution across the country might make it possible to offer more support to teachers moving into the area. Another proposed providing NQTs with reduced-price accommodation for the first year (of, say £400 per month) in premises shared with other NQTs in order to provide additional support. The final proposal (related only to attracting rather than retaining new staff) was that schools should offer them relocation expenses.

The tutors recognised, however, that any money that could be offered would not be enough. More should be done to emphasise both the moral purpose inherent in teaching – and the fun to be found in the role. Positive commitment, it was suggested, could also be generated by promoting pride in teachers' subject knowledge and their expertise in subject-specific pedagogy, which was connected to many teachers' core identity. In this respect one of the induction tutors cited evidence from Philippa Cordingley's research syntheses, and from strategies reported by Pearson that drew on experience in Singapore. Again, the professional tutors stressed the importance of a collaborative culture, citing evidence put forward by Mary Bousted of ATL. In this respect the tutor also highlighted the importance of teacher agency: encouraging greater discussion of their practice and more autonomy in professional decision about appropriate pedagogy. As a mark of trust and inclusion, early career teachers should be encouraged rather than excluded from taking examination classes. While some departments might assume that it would be helpful to restrict NQTs' timetables to just two key stages, the induction tutor regarded such a decision as '*crazy thinking*' (Tutor 3) because of the lack of trust it seemed to convey.

Finally the tutors suggested investing funds wherever possible in teachers rather than in other kinds of staff, ideally so that all of them could have enough time for reflection, which was seen as a fundamental duty . A particular priority in relation to NQTs was that the distribution of classes should be seen to be 'fair', so that they were not given a disproportional number of low sets or a greater number of different classes than a more experienced colleague. Nor should they have to move between classrooms while more experienced teachers retained their own rooms. One induction tutor was appalled to discover that one teacher in their third year was required to teach 18 different classes, spanning four different subjects and teaching in five different rooms.

6.4.3 Findings from additional questionnaires completed by NQTs (undertaking the OTSA-OUDE Induction programme)

These questionnaires offer a few additional insights into the most challenging aspects of the NQT year, as it was happening. The issues most frequently mentioned were those that have already been extensively discussed that relate to the nature of the workload that they faced: **the extent of that workload** – because of their increased timetable which required more time to be spent on planning and on the additional administrative tasks associated with it – and the associated challenges of simply managing their time and struggling to achieve any kind of work-life balance. Specific reference was also made to the demands of the new GCSE curriculum; the number of after-school meetings that they had to attend, the pressures of involvement in after school clubs; and time lost when they were required to cover lessons.

A third of the NQTs referred to issues of **student behaviour**: focusing specifically on concerns with specific students or with low set groups.

The other element of particular concern to several NQTs, however, was the **generation, recording and use of assessment data**. Reference was made to specifically to marking and to the process of predicting grades; to the challenges of data management and the sheer amount of data required across all years groups.

Two specific issues were mentioned as matters of concern by just one student each. The first related to pastoral responsibilities as an additional feature of their workload. While they found the pastoral work expected of them in relation to liaison with parents helpful, it consumed considerable *'personal time and energy'* (NQT 5), The other was a lack of support in school for specific kinds of professional learning since it seemed that they could not attend courses that would require any cover in school and that there was no support for their school for them to undertake the OUDE Master's in Learning and Teaching.

Chapter 7: Detailed findings for secondary schools

1. What attracts NQTs to work in special schools in Oxfordshire?

1.1 Findings from survey data about the trajectories of recent NQTs

The respondents completing the survey were able to give training details about five of the eight teachers that had been recruited as NQTs. In four cases the teachers had trained locally within Oxfordshire or Buckinghamshire and the fifth had trained in a neighbouring county.

1.2 Findings from interviews with teachers in special schools recruited as NQTs (still in post after 3+ years)

Of the four teachers interviewed two had trained within Oxfordshire/Buckinghamshire and another with a provider in a neighbouring county. They were all **living locally** before they undertook their training, which was also true of the fourth teacher, who had gone to London to train only after working in the school as a Teaching Assistant. In this case, the head had encouraged them to consider returning as an NQT. In two cases the teachers had specific knowledge of, and interest in, working in the school before they undertook their training – which was what persuaded them to apply. In all four cases the teachers were essentially committed to working in the area and regarded it as impractical to go anywhere else. Unsurprisingly, they had no reservations about taking up a post in the county.

2. What obstacles are there to the effective recruitment of NQTs to special schools in Oxfordshire?

2.1 Findings from survey data about the trajectories of recent NQTs

None of the six special schools that responded to the survey reported any vacancies that had been unfilled for at least three months. This would suggest that they have **relatively few difficulties** recruiting adequate numbers of teachers.

1.2 Findings from interviews with teachers in special schools recruited as NQTs (still in post after 3+ years)

The only sense in which the data that we collected suggested that there might be any difficulty in terms of *effective* recruitment of NQTs came from the responses of the teachers interviewed. With the exception of the one NQT who had undertaken their training largely within the special school (through the GTP route), and found the school-based elements of the course very appropriate, the others had received very **limited specialist training** related to the demands of a special school. The particular challenges that they faced related not only to understanding the needs of the children, but also to their responsibilities to communicate effectively with parents and to manage the work of other adults. An additional demand for which some felt unprepared was the **breadth of curricular knowledge** that they found they also needed. Even the teacher who was following the GTP route reflected that the university-based elements of her programme had not been geared to the specific demands of teaching in a special school.

3. Why do early career teachers leave the special schools to which they were recruited as NQTs?

3.1 Findings from survey data about the trajectories of recent NQTs

Of the eight NQTs included in the survey data, two of the eight teachers recruited as NQTs left their roles in special schools at the end of their first year. In one case, the teacher moved to another maintained school outside the county, and it was suggested that this was because of the cost of living in Oxfordshire. In the other case the teacher left the profession, and it was suggested that this was because they lacked the resilience needed to work in that particular school.

3.2 Findings from telephone interviews with teachers recruited to special schools as NQTs

3.2.1 The nature and extent of the challenges that they faced as NQTs (including the extent to which they felt prepared for the challenges)

Extent of the challenge: In three out of the four cases, the teachers who had been recruited as NQTs reported that they had found their first year 'very' or 'extremely' challenging. The fourth noted that while the 'challenges' were greater than they had been in their NQT year, the workload was not as intense so that the experience overall was less 'overwhelming'.

The nature of the challenge: In most cases the challenges were associated with the fact that their initial training had not really equipped them to work in a special school, so they had **much to learn about children with complex need**s. One teacher described this process as like 'starting from scratch'. In addition to handling **difficult incidents** that arose in relation to individual students, associated demands included **liaison with parents** and **managing the work of other staff**. Even for the teacher who had followed an employment-based route (the GTP) and was thus familiar with the particular demands of the role there were challenges: one associated with safeguarding issues in

relation to students with very severe problems and the other stemming simply from the volume of work.

<u>The extent to which they felt prepared for the challenge</u>: None of the teachers really felt that their training programme had adequately prepared them for the **challenges that they faced in a special school setting**. The teacher following the GTP route felt well-supported in the school and that they had been had been appropriately guided in that context, but felt that the university-based training (because of the lack of time devoted to it) had necessarily lacked depth and any specific focus on special educational needs. One of the teachers who had undertaken a mainstream PGCE programme had been given some opportunities for additional observation in special school settings, but similarly felt that the programme should have addressed special educational needs more effectively. Another teacher who had pursued a mainstream route was more resigned to the mismatch, knowing that there would be elements of the role for which they would necessarily be unprepared, but regarding what they had taken from their training programme as serving them very well.

3.2.2 Reports on their colleagues' reasons for leaving

Although three of the four teachers interviewed were aware of colleagues recruited as NQTs who had since left the school, most of them suggested that the staffing at their schools was generally very stable. This was the view of the fourth teacher who could not recall any NQTs who had since left. While two teacher mentioned personal reasons for colleagues' moves, related to decisions to move nearer to family members, they suggested that this was less common than moves to secure further promotion, which was also cited by a third teacher. They noted that once teachers wanted to move beyond middle leadership into more senior positions there were few opportunities at the school, which meant that they would have to move at that point.

3.2.3 Reports on their own reasons for considering leaving

Two of the four special school teachers who were interviewed suggested that they had at some point considered leaving teaching. In one case this was stimulated simply by the desire to do something different. In the other, the teacher wondered whether they needed to take time out to 'regroup' – perhaps by taking time to work in another country.

When asked if they had ever considered moving to another school, only one of the four teachers suggested that they had considered this. Their reasons were related to the cost of living and their quality of life – noting a desire to live by the sea. In explaining why they had never been tempted to consider a move, three of the teachers stressed how fortunate they were to work where they did. Essentially they **enjoyed their work** and could not imagine being as lucky again in finding a school that would offer them the same **opportunities for career progression** as they had enjoyed. Nor could they see the scope to secure better outcomes for students anywhere else.

4. Why do some secondary teachers recruited as NQTs to special schools in Oxfordshire choose to continue working in the school and what might induce others to stay?

4.1 Findings from telephone interviews with teachers recruited as NQTs

4.1.1 The nature and effectiveness of support in their <u>NQT</u> year

<u>Support that they had expected</u>: Three of the four teachers reported that they had expected to be allocated a mentor and additional non-contact time. Only one teacher specifically mentioned their expectation that they would be taught how to teach students with learning disabilities. Three of the teachers also mentioned their expectations of broad support from across the school community – including advice from different subject leaders and support from the senior leadership team. In some cases these expectations of wider support drew on their prior knowledge of the school.

<u>Support that they received</u>: All the teachers were allocated a **designated mentor** (and in the one case where that mentor fell in, a senior teacher stepped in to fill the position). They also all stressed the wide range of help and guidance that they received, with opportunities for observation of others (as well as observation and feedback on their own teaching and progress towards the standards), team teaching and lots of '*incidental*' support. One teacher described this as '*phenomenal*' (Interview 2), explaining that '*the **emotional and practical support** was always there, whenever it was needed*'. Although one teacher noted that they didn't get as much help with their curriculum needs as they had anticipated, another was effusive about the extent to which subject leaders acknowledged and fulfilled their responsibilities to guide NQTs. Only one teacher mentioned attending training offered by the local authority.

<u>Value attributed to that support</u>: All four teachers were very appreciative of the support that they had received; one describing it as the '*maximum*' help (Interview 3) they could have been offered; another referring to it as 'incredible' and a third acknowledging how privileged they felt, given that the level of support was very different in other schools. Particular praise was expressed for the way in which senior managers protected their non-contact time, for the **quality of the mentoring** that they had received and for the way in which the internal support from the school had **built their confidence**. While external training was regarded as worthwhile, not least for the changes to meet other NQTs, the school support was what '*really built me*' (Interview 4).

4.1.2 Other kinds of informal support that they received in the <u>NQT</u> year

The nurturing nature of the schools as they related to their students' needs seem to have been fully extended to the **nurture of the NQTs**. The teachers in these contexts repeatedly made use of superlatives, variously describing their schools as '*phenomenally*' or '*exceptionally*' supportive, or with an '*incredible ethos*'. One teacher could 'distinctly remember colleagues '*putting their heads round the door and checking that everything was all right; saying "Good luck for your first day" – those things that make a big, big difference.*'(Interview 2) The schools came across as committed to teachers' professional development and therefore consistently reflective about their practice: '*They*

love to examine what is happening? How do we make what happens to these young people that come to us the best that it can be?' (Interview 3) But they also seemed to **avoid placing inappropriate pressure on staf**f: '*They looked after me to make sure I didn't have unrealistic expectations of what I could achieve. Not judgmental or overly critical, but supported and developed you as a professional'*).

One teacher acknowledged that more support was available to them beyond the school, mentioning training sessions and a discussion forum provided by OTSA had they felt in need of it. But essentially the quality of the mentoring that they had received meant that they felt little need for anything further.

