



Teacher Voice

NFER Teacher Voice Omnibus November 2012 Survey

School exclusions

Office of the Children's Commissioner

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Introduction

The Office of the Children's Commissioner (OCC) submitted seven questions to NFER's Teacher Voice Omnibus Survey in November 2012. The questions covered the following topics:

- Teachers' awareness of schools' behaviours in relation to different types of exclusions.
- Teachers' awareness of the content of the statutory guidance on exclusions.
- The extent to which teachers believe their schools meet the needs of certain groups of learners.
- The extent to which teachers have been trained to meet the needs of certain groups of learners.
- Teachers' views on why certain groups of learners are more likely to be excluded than others.
- Teachers' understanding of roles and responsibilities within schools concerning exclusions and their awareness of current legislation.

This report provides an analysis of the responses to the questions, along with supporting information about the survey. Results are presented by school phase (primary and secondary) and, where relevant, by seniority of respondent (classroom teachers or senior leaders).

This report forms one part of the output from the Omnibus survey. The analysis is also presented and given in more detail in a set of interactive web-based tables produced separately (in Pulsar Web). These will be available until the end of January 2013.

Context

School exclusions are governed by a number of different statutes, including the Equality Act, 2012, the Education Act, 2002, and the Children Act, 1989 along with relevant sections of other legislation and statutory instruments. From September 2012 new statutory guidance came into force: *Exclusion from maintained schools, Academies and pupil referral units in England, a guide for those with legal responsibilities in relation to exclusion* (DfE, 2012).¹ While the guidance is not mandatory, it is expected that it '*should be followed unless there is a good reason not to in a particular case*' (DfE, 2012, p. 2). It stipulates that exclusion should only be used as a last resort, stating that:

A decision to exclude a pupil permanently should only be taken:

- *in response to a serious breach, or persistent breaches, of the schools behaviour policy; and*
- *where allowing the pupil to remain in a school would seriously harm the education or welfare of the pupil or others in the school.*²

¹ Department for Education (2012). *Exclusion from maintained schools, Academies and pupil referral units in England. A guide for those with legal responsibilities in relation to exclusion.* (DfE London).

² Department for Education (2012). *Exclusion from maintained schools, Academies and pupil referral units in England. A guide for those with legal responsibilities in relation to exclusion.* (DfE London), p.6.

The guidance is underpinned by expectations that schools will behave in an inclusive way, specifically taking account of the requirements of the Equality Act, 2010. It notes that certain social groups, such as pupils in receipt of free school meals, those from minority ethnic groups, Gypsy and Traveller children, and children with Special Educational Needs (SEN) are more likely to be excluded from school due to behaviour issues. In light of this, the statutory guidance contains specific references to the duty on schools to ensure that appropriate avenues are exhausted before excluding pupils from those backgrounds. The statutory guidance requires headteachers to '*consider what extra support might be needed to identify and address the needs of pupils from these groups in order to reduce their risk of exclusion*'³, such as drawing on professional support from specialist agencies.

Moreover, the statutory guidance reminds schools that in a number of cases exclusion is illegal. Examples include excluding a child with a statement of SEN because the school is unable to meet his or her need or using the threat of exclusion to encourage parents to move a child to another school.

The statutory guidance also contains clear information about the responsibility of key stakeholders. Decisions on exclusions are matters for headteachers with governing bodies required to determine any appeals against those decisions as part of wider processes aimed at ensuring that pupils remain in school as far as possible.

This report presents the outcomes of the omnibus survey questions conducted into teachers' awareness of the guidance and its implications, and their perceptions of the extent to which their own schools work in ways which accord with its requirements. The findings will inform the Office of the Children's Commissioner's School Exclusions Inquiry.

³ Department for Education (2012). Exclusion from maintained schools, Academies and pupil referral units in England. A guide for those with legal responsibilities in relation to exclusion. (DfE London), p.7.

Analysis of findings

The sample

A sample of over 1,600 teachers completed the survey. The sample was weighted to ensure that it was representative and included teachers from a wide range of school governance types and subject areas. Sample numbers were sufficient to allow for comparisons between the primary and secondary sectors. Detailed information about the sample is given in the supplementary section of this report.

Schools' exclusion practices

The first question submitted to the Teacher Voice survey asked teachers whether, to their knowledge, their school carried out any of eight different types of exclusions. The list of types and results can be viewed in Table 1 below. The first two types of exclusions are in accordance with the statutory guidance, while the other practices listed may contravene it.

Table 1. To the best of your knowledge, has your school done any of the following?

	All	Primary	Secondary
Formally excluded pupils for a fixed term for reasons of poor behaviour.	71%	55%	88%
Formally excluded pupils permanently for reasons of poor behaviour.	38%	12%	65%
Encouraged some pupils to move to a different school, without recording such a move as a permanent exclusion.	22%	6%	39%
Encouraged parents of some children to educate them at home, without recording such a move as a permanent exclusion.	3%	1%	6%
Recorded pupils as 'authorised absent' or 'educated elsewhere' when the school has encouraged them not to come into school.	6%	2%	11%
Sent pupils with statements of SEN home when their carer/teaching assistant is not available because the school is unable to meet their needs.	1%	2%	<1%
Sent pupils with medical needs home when their carer/teaching assistant is not available because the school is unable to meet their needs.	1%	1%	<1%
Sent pupils home for any period without recording it as a fixed term exclusion.	7%	7%	8%
None	17%	32%	3%
Don't know	8%	10%	6%
Local base (N)	1591	790	802

Respondents were able to select more than one response so percentages may sum to more than 100.

Due to the secondary and all teacher categories being weighted separately and the primary teacher category being unweighted, the number of primary and secondary respondents may not sum to the number of teachers in total. Source: NFER Omnibus Survey November 2012.

The most commonly reported practices were formal exclusions, with 71 per cent of staff reporting that their school had issued fixed-term exclusions for poor behaviour, and almost two-fifths (38 per cent) saying that their school had excluded pupils permanently for this reason. Though far less common, just over a fifth of respondents (22 per cent) said that encouraging pupils to move to a different school, without recording such a move as a permanent exclusion, had taken place in their school. Only a very small minority of teachers reported that their schools had engaged in the other illegal or uncondoned practices that we asked them about.

There were large variations in responses by phase, with greater proportions of secondary teachers than primary ones reporting that their school had carried out almost all of the practices listed in Table 1. We have highlighted the sanctions where the disparity between the responses of secondary teachers and their primary colleagues is particularly pronounced below.

