

2022



**Teacher Labour
Market in Wales**

Annual Report 2022

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Contents

Introduction	3
Key findings	4
Recruitment to initial teacher education	6
Trends in teacher retention	8
Teacher supply and demand	10
Teacher labour market health	11
Focus on: teacher role and experience	12
Focus on: shortage subjects	13
Focus on: Welsh-medium schools	15
Focus on: schools in disadvantaged areas	16
References, data sources and methodology	18



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Introduction

The recruitment, development and retention of teachers and school leaders is a crucial underpinning for a successful education system. Ensuring there are sufficient numbers of high-quality teachers employed in schools is necessary for the school system to deliver a high-quality education for all children and young people, particularly as the Curriculum for Wales is rolled out nationally in 2022.

NFER's Teacher Labour Market in Wales report aims to analyse the state of the Welsh teacher labour market by measuring the key indicators and trends of teacher recruitment and retention. This is the second report funded by the Nuffield Foundation, tracking changes over time, building on the trends analysed in the 2020 report. There was no report in 2021, due to the lack of timely data reflecting the impact of the pandemic on the Welsh teacher labour market at the time.

In this report we analyse Welsh Government school census data on teacher recruitment and retention and UCAS data on teacher training applications to assess the current state of the teacher labour market, and track the progress towards addressing teacher supply issues.

Our analysis shows that while the Welsh school system was facing a growing challenge of ensuring there are sufficient numbers of teachers before the pandemic, this has been eased somewhat in the short term. However, there continues to be evidence of particular recruitment and retention challenges in some areas, including: shortage subjects (such as Welsh, maths, science and modern foreign languages), Welsh-medium schools and schools in areas with high levels of disadvantage. These challenges are likely to intensify again as the wider labour market recovers from the pandemic and affects the relative attractiveness of teaching as a profession.



The pandemic-related increase in teacher recruitment and retention in Wales is likely to ease teacher supply challenges over the next two years. However, the emerging evidence from England suggests that the environment for recruiting and retaining teachers after that may be significantly more challenging. Action by the Welsh Government to address these trends should focus on improving the attractiveness of teaching to enter and stay in, targeting action at the subjects and areas that most need support.

Jack Worth, NFER
School Workforce Lead



 **Key
findings**

The Covid-19 recession has led to an increase in the number of applicants to initial teacher education (ITE) courses in Wales

Uncertainty in the wider labour market led to increased interest in entering teaching in Wales, which continued throughout the pandemic when other industries reduced recruitment. The number of ITE applications with accepted offers increased by more than 30 per cent for primary courses and over 60 per cent for secondary courses between 2019/20 and 2020/21. The surge in applications slowed in 2021/22 but still remained at higher levels than in 2019/20. This is likely to have led to increased enrolments in ITE and eventually to a higher supply of new teachers in the Welsh teaching workforce in 2021/22 and 2022/23. This increase would mean that recruitment allocations for primary ITE postgraduate courses are likely to be met over the next two years, while at secondary, a narrowing of the gap between intake and target allocations can be expected.

Fewer teachers left teaching in 2020 as a result of uncertainty caused by the pandemic

Lower teacher leaving rates together with a projected fall in the number of primary school pupils suggest that overall teacher supply in the primary school sector is likely to improve in the near future. The number of secondary school pupils is projected to increase, but the growth in teacher supply over the last two years has matched the pace of pupil number growth. These trends suggest that the gaps between secondary teacher supply and demand in Wales observed in previous years are unlikely to open further. Other indicators of labour market health, such as the proportion of vacancies that are unfilled and the average number of applications per vacancy, also point to an improvement in supply over at least the next two years.

However, despite this improved recruitment picture, recruitment of trainees to initial teacher education in shortage subjects such as maths, sciences, and Welsh remained below the target allocations in 2019/20 and are likely to remain below the allocations in 2020/21 and 2021/22. Government action will be needed to ensure that positive teacher supply and retention trends continue after the economy recovers from the effects of the pandemic.

Teachers at the beginning of their teaching career are more likely to leave teaching

Using new data from the Welsh Government's School Workforce Annual Census, we find that less experienced teachers have higher leaving rates than their more experienced counterparts. This highlights the importance of policies targeted towards retaining newly qualified and early-career teachers. This was echoed in a recent Government review that called for a strengthening of the induction process to better support early-career teachers.

Schools in disadvantaged areas face higher teaching leaving rates compared to schools in affluent areas

Disparities in leaving rates between schools in disadvantaged areas and schools in more affluent areas continued to persist in 2020/21. However, other indicators of teacher labour market health, such as the proportion of unfilled vacancies, suggest the more acute recruitment challenges that disadvantaged schools previously faced particularly have eased somewhat in 2020, likely due to the impact of the pandemic on higher teacher retention.

Recruitment to initial teacher education

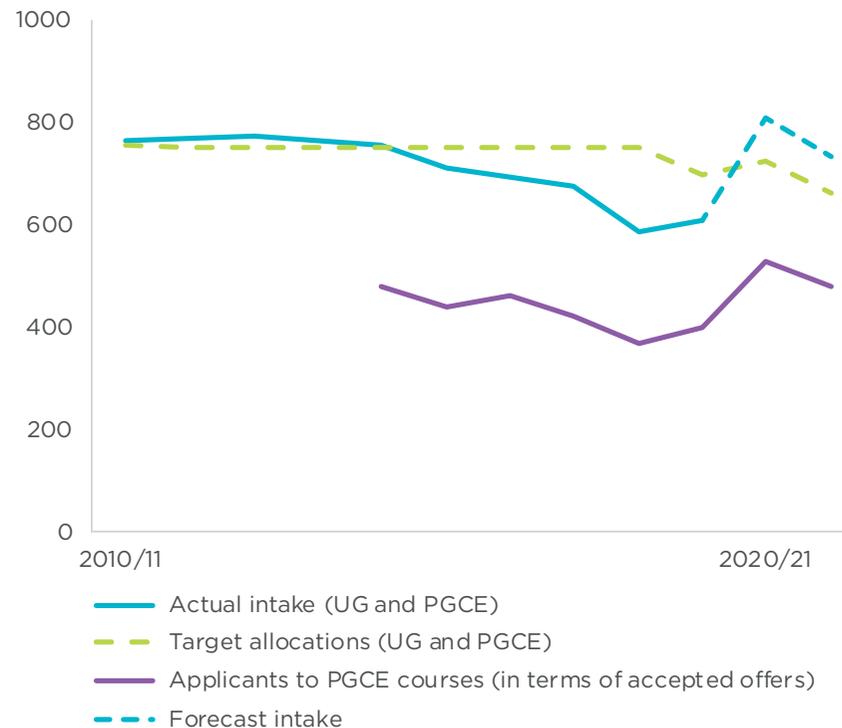
Changes in conditions in the wider labour market caused by the Covid-19 pandemic have driven up teacher recruitment in Wales. Although overall enrolments in primary and secondary ITE remained below the target allocation numbers in 2019/20, an increase in the number of applications to ITE courses over the last two years may close the gap between the intake and target allocations in the future.