4.1.3 Nature and effectiveness of support in their <u>second</u> year of teaching

None of the teachers suggested that there had been any kind of specific programme expressly designed for teachers in their second year, although two of them mentioned being aware of a particular teacher (their former mentor or the school's deputy head) continuing to '*keep an eye'* (Interview 3)or '*informally check-up'* (Interview 2)on how they were doing. Three of the four teachers described the second y In some cases the nature of the school, with regular curriculum or SEND-focused workshops, meant that they continued to receive regular support for further development; in others the teachers assumed specific leadership roles which gave them further well-structured opportunities for professional learning. In these two cases where the teachers took on subject leadership roles in their second years, they both stressed the specific support that they received in this role; one emphasising the '*framework'* (Interview 4) that structured that support as he progressed and the other stressing the ongoing support '*from peers as well as the leadership team'* (Interview 2). Overall, three of the four teachers summed up the support that they had received in their second year as 'very helpful' or '*really good, with a great focus'* (Interview 4). (The other teacher merely refrained from offering a general summary in addition to their specific descriptions of different features.)

4.1.4 Nature and effectiveness of support in their <u>third</u> year of teaching

The teachers continued to describe their schools as very **supportive** in their third year of practice. Three of them mentioned that they took on new responsibilities at the end of that third year and in all three cases they described how they had been preparing for the role – either through specific research projects they were doing in connection with a subject association, or in consultation with the colleagues moving on from the role, or through discussions initiated in **professional development** meetings. It seemed clear that the schools in which they worked were very aware of teachers' potential and interest in career development as well as professional learning and took **succession planning** very seriously.

4.1.5 Other kinds of support that they would have welcomed in their first 3 years of teaching

Three of the teachers interviewed could not think of any other ways in which they personally could have been supported during their first three years, although one of them acknowledged that teachers with a different approach to their own professional learning might have welcomed more theoretical input in the form a Master's programme. Another acknowledged that it might be important for there to be a more effective back-up system if teachers were not being effectively supported. Although OTSA had apparently reviewed the provision that was being offered, this particular teacher was not entirely convinced that they would have had any authority to insist on improvement in cases where that might prove necessary.

The one specific suggestion as to how their own support could have been improved was that the local authority programme should offer **NQT induction that was specific to special schools**. They felt that the authority was insufficiently aware of the distinctions between mainstream and special schools and thus was failing to provide appropriate opportunities for special school staff.

4.1.6 Specific factors that <u>induced</u> them to stay when they had contemplated leaving <u>teaching</u>

The two teachers who had never even considered leaving suggested that the main reason for this was that they had never been overwhelmed by their workload or the stress of the job. One felt that they had never experienced difficulties of work-life balance while the other explained that they had '*closely watched'* (Interview 1)this especially when the pressure was on, so that they did not burn out or become disillusioned. The same teacher had deliberately *not* sought a more senior position because it was the' *joy'* of working with students and the love of '*continuing to learn'* that was their chief motivation.

In both cases where the teachers had contemplated leaving teaching, they reported that it was their loyalty to the school and their fundamental belief in the quality of the work that it was doing that persuaded them to stay.

4.1.7 Specific factors that induced them to stay when they had contemplated <u>moving elsewhere</u>

It was essentially the same loyalty to their school and belief in the quality of provision offered to the students that both prevented the teachers from contemplating a move anywhere else and held back the one teacher who had wondered about doing so (in order to find somewhere cheaper to live and nearer the sea.) The teachers re-emphasised how lucky they felt in their current contexts, their enjoyment of the work that they were doing and the quality of the outcomes that their school was making it possible to achieve for students. Although two of the teachers also noted that their family was settled in the area too, these points were made after they had stressed their own sense of commitment and enjoyment of the work.

4.1.8 Specific factors that they believed <u>might induce</u> them to stay longer

Only one of the four teachers suggested that they might perhaps leave their current school within the next two or three years in order to secure a more senior post. In this case they did not offer any suggestions about what might induce them to stay. Another teacher, who had no intention of leaving, stressed that the school had achieved an 'amazing balance' between striving for continual improvement and ensuring that everyone enjoyed what they were doing: *Everybody works to the best of their ability. We have incredibly high standards and work so hard, always raising their own game and raising others through challenge. All take genuine pleasure in what they do'* (Interview 2)*.* Another feature of the school that made it so attractive to this particular teacher was the way in which '*decisions are made collectively rather than unilaterally*'. The teacher felt that *'people treat the leadership team on an equal footing, rather than as a hierarchy'* and that the school had found ways to enable individuals to contribute to those aspects of management in which they were most interested.

In reflecting on what might have induced colleagues to stay when they had left to seek promotion elsewhere, the only suggestion that was made related to creating appropriate development opportunities at the school. It was noted that this had occasionally been done where it was possible within the school budget, but there seemed less scope for the school to be able to do so in future.

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EDUCATION SCRUTINY COMMITTEE – 12 DECEMBER 2016

EDUCATION ATTAINMENT REPORT (SECONDARY) 2016
(Provisional results)

Report by Strategic Lead – Education Quality

Introduction

1. This report presents an overview of the provisional educational outcomes of children and young people in Oxfordshire secondary schools for the academic year 2015-16.

2. A new secondary school accountability system was implemented in 2016. The headline accountability measures for schools from 2016 are: Attainment 8, Progress 8, Attainment in English and Maths (A*-C), and English Baccalaureate (EBacc) entry and achievement.

3. Provisional results published by the DfE in October indicates that overall Oxfordshire performs broadly in line or above the national average in these key measures; however the county performs less well when compared against its statistical neighbour group[1].

4. There continues to be a variation in performance between localities and types of school within the county.

5. Comparative data for different groups of pupils (e.g. disadvantaged pupils) have not yet been published by the DfE. This data will be available from mid-January 2017.

Table 1: Key headline measures

	Average Attainment 8 score per pupil	Progress 8 Score	A*-C English & Maths	EBacc achievement
Oxfordshire	50.3	0.02	65.4	24.5
England	49.8	-0.03	62.8	24.6
Statistical Neighbour average	51.8	1.04	66.7	28.5

Attainment 8

6. Attainment 8 is the new headline measure and is made up from eight subjects:

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[1] Statistical neighbour group – a set of local authorities designated by National Foundation for Educational Research (NFER) on behalf of the DfE as having the most similar socio-economic characteristics. Oxfordshire's statistical neighbours are Bath & NE Somerset, Bracknell Forest, Buckinghamshire, Cambridgeshire, Gloucestershire, Hampshire, Hertfordshire, West Berkshire, West Sussex and Wiltshire.

- English element (double weighted). This is based on the highest point score of a pupil's English language or English literature qualification. This will be double weighted provided that both qualifications have been taken. In 2016 an English (combined) qualification can be included and double weighted. If only GCSE English literature or English language is taken then this qualification will count in the English slot, but will not be double-weighted.
- Maths element. A double weighted mathematics element that will contain the point score of the pupil's mathematics qualification.
- English Baccalaureate (EBacc) element. This includes the three highest point scores from any of the qualifications that contribute to the EBacc (science subjects, computer science, history, geography, and languages)
- Open element - The remaining element contains the three highest point scores in any three **other** subjects. This can include English language or literature (as only the highest one is counted in the English slot), further GCSE qualifications (including any EBacc subjects not included in the EBacc element if more than three EBacc qualifications were taken) or any other non-GCSE qualifications on the DfE approved list.
- The Attainment 8 score is the sum of the 4 separate elements (English, mathematics, EBacc and Open elements).

7.   The maximum Attainment 8 score for a pupil taking only GCSE qualifications is 80, for a pupil who achieves eight A* grades at GCSE in qualifying subjects[2].

8.   For illustration, 8 C grades at GCSE would give an Attainment 8 score of 50 and 8 B grades an Attainment 8 score of 60. See Appendix C page 11 for worked examples in calculating Attainment 8.

Table 2: Attainment 8 scores by element

	Average Attainment 8 score per pupil	English element	Maths element	EBacc element	Open element
Oxfordshire	50.3	10.7	10.0	14.1	15.5
England	49.8	10.5	9.8	13.7	15.7

9.   The Attainment 8 score for Oxfordshire is 50.3 (broadly equivalent to 8 C grades). Although this is slightly above the national figure (49.8) it is the lowest of the statistical neighbour group. Buckinghamshire has the highest Attainment 8 score (55.3). See chart on page 4 for statistical neighbour performance.

10. The scores per pupil for the English, mathematics and EBacc elements are very slightly higher in Oxfordshire than those nationally. However the attainment score for the Open element drops slightly below the national figure.

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[2] Key Stage 4 point scores (2016) – A*- 8, A – 7, B – 6, C – 5, D – 4, E – 3, F – 2, G - 1

11. The Open element comprises of GCSE and non-GCSE subjects. Table 3 indicates that it is the non-GCSE subjects in which Oxfordshire's attainment falls below the national average.

Table 3: Attainment 8 Open element

	Attainment 8 – Open element		
	Total	GCSE component only	Non-GCSE component only
Oxfordshire	15.5	13.8	1.7
England	15.7	12.9	2.8

12. Approximately three quarters (74%) of the Oxfordshire cohort only had GCSE subjects making up their Open element. 24% of pupils had combinations of GCSE and non-GCSE subjects. Only a minority of pupils only had non-GCSE subjects in this element.

13. The choice of curriculum on offer at a school will affect the combination of subjects that make up the Open element which means that careful interpretation of this element is necessary.
     Schools where pupils take a wide range of EBacc subjects (e.g. triple sciences, languages, geography and/or history) will find that the lower grades for these subjects populate their Open element (the 3 subjects with the higher grades will populate the EBacc element). Schools where pupils take subjects that are not included in the EBacc (art, drama, sport and non-GCSE subjects) will have their grades in these subjects populating their Open element.

Progress 8
14. Progress 8 captures the progress a pupil makes from the end of key stage 2 to the end of key stage 4. It compares pupils' achievement (their Attainment 8 score) with the average Attainment 8 score of all pupils nationally who had a similar starting point (or 'prior' attainment).
     Progress 8 is a relative measure; therefore the national average Progress 8 score for mainstream schools is zero[3].
     A positive Progress 8 score indicates that on average pupils within a school (or group) have made more progress than similar pupils nationally.

15. The DfE guidance states that Progress 8 scores should be interpreted alongside their associated confidence intervals in order to determine whether their progress score is statistically significant.

16. Oxfordshire's Progress 8 figure of 0.02 means that on average pupils in the county are making slightly more progress than pupils with the same prior attainment nationally.

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[3] For all mainstream pupils nationally, the average Progress 8 score will be zero. When including pupils at special schools the national average will not be zero. A Progress 8 score of 1.0 means pupils in the group make on average a grade more progress than the national average; a score of -0.5 means they make on average half a grade less progress than average

3

Table 4: Progress 8 scores by element

	Progress scores				
	Overall Progress 8 measure	English element	Maths element	EBacc element	Open element
Oxfordshire	0.02	0.06 Sig above[4]	0.09 Sig above	0.09 Sig above	-0.13 Sig below
England	-0.03	-0.04	-0.02	-0.02	-0.04

17. Progress scores for the English, maths and EBacc elements show that the progress made by pupils in Oxfordshire is significantly above average compared to the progress made by pupils nationally who has the same prior attainment.

Oxfordshire's performance is broadly in the middle of the statistical neighbour group for these elements.

Chart 1: Attainment and progress by statistical neighbours
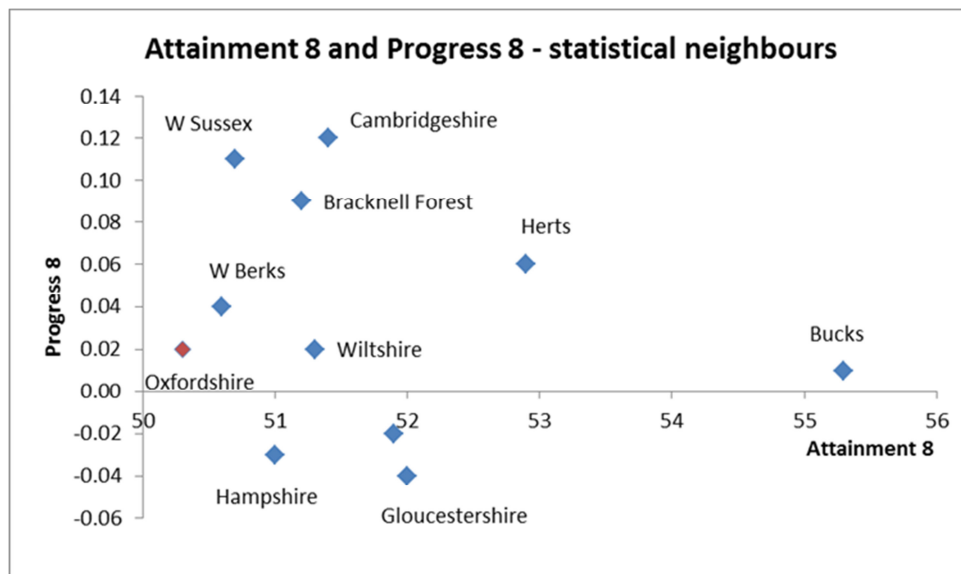
Attainment in English and maths (A*-C)

Table 5: Attainment in English and maths – 3 year trend

	% English & Maths (A*-C)		
	2014	2015	2016
Oxfordshire	57.4	62.1	65.4
England	58.9	59.2	62.6
Statistical Neighbour Average	58.2	63.9	66.7

18. Attainment in English and maths at grades A*-C increased by 3.3%points in Oxfordshire between 2015 and 2016. This remains higher than the national figure of 62.6%, which also saw a similar increase.