- Almost two thirds (65%) of secondary teachers indicated that their school had issued a **permanent exclusion** for reasons of poor behaviour, compared with just over a tenth (12 per cent) of their primary school colleagues.
- Proportionately more secondary school staff told us that their school had issued a formal **fixed term exclusion** than those in primary schools (88% compared with 55%).
- Almost four in ten secondary teachers (39 per cent) said that their school had encouraged some pupils to **move to a different school**, without recording such a move as a permanent exclusion, compared with six per cent of primary teachers.
- Only three per cent of secondary teachers said that their school had carried out **none** of the practices listed in Table 1, compared with almost a third (32 per cent) of primary teachers. Our data therefore supports the national statistics on the relative rates of exclusions in primary and secondary schools.

In line with the above, senior leaders in secondary schools were proportionally far more likely than their primary school counterparts to say their school had excluded pupils. For example, 96 per cent of secondary senior leaders said that their school had issued a fixed term exclusion, compared with 58 per cent of senior leaders in primary schools. The disparity was even greater in terms of permanent formal exclusions, with 70 per cent of secondary school leaders stating that their school had excluded pupils permanently, compared with 11 per cent of primary school leaders.

The data also revealed some differences in response patterns by seniority. Senior leaders were proportionally less likely than classroom teachers to say that their school had excluded pupils permanently due to poor behaviour (31 per cent compared with 39 per cent) or that they had encouraged pupils to move to another school, without recording this as a permanent exclusion (16 per cent compared with 23 per cent). Responses by seniority to the other practices listed in Table 4 were otherwise fairly similar, and the proportions of senior leaders and classroom teachers who said that their school had issued a fixed-term exclusion for poor behaviour were identical (71 per cent).

Awareness of the statutory guidance

We next asked respondents whether they knew which of the practices we enquired about in Question 1, were in accordance with the statutory guidance for schools. Tables 2 to 9 show this data.

Table 2 presents teachers' responses to the question of whether it is in accordance with the statutory guidance for a school to formally exclude pupils for a fixed term for reasons of poor behaviour.

Table 2. Can you say whether or not it is in accordance with the statutory guidance for a school to formally exclude pupils for a fixed term for reasons of poor behaviour?

	All	Primary	Secondary
In accordance with the statutory guidance	83%	79%	86%
Contrary to the statutory guidance	1%	2%	1%
Don't know	16%	19%	13%
Local base (N)	1589	788	803

Due to rounding, percentages may not sum to 100.

Due to the secondary and all teacher categories being weighted separately and the primary teacher category being unweighted, the number of primary and secondary respondents may not sum to the number of teachers in total. Source: NFER Omnibus Survey November 2012.

From this list of practices that we asked teachers about, there appeared to be most awareness about this. The question received the highest proportion of correct answers, and the lowest proportion of 'don't know' responses (from 16 per cent of teachers). Over four-fifths (83 per cent) of respondents correctly stated that the statutory guidance allows schools to formally exclude pupils for a fixed term for reasons of poor behaviour. Awareness of this was slightly lower among primary school respondents than their secondary counterparts (79 per cent compared with 86 per cent). A greater proportion of school leaders (95 per cent compared with 80 per cent of classroom teachers) identified that it is within the statutory guidance to exclude a pupil for a fixed term due to poor behaviour, suggesting that senior leaders may have a better grasp of the guidance.

We next asked teachers whether it is in accordance with the statutory guidance for a school to formally exclude pupils permanently for reasons of poor behaviour. Table 3 presents their responses.

Table 3. Can you say whether or not it is in accordance with the statutory guidance for a school to formally exclude pupils permanently for reasons of poor behaviour?

	All	Primary	Secondary
In accordance with the statutory guidance	68%	60%	76%
Contrary to the statutory guidance	7%	9%	5%
Don't know	25%	31%	19%
Local base (N)	1552	758	797

Respondents were able to select more than one response so percentages may sum to more than 100.

Due to the secondary and all teacher categories being weighted separately and the primary teacher category being unweighted, the number of primary and secondary respondents may not sum to the number of teachers in total. Source: NFER Omnibus Survey November 2012.

The majority of respondents - 68 per cent - correctly interpreted the statutory guidance as allowing schools to exclude a child permanently for poor behaviour. Notably, however, a quarter of respondents said that they did not know whether this practice is in accordance with the guidance.

Looking at the data by phase, the percentage of secondary teachers (76 per cent) who identified that the guidance permits formal permanent exclusions for reasons of poor behaviour was higher than for primary teachers (60%). Consistent with this, just under a third of teachers in primary schools (31 per cent) and just under a fifth (19%) of those in secondary schools said they did not know whether the sanction was permitted. Senior leaders were proportionally more likely (83 per cent) to say that the statutory guidance provided for a pupil being excluded permanently for poor behaviour than classroom teachers (65 per cent). This view was proportionally more prevalent among secondary school senior leaders (94 per cent) than those in primary schools (77 per cent).

Tables 4-9 show teachers' knowledge about practices that may not be condoned by the statutory guidance. Table 4 presents the data on whether teachers think the guidance permits schools to encourage some pupils to move to a different school, without recording such a move as a permanent exclusion. The statutory guidance states that '*the threat of exclusion must never be used to influence parents to remove their child from the school*⁴.

Table 4. Can you say whether or not it is in accordance with the statutory guidance for a school to encourage some pupils to move to a different school, without recording such a move as a permanent exclusion?

	All	Primary	Secondary
In accordance with the statutory guidance	14%	6%	22%
Contrary to the statutory guidance	52%	63%	42%
Don't know	34%	31%	37%
Local base (N)	1527	752	778

Due to rounding, percentages may not sum to 100.

Due to the secondary and all teacher categories being weighted separately and the primary teacher category being unweighted, the number of primary and secondary respondents may not sum to the number of teachers in total. Source: NFER Omnibus Survey November 2012.

Just over half (52 per cent) of teachers correctly believed that it is contrary to the statutory guidance to encourage pupils to move to a different school without recording it as an exclusion. This means that almost half of teachers (48 per cent) did not have a correct understanding of the guidance on this point: 14 per cent wrongly thought that the guidance condones this practice, while just over a third (34 per cent) did not know one way or the other.

Over one in five secondary teachers (22 per cent) thought that encouraging pupils to move to a different school without recording it as a permanent exclusion is permitted by the

⁴ Department for Education (2012). Exclusion from maintained schools, Academies and pupil referral units in England. A guide for those with legal responsibilities in relation to exclusion. (DfE London), p6.

statutory guidance. The proportion of primary teachers who thought this (6 per cent) was much lower. Looking at the data broken down by seniority, a higher percentage of senior leaders (66 per cent) than classroom teachers (49 per cent) knew that the practice was contrary to the statutory guidance.