Our analysis of postgraduate ITE applications data from the Universities and Colleges Admissions Service (UCAS) shows that the overall number of ITE applicants in Wales was 26 per cent higher in the 2020 application cycle compared to the 2019 cycle. This was likely to have been a result of the economic recession and labour market uncertainty caused by the pandemic. Research on the impact of economic cycle on teachers' career decisions has found that 'teaching is seen as offering secure employment during a time of rising unemployment' (Hutchings, 2011).

The number of applicants with accepted offers for primary ITE courses in Wales increased by over 30 per cent between the 2019 and 2020 application cycles. The number of trainees enrolled in primary ITE in 2019/20 (a cohort who applied to ITE before the pandemic) increased in line with the higher number of applications, albeit remaining 12 per cent below the overall target allocation.

ITE intake data for 2020/21 was not available at the time this report was written, but the applications data provides a good indication that the number of trainees enrolling in ITE courses is likely to increase in line with the increase in applications. UCAS applications data does not include applications to undergraduate ITE courses, which explains the gap between enrolments (blue line) and accepted applicants (purple line). To illustrate the likely intake, we apply the increase in accepted offers from the application data to the previous intake data. It implies that it is likely that intake numbers may exceed the overall target allocation in the next two years.

Entrants and target allocations for primary school ITE courses in Wales



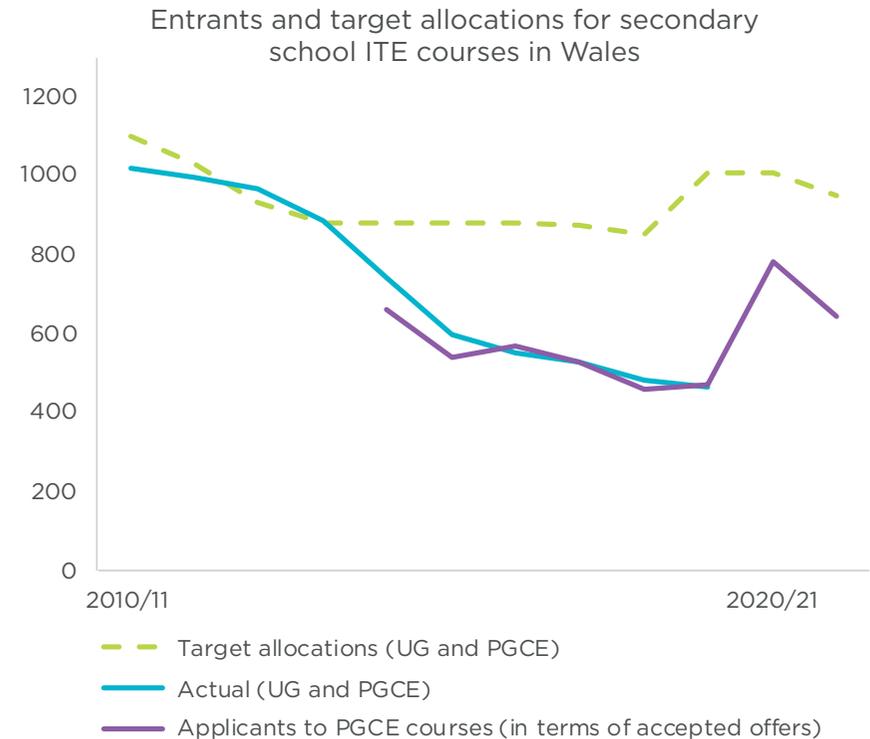
Sources: Higher Education Statistics Agency, Wales; Higher Education Funding Council for Wales; Education Workforce Council; UCAS.

Recruitment to initial teacher education – secondary

For secondary ITE courses, the number of postgraduate applicants with accepted offers increased by nearly two-thirds between 2019/20 and 2020/21. The number of trainees enrolling in secondary school ITE has been below the overall target allocation since 2013/14 and continued to fall until 2019/20. However, the surge in applications for ITE in 2020/21 and 2021/22 is likely to translate into an increase in ITE intake in the following years and serve to bridge some of the gap between the ITE recruitment allocations and actual entries.

Before the Covid-19 pandemic, Wales's school system was consistently facing under-recruitment in ITE compared to the overall target allocations, with a more acute challenge in the secondary school sector. Recent trends are a welcome sign that supply issues may have eased somewhat during the pandemic.

However, it is important to recognise that these positive trends may be short-lived. Applications data in the 2021 cycle show a reversal of the previous years' uptick in applications to ITE, a sign that the effects of the pandemic have dampened over time as the economy has recovered. Data from England from the 2022 cycle (none from this cycle has been published by UCAS for Wales) suggests that the level of interest in teaching has returned to pre-pandemic levels (Worth and Faulkner-Ellis, 2022). Sustained government action will be needed to ensure that teaching remains an attractive profession for potential trainees in the future.



Sources: Higher Education Statistics Agency; Higher Education Funding Council for Wales; Education Workforce Council; UCAS.

Trends in teacher retention using school-reported data

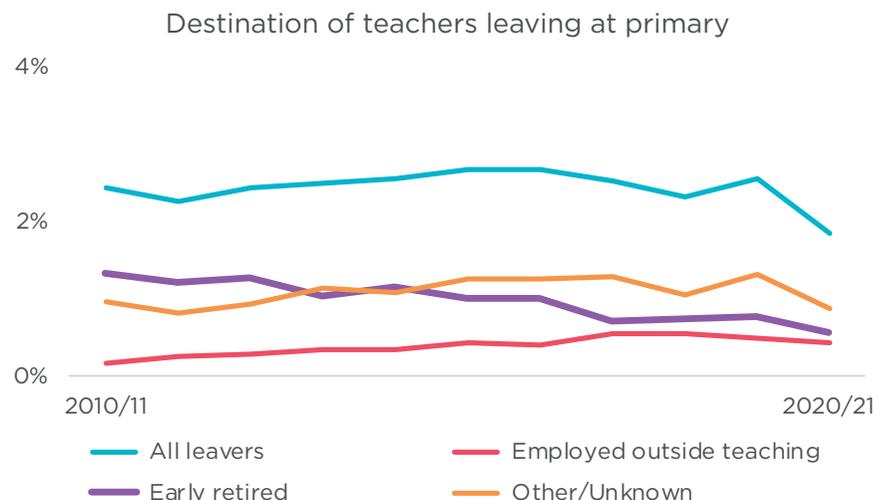
The rate of teachers leaving teaching fell in 2020/21 in both the primary and secondary school sectors in Wales.

The Covid-19 pandemic caused widespread uncertainty in the wider economy and the labour market. These recent shocks have precipitated a reduction in the number of teachers leaving the sector in the last two years. A similar trend has been observed in England (Worth and Faulkner-Ellis, 2021). This is likely due to a combination of practical factors (e.g. teachers not wanting to leave their school understaffed during a lockdown) and economic reasons (i.e. fewer teachers leaving due to poorer job prospects outside of teaching).