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[4] Sig above indicates that the progress score is statistically significantly above the national average. Sig below indicates that the progress score is statistically significantly below the national average.

4

The majority of this increase is due to a change in methodology in 2016. This new methodology requires pupils to achieve an A*-C in either language or literature, with no requirements to take both. Previously pupils had to take exams in both English language and literature, but achieve an A*-C in English language.

19. At school level in Oxfordshire the proportion of pupils achieving A*-C in English and mathematics varies from 42% to 86%.

Attainment at 5 A*-C GCSEs including in English and mathematics

20. This is no longer a key performance measure. The DfE have provided indicative figures for 2016 data to local authorities for information, however due to changes in methodology (e.g. in English) a direct comparison with previous years in not advisable.

21. Provisional data for Oxfordshire indicates that 58.7% of pupils achieved at least 5 A*-C GCSEs including in English and maths. In 2016 this figure was 59.7%.

Key performance measures by school:

Appendix A on page 9 shows the Attainment 8 and Progress 8 scores by school in Oxfordshire.

22. There continues to be a degree of variation in both attainment and performance between schools in the county.

23. The Attainment 8 score in Oxfordshire varies from 43.1 to 58.5.
    The Progress 8 score in Oxfordshire varies from -0.39 to 0.8.

24. The Progress 8 figure for The Oxford Academy (0.82) is significantly higher than that of other schools in the county.
    This is the 14th highest Progress 8 score out of all secondary schools nationally.
    This indicates that on average pupils at The Oxford Academy achieved 0.8 of a grade higher than other pupils with the same prior attainment.

Key performance measures by locality.

25. Overall schools in the Didcot locality have the highest attainment and progress scores in the county.

26. Progress 8 scores in both Didcot and Oxford localities are noticeably higher than elsewhere in the county. This indicates that pupils in these two areas make more progress between key stages 2 and 4 than pupils with similar prior attainment nationally.

Table 6: Attainment and progress scores by locality (provisional)

5

Locality	Attainment 8 score	Progress 8 score
Abingdon	49.1	-0.14
Banbury	50.1	0.07
Bicester	48.4	-0.14
Didcot	53.5	0.17
Oxford	49.3	0.15
Thame	52.4	0.05
Wantage & Faringdon	52.5	0.08
Witney & Carterton	50.0	-0.05
Woodstock & Chipping Norton	52.0	0.04

(Locality data excludes pupils attending special schools)

27. Three localities, Bicester, Abingdon and Witney, have negative Progress 8 scores, indicating that on average pupils makes slightly less progress in these areas than pupils with the same prior attainment nationally. All three of these localities have lower Attainment 8 scores as well.

28. The DfE publish district level comparisons. These are due in January 2017.

Chart 2: Attainment and progress by locality (provisional)
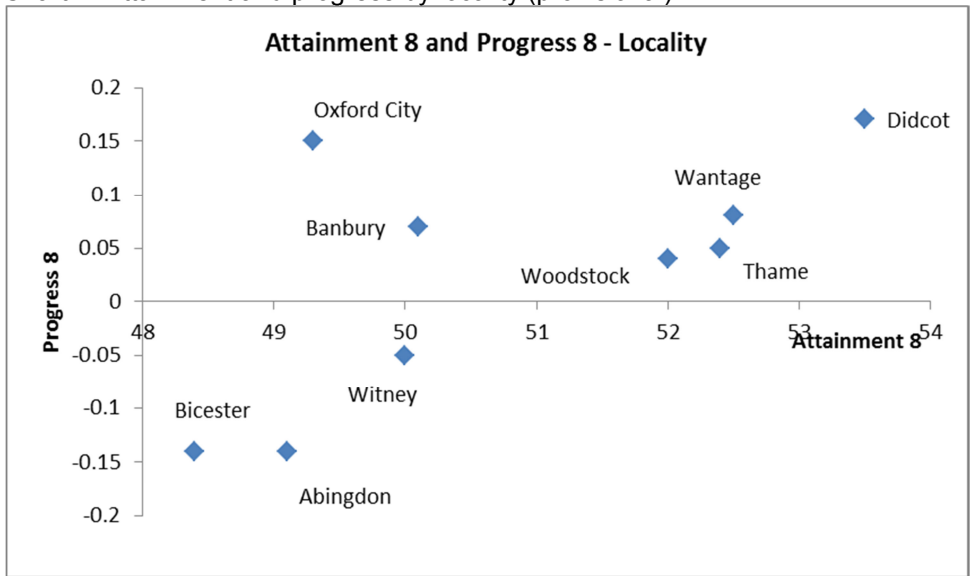
Attainment by gender

Table 7: Key performance measures by gender (provisional)

	% of Cohort	Attainment 8		Progress 8		A*-C English & maths	
	Oxfordshire	Oxfordshire	National	Oxfordshire	National	Oxfordshire	National
Girls	2922 (49%)	52.9	52.1	0.18	0.11	70.2	66.7
Boys	3053 (51%)	47.7	47.5	-0.14	-0.17	60.8	58.6

29. Nationally girls continue to outperform boys, making considerably more progress as well as having higher attainment.

30. Girls in Oxfordshire have a higher Attainment 8 score (52.9) than girls nationally (52.1) and their progress is significantly higher than that of all pupils with the same prior attainment nationally.

31. Boys in Oxfordshire have an Attainment 8 score (47.7) that is broadly in line with all boys nationally. Their Progress 8 score (-0.14) indicates that boys in Oxfordshire make less progress compared to all pupils with the same prior attainment nationally, but they do make more progress than the national boys cohort (-0.17).

Attainment by prior attainment band[5]

Table 8: Key performance measures by prior attainment (provisional)

Prior attainment	% of Cohort		Attainment 8		Progress 8		A*-C English & maths	
	Oxon	National	Oxon	National	Oxon	National	Oxon	National
Low	18.4	16.9	28.2	31.3	-0.21	0	10.8	11.8
Middle	52.2	51.8	49.7	49.2	0.06	0	66.8	62.6
High	29.4	31.3	65.0	64.3	0.08	0	97.1	95.7

32. In 2016 the key stage 4 cohort in Oxfordshire had a slightly higher proportion of low prior attaining pupils (18.4% compared with 16.9%) and a slightly lower proportion of high prior attaining pupils (29.4% compared with 31.3%) than the national distribution.

33. The low prior attaining cohort in Oxfordshire performs less well at the key headline measures than the same cohort nationally. In particular the Progress 8 score for this cohort is statistically significantly below the national average, with pupils making 0.2 of a grade on average less than similar pupils nationally.
Only 10.8% of this cohort achieved an A*-C at GCSE in both English and mathematics.

34. Pupils who achieved the expected level 4 at key stage 2 (Middle prior attainment group) in Oxfordshire perform slightly above the same group nationally. This is most noticeable in English and maths where 66.8% achieved at least a C grade in both subjects compared with 62.6% nationally.

35. High prior attaining pupils in Oxfordshire continue to perform well at key stage 4.

Attainment by school type

Table 9: Key performance measures by school type (provisional)

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[5] Low prior attainment   – achieved below the expected level 4 at key stage 2
Middle prior attainment – achieved the expected level 4 at key stage 2
High prior attainment   – achieved above the expected level 4 at key stage 2

7

School Type	Number of schools	Number of pupils	Attainment 8		Progress 8	
			Oxfordshire	National	Oxfordshire	National
LA maintained mainstream	6	715	47.3	49.8	-0.2	-0.03
Academies – convertor	23	4461	52.0	53.2	0.07	0.09
Academies - sponsored	5	679	47.1	45.8	0.09	-0.14

36. The majority of secondary schools in Oxfordshire are convertor academies. This group of schools have the highest average Attainment 8 score (52.0) within the county. However this is lower than the average for this group of schools nationally (53.2). The average progress across this group of schools is broadly in line with that for convertor academies nationally.

37. There are five sponsored academies in Oxfordshire[6]. As a group these schools perform noticeably better than sponsored academies nationally.
In particular pupils in these schools make significantly more progress (Progress 8 score of 0.08) than pupils nationally (who have a Progress 8 score of zero) and pupils in sponsored academies nationally (Progress 8 score -0.14).
This is primarily due to the high progress of pupils at The Oxford Academy.

38. Attainment and progress of pupils in the six LA maintained schools falls below that of LA maintained schools nationally. The Progress 8 score of -0.2 means that on average pupils in this group of schools achieve 0.2 of a grade less than pupils with similar prior attainment nationally.

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[6] Banbury Academy, Bicester School, North Oxfordshire Academy, Oxford Spires, The Oxford Academy

Appendix A.
Attainment and Progress by school (provisional)
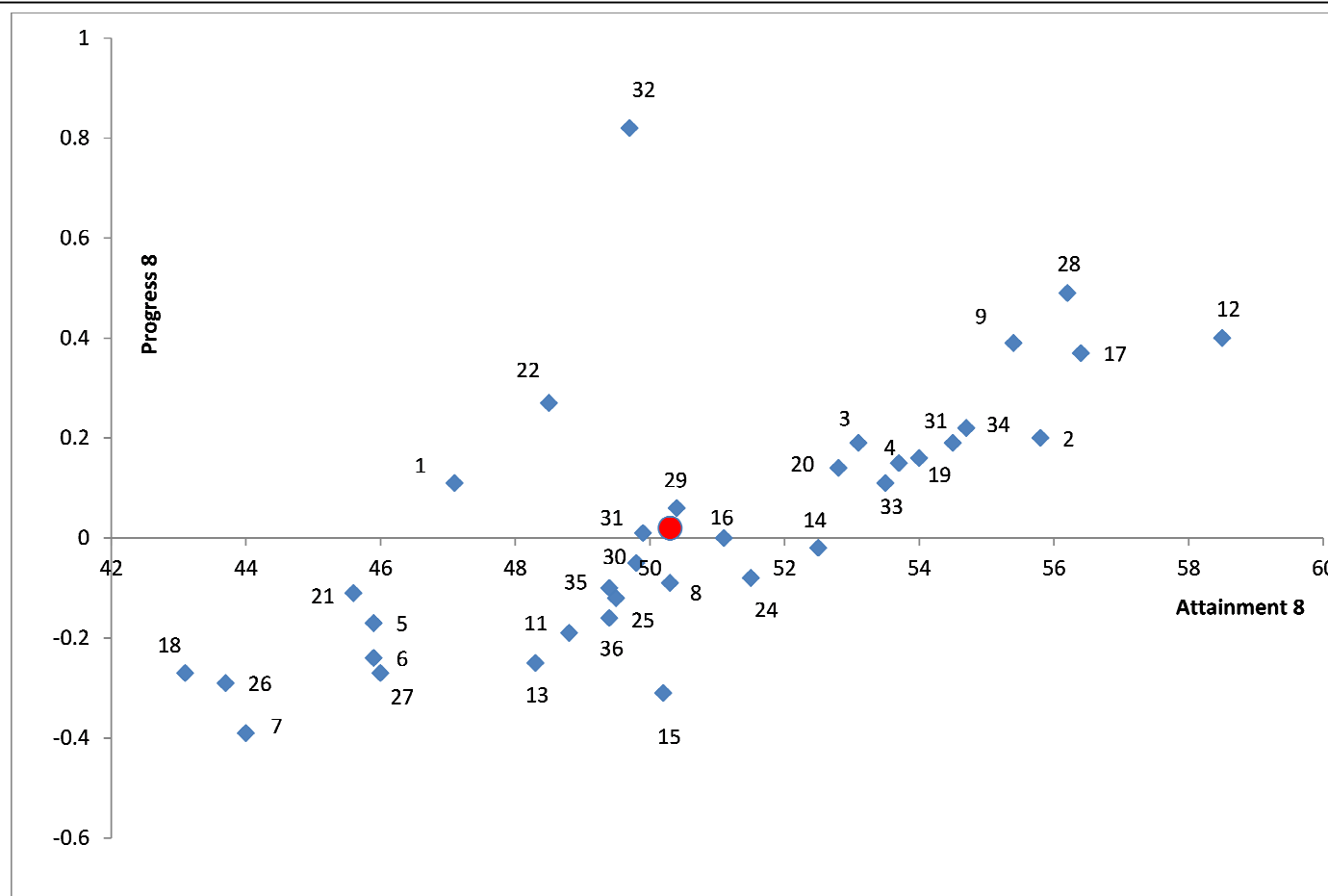
1	Banbury Academy
2	Bartholomew School
3	Blessed George Napier
4	Burford School
5	Carterton CC
6	Cheney School
7	Chiltern Edge
8	Chipping Norton School
9	Didcot Girls' School
10	Faringdon CC
11	Fitzharrys School
12	Gillotts School
13	Gosford Hill School
14	Icknield Community College
15	John Mason School
16	King Alfred's
17	Langtree School
18	Larkmead School
19	Lord Williams's School
20	Matthew Arnold School
21	North Oxfordshire Academy
22	Oxford Spires Academy
23	**Oxfordshire**
24	Space Studio Banbury
25	St Birinus School
26	St Gregory the Great
27	The Bicester School
28	The Cherwell School
29	The Cooper School
30	The Henry Box School
31	The Marlborough
32	The Oxford Academy
33	The Warriner School
34	Wallingford School
35	Wheatley Park School