Table 5 presents the teacher view data on whether it is in accordance with the statutory guidance for a school to encourage parents of some children to educate them at home, without recording such a move as a permanent exclusion.

Table 5. Can you say whether or not it is in accordance with the statutory guidance for a school to encourage parents of some children to educate them at home, without recording such a move as a permanent exclusion?

	All	Primary	Secondary
In accordance with the statutory guidance	3%	2%	5%
Contrary to the statutory guidance	65%	70%	61%
Don't know	32%	29%	34%
Local base (N)	1513	749	767

Due to rounding, percentages may not sum to 100.

Due to the secondary and all teacher categories being weighted separately and the primary teacher category being unweighted, the number of primary and secondary respondents may not sum to the number of teachers in total. Source: NFER Omnibus Survey November 2012.

Just under two thirds of respondents said that they thought this practice was against the statutory guidance (as is the case). Only three per cent of teachers thought that the guidance permits a school to encourage parents of some children to educate them at home, without recording such a move as a permanent exclusion. However, what is, once again, particularly notable is that almost a third (32%) of teachers did not know whether or not the practice is in accordance with the guidance.

Examining the data by phase, awareness within the secondary phase of education was slightly lower than in the primary phase. A slightly higher proportion of secondary school respondents said that they did not know whether the practice is in accordance with the guidance compared to their primary counterparts (34 per cent did so, compared with 29 per cent). Secondary teachers were also proportionally less likely to know that the practice is counter to the guidance than primary teachers (61% compared with 70%). This difference by phase held true amongst senior leaders, with a greater proportion of those in primary schools (84 per cent) aware of what the guidance says about encouraging parents of some children to educate them at home, without recording such a move as a permanent exclusion, compared with secondary senior leaders (76 per cent).

Table 6 presents teachers' responses on whether it is in accordance with the statutory guidance for a school to record pupils as 'authorised absent' or 'educated elsewhere' when the school has encouraged them not to come into school.

Table 6. Can you say whether or not it is in accordance with the statutory guidance for a school to record pupils as 'authorised absent' or 'educated elsewhere' when the school has encouraged them not to come into school?

	All	Primary	Secondary
In accordance with the statutory guidance	3%	2%	4%
Contrary to the statutory guidance	73%	75%	71%
Don't know	24%	23%	25%
Local base (N)	1514	752	764

Due to rounding, percentages may not sum to 100.

Due to the secondary and all teacher categories being weighted separately and the primary teacher category being unweighted, the number of primary and secondary respondents may not sum to the number of teachers in total. Source: NFER Omnibus Survey November 2012.

The statutory guidance specifically mentions the illegality of such 'informal' or 'unofficial' exclusions, and almost three quarters (73 per cent) of teachers responded that this practice is contrary to the guidance. However, just under a quarter (24 per cent) of respondents did not know whether or not it is in accordance with the guidance. There were only minor variations by phase in teachers' responses, with more variation by seniority. Senior leaders were proportionally more likely to say that the practice was contrary to the statutory guidance (88 per cent) than classroom teachers (69 per cent).

The next sub-question asked teachers whether or not the statutory guidance permits schools to send pupils with statements of SEN home when their carer/teaching assistant is not available because the school is unable to meet their needs. Table 7 presents this data.

Table 7. Can you say whether or not it is in accordance with the statutory guidance for a school to send pupils with statements of SEN home when their carer/teaching assistant is not available because the school is unable to meet their needs?

	All	Primary	Secondary
In accordance with the statutory guidance	3%	3%	3%
Contrary to the statutory guidance	64%	64%	64%
Don't know	33%	33%	32%
Local base (N)	1512	750	765

Due to rounding, percentages may not sum to 100.

Due to the secondary and all teacher categories being weighted separately and the primary teacher category being unweighted, the number of primary and secondary respondents may not sum to the number of teachers in total. Source: NFER Omnibus Survey November 2012.

Nearly two thirds of respondents correctly identified that this practice is contrary to the statutory guidance. However, a third of teachers did not know, and a very small minority (3%) thought that it was in accordance with the guidance. There was only negligible variation in responses by phase, once again. In terms of seniority, senior leaders were again proportionately more likely than classroom teachers to say that the practice was contrary to the statutory guidance (78% compared to 61% of classroom teachers). As in previous

questions, this was most likely because proportionally fewer of them responded that they didn't know.

We also asked teachers whether sending a pupil with medical needs home when their carer or teaching assistant is not available is in accordance with the statutory guidance. As Table 8 shows, more than half of respondents correctly believed that this was contrary to the statutory guidance. However, almost two-fifths (39%) of respondents did not know the contents of the guidance on this practice, making this the practice about which there was least knowledge or certainty.

Table 8. Can you say whether or not it is in accordance with the statutory guidance for a school to send pupils with medical needs home when their carer/teaching assistant is not available because the school is unable to meet their needs?

	All	Primary	Secondary
In accordance with the statutory guidance	6%	6%	5%
Contrary to the statutory guidance	56%	54%	57%
Don't know	39%	39%	38%
Local base (N)	1513	750	766

Due to rounding, percentages may not sum to 100.

Due to the secondary and all teacher categories being weighted separately and the primary teacher category being unweighted, the number of primary and secondary respondents may not sum to the number of teachers in total. Source: NFER Omnibus Survey November 2012.

The data shows very similar responses across both phases of education, though again, there are variations by seniority. A higher percentage of senior leaders (71 per cent) than classroom teachers (52 per cent) indicated that this practice was contrary to the statutory guidance. Secondary school leaders were proportionally more likely to say this than primary school leaders (76 per cent did so, compared to 67 per cent of their primary counterparts).

In the final part of this question, we asked teachers whether sending pupils home for any period without recording it as a fixed term exclusion is in accordance with the statutory guidance. As noted above, the statutory guidance states that it is illegal for a school to send pupils home for any period without recording it as a fixed term exclusion.

Table 9. Can you say whether or not it is in accordance with the statutory guidance for a school to send pupils home for any period without recording it as a fixed term exclusion?

	All	Primary	Secondary
In accordance with the statutory guidance	3%	2%	3%
Contrary to the statutory guidance	68%	70%	66%
Don't know	29%	28%	31%
Local base (N)	1516	754	764

Due to rounding, percentages may not sum to 100.