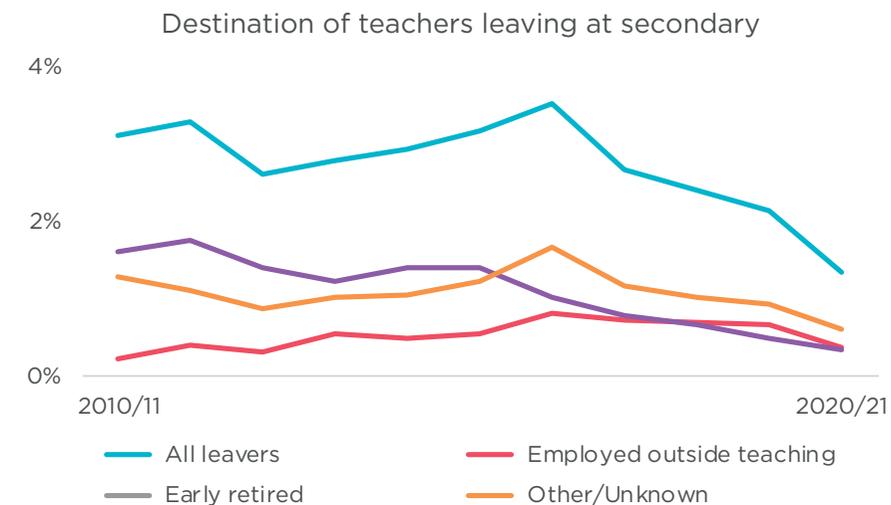
Estimates based on school-reported PLASC data show that the rate of primary teachers leaving teaching went up from 2.3 per cent in 2018/19 to 2.5 per cent in 2019/20. Between 2019/20 and 2020/21 the primary teacher leaving rate fell substantially to 1.8 per cent. The secondary school leaving rate continued its previous downward trend, falling from 2.4 per cent in 2018/19 to 1.3 per cent in 2020/21.

While the above estimates suggest teacher retention has improved in the short-term, the increase is likely to have been a result of the pandemic, and these improvements in retention may be temporary. As Covid-19 restrictions have been relaxed and the wider labour market has recovered strongly, teacher supply trends may revert to pre-pandemic trends soon.

The proportion of leavers that retire early has declined from over 50 per cent of leavers in 2011/12 to 30 per cent in 2020/21 (the PLASC data does not include normal-age retirements). The proportion of leavers moving to jobs outside of teaching in the state sector has increased from 12 per cent to 29 per cent over the same period. However, the destination after leaving for substantial proportions of leavers was recorded by their school as either 'other' or 'unknown', which makes the interpretation of the trends in destinations for leavers somewhat ambiguous and difficult to draw firm conclusions about.



Sources: Pupil Level Annual School Census in Wales



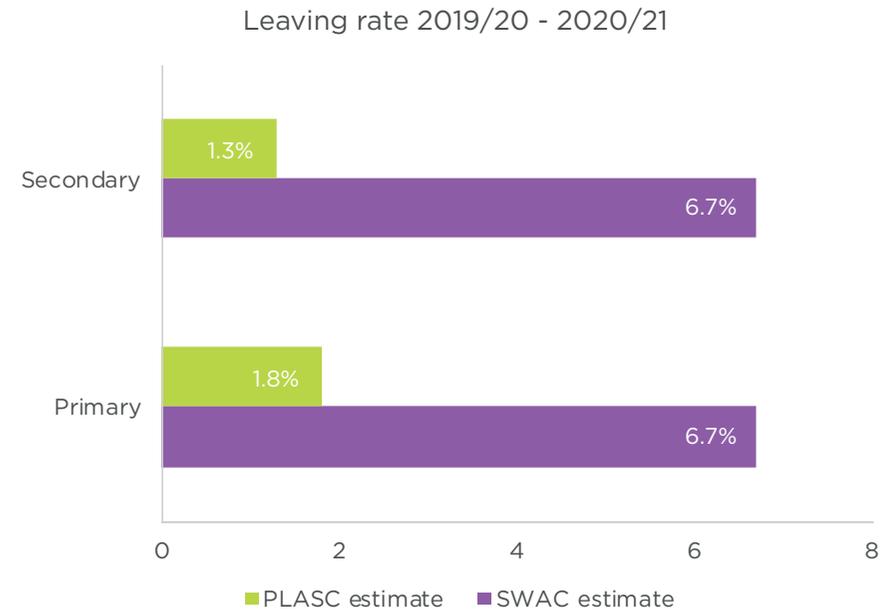
Sources: Pupil Level Annual School Census in Wales

Teacher retention measured using teacher-level census data

In November 2019 and 2020, the Welsh Government collected the first two School Workforce Annual Censuses (SWAC). Similar to England's School Workforce Census, the SWAC dataset is a teacher-level census including data on teachers' contracts, pay, qualifications and subjects taught. This new dataset enables teacher retention to be measured in a different way to the school-reported data in PLASC. We use the identification of the same individuals in the two censuses to measure the proportion of teachers who were employed in a state-funded school in 2019 and who were no longer employed in state-sector teaching in 2020. A limitation of this measure is that it may include teachers who are still teaching, but in England or Scotland, the private sector or another sector not covered by the SWAC data collection, such as further education.

SWAC data provides a more accurate measure of the overall teacher retention rate, particularly as it is less susceptible to reporting errors in indicators of retention. Also, the number of leavers in the school-reported PLASC data does not include teachers that retire at normal retirement age, so undercounts the number of all leavers by design. However, a limitation of SWAC data is that as it is a new dataset, we are unable to use it to analyse trends in retention from before 2019. For this reason we focus on the PLASC data to identify the impact of Covid-19 and associated recession on teacher retention rates.

The rate of teachers leaving state-funded teaching between 2019/20 and 2020/21, as measured by SWAC, was 6.7 percent for both primary and secondary schools. This estimate is considerably higher than the PLASC estimate for the same year due to the differences in the way the data is collected and the measure is calculated described above.



Sources: Pupil Level Annual School Census in Wales 2020; School Workforce Annual Census Wales 2020

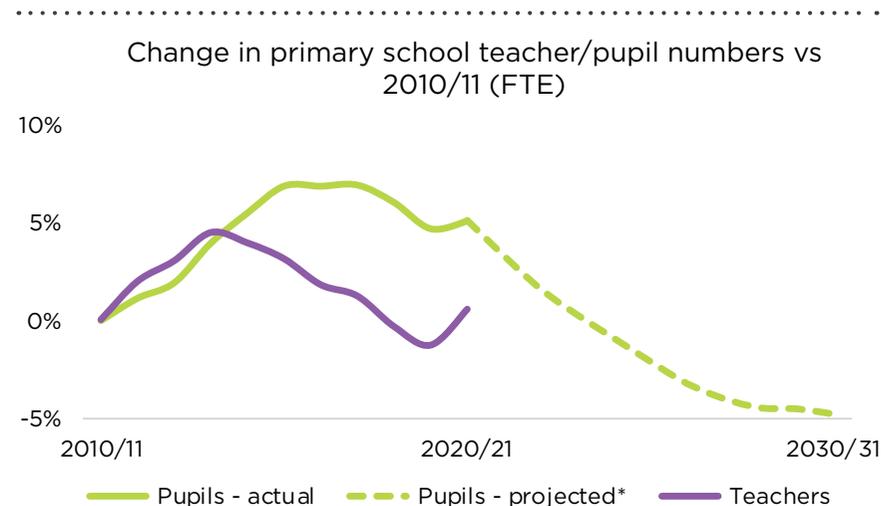
Teacher supply and demand

With primary pupil numbers in Wales projected to fall in the future, the teacher supply situation seems likely to improve if the current positive trends in teacher supply and retention continue. However, the short-lived nature of the pandemic’s impact on recruitment and retention may mean the trends in supply do not continue.