Appendix B. List of schools by locality

Abingdon	Fitzharrys School
	John Mason School
	Larkmead School
	Matthew Arnold School
Banbury	Banbury Academy
	Blessed George Napier Catholic School
	North Oxfordshire Academy
	The Warriner School
Bicester	Gosford Hill School
	The Bicester School
	The Cooper School
Didcot	Chiltern Edge School
	Didcot Girls' School
	Gillotts School
	Langtree School
	St Birinus School
	Wallingford School
Oxford City	Cheney School
	Oxford Spires Academy
	St Gregory the Great Catholic School
	The Cherwell School
	The Oxford Academy
Thame	Icknield Community College
	Lord Williams's School
	Wheatley Park School
Wantage	Faringdon Community College
	King Alfred's Academy
Witney	Burford Secondary School
	Carterton Community College
	The Henry Box School
	Wood Green School
Woodstock	Bartholomew School
	Chipping Norton School
	The Marlborough CofE School

Appendix C.
Calculating Attainment 8

Worked Example A

Table 1 sets out how the Attainment 8 score would be calculated for a particular pupil, Gillian.

	Qualification	Grade	Points	Included in measure?	Element	Doubled	Total Points
1	GCSE maths	A	7	Y	Maths	Y	14
2	GCSE English Language	A*	8	Y	English	Y	16
3	GCSE English Literature	B	6	Y	Other	N	6
4	GCSE Core Science	A	7	Y	EBacc	N	7
5	GCSE Additional Science	B	6	Y	EBacc	N	6
6	GCSE art	C	5	Y	Other	N	5
7	GCSE French	A*	8	Y	EBacc	N	8
8	GCSE Spanish	B	6	Y	Other	N	6
9	GCSE Religion Studies	D	4	N			

Attainment 8 score is the sum of the elements = 68
Dividing the Attainment 8 score by 10 gives the pupil's average grade. In this case it is 6.8, between a GCSE grade A and B.

Worked Example B

Table 2 sets out how the Attainment 8 score would be calculated for a particular pupil, Hardip.

	Qualification	Grade	Points	Included in measure?	Element	Doubled	Total Points
1	GCSE maths	D	4	Y	Maths	Y	8
2	GCSE English Language	C	5	Y	English	N	5
3	GCSE Core Science	C	5	Y	EBacc	N	5
4	BTEC First Award in Hospitality	Merit	6	Y	Other	N	6
5	BTEC First Award in Sport	Pass	5	Y	Other	N	5
6	Cambridge National Certificate in Business & Enterprise	Pass	5	Y	Other	N	5
7	NCFE Certificate in Engineering Studies	Pass	5	N			

The English point score is not doubled as Hardip did not take both English language and Literature.
He has only taken one EBacc subject, so he scores zero for two of the three EBacc slots.
Only three of his four non-GCSE qualifications are counted in the Other slot.

Attainment 8 score is the sum of the elements = 34
Dividing the Attainment 8 score by 10 gives the pupil's average grade. In this case it is 3.4, between a GCSE grade D and E.

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Elective Home Education (EHE)

Annual Report
2015/16

OXFORDSHIRE
COUNTY COUNCIL

The Elective Home Education Team

The Elective Home Education (EHE) Team is staffed by one FTE Lead EHE Officer and three part time EHE Link Workers (working the equivalent of one FTE).

Developments in 2015/16;

- Due to public consultation, EHE policy and procedures have been revised.
- Visits have been prioritized. Repeat visits to families who we know to be providing education have ceased in order to concentrate on first visits. This allows more resource to ensure that our most vulnerable families are identified and appropriate action is taken early.
- As a result of liaising with the CEO of Examination Officers Association, details of external exam centers which accept EHE students is now available as part of the information pack issued to parents.
- A series of successful meetings with Abingdon and Witney College have taken place. Information has been shared to facilitate good practice and to promote the integration of 14-16 yrs. olds into college placements. Safeguarding has been a priority in discussions, so that the process of removal from school roll is monitored carefully.
- We have liaised with Youth Engagement and Opportunities team to ensure NEET information is communicated to Year 11's. Destinations post year 11 EHE students are sought and tracked. This continues to be ongoing and information is now shared earlier in the year to ensure students have the correct information and time to plan and make informed choices.
- Health Service information is shared with parents on the latest immunization sessions available to them.
- EHE Officer has been invited by the Community Pediatric Service to give a talk on the legal framework surrounding Elective Home Education. This will include Pediatric Doctors, Consultants, Doctors in training, the multi-disciplinary team, therapists and the Autism Diagnostic Service.

Case Summary 2015/16

Total registered EHE during 2015/16	460
New	167
Closed	156
Returned to school	90
Gypsy, Roma and Traveller (GRT)*	29
Referred to County Attendance Team for a School Attendance Order	2
Statements/EHCP	28
Record of Social Care involvement (open/closed)	177
Young Carers	22
Local Authority Care	7

*GRT figures based on known travellers, not ethnicity

Comparison with Statistical Neighbours

Local Authority	Total registered EHE 2014/15	Number of new cases 2014/5	% of total registered	Total registered EHE 2015/16	Number of new cases 2015/16	% of total registered
Cambridgeshire	776	322	43%	953	379	40%
Gloucestershire	659	306	46%	716	307	43%
Oxfordshire	**456**	**202**	**44%**	**460**	**167**	**36.3%**

## EHE as a percentage of the Oxfordshire's School Population

Academic Year	Oxfordshire's School Population	Total EHE cases registered over the academic year	EHE as a percentage of the school population
2011/2012	87,889	379	0.43%
2012/2013	88,274	378	0.43%
2013/2014	89,263	410	0.5%
2014/2015	91,663	456	0.5%
2015/2016	92,241	460	0.5%

EHE as a Percentage of the School Population has stayed the same over the last three academic years

Cases on EHE Register per Academic Year

New and Closed Cases
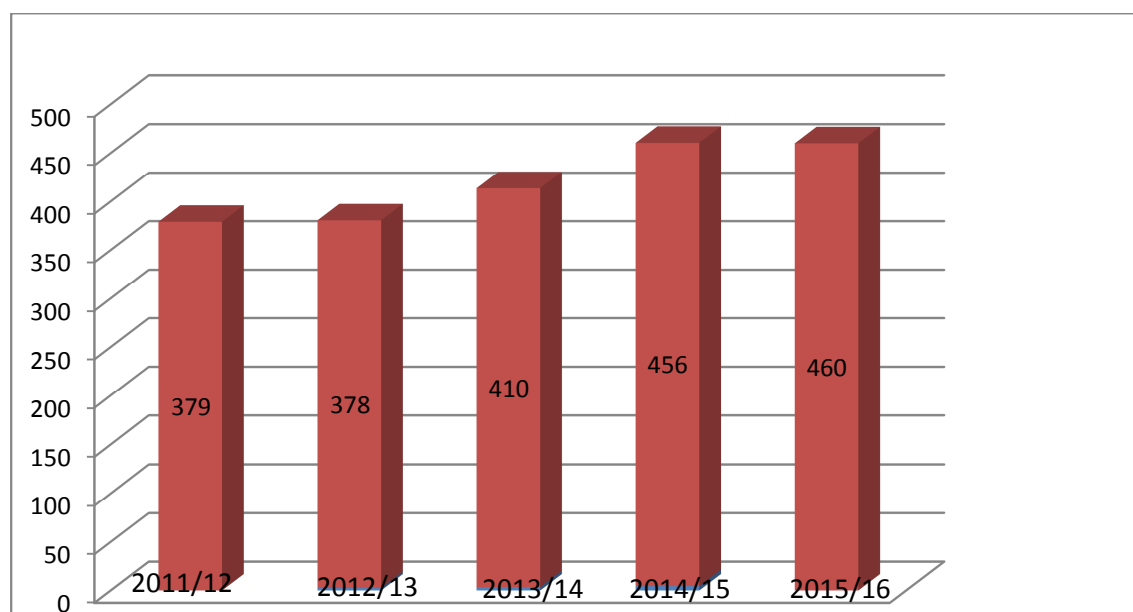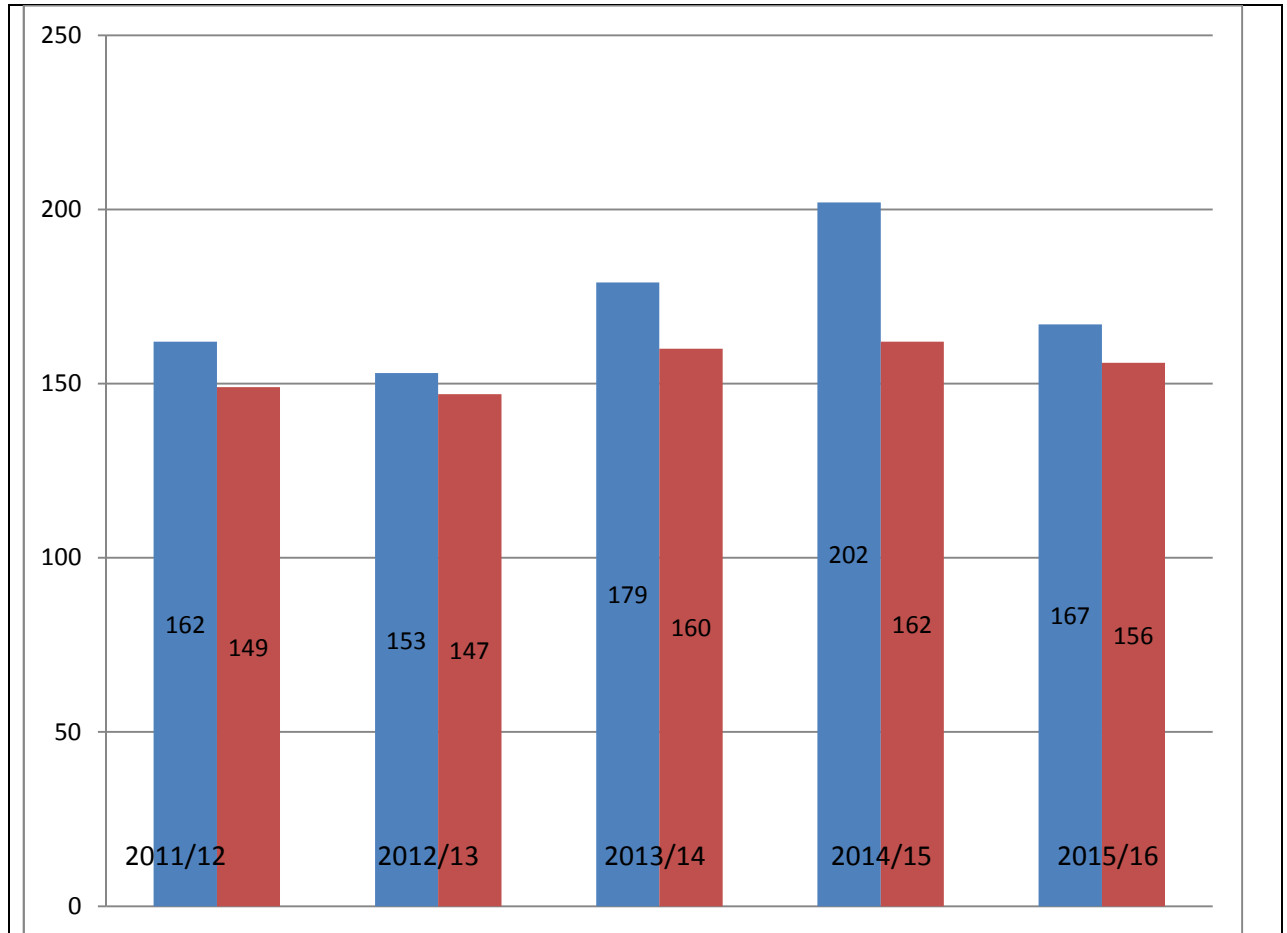
|	2011/12	2012/13	2013/14	2014/15	2015/16
New Referrals	162	153	179	202	167
Closed Referrals	149	147	160	162	156

The statistical average is 172 cases per year over the last five academic years.