Due to the secondary and all teacher categories being weighted separately and the primary teacher category being unweighted, the number of primary and secondary respondents may not sum to the number of teachers in total. Source: NFER Omnibus Survey November 2012.

Table 9 shows that more than two-thirds (68 per cent) of respondents correctly identified that the practice is against the statutory guidance. Almost three in ten (29 per cent) did not know whether the practice accords with the statutory guidance. Again, there was little variation by phase, but more by seniority. Over four-fifths of school leaders (82 per cent) said that the practice was contrary to the statutory guidance, compared with 65 per cent of classroom teachers.

Looking across the data presented in Tables 2-9, we can see that a large minority of teachers do not know which practices the statutory guidance condones and which it does not. Seniority appears to play a role in teachers' awareness of the guidance. On every practice that we enquired about, a higher proportion of senior leaders than classroom teachers had an accurate knowledge whether the guidance condones it. The percentage point gap between the proportions of senior leaders and classroom teachers who had correctly interpreted the guidance ranged from 15 per cent (with regard to fixed term exclusions for poor behaviour) to 20 per cent (in relation to encouraging parents of some children to educate them at home, without recording this as a permanent exclusion). Furthermore, lower proportions of senior leaders than classroom teachers indicated that they did not know whether each of the practices listed in Table 1 is condoned by the guidance or not. On average across the different practices, there was a 17 percentage point gap between the proportions of senior leaders and classroom teachers who selected 'don't know'. This is perhaps unsurprising, given that senior leaders are likely to be responsible for setting their school's policies on behaviour management and exclusions and only Headteachers can exclude pupils. The data suggests that more communication with teachers, particularly classroom teachers, on the details of the statutory guidance is needed.

Following on from the series of items described above, we asked respondents whether they considered it reasonable for a school to operate in the ways outlined above. Their responses are presented in Table 10.

Table 10. Do you consider it is reasonable for a school to do any of the following?

	All	Primary	Secondary
Formally exclude pupils for a fixed term for reasons of poor behaviour.	93%	90%	96%
Formally exclude pupils permanently for reasons of poor behaviour.	76%	65%	87%
Encourage some pupils to move to a different school, without recording such a move as a permanent exclusion.	28%	13%	43%
Encourage parents of some children to educate them at home, without recording such a move as a permanent exclusion.	5%	2%	8%
Record pupils as 'authorised absent' or 'educated elsewhere' when the school has encouraged them not to come into school.	4%	2%	5%
Send pupils with statements of SEN home when their carer/teaching assistant is not available because the school is unable to meet their needs.	9%	10%	7%
Send pupils with medical needs home when their carer/teaching assistant is not available because the school is unable to meet their needs.	16%	20%	12%
Send pupils home for any period without recording it as a fixed term exclusion.	7%	7%	8%
None	4%	7%	2%
Don't know	1%	2%	1%
Local base (N)	1600	795	807

Respondents were able to select more than one response so percentages may sum to more than 100. Due to the secondary and all teacher categories being weighted separately and the primary teacher category being unweighted, the number of primary and secondary respondents may not sum to the number of teachers in total. Source: NFER Omnibus Survey November 2012.

The use of formal fixed-term exclusions was felt to be reasonable by the highest proportion of teachers (93%), followed by formal permanent exclusions for poor behaviour (supported by 76% of teachers). Almost three in ten (28%) teachers felt that encouraging pupils to move to a different school without recording the move as a permanent exclusion is reasonable, even though this contradicts the statutory guidance. None of the other practices we asked about were viewed as reasonable by more than 16 per cent of teachers. Very small percentages (less than 10 per cent) of respondents said they thought it was reasonable for a school to implement practices such as encouraging parents to educate their children at home, record pupils as 'authorised absent', or send pupils home without recording it as a fixed-term exclusion.

There were some notable differences in responses by phase, particularly in relation to the practice of encouraging some pupils to move to a different school, without recording such a move as a permanent exclusion. Seeing this as reasonable was proportionately much less prevalent among primary school respondents (13 per cent) than their colleagues in secondary schools (43 per cent). Secondary teachers were also proportionally more likely

than their primary counterparts to view permanent exclusions on the grounds of poor behaviour as reasonable (87 per cent compared with 65 per cent did so). Meanwhile, and of less note, a fifth (20 per cent) of primary school respondents thought that it is reasonable to send pupils with medical needs home when the school is unable to meet their needs, compared to 12 per cent of secondary school teachers.

Formal training in meeting the needs of pupils with specific needs

The statutory guidance notes the need for schools to operate inclusively in order to ensure that the needs of all learners are met. We therefore asked a series of questions exploring the extent to which staff had received training in meeting the needs of some potentially vulnerable groups. These were defined as young people with physical disabilities, those with dyslexia, those with speech, language or communication difficulties (SLCD), those with Autistic Spectrum Disorder (ASD), those with behaviour, emotional or social disorders, and learners for whom English is an additional language (EAL). We also asked teachers how they rated the quality of the training they had accessed. The findings are presented in Tables 11-16. We go on to present our findings on the extent to which teachers report that they have integrated the outcomes of their training into their teaching in Table 17.

Given the emphasis on inclusion in the statutory guidance it is notable as we look across the data in Tables 11-16, that the large majority of teachers (roughly three-quarters at least for each type of training) across both phases of education had received training to help them meet the needs of the vulnerable groups of pupils we identified in the survey. However, a significant minority of teachers had not received formal training in meeting the needs of these vulnerable groups of pupils. Of particular note, around a quarter of teachers had not received training on how to meet the needs of learners with a physical disability or those with EAL. Training on supporting these two groups of pupils also attracted the greatest proportions of negative quality ratings, with around a fifth of teachers deeming it to have been poor or very poor. Furthermore, around one in seven of the respondents had not received training on meeting the needs of the other groups of learners we identified.

The majority of respondents were positive about the quality of the training they had received, with between 51 per cent and 69 per cent rating it as at least satisfactory. Training in meeting the needs of pupils with ASD was felt to be at least satisfactory by the highest proportion of teachers (seven in ten or 69 per cent), followed by training in meeting the needs of pupils with a BESD (67 per cent), or a SLCD (65 per cent). However, only small proportions - between five and ten per cent - rated the quality as excellent in any of the areas we asked about. This suggests that there is considerable scope to improve the quality and take up of formal training in these areas would be useful. Exploring the role of informal training, may also be illuminative, in gaining a complete picture of the training that teachers receive to help them to support vulnerable groups of children.