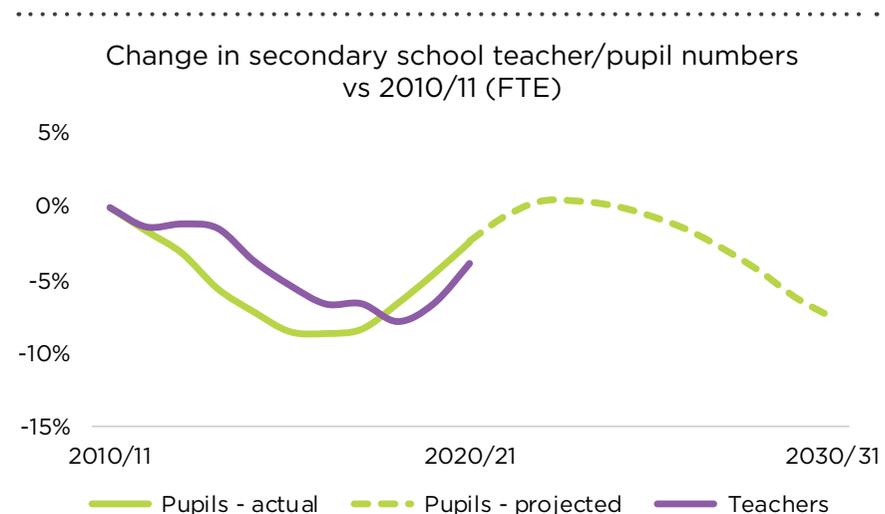
Fewer teachers leaving teaching in 2020/21 compared to previous years because of the pandemic led to an increase in the number of teachers employed in Wales in 2020/21. At the same time, the pandemic has precipitated a surge in the number of applications to postgraduate ITE courses in 2020 and 2021, which is likely to lead to an increase in available teacher supply over the next two years as increased enrolments translate into more teachers entering the labour market.

The key driver for the number of teachers required in the system is pupil numbers. The number of primary school pupils in Wales remained constant between 2019/20 and 2020/21, but is projected to fall in the coming decade. If growth in teacher supply continues at the current rate, as it may do in the short term due to the increase in ITE applications, pupil-teacher ratios at primary are set to improve.

The number of secondary school pupils has increased since 2017/18, and is projected to continue to increase until 2024/25. Despite an increase in pupil numbers in secondary schools, pupil-teacher ratios have remained stable since 2018/19 as teacher supply has grown at the same rate as the increase in pupil numbers. Current trends in teacher supply would need to continue to ensure stable secondary pupil-teacher ratios in light of the expected increase in secondary school pupils in the near future. The increase in ITE enrolments due to the pandemic means this may be possible, at least in the short term.



Sources: Pupil Level Annual School Census in Wales; Note: *Pupil projections are from StatsWales, Welsh Government: 2020



Sources: Pupil Level Annual School Census in Wales; Note: *Pupil projections are from StatsWales, Welsh Government: 2020

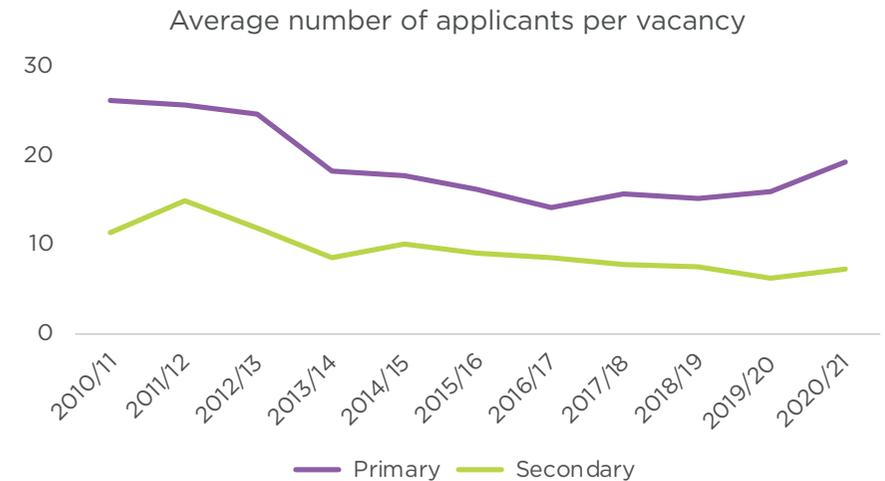
Teacher labour market health

The trends in teacher retention in Wales suggest that the pandemic led to an easing of teacher supply, particularly at secondary level. Other PLASC data measuring the health of the teacher labour market experienced by schools, such as the number of applicants per teacher vacancy, supports the view that the supply of teachers was high in 2020/21.

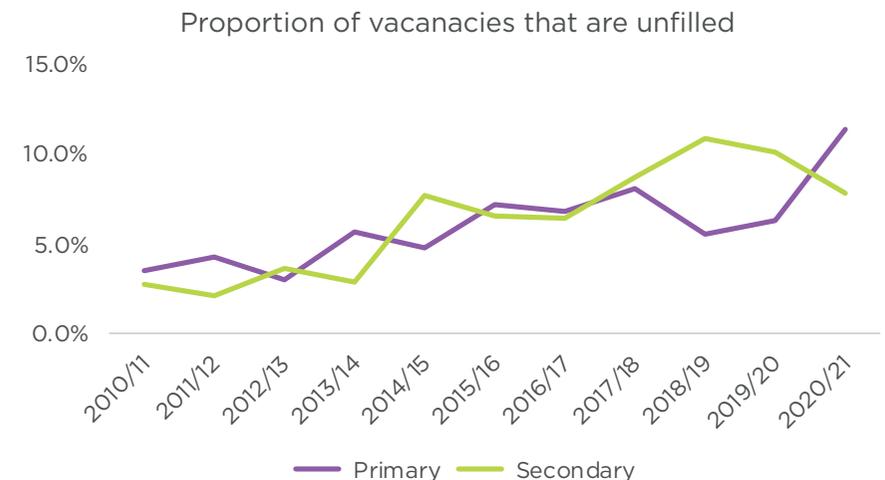
The teacher vacancy rate (vacancies during the year as a proportion of all teaching staff) has fallen since 2018/19 in both primary and secondary sectors, a reversal of its previously upward trend. The vacancy rate at primary decreased from 5.6 percent in 2018/19 to 3.3 percent in 2020/21, while the secondary school vacancy rate fell at a smaller rate from 6.5 percent to 6 percent. These trends reflect the overall reduction in the number of teachers leaving the sector as well as a likely decrease in mobility of teachers between schools driven by the pandemic. Relatedly, the average number of applicants per vacancy has increased since 2018/19 for both sectors, with a relatively higher increase at primary.