5

Reasons for Elective Home Education

Reason	Number of cases				
	2011/12	2012/13	2013/14	2014/15	2015/16
Bullying	28	27	24	22	25
Dissatisfaction with system	81	85	85	62	51
Distance/Access to local School	5	5	13	4	4
Other/Unknown	51	47	64	122	127
Parents Desire for Closer Relations	26	29	27	30	25
Philosophical/Ideological beliefs	28	30	35	35	49
Religious/cultural beliefs	45	56	48	49	55
Special Educational Needs	62	35	42	32	37
Short term intervention	38	48	51	75	60
Unwilling/Unable to attend School	15	16	21	25	27

These statistics are based on main reasons given by parents/guardians (often there are a number of factors contributing to their decision to home educate).

Cases by Gender

	2011/12	2012/13	2013/14	2014/15	2015/16
Male	208	208	209	227	220
Female	171	170	201	229	240
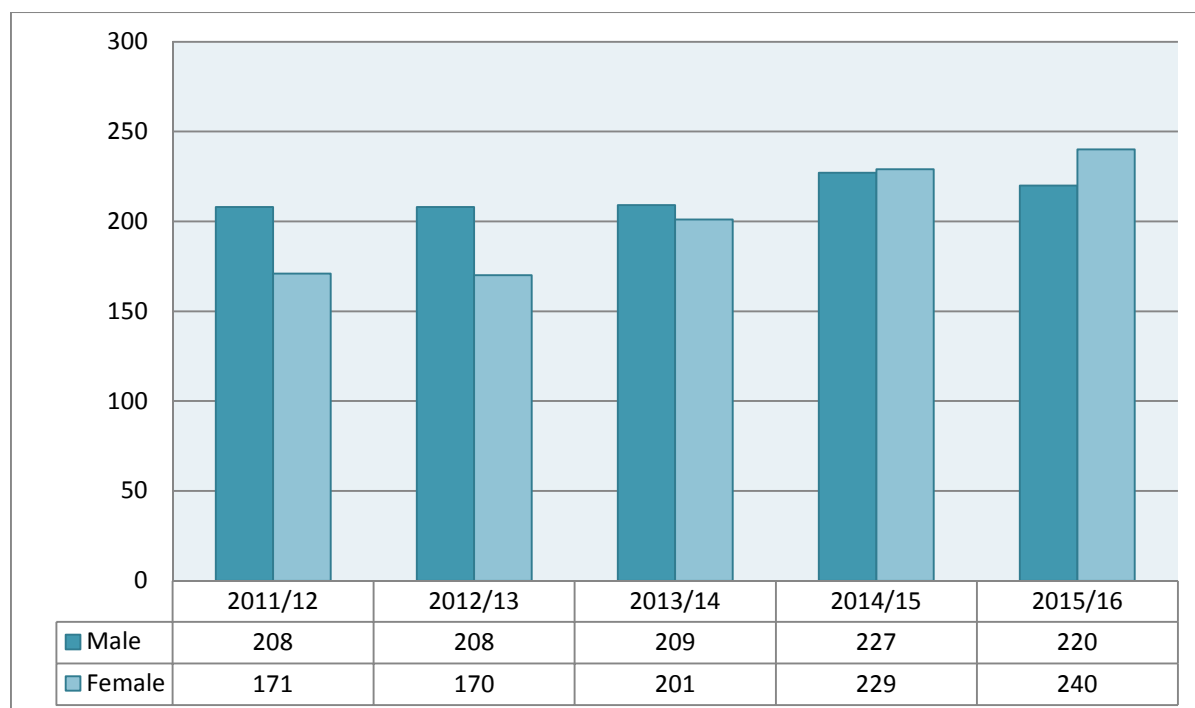
The ratio of male to female home educated young people has been evenly split over the previous years until last year when there was a 9% increase in female cases over male cases.

Cases with Statements of Special Educational Needs/Education Health and Care Plan

Year	Statement/EHCP
2011/12	18
2012/13	16
2013/14	20
2014/15	26
2015/16	28

Attendance and Exclusions History

	2014/2015	2015/16
Attendance 90% or less (prior to EHE)	194	165
Attendance over 90% (prior to EHE)	**68**	**72**
No attendance data available	195	226
Fixed term exclusions history	24	31
Permanent exclusion history	3	3

Cases by National Curriculum Year

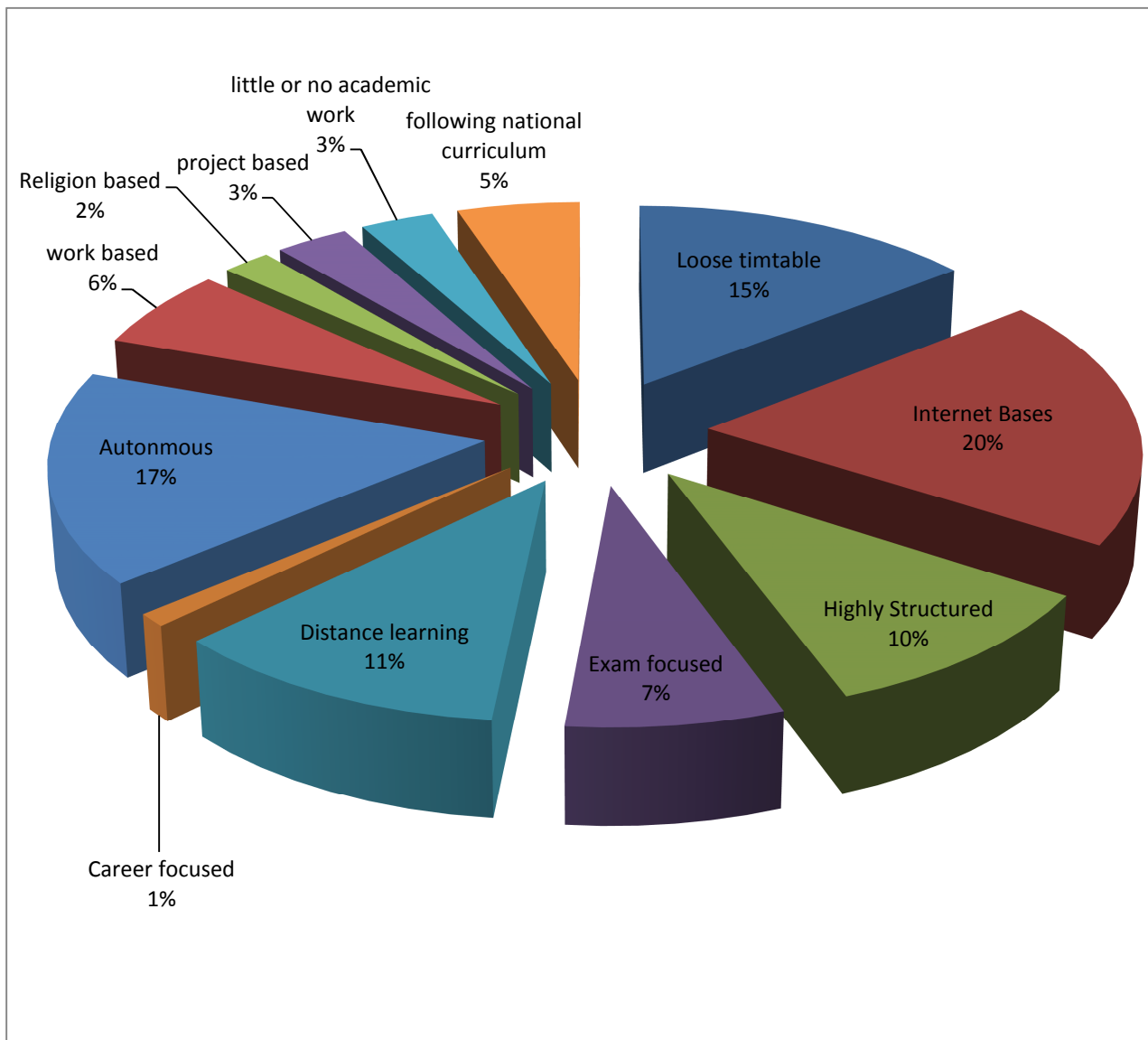|	Yr 0	Yr 1	Yr 2	Yr 3	Yr 4	Yr 5	Yr 6	Yr 7	Yr 8	Yr 9	Yr 10	Yr 11
Column3	9	19	25	31	42	35	33	36	45	63	50	72
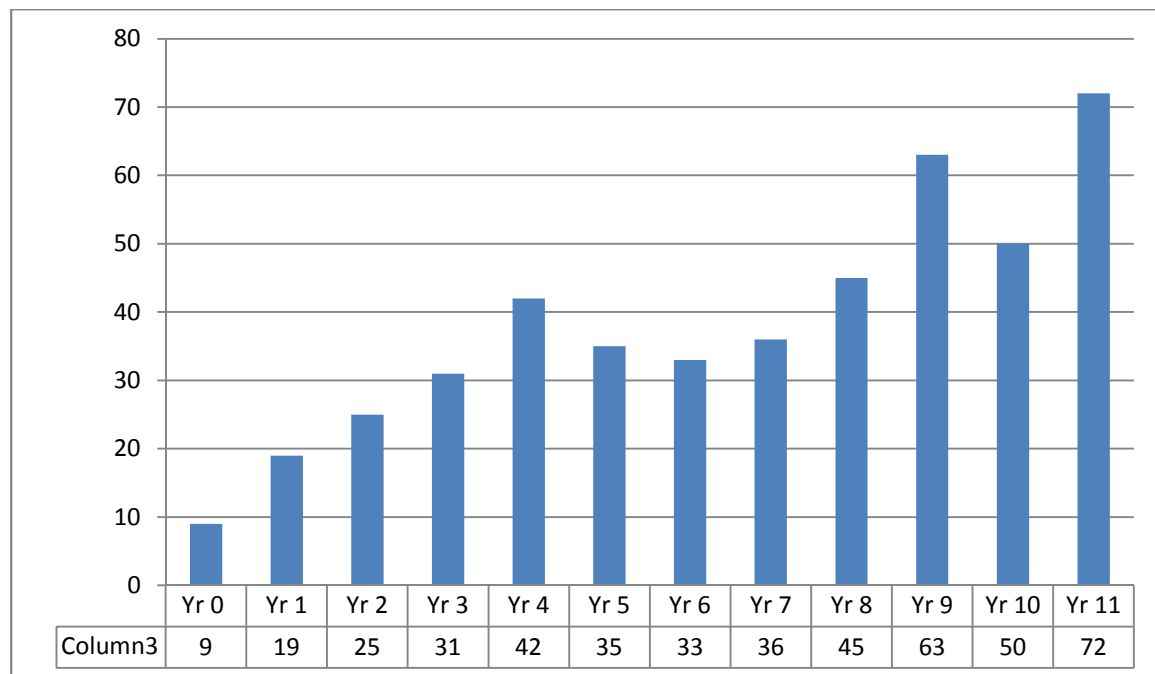
From year 0 to year 11 there has been a 700% increase in students that are Elective Home Educated.
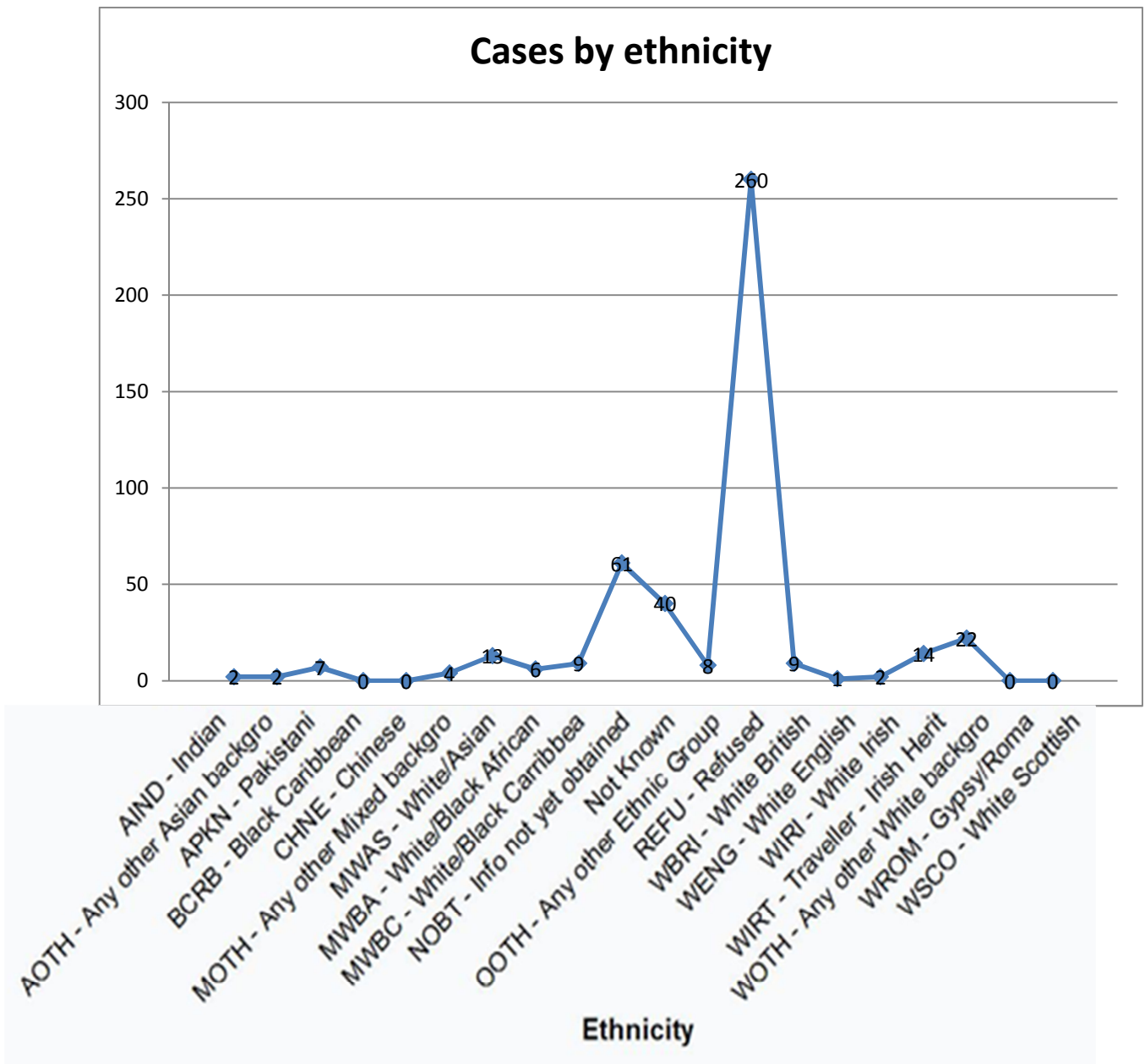
Cases by ethnicity