There was considerable consensus in terms of the proportions of teachers who had not received training in any of the areas about which we asked, and their perceptions of its quality, across both phases of education. The only notable exception was with regard to the quality of training in meeting the needs of pupils with speech, language and communication difficulties, which 70 per cent of primary teachers rated as at least satisfactory, compared to 60 per cent of secondary teachers.

There were some differences by seniority, with greater proportions of classroom teachers than senior leaders saying that had not received formal training. This was the case for all of the training areas about which we enquired. For example, the proportion of senior leaders who had not received training on meeting the needs of pupils with physical disabilities (17 per cent) was lower than that for classroom teachers (29 per cent).

Senior leaders were also proportionally more positive about the quality of the training that they had received. For all of the training areas, greater proportions of senior leaders said that their training had been at least satisfactory; while greater proportions of classroom teachers said that their training had been poor or very poor. This merits further investigation, to ensure that all teachers have access to good quality training.

The results can be seen in tables 11-16 inclusive.

Table 11. Overall, how would you rate any formal training (including training received as part of CPD and/or initial teacher training) you have received in meeting the needs of pupils with physical disabilities?

	All	Primary	Secondary
Excellent	5%	4%	6%
Good	21%	21%	20%
Satisfactory	30%	30%	31%
Poor	14%	16%	13%
Very poor	3%	3%	3%
No training	27%	26%	28%
Local base (N)	1600	795	806

Due to rounding, percentages may not sum to 100.

Due to the secondary and all teacher categories being weighted separately and the primary teacher category being unweighted, the number of primary and secondary respondents may not sum to the number of teachers in total. Source: NFER Omnibus Survey November 2012.

Table 12. Overall, how would you rate any formal training (including training received as part of CPD and/or initial teacher training) you have received in meeting the needs of pupils with dyslexia?

	All	Primary	Secondary
Excellent	7%	8%	7%
Good	27%	27%	27%
Satisfactory	32%	31%	33%
Poor	16%	15%	17%
Very poor	4%	5%	3%
No training	14%	15%	14%
Local base (N)	1602	795	809

Due to rounding, percentages may not sum to 100.

Due to the secondary and all teacher categories being weighted separately and the primary teacher category being unweighted, the number of primary and secondary respondents may not sum to the number of teachers in total. Source: NFER Omnibus Survey November 2012.

Table 13. Overall, how would you rate any formal training (including training received as part of CPD and/or initial teacher training) you have received in meeting the needs of pupils with speech, language and communication difficulties?

	All	Primary	Secondary
Excellent	7%	9%	4%
Good	28%	33%	23%
Satisfactory	30%	28%	33%
Poor	16%	14%	18%
Very poor	3%	4%	3%
No training	16%	13%	19%
Local base (N)	1603	798	807

Due to rounding, percentages may not sum to 100.

Due to the secondary and all teacher categories being weighted separately and the primary teacher category being unweighted, the number of primary and secondary respondents may not sum to the number of teachers in total. Source: NFER Omnibus Survey November 2012.

Table 14. Overall, how would you rate any formal training (including training received as part of CPD and/or initial teacher training) you have received in meeting the needs of pupils with a diagnosis of Autistic Spectrum Disorder (ASD)?

	All	Primary	Secondary
Excellent	10%	12%	9%
Good	29%	32%	27%
Satisfactory	30%	27%	34%
Poor	13%	13%	14%
Very poor	3%	3%	3%
No training	14%	14%	15%
Local base (N)	1606	799	809

Due to rounding, percentages may not sum to 100.

Due to the secondary and all teacher categories being weighted separately and the primary teacher category being unweighted, the number of primary and secondary respondents may not sum to the number of teachers in total. Source: NFER Omnibus Survey November 2012.

Table 15. Overall, how would you rate any formal training (including training received as part of CPD and/or initial teacher training) you have received in meeting the needs of pupils with a behavioural, emotional or social disorder (BESD)?

	All	Primary	Secondary
Excellent	7%	8%	7%
Good	28%	29%	26%
Satisfactory	32%	31%	35%
Poor	14%	14%	15%
Very poor	3%	3%	3%
No training	15%	15%	15%
Local base (N)	1604	798	807

Due to rounding, percentages may not sum to 100.

Due to the secondary and all teacher categories being weighted separately and the primary teacher category being unweighted, the number of primary and secondary respondents may not sum to the number of teachers in total. Source: NFER Omnibus Survey November 2012.

Table 16. Overall, how would you rate any formal training (including training received as part of CPD and/or initial teacher training) you have received in meeting the needs of pupils with English as an additional language (EAL)?

	All	Primary	Secondary
Excellent	6%	7%	5%
Good	17%	17%	16%
Satisfactory	28%	31%	25%
Poor	19%	17%	20%
Very poor	6%	4%	8%
No training	25%	24%	26%
Local base (N)	1605	799	808

Due to rounding, percentages may not sum to 100.

Due to the secondary and all teacher categories being weighted separately and the primary teacher category being unweighted, the number of primary and secondary respondents may not sum to the number of teachers in total. Source: NFER Omnibus Survey November 2012.

Respondents, who had received training in meeting the needs of at least one of the groups of pupils in the previous questions, were asked to what extent, if at all, the training had impacted on their behaviour as a teacher. The results are presented in Table 17 below.

Table 17. To what extent, if at all, did the training you received impact on your behaviour as a teacher?

	All	Primary	Secondary
A lot	36%	42%	30%
A little	57%	52%	61%
Not at all	7%	5%	9%
Local base (N)	1544	777	767

Due to rounding, percentages may not sum to 100.

Due to the secondary and all teacher categories being weighted separately and the primary teacher category being unweighted, the number of primary and secondary respondents may not sum to the number of teachers in total. Source: NFER Omnibus Survey November 2012.

The large majority of respondents believed that the training they had received had impacted on their behaviour as a teacher, with 36 per cent saying that it had had a lot of impact, and 57 per cent that it had had a little impact. Senior leaders were proportionately more likely to say that it had impacted ‘a lot’ (47 per cent) than classroom teachers (34 per cent). There was a difference in the perceptions of primary and secondary teachers about the extent to which their practice had been influenced: just over two-fifths (42 per cent) of primary schools said it had influenced them ‘a lot’, compared to 30 per cent of secondary school staff. It would be interesting to investigate the reasons for this further, to be able to support teachers to put their training into action.

We next asked the small sub-group of teachers who had not received any of the training discussed above, why this was the case. Table 18 presents the responses.