However, the proportion of unfilled vacancies has increased at primary, contrary to what we might expect given that other indicators point to an increase in teacher supply. This may reflect schools receiving higher numbers of applicants, but these not all being suitable candidates, thus lowering the chance of the application translating into an appointment. The ITE experience, especially school-based placements, of the cohort of new teachers entering teaching in 2020/21 was disrupted by the pandemic. Moreover, the increase in the number of people entering teaching (marked by the increase in ITE intake) is only likely to translate into increased appointments in the next few years.

In secondary schools, the proportion of unfilled vacancies has fallen since 2018/19, in line with the higher average number of applications per vacancy. These trends suggest that the recruitment challenges faced by schools have eased somewhat over the last two years to some degree, particularly at secondary. The increased number of ITE enrolments may lead to further improvements in these indicators in the coming years.



Sources: Pupil Level Annual School Census in Wales



Sources: Pupil Level Annual School Census in Wales

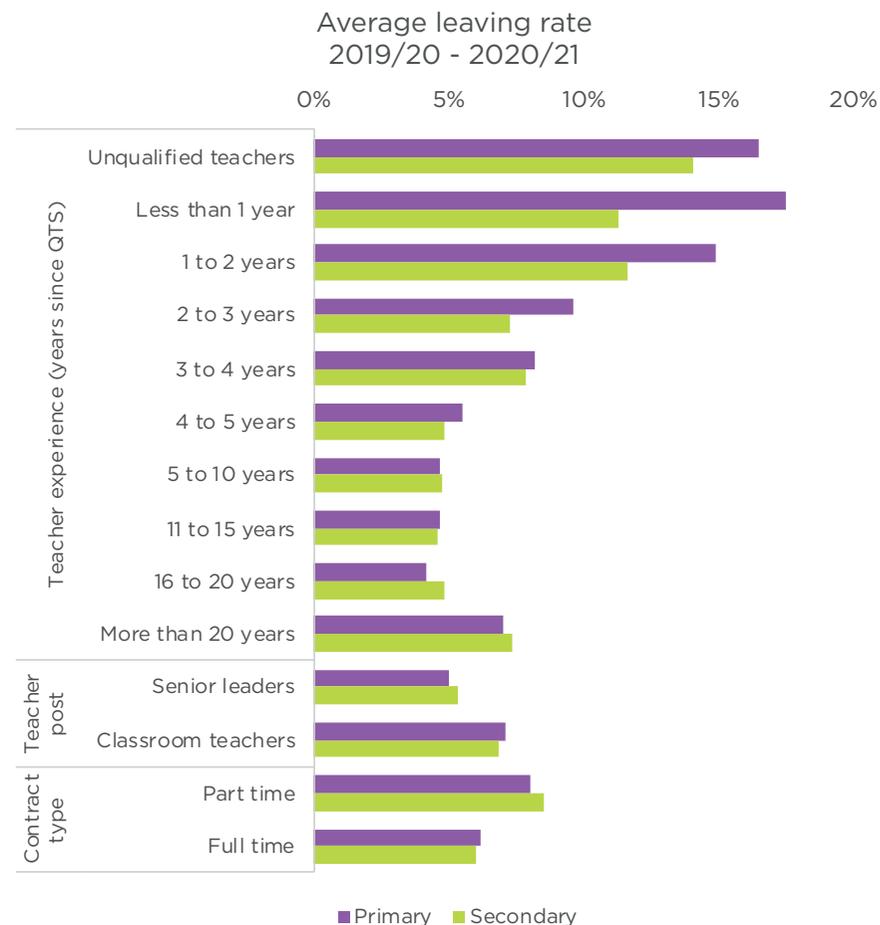
Focus on: teacher role and experience

Full-time teachers, teachers with more years of experience, and senior leaders are less likely to leave teaching than their counterparts

SWAC data, which is disaggregated at the individual teacher level, allows us to gain insights into the types of teacher, in terms of experience, role and other characteristics, that are more or less likely to leave teaching in Wales.

The rate at which teachers leave varies substantially with years of experience, measured as years since the teacher achieved QTS. The longer teachers spend in the profession and the more senior their position is, the less likely they are to leave. The leaving rate is highest among unqualified teachers and teachers within the first two years of entering teaching, and falls with rising experience. The proportion of leavers increases slightly among teachers that have more than 20 years of experience, most likely due to teachers retiring. This general pattern holds true for both primary and secondary teachers, although the differences across years of experience is more marked in the former.

The leaving rate among teachers that hold senior leadership positions are lower compared to classroom teachers. Leaving rates are also lower among teachers on full-time contracts compared to part time teachers. These findings point to the importance of retaining newly qualified and early-career teachers. This was highlighted in a recent Welsh Government review of the process of induction of teachers into the profession (Waters, 2020). The review calls for a strengthening of the induction process in order to better support early-career teachers.



Sources: School Workforce Annual Census Wales 2020

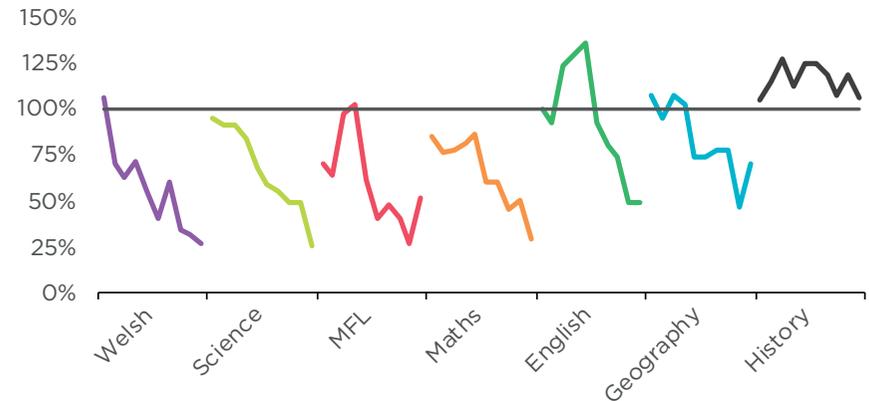
Focus on: shortage subjects

Recruitment of ITE trainees to shortage subjects such as maths, science, and Welsh remained below the target allocations in 2019/20. However, other indicators of recruitment and supply point to an easing of shortages across all subjects driven by the pandemic.

Until 2019/20, recruitment of trainees to ITE was below the overall target allocations for a number of subjects, and had fallen further for shortage subjects such as maths, science and Welsh to meet less than half of the recruitment targets. Recruitment to modern foreign languages (MFL) and geography ITE courses increased in 2019/20 but continued to remain substantially below target. Enrolment data for the years after 2019/20 was not available at the time this report was written, but we would expect to see some of the under-recruitment close in 2020/21 across subjects as the pandemic-related surge in applications to ITE translates into increased intake.