There are 260 cases where parents did not divulge the Ethnicity of the student.

Learning Style

Most Families have more than one learning style; the above is based on the main style given by parents. New ways of learning have emerged recently with the advent of online schools such as Interhigh and locally with Wolsey Hall.

### Pre-EHE Base (new cases) 5 and above

Pre EHE base	Total
A& T out of county school	5
A&T pre school feeder	7
Banbury Academy	5
Chiltern Edge	6
Church Cowley St James Primary	7
Deddington C of E Primary	7
Didcot Girls School	8
Elective home education	12
Faringdon Community College	5
Meadowbrook College	6

Cases by Hub 2015/16
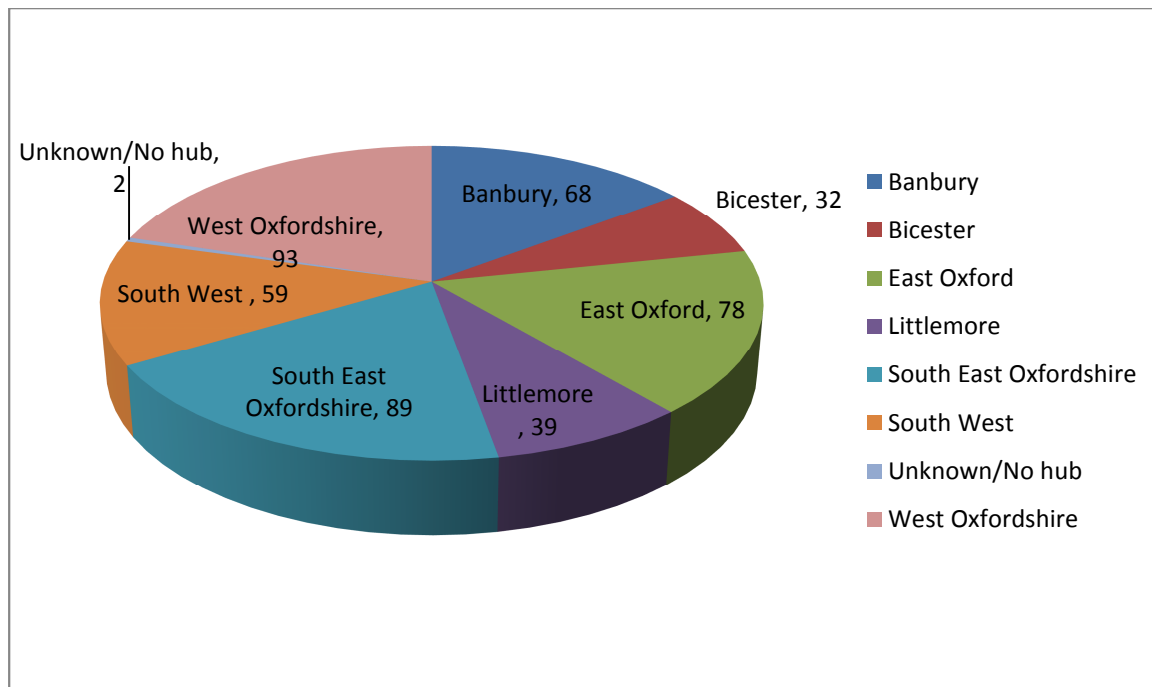
Students with open involvement during EHE period = 26
Students with closed involvement during EHE period = 53
Students with no involvement during EHE period = 381

YEAR 11 DESTINATIONS

	College	EHE	Emp with training	Moved Away	NEET	School	Temp Unknown
Total	30	5	1	1	2	3	21
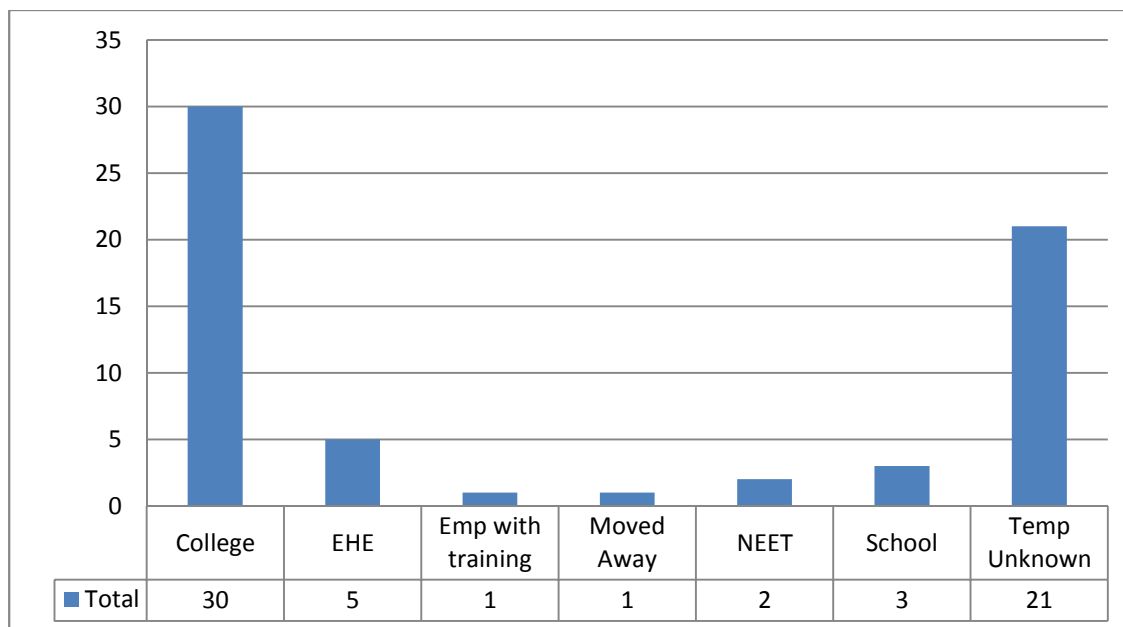
Almost 50% of year 11s, and possibly more (destinations for 21 cases are currently unknown), went on to College rather than continue with home education. This may suggest a schools issue. The fact that EHE young people can access college courses free of charge pre-16 may mean that, because they are already in the college environment, they are more likely to stay on post-16. A number have gone on to entry level college provision, such as the Gateway Programme.

EDUCATION SCRUTINY COMMITTEE – 12 DECEMBER 2016

EFFECTIVENESS OF THE PUPIL PLACE PLANNING PROCESS

Report by the Director for Children's Services

INTRODUCTION

1. Oxfordshire is experiencing rapid growth and this is having a significant impact on the demand for, and supply of, school places. Effective pupil place planning is essential to ensure the needs of Oxfordshire families are met, and a crucial component of strategic planning for growth across the county.

2. This report sets out the pupil place planning process in Oxfordshire, summarises current pupil planning data, and comments on specific issues relating to pupil place planning.

BACKGROUND: OXFORDSHIRE'S SCHOOLS

3. As of September 2016, Oxfordshire is home to:
    *   237 state sector mainstream schools providing primary education, two of which also provide secondary education (with a third due to start offering secondary education from 2017). Two new primary schools are due to open in September 2017.
    *   38 state sector mainstream schools currently providing secondary education, including three recently opened schools providing for the 14-19 age range: Banbury Space Studio (2014), UTC Oxfordshire in Didcot (2015) and Bicester Technology Studio (2016). In 2017, when year groups at the Europa School (Culham) reach secondary age, and Aureus School opens at Great Western Park in Didcot, the number of schools providing secondary education will increase to 40.
    *   13 state sector schools providing specialist provision for children with special educational needs, one Pupil Referral Unit and one Hospital School.
    *   7 local authority maintained nursery schools (other early education and childcare provision in Oxfordshire is delivered through a mixed market of private and voluntary providers, including pre-schools, day nurseries and childminders, and through schools, including academies and free schools).

4. In Oxfordshire, over 80% of secondary schools, nearly 30% of primary schools and over 30% of special schools are currently academies.