Table 18. Please indicate the main reason why you have received no training in meeting the needs of pupils with physical disabilities, dyslexia, speech, language and communication difficulties, ASD, BESD and EAL.

	All %(n)	Primary %(n)	Secondary% (n)
I have not been offered training in any of these areas and do not feel I need it.	20% (12)	17% (4)	21% (9)
I have not been offered training in any of these areas though I feel I need it.	72% (44)	70% (16)	73% (29)
I have been offered training in at least one of these areas, but felt that other training was a higher priority.	0% (0)	0% (0)	0% (0)
I have been offered training in at least one of these areas, but perceived it to be of low quality.	2% (1)	0% (0)	2% (1)
I have been offered training in at least one of these areas, but did not feel I needed it.	0% (0)	0% (0)	0% (0)
I have been offered training in at least one of these areas but have not been able to undertake it.	2% (1)	4% (1)	0% (0)
Other	5% (3)	9% (2)	4% (2)
Local base (N)	61	23	40

Only a small number of respondents indicated that they had received no training in meeting the needs of pupils with physical disabilities, dyslexia, speech, language and communication difficulties, ASD, BESD or EAL so the findings should be treated with caution. Due to rounding, percentages may not sum to 100.

Due to the secondary and all teacher categories being weighted separately and the primary teacher category being unweighted, the number of primary and secondary respondents may not sum to the number of teachers in total. Source: NFER Omnibus Survey November 2012.

Because the number of respondents in this category was very small (61 respondents), considerable care needs to be taken when interpreting this data. The most common answer, given by 44 of the 61 respondents, was that they had not been offered any training even though they felt they needed it. The second most common response was that teachers had not been offered such training and didn’t think they needed it; twelve respondents said this. The numbers are too small for any meaningful analysis to be undertaken by respondent sub-groups.

Meeting the needs of vulnerable pupils

As is noted above, the statutory guidance requires schools to be inclusive towards the groups of pupils we discuss above, for example by making use of specialist support services when appropriate. The survey therefore included a series of questions to obtain staff perceptions of the extent to which their schools are meeting the needs of some of these groups of learners. The data is presented in Tables 19-24.

The first of this group of tables (Table 19) presents respondents' responses to the question of the extent to which their school meets the learning needs of pupils with physical disabilities.

Table 19. In your opinion, to what extent does your school meet the learning needs of pupils with physical disabilities?

	All	Primary	Secondary
To a great extent	44%	45%	43%
To some extent	39%	33%	45%
Not at all	2%	1%	2%
No pupils with this need in my school	13%	18%	7%
Not sure	3%	2%	3%
Local base (N)	1605	799	809

Due to rounding, percentages may not sum to 100.

Due to the secondary and all teacher categories being weighted separately and the primary teacher category being unweighted, the number of primary and secondary respondents may not sum to the number of teachers in total. Source: NFER Omnibus Survey November 2012.

Most respondents (83%) felt that their school met the needs of pupils with physical disabilities at least to some extent and more than two-fifths (44%) thought it did so to a great extent. The main difference by phase was that primary school respondents were proportionately more likely to say there were no children with physical disabilities in their school than those working in secondary schools (18% compared with 7% did so). Looking at the data by seniority shows that a higher proportion of senior leaders felt that their school meets the needs of pupils with physical disabilities to a great extent, compared with classroom teachers (52% compared with 42%).

Table 20 presents teachers' views on the extent to which their school meets the learning needs of pupils with dyslexia.

Table 20. In your opinion, to what extent does your school meet the learning needs of pupils with dyslexia?

	All	Primary	Secondary
To a great extent	33%	30%	34%
To some extent	58%	57%	60%
Not at all	4%	5%	3%
No pupils with this need in my school	1%	2%	<1%
Not sure	4%	6%	2%
Local base (N)	1603	798	808

Due to rounding, percentages may not sum to 100.

Due to the secondary and all teacher categories being weighted separately and the primary teacher category being unweighted, the number of primary and secondary respondents may not sum to the number of teachers in total. Source: NFER Omnibus Survey November 2012.

A large majority of respondents (91%) believed their school meets the needs of these learners at least to some extent. A third felt that it did do so to a great extent. Teachers' phase and seniority had little effect on their responses.

Table 21 shows the extent to which teachers felt that their school meets the learning needs of pupils with speech, language and communication difficulties.

Table 21. In your opinion, to what extent does your school meet the learning needs of pupils with speech, language and communication difficulties?

	All	Primary	Secondary
To a great extent	40%	50%	30%
To some extent	52%	46%	59%
Not at all	3%	1%	4%
No pupils with this need in my school	2%	1%	3%
Not sure	3%	2%	5%
Local base (N)	1608	801	809

Due to rounding, percentages may not sum to 100.

Due to the secondary and all teacher categories being weighted separately and the primary teacher category being unweighted, the number of primary and secondary respondents may not sum to the number of teachers in total. Source: NFER Omnibus Survey November 2012.

Again, a large majority of respondents felt that their school meets the needs of this group of pupils at least to some extent (40 per cent said that it did so to a great extent and 52 per cent to some extent). The percentage who thought their school did so to a great extent was higher among school leaders (53 per cent) than among classroom teachers (37 per cent). It was also proportionately higher among all respondents from primary schools (50 per cent) than secondary schools (30 per cent).

When asked whether their school meets the learning needs of pupils with a diagnosis of Autistic Spectrum Disorder (ASD), 93 per cent of respondents believed that it did so at least to some extent, as shown in Table 22. Almost half the teachers thought their school meets the needs of this pupil group to a great extent. There was little difference in the perceptions of respondents from primary and secondary schools, but some difference by seniority of

respondent. Again, school leaders were proportionally more likely to feel that their school meets the needs of pupils with a diagnosis of ASD than classroom teachers (55% compared with 44%).

Table 22. In your opinion, to what extent does your school meet the learning needs of pupils with a diagnosis of Autistic Spectrum Disorder (ASD)?

	All	Primary	Secondary
To a great extent	46%	48%	44%
To some extent	47%	45%	48%
Not at all	3%	2%	3%
No pupils with this need in my school	1%	1%	1%
Not sure	4%	4%	3%
Local base (N)	1608	801	809

Due to rounding, percentages may not sum to 100.

Due to the secondary and all teacher categories being weighted separately and the primary teacher category being unweighted, the number of primary and secondary respondents may not sum to the number of teachers in total. Source: NFER Omnibus Survey November 2012.

Table 23 presents respondents' views on the extent to which their school meets the learning needs of pupils with a behavioural, emotional or social disorder (BESD).