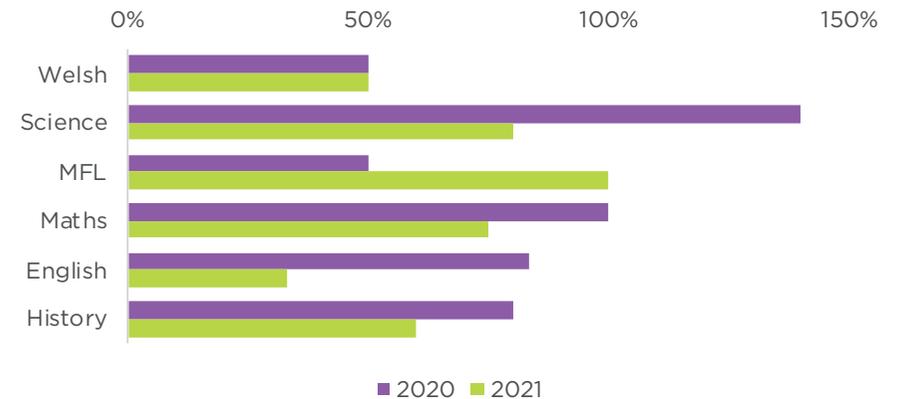
The number of applicants to postgraduate ITE courses with accepted offers increased across nearly all subjects (and at least doubled for science and maths) between the 2019 and 2020 application cycles. In 2021, as the labour market recovered from the shock of the pandemic, the number of applications tapered off across most subjects but remained at a higher level than in 2019. The exception was MFL, typically a shortage subject, where applications continued on an upward trend.

Secondary school ITE entries vs target allocations, by subject 2010/11 - 2019/20



Sources: Higher Education Statistics Agency; Higher Education Funding Council for Wales; Education Workforce Council

Change in number of applications with accepted offers, compared to 2019 (%)

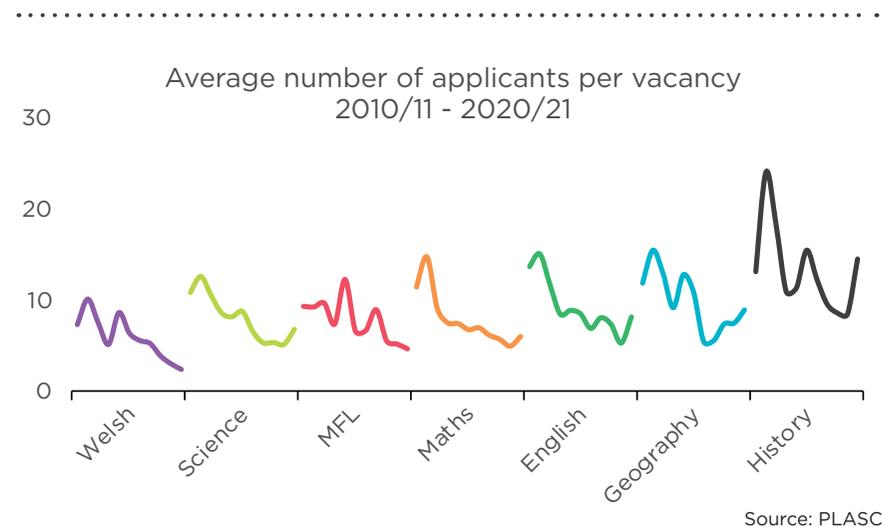
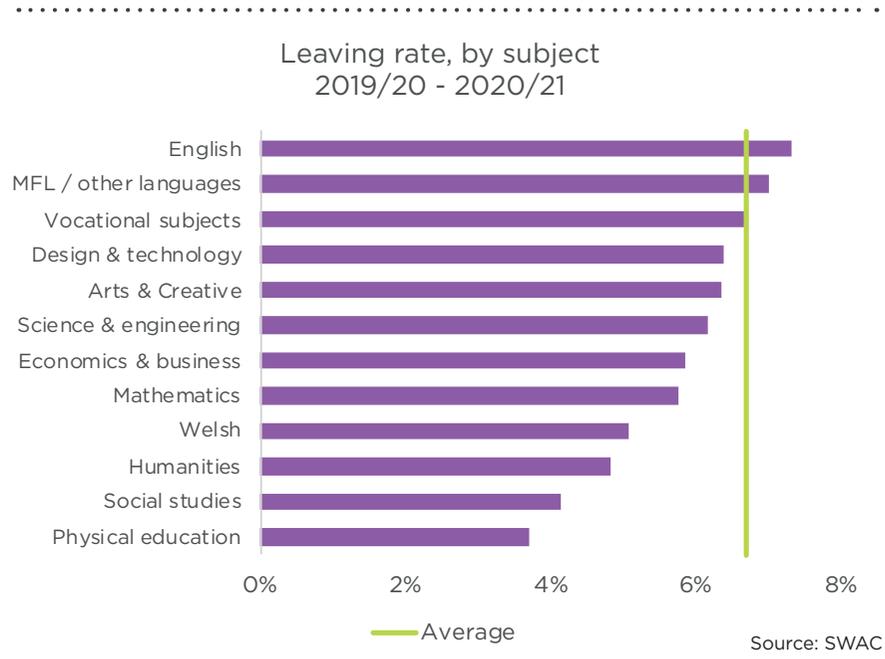


Source: UCAS

SWAC data also enables analysis of leaving rate by subject, where PLASC data did not previously provide all the relevant information to calculate these. Teacher leaving rates between 2019/20 and 2020/21 were higher than average in subjects such as English, MFL and science. It is somewhat surprising, in light of findings from England, that in Wales - at least in 2020/21 - the leaving rate for maths teachers was slightly below the overall secondary average (DfE, 2017). The lowest leaving rates were among physical education, social studies and humanities teachers, which is similar to patterns seen in England.

The number of applications per vacancy fell from 2015/16 until 2019/20 across all subjects. However in 2020/21, a number of subjects including science, maths and English saw an increase in the number of applicants per vacancy. In contrast, the number of applications to vacancies for Welsh and MFL continued to fall in 2020/21.

The proportion of Welsh and science vacancies that were unfilled increased between 2018/19 and 2019/20, but have decreased since then. The proportion of unfilled vacancies has gone down across all subjects except geography in 2020/21, reflecting the easing of teacher supply induced by the pandemic, particularly in shortage subjects like science and maths. This is, however, likely to be short-lived as evidenced by the dampening of increases in ITE applications in 2021 compared to 2020 as the labour market recovered from the effects of the pandemic.