PUPIL PLACE PLANNING

5. The Pupil Place Planning function within Oxfordshire lies within the Education Sufficiency & Access team, and includes:

- Maintaining information on school capacities: the council is responsible for assessing non-academy school capacities (using a set government methodology) and keeping up-to-date records on academies' capacities;
- Monitoring pupil numbers through census data collected three times a year from all state-funded schools;
- Close working with the School Admissions team to monitor emerging pressures on school places;
- Annual pupil forecasts based on demographic data and housing growth plans;
- Reporting to the Department for Education on school capacities and pupil forecasts, which then informs the annual "Basic Need" funding the council receives for the purposes of increasing school capacity;
- Responding (through the council's "Single Response" process) to housing development planning applications for 10 or more dwellings, advising on the expected impact on school capacity and making the case for developer funding for any consequent expansion of school capacity;
- Responding to Local Plan and similar consultations, advising on where school capacity may present a constraint on housing growth and identifying where new or expanded schools will be necessary;
- Liaising with district councils and housing developers on the planning of school capacity to meet the needs of housing growth;
- Collating an overview of housing growth pressures in each area, especially where this post-dates the housing feed in the latest available pupil forecasts;
- Working with existing schools to plan their expansion, when this is necessary as a result of population growth (including housing growth);
- Planning new schools, including securing sponsors through the Local Academy "Presumption" process or through working with bidders to the Department for Education "Wave" process (see below).

6.   The county's Pupil Place Plan provides an annual snapshot of school planning in the county, and is published on the county council's website. The Plan is updated each year with revised pupil forecasts and other data, and circulated to schools for comment before being approved by the Cabinet Member for Schools.

7.   A School Organisation Stakeholder Group, with representatives from county and district councillors, schools, governors and the dioceses providing education in the county, meets three times a year to provide advice and comment on school planning and organisation issues.

PLANNING FOR NEW SCHOOLS

8.   While in many circumstances, additional school places can best be provided through temporary or permanent expansions of existing schools, increasingly new schools will be required to meet the needs of Oxfordshire's growing population.

9. Under the Education Act 2011, nearly all new schools will now be established as academies, and since May 2015, all new academies are classified as free schools. New academies can be established through two routes:

- Proposers can apply directly to the DfE to establish a free school, through twice-yearly application waves. These are often referred to as **"wave" schools or promoter-led proposals**. The free school application process includes studio schools, and there is a parallel process for University Technical Colleges. Other similar application processes may be launched periodically by the government to foster specific types of school. Europa School (2012), Tyndale Community School (2013) and Heyford Park Free School (2013) were opened through the wave route, which will also provide a new secondary school (The Swan School) for Oxford; in addition two studio schools and a UTC have been opened.

- If the need for a new school has been identified but there have been no suitable "wave" proposals, the county council runs a competitive process to invite potential academy sponsors to run the new school. These are often referred to as **"presumption" schools or LA-led proposals**. This presumption process has in Oxfordshire been used to identify sponsors for two primary schools and a secondary school in Didcot, as well as for planned new primary schools in Bicester, Banbury and Oxford, and a secondary school in Bicester.

10. Once schools are open, there is no difference between wave academies and presumption academies for the purposes of pupil place planning; all academies form part of the mixed economy of schools within Oxfordshire.

Table 1: Schools scheduled to open over the next three years.

| Location	Type of school	Opening date	Sponsor
Gagle Brook Primary School, North West Bicester	1 form entry primary school, growing to 2 form	2017	White Horse Federation
Longford Park Primary School, Banbury	1.5 form entry primary school, growing to 2 form	2017	GLF Schools
Aureus School, Didcot Great Western Park	1200 place 11-16 secondary school	2017	GLF Schools
Chalkhill Primary School, Didcot Great Western Park	2 form entry primary school	2018	GLF Schools
The Swan School, Oxford	"Wave" secondary school	2018 (tbc)	River Learning Trust
Oxford Barton	1.5 form entry primary school	2019 (tbc)	Cheney School Academy Trust
South West Bicester	Secondary school, 600 places, 11-16	2019	White Horse Federation
Banbury, Southam Road	1 form entry primary school	2019 (tbc)	To be decided

Bicester, Graven Hill	Up to 3 form entry primary school	2019 (tbc)	To be decided

11. In total, these new schools will add over 5,000 new school places, in addition to over 11,000 new school places being provided through the expansions in the county's current capital programme.

12. Based on current district Local Plans, up to a further seventeen primary schools and five secondary schools, as well as at least one new SEN school, are expected to be opened by 2030 in Oxfordshire. This number may rise as a result of the higher levels of housing growth now proposed in Local Plans, and in response to plans to address Oxford's unmet housing need.

**DEMAND FOR SCHOOL PLACES IN OXFORDSHIRE**

13. Primary school pupil numbers have been growing rapidly in Oxfordshire for several years; secondary school pupil numbers have been broadly stable, but have now also started to grow:

Chart 1: total pupil numbers 2010/11 – 2015/16
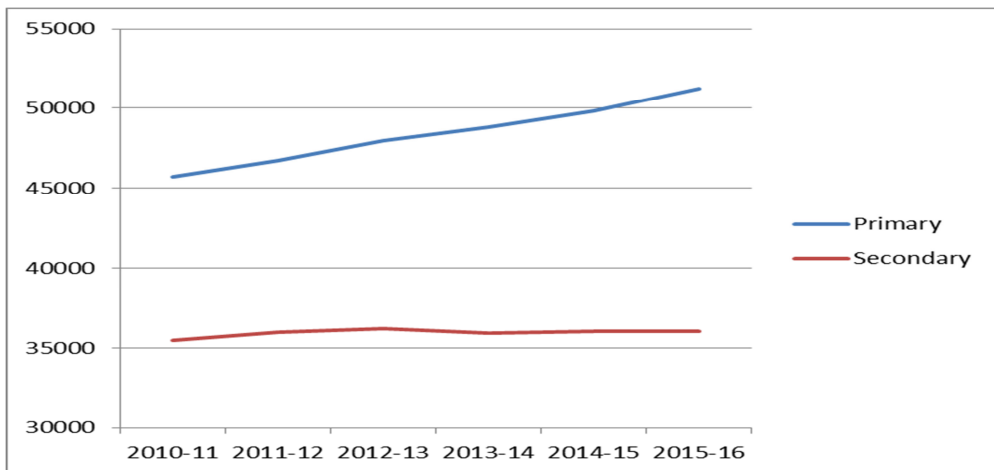
Pupil numbers at both primary and secondary level are now forecast to increase:

Chart 2: forecast total pupil numbers 2015/16 – 2023/24
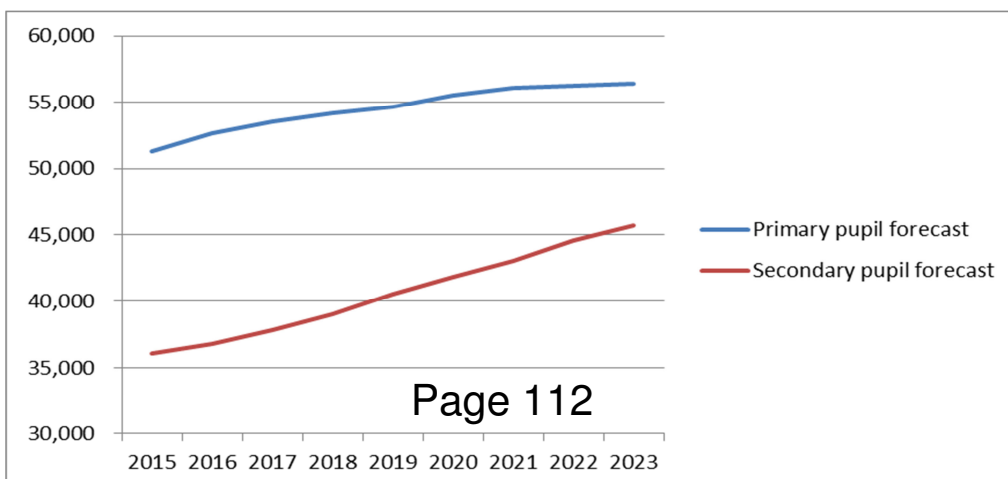
14.   Current pupil projections show an 8.6% increase in primary pupil numbers, and for secondary school pupils a 14.6% predicted rise, between 2015/16 and 2020/21. However, there is a significant amount of planned/proposed housing which is not yet included in these forecasts, so actual growth is expected to be higher.

PUPIL PLACE PLANNING PERFORMANCE INDICATORS

Meeting parental preference

15.   As a result of effective school place planning, close working with all schools and carefully targeted investment, the proportion of Oxfordshire residents allocated their first preference and/or offered a place at one of their three preferred schools is consistently high, and above the national average:

Table 2: school preference data 2014-2016

Primary applications	2014	2015	2016
% 1st preferences met - Oxon	89.0	88.0	91.4
%1st preferences - England	87.7	87.8	88.4
% top-3 preferences met - Oxon	96.8	96.0	98.0
% top-3 preferences met - England	95.7	95.9	96.3

| Secondary applications	2014	2015	2016
% 1st preferences met - Oxon	90.6	90.9	92.1
%1st preferences - England	85.2	84.2	84.1
% top-3 preferences met - Oxon	97.8	97.8	98.4
% top-3 preferences met - England	95.5	95.0	95.0

Spare places

16.   In general, more parents are able to secure their preferred school if there is some spare capacity in the system; this benefit needs to be balanced against the financial risks for schools of maintaining too high a level of surplus places. The Audit Commission advises that a level of 5-10% spare places is reasonable to provide some flexibility for unexpected influxes of children and enable parents to have some choice of schools. Oxfordshire has a target of 10% spare places overall.

Table 3: spare school places across Oxfordshire, May 2016

Sector	Primary	Secondary
Total capacity	56946 places	46456 places
Total number on roll	50501 pupils	34595 pupils
Spare capacity	11%	26%

17. While the level of primary school spare places is just above the county's target, spare places are not evenly spread across areas and age groups. Across the areas used for planning school places, only the Sonning Common area has less than 5% spare primary school places overall. Across the county, the oldest primary cohorts are significantly smaller than the younger ones, reflecting the rising birth rate in recent years.

Chart 3: primary school cohort sizes in Oxfordshire, May 2016
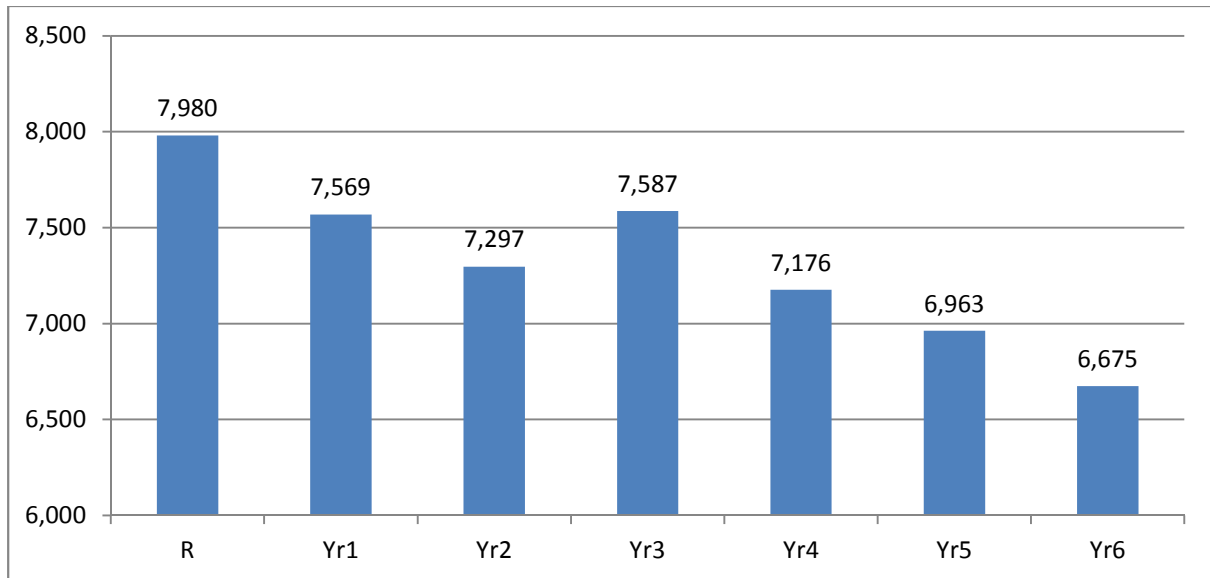
18. Although there are currently surplus secondary school places, this reflects the demographic dip in this age range. The higher birth rate is now starting to feed into secondary schools, and will reduce the level of spare places.