Table 23. In your opinion, to what extent does your school meet the learning needs of pupils with a behavioural, emotional or social disorder (BESD)?

	All	Primary	Secondary
To a great extent	42%	46%	37%
To some extent	51%	49%	54%
Not at all	3%	2%	5%
No pupils with this need in my school	2%	1%	1%
Not sure	3%	2%	3%
Local base (N)	1603	798	806

Due to rounding, percentages may not sum to 100.

Due to the secondary and all teacher categories being weighted separately and the primary teacher category being unweighted, the number of primary and secondary respondents may not sum to the number of teachers in total. Source: NFER Omnibus Survey November 2012.

Again, more than nine in ten teachers (93 per cent) felt their school meets the needs of these learners at least to some extent. The percentage of respondents from primary schools who thought their school meets the learning needs of pupils with BESD to a great extent (46 per cent) was proportionately higher than the corresponding figure for secondary schools (37 per cent). Senior leaders were proportionally more likely to indicate that their school meets these pupils' needs to a great extent (53 per cent) than classroom teachers (40 per cent).

Finally, we asked teachers about the extent to which their school meets the learning needs of pupils with English as an additional language (EAL). We present this data in Table 24.

Table 24. In your opinion, to what extent does your school meet the learning needs of pupils with English as an additional language (EAL)?

	All	Primary	Secondary
To a great extent	29%	33%	24%
To some extent	51%	46%	57%
Not at all	7%	5%	9%
No pupils with this need in my school	9%	13%	5%
Not sure	4%	3%	6%
Local base (N)	1605	799	809

Due to rounding, percentages may not sum to 100.

Due to the secondary and all teacher categories being weighted separately and the primary teacher category being unweighted, the number of primary and secondary respondents may not sum to the number of teachers in total. Source: NFER Omnibus Survey November 2012.

Four-fifths of respondents felt their school meets the needs of pupils with EAL at least to some extent, with almost three in ten (29 per cent) feeling that it does so to a great extent. A third of primary school teachers thought that their school meets these pupils' needs to a great extent, a higher proportion than among those working in secondary schools (24 per cent). Senior leaders were proportionally more likely to say that these needs were being met to a great extent (40 per cent) than classroom teachers (26 per cent). Less than a tenth of respondents (7 per cent) said that their school was not meeting these pupils' needs at all. It is worth noting that this is a slightly higher proportion than for any of the other groups of pupils we asked about in this series of questions.

The tables above suggest that respondents consider that their schools are responding to the needs of these vulnerable groups of pupils. Only very small proportions of teachers said that their school is not meeting the needs of these pupils. However, in most cases the percentages of teachers who considered that their school is meeting these pupils' need 'to some extent' exceeded those saying that their school does so 'to great extent'. This would suggest that many schools have scope to improve the way that they support these groups of pupils.

School exclusions policies

The statutory guidance outlines the roles and responsibilities of different stakeholders in relation to school exclusions. It specifically refers to the responsibility of the headteacher and the governing body in such processes. We asked teachers who, in their school, is mainly responsible for establishing their school's policy on permanent and fixed-term exclusions. The results are presented in Table 25 below.

Table 25. In your school, who is mainly responsible for establishing the policy on permanent and fixed term exclusions?

	All	Primary	Secondary
Headteacher	54%	65%	44%
Governing Body	26%	23%	30%
Deputy Head	3%	1%	6%
Assistant Heads	2%	<1%	3%
Year Heads	<1%	0%	<1%
Individual teachers	0%	0%	0%
Other	<1%	<1%	<1%
Don't know	14%	11%	17%
Local base (N)	1601	797	806

Due to rounding, percentages may not sum to 100.

Due to the secondary and all teacher categories being weighted separately and the primary teacher category being unweighted, the number of primary and secondary respondents may not sum to the number of teachers in total. Source: NFER Omnibus Survey November 2012.

Over half of teachers (54 per cent) told us that the headteacher of their school is mainly responsible for establishing its policy on permanent or fixed-term exclusions. This was the most common response. It was followed at some distance by the governing body, which just over a quarter of teachers (26 per cent) identified as having the main responsibility for establishing the policy. Only a very small proportion of teachers said that anyone else is responsible for establishing their school's exclusions policy, though it is worth noting that a sixth of teachers (14 per cent) did not know who is responsible for this in their school.

Respondents in primary schools were proportionately more likely than their secondary counterparts to say that their headteacher has the main responsibility for establishing their school's exclusions policy (65 per cent compared with 44 per cent did so). Conversely, the governing body was reported to have the main responsibility by a higher proportion of secondary teachers compared with primary teachers (30 per cent compared with 23 per cent said this). Secondary school teachers were proportionally more likely not to know who holds responsibility for establishing exclusions policy in their school than their primary colleagues (17 per cent compared with 11 per cent). Seniority, as one might expect, was a factor in the way that teachers responded. Senior leaders were proportionally much less likely to say they didn't know (1%) than classroom teachers (18 per cent). Furthermore, higher proportions of senior leaders than classroom teachers said that their headteacher or governing body has the main responsibility for establishing exclusions policy.

Perceived reasons for inequality in exclusions

The OCC was keen to use the survey to investigate why teachers thought that the national statistics show that certain groups of children are more likely to be excluded than others. These groups are: boys; pupils receiving free school meals; pupils with SEN; and pupils from certain ethnic groups - particularly Black British, Black Caribbean, Traveller of Irish heritage and Gypsy/Roma. We asked an open-response question about each of the four groups of pupils in turn and coded the responses. We present the top ten most frequently occurring

responses to each question, as defined by 'all teachers', in tables 26-29⁵. Table 26 presents the responses to the question of why respondents think boys are more likely to be excluded.

Table 26. Why do you think boys are more likely to be excluded?

	All	Primary	Secondary
Boys' poor behaviour and levels of aggression higher than girls	65%	60%	68%
Lack of interest in the curriculum or lessons	26%	30%	23%
Lack of appropriate role models	10%	11%	10%
Home circumstances or lack of parental support	5%	6%	5%
Boys less mature	5%	4%	6%
Don't know	3%	2%	4%
Boys generally disillusioned with school	1%	2%	1%
Boys more prone to developmental disorders such as Autism and Attention Deficit Hyperactivity Disorder	1%	2%	<1%
Low achievement or self-esteem	1%	1%	1%
Boys' behaviour more likely to harm adults	1%	1%	1%
Local base (N)	1400	680	723

Respondents were able to give more than one reason so percentages may not sum to 100. Top 10 responses as given by 'all teachers'. All responses are available in Pulsar Web. Due to the secondary and all teacher categories being weighted separately and the primary teacher category being unweighted, the number of primary and secondary respondents may not sum to the number of teachers in total. Source: NFER Omnibus Survey November 2012.