Focus on: Welsh-medium schools

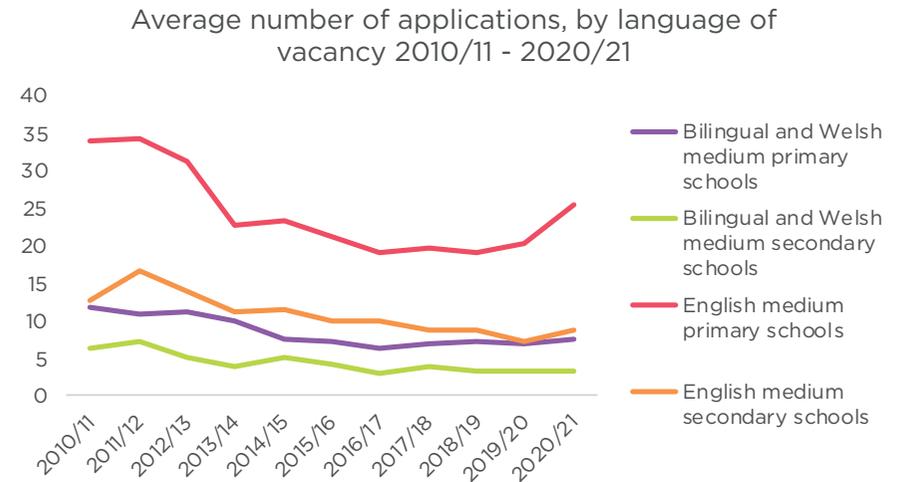
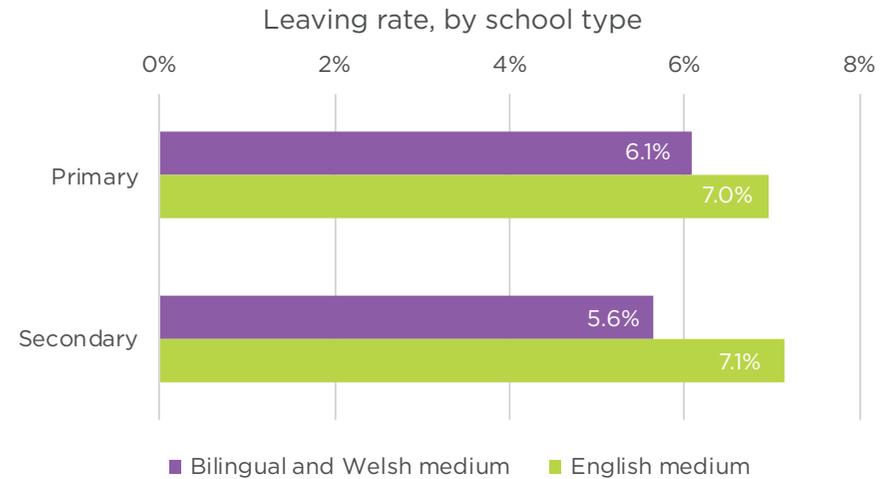
Teacher labour market indicators in previous years suggested that there were greater teacher supply challenges for bilingual and Welsh-medium schools. However, trends over the last two years indicate that this may be changing.

The proportion of teachers that left teaching between 2019/20 and 2020/21 (estimated based on SWAC data) is lower in bilingual and Welsh-medium schools compared to English-medium schools, in both the primary and secondary sectors. In primary schools, the vacancy rate remains higher in bilingual and Welsh-medium schools, but the difference between the two has reduced between 2018/19 and 2020/21. There is no difference in vacancy rate observed between schools of different language types at secondary.

While these findings indicate that the challenges bilingual and Welsh-medium schools were previously facing have been eased to an extent, other measures suggest that some challenges in recruiting teachers to teach in Welsh persist. However, the average number of applicants per vacancy has consistently been higher in English-medium schools in both the primary and secondary sectors.

Moreover, vacancies that require teaching in Welsh continue to receive fewer applications on average than those that do not require teaching in Welsh. Between 2019/20 and 2020/21, vacancies that required teaching in Welsh on average received five applications per vacancy, while the latter received 13. Some of this could be due to the location of bilingual and Welsh-medium schools in more rural areas where recruitment tends to be more challenging.

Overall trends suggest that continued Government action to increase the number of teachers trained to teach through the medium of Welsh may help further alleviating recruitment challenges in the years ahead.



Focus on: schools in disadvantaged areas

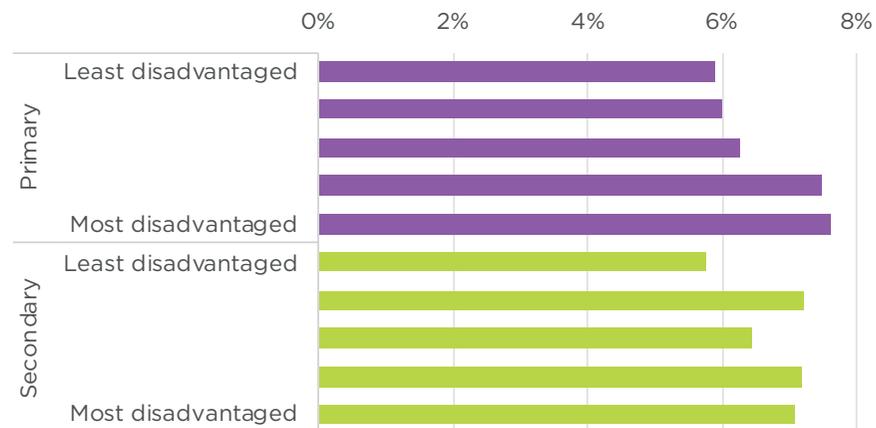
Teachers in schools serving more disadvantaged communities are more likely to leave teaching compared to schools in more affluent areas. However, recruitment challenges in disadvantaged schools seem to be improving.

The leaving rate of primary teachers increases with the level of school disadvantage, categorised based on the proportion of pupils who are eligible for free school meals (FSM). At secondary, differences are less marked, but the leaving rate in the most disadvantaged fifth of schools is one percentage point higher than those in the least disadvantaged fifth of schools. This highlights that despite the overall positive impact that labour market conditions have had on teacher retention, disparities between disadvantaged and non-disadvantaged areas persist.

In contrast, recent trends in recruitment indicators suggest that the disproportionate challenge that is typically faced by disadvantaged schools has been eased in primary schools to an extent. In primary schools, the proportion of unfilled vacancies was higher in disadvantaged schools until 2018/19. Since then, the trend seems to have reversed with a lower proportion of unfilled vacancies on average in relatively more disadvantaged schools.

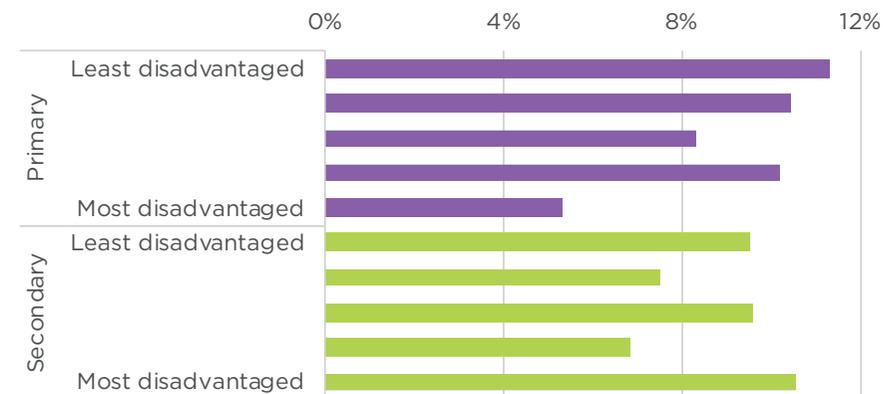
At secondary, in 2019/20 and 2020/21 there are no clear differences in the proportion of unfilled vacancies between disadvantaged and advantaged schools. This suggests that secondary schools in disadvantaged areas may have found staffing relatively less challenging more recently, perhaps due to the more benign environment for retaining teachers during the pandemic.

Average teacher leaving rate 2019/20 - 2020/21



Sources: SWAC (leaving rate); Pupil Level Annual School Census in Wales (FSM)

Average proportion of vacancies that are unfilled 2019/20 - 2020/21



Source: Pupil Level Annual School Census in Wales



Conclusions

The increase in teacher recruitment and retention in Wales, as a result of the pandemic and related recession, is likely to ease teacher supply challenges over the next two years. However, the emerging evidence from England in 2022 (Worth and Faulkner-Ellis, 2022) suggests that these trends are unlikely to persist into 2022, implying that the environment for recruiting and retaining teachers after 2022 may be significantly more challenging. This in turn is likely to have implications for the staffing plans for schools in Wales over the next few years.