Table 4: forecasts secondary pupil numbers and spare places

Year	2016/17	2017/18	2018/19	2019/20	2020/21	2021/22	2022/23
Total secondary pupil forecast	36,787	37,826	39,035	40,553	41,797	43,040	44,554
Forecast spare places without capacity growth	21%	19%	16%	13%	10%	7%	4%

19. Without any increase in secondary school capacity, current forecasts indicate that Oxfordshire as a whole would not fall below 10% spare places until 2021. However, at the local level, spare places will be eroded more quickly in some areas; in addition, pupil growth will lead to a shortage of Year 7 places while there may still be sufficient capacity overall. Additional secondary school

capacity (either through school extension or new schools) will therefore be needed before 2020 in many areas: for example, the secondary schools in Cumnor, Faringdon and Wallingford already have less than 5% spare places overall, and these schools are planned for expansion over the next two years.

PUPIL PLACE PLANNING - ISSUES

<u>In-year and late applications</u>

20. As well as the annual applications/admissions rounds for primary school, secondary transfer, and transfer at 14-plus to UTCs and studio schools, there have been a growing number of applications outside the standard process. This includes late applications for primary and secondary school, and in-year applications – either children transferring from one school to another, or moving into Oxfordshire after starting school age.

21. In the period between 18 April and 16 September 2016, the following applications were received:

Table 5: In-year applications

Primary applications	Reception	Year 1	Year 2	Year 3	Year 4	Year 5	Year 6
	566	478	362	408	351	293	218
Secondary applications	Year 7	Year 8	Year 9	Year 10	Year 11		
	186	229	217	210	100		

22. In-year and late applications cause particular difficulties for place planning. In many cases, families might apply to their designated school, but find that the specific year group has filled up with children from outside the designated area.

23. Some areas are more affected than others. MoD personnel redeployments can lead to significant in-year applications, particularly around Carterton, Bicester, Abingdon and Didcot. The impact can also be felt more widely, for example with the relocation of personnel from RAF Lyneham to RAF Brize Norton, where, due to insufficient military accommodation being available in Carterton, families were dispersed over a wider area, causing pressure on school places in towns such as Faringdon and Watchfield.

24. Likewise, there are some other major employers whose activities might result in locally significant fluctuations in school population. Where the School Admissions team has been notified by employers of planned employee relocations, they have been able to provide advice on applying for school places.

<u>Academisation</u>

25. The academisation agenda has made less difference to the pupil place planning process than perhaps might have been foreseen.

- All academies in Oxfordshire are part of the coordinated admissions scheme, with allocations working in the same way as non-academy schools.
- Good working relationships with academy trusts have enabled joint planning of school capacity changes.
- The county council cannot require an academy to expand against its will; it does have the power to require controlled schools to expand, but the council has used these powers very rarely.
- Entitlement to free transport relates to the nearest available school, whether that school is an academy or not. In general, an increase in the number of schools within Oxfordshire as new free schools open would be expected to reduce the average travel distance to school, and reduce the need for school transport to be provided.

Births

26. Oxfordshire has experienced a significant increase in births over the last 10 years. Births registrations indicate that a particularly large cohort started primary school in September 2015, and numbers are now expected to subside, excluding migration and housing impacts.

Table 5: births registered 2009-2013

Year of birth	Sep09-Aug10	Sep10-Aug11	Sep11-Aug12	Sep12-Aug13
Due to start primary school (Reception)	2014	2015	2016	2017
Births registered in Oxfordshire	7107	7841	7456	7200

Housing growth

27. The county council uses a bespoke population calculation tool to estimate the pupil generation expected from housing developments, taking into account the type and size of new homes, and the speed of delivery. This is based on a 2008 survey of new housing, and work has been commissioned to update the survey. However, housing growth will always present challenges to pupil place planning:

- It is impossible to exactly predict what age of children will move into new homes, and while the estimate of total primary pupils may be accurate, if children are concentrated in a few year groups then school capacity for those ages can be exceeded.
- The build rate of houses can vary significantly from that indicated at the outset, resulting in pupils being generated much slower than expected, leaving schools with surplus places, or faster than predicted, outrunning the expansion of school capacity. This is particularly an issue with new schools, where the school may be opened too soon if housing delivery slows down.
- School capacity which is created ahead of housing growth will result in surplus places either at that school, or at surrounding schools, which is financially destabilising.

- School capacity which is created at very popular schools ahead of housing growth is likely to attract families from outside the catchment area, and fill up before families can move into the new homes.

28. In addition, Oxfordshire's component district councils are at different stages in their Local Plan processes, and precise housing plans are still to be confirmed in many areas. In some areas the Local Plan and housing supply situation is resulting in significant housing growth on smaller sites which cumulatively will have implications for schools provision across the County.
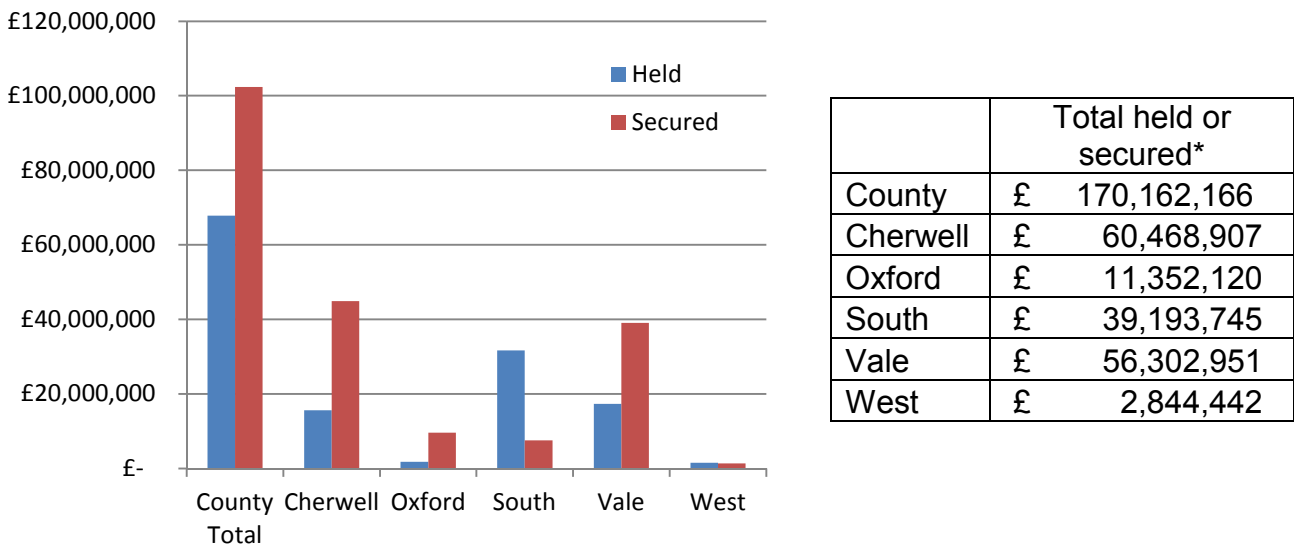
Cross-border movement

29. Patterns of parental preference can lead to both Oxfordshire pupils attending non-Oxfordshire schools, and non-Oxfordshire pupils attending Oxfordshire schools. In some cases the designated school for a settlement is in a different county – for example, some Buckinghamshire villages feed to Lord Williams's School in Thame.

30. At primary level, imports and exports of pupils broadly balance. 714 non-Oxfordshire resident children attend Oxfordshire primary schools and 646 Oxfordshire resident children attend schools in other local authorities. Most outward flow of primary pupils is to Northamptonshire; most inward flow of primary pupils is from Reading.

31. At secondary level, Oxfordshire is a net importer to the extent of 1.9% of the school population. 1514 non-Oxfordshire resident children attend Oxfordshire primary schools and 935 Oxfordshire resident children attend schools in other local authorities. Most outward flow of secondary pupils is to Gloucestershire, Northamptonshire and Warwickshire; most inward flow of primary pupils is from Buckinghamshire and Reading.

32. These flows complicate pupil forecasting, as factors outside the county will have an influence. Contact is maintained with school planning colleagues in surrounding authorities to ensure a flow of information.

Funding

33. Government funding for school places is mainly through annual "Basic Need" allocations, which is allocated on the basis of a comparison of forecast pupil numbers with school capacity in each planning area, with shortfalls in capacity attracting funding. Adjustments are made to account for school places for which central government funding has already been provided, including through free schools, or which will be funded from developer contributions.

34. In recent years the government has moved to a rolling 3-year allocation of funding which has helped provide more certainty for planning, but each annual allocation can be difficult to predict. For the 3-year period 2016/17–2018/19, Oxfordshire has been allocated £21,002,166 in Basic Need funding.

35. Significant additional funding for school buildings is also secured through developer funding. New residential developments are expected to contribute towards increasing school capacity where this is required as a direct consequence of housing growth. This may be through direct delivery of new schools, or through financial Section 106 (S106) contributions or Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL).

Chart 4: developer funding held or secured* towards education provision

	Total held or secured*
County	£ 170,162,166
Cherwell	£ 60,468,907
Oxford	£ 11,352,120
South	£ 39,193,745
Vale	£ 56,302,951
West	£ 2,844,442

*Secured means contributions in signed Section 106 Agreements which have yet to be received. The contributions might not be received if the development does not reach the required trigger. Further funding will be at different stages of being negotiated, but not yet secured in a signed Section 106 Agreement.

36. Changes in the regulations governing developer contributions have made it more challenging to secure sufficient funding for school places. There is still uncertainty over how much funding will be available for school infrastructure from CIL.

37. In addition to capital funding, the county council is required to maintain a revenue growth fund, which provides additional revenue funding to support expanding school until the higher pupil numbers feed into the school's annual budget, and start-up grants for new schools. This is top-sliced from the Direct Schools Grant by agreement with Schools Forum, and therefore reduces the funding which can be paid out to all schools.

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December 2016

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EDUCATION SCRUTINY COMMITTEE - FORWARD PLAN

	Contact Officer	Notes
Education Scrutiny Committee – 12 December 2016		
Secondary school performance (including vulnerable groups)	Christine Malone, Strategic Lead for Education Quality	
Elective Home Education Annual Report	TBC	
Effectiveness of the pupil place planning process	Roy Leach, Strategic Lead for Education Sufficiency and Access	
Recruitment and Retention of New Qualified Teachers	Christine Malone, Strategic Lead for Education Quality	Report by Oxford University and Oxford Brookes
Education Scrutiny Committee – 13 March 2017		
Academies in Oxfordshire Annual Report	Allyson Milward, Academies Manager	
Scrutiny Annual Report	Corporate Services	
Exclusions of LAC – Dicot Girls' School	Janet Johnson, Strategic Lead for Vulnerable Learners	
Discussion with the Ofsted Regional Director	Jackie Atkins/ Laurence Bunch, Corporate Services	
Education Attainment	Christine Malone	As agreed at Sept 2016 meeting
Discussion with the Chief Executive of the Education Funding Agency	Jackie Atkins/ Laurence Bunch, Corporate Services	TBC

Last updated: 24/11/2016

Education Scrutiny Committee – 24 May 2017		
Education Scrutiny Committee – 19 July 2017		
Attendance & Exclusions		
Ofsted profile of Oxfordshire schools & settings		
Education Scrutiny Committee – 27 September 2017		
School performance (provisional results)		
Education Scrutiny Committee – 13 December 2017		
Elective Home Education Annual Report		
Secondary school performance (including vulnerable groups)		
Education Scrutiny Committee – 14 March 2018		
Scrutiny Annual Report		
Academies in Oxfordshire Annual Report		

Last updated: 24/11/2016

Further items for consideration:

- FE Maths and English issues (*FE colleges struggling with the consequences of meeting a rule obliging providers to ensure 16 to 19-year-old FE learners without at least C grade GCSE maths and English continued to study the subjects or miss out on funding*) – suggestion to invite FE sector representatives for discussion with the Committee
- Financial viability of providers of childcare provision for early years
- Young People Not in Education, Employment or Training (NEETs) Annual Report
- Virtual School Annual Report
- Provision of School Places in Areas of Growth
- Use of Pupil Premium
- Multi Academy Trusts (Governance and Financial Measures)
- Progress and achievement of sponsored academies
- Early Years (Nurseries)

Last updated: 24/11/2016

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