Action by the Welsh Government to address these trends should focus on improving the attractiveness of teaching to enter and stay in, focusing on both the financial and non-financial attractiveness and targeting action at the subjects and areas that most need support.

In this context, the Welsh Government's priority subject incentive scheme appears well targeted at subjects with persistent recruitment challenges, and has increased in generosity for trainees with 2:1 and 2:2 degrees. However, the £15,000 incentive value for the most targeted subjects is lower than in England – where there is a considerable on-going challenge – and may be insufficient to attract the trainees numbers required.

The 2022/23 pay award for teachers in Wales will also need to recognise and address the increased recruitment and retention challenge. If the pay increase for teachers is less than the anticipated 5.3 per cent increase in pay in the rest of the economy (OBR, 2022), then recruitment and retention may be weakened by teacher pay losing relative competitiveness.

Addressing the non-financial attractiveness of teaching should also be a priority for Welsh Government, the Education Workforce Council (EWC) and other stakeholders in Wales. The 2021 national education workforce survey highlighted the continued challenge of unmanageable workload for school teachers and school leaders (EWC, 2021). Indeed, the survey suggested that school teachers were working more hours in 2021 than they were in 2016. Progress with reducing teacher workload would likely help to improve teacher retention. Reducing teacher workload and supporting teacher well-being should therefore remain a high priority for the Welsh Government and other stakeholders.

The Welsh Government's commitment to a ten-year plan for increasing the number of Welsh-speaking teachers is welcome in the context of the particular recruitment challenges faced by bilingual and Welsh-medium schools highlighted in this report. Continued monitoring and evaluation of the progress of this plan will be crucial to ensuring it delivers more teachers and eases those recruitment challenges.

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Data sources used

StatsWales, Welsh Government: Pupil Level Annual School Census in Wales; Pupil projections

Higher Education Statistics Agency: Enrolment on ITE courses

Higher Education Funding Council for Wales: Initial teacher training (ITT) intake targets

The Education Workforce Council: ITE intake targets, 2019/10 – 2020/21

Notes on methodology

Teacher labour market measures

Teacher supply and demand. Change in FTE number of pupils and teachers in the Welsh schools by phase, compared to their respective levels in 2010/11. Source: Pupil Level Annual School Census (PLASC) in Wales; Pupil projections from StatsWales, 2020.

Pupil numbers from 2010/11 to 2020/21 are pupils on roll recorded in PLASC, and includes both full-time and part-time pupils. Pupil projections from 2021/22 to 2030/31 are from the StatsWales published estimations. Projections are based on the school population of Wales in January 2020 and the trends indicated by the 2018 based mid-year projections of the home population of Wales produced by the Office for National Statistics. Pupil projections are in FTE terms. To enable comparison between the two series, pupil numbers on roll have been deflated by the percentage difference between PLASC pupils on roll and FTE pupils for the common data point for year 2020/21: primary schools pupil numbers by 4 percent, secondary school pupil numbers by 2 percent. This adjustment does not remove all inconsistencies between the two series, but does enable indicative analysis of future trends because the two series will move very similarly. Teacher numbers from 2010/11 to 2020/21 have been estimated on an FTE basis from PLASC.

Rate of teachers leaving the state sector. Source: SWAC; PLASC Wales

Teacher leaving rate between 2019/20 and 2020/21 is estimated using SWAC data over both years as the proportion of teachers with open contracts in 2019 that do not have a record in the 2020 SWAC. Teachers that have retired are included as leavers in this estimate.

Due to quality issues with the school identifier, contract details (from the Pay, HR and absence collection) could not be linked to schools in cases where teachers have multiple open contracts in different schools. For these cases, the contract where the individual teacher spend the highest number of hours has been considered as the teachers main record. In cases where contracted hours are equal across schools, the contract where the individual holds a more senior post has been considered.

The leaving rates estimated based on SWAC are not directly comparable to any estimates based on PLASC because SWAC provides individual-level data while PLASC provides teacher data aggregated at the school level. Further, leaving rate estimates from PLASC do not include teachers that retired at normal retirement age, and is therefore lower than estimated based on SWAC by design. To draw comparisons and compare trends to previous years, we have presented leaving rates from PLASC. This was estimated as the headcount of teachers that left teaching (full-time and part-time) during the year, as a proportion of the total number of teachers (full-time and part-time) at the beginning of the year. The count of leavers in PLASC only includes teachers who were known to have left the profession or have taken early retirement.

Vacancy rate. *Source: PLASC Wales*

The vacancy rate for a year is calculated as the number of vacancies as a proportion of all teaching posts. Vacancies in PLASC are advertised teacher vacancies for permanent staff, recorded at the end of the year. The total number of teaching posts is estimated as the total number of teachers and vacancies at the end of the year, excluding appointments made.

Unfilled vacancies. *Source: PLASC Wales*

Unfilled vacancies are vacancies for which no permanent appointment was made over the year. These include vacancies that are temporarily covered by a supply teacher, senior management, non-specialists, or 'other'.

Applicants per vacancy. *Source: PLASC Wales*

The average number of applicants per vacancy is calculated as the total number of applications received divided by the total number of vacancies in a school over a year, separately for each phase. For comparison across subjects and school types, this is estimated as the average number of applications received per vacancy disaggregated by subject.

Entrants and intake targets for ITE. *Sources: Higher Education Statistics Agency; Higher Education Funding Council for Wales*

Entrants to ITE refers to the number of undergraduate and postgraduate teacher training entries (first years on ITE courses) by phase and subject. Intake targets are the number of teacher trainees required to meet estimated teacher demand in Wales, set annually by the Welsh Government. Note that ITE entrants includes students in Welsh Higher Education Institutions (HEIs) and a small number in the Open University, while ITE targets reported are for Welsh HEIs only.

Applications to ITE courses. *Source: UCAS*

Data on applications and accepted offers - the sum of 'placed' (i.e. applicant has received and accepted an unconditional offer) and 'conditional placed' (i.e. applicant has received and accepted a conditional offer) for postgraduate initial teacher training is based on the monthly Teacher Training Statistical Releases. Data on the number of applicants and applications is published once a month between November and the following September in PDFs on the UCAS website. Further details on this analysis and data can be found in NFER's report on the Impact of Covid-19 on Initial Teacher Training (Worth, J and McLean, D, 2020).

Definition of school characteristics

School sector. Primary schools include both nursery schools and primary schools, and secondary schools include both secondary schools middle schools. We exclude PRU and special schools from all analysis. For indicators of recruitment (i.e. vacancy rates, applications to vacancies and unfilled vacancies), we exclude nursery schools and special schools as recruitment data is not collected for these school types.

School language of instruction. We combine all schools recorded as bilingual, transitional, dual stream, and Welsh medium schools in the PLASC into the category 'bilingual and Welsh medium schools'. English medium schools refer to schools that recorded as such in the PLASC. English is the language of the day-to-day business of English medium schools, but some Welsh is also used as a language of communication with the pupils.

Evidence for excellence in education

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