The most common reason offered for why boys are more likely to be excluded was that their behaviour is generally worse or that they are more aggressive than girls. This was often related by respondents to boys' physical strength and the way they react to challenging situations. The second most common reason offered was that boys lack interest in the curriculum or lessons. The third most common reason, identified by one in ten teachers (10 per cent) related to home circumstances or lack of parental support. At most, five per cent of teachers nominated any of the other reasons presented in Table 26. There were some differences in responses by phase, with secondary teachers proportionally more likely to mention boys' behaviour than primary teachers (68 per cent did so, compared with 60 per cent of primary colleagues). Conversely, respondents in primary schools were proportionally more likely to cite lack of interest in the curriculum or lessons as a reason for why boys are more likely to be excluded (30 per cent) than secondary teachers (23 per cent). There was little difference in the perceptions of senior leaders and classroom teachers.

We next asked teachers for their thought on why pupils receiving free school meals are more likely to be excluded. Table 27 presents the top ten responses.

⁵ Some of the responses in Tables 26-29 inclusive have been relabelled for presentational purposes so they may not match the precise wording of the tables presented in Pulsar Web

Table 27. Why do you think pupils receiving free school meals are more likely to be excluded?

	All	Primary	Secondary
Home circumstances or lack of parental support	72%	73%	72%
Poverty/financial concerns	14%	14%	14%
Don't know	10%	9%	11%
Lack of interest in the curriculum or lessons	8%	7%	9%
Disagree with proposition	5%	5%	4%
Attendance or behaviour issues	4%	5%	3%
Lack of empathy by school	2%	2%	3%
Lack confidence or self-esteem	2%	2%	1%
Unable to access curriculum	1%	1%	1%
Poor nutrition	1%	1%	1%
Local base (N)	1317	629	691

Due to rounding, percentages may not sum to 100. Top 10 responses as given by 'all teachers'. All responses are available in Pulsar Web. Due to the secondary and all teacher categories being weighted separately and the primary teacher category being unweighted, the number of primary and secondary respondents may not sum to the number of teachers in total. Source: NFER Omnibus Survey November 2012.

The most frequently cited explanation for pupils receiving free schools meals being disproportionately excluded, was their home circumstances or lack of parental support. Over seven in ten teachers (72 per cent) suggested this reason. The second most common suggestion was poverty/financial concerns (suggested by 14% of respondents). The third most popular response was 'don't know' (given by 10 per cent of teacher who responded to the question), which is an interesting finding in itself. There was a high degree of consensus between primary and secondary teachers' responses as well as, once again, between those of senior leaders and classroom teachers.

Moving on to the next group of disproportionately excluded pupils, Table 28 presents teachers' views on why pupils with SEN are significantly more likely to be excluded than other pupils.

Table 28. Why do you think pupils with SEN are more likely to be excluded?

	All	Primary	Secondary
Schools lack appropriate facilities or resources to meet their needs	42%	47%	39%
Lack of interest in the curriculum or lessons	25%	21%	30%
Behaviour arising from a specific condition related to their special need.	18%	21%	14%
Lack confidence or self-esteem	9%	11%	6%
Need additional support that is not available	7%	8%	7%
Mainstream schools not suitable to needs	5%	6%	4%
Poor behaviour	5%	5%	5%
Staff not trained to deal with the issue	5%	5%	6%
Don't know	4%	3%	5%
Not understanding school rules/expectations	4%	3%	4%
Local base (N)	1377	667	715

Due to rounding, percentages may not sum to 100. Top 10 responses as given by 'all teachers'. All responses are available in Pulsar Web. Due to the secondary and all teacher categories being weighted separately and the primary teacher category being unweighted, the number of primary and secondary respondents may not sum to the number of teachers in total. Source: NFER Omnibus Survey November 2012.

Most of the reasons suggested by teachers related to the issues faced by children with SEN and how schools responded to them. The largest group of responses, given by 42 per cent of teachers, attributed the disproportionate exclusion rate for pupils with SEN to a lack of appropriate facilities or resources to meet their needs. The second most common reason, suggested by a quarter of teachers, was learners' lack of interest in the curriculum or lessons. Almost a fifth of respondents believed that the reason for the high exclusion rate among pupils with SEN arose due to a specific condition related to their special need, making this the third most common reason suggested.

The data shows that there were some differences by phase, with a higher proportion of secondary teachers than their primary counterparts citing learners' lack of interest in the curriculum or lessons (30 per cent compared with 21 per cent). Meanwhile, greater proportions of primary teachers (47 per cent) than secondary teachers (39 per cent) suggested that schools lack appropriate facilities or resources to meet their needs as a reason for the disproportionate exclusion rate among pupils with SEN.

There was little variation in responses by seniority, though it is worth noting that senior leaders and classroom teachers were less united in their view of a pupil's specific condition, and the poor behaviour stemming from it, being related to the disproportionate exclusion rate. A quarter of senior leaders identified a pupil's specific condition as a reason for this, compared with 16 per cent of classroom teachers.

Table 29 presents teachers' suggestions for why the final group of pupils - those from certain ethnic groups - are more likely to be excluded.

Table 29. Why do you think pupils from certain ethnic groups are more likely to be excluded?

	All	Primary	Secondary
Clash of cultures	37%	36%	38%
Schools not adapting to their needs	17%	18%	16%
Don't know	17%	18%	15%
Home circumstances or lack of parental support	15%	14%	16%
Disrupted schooling/poor attendance	12%	12%	12%
Don't fit in	6%	6%	6%
Poor behaviour	6%	6%	5%
Lack of positive role models	5%	4%	6%
Lack of relevance in curriculum	5%	5%	5%
Don't accept the rules/lack of respect	5%	5%	5%
Local base (N)	1285	622	668

Due to rounding, percentages may not sum to 100. Top 10 responses as given by 'all teachers'. All responses are available in Pulsar Web. Due to the secondary and all teacher categories being weighted separately and the primary teacher category being unweighted, the number of primary and secondary respondents may not sum to the number of teachers in total. Source: NFER Omnibus Survey November 2012.

A clash of cultures emerged as the most commonly cited reason, suggested by over a third of teachers (37 per cent). The second most common reason cited was that schools were not tailoring their provision to their needs; while an equal proportion of respondents said that they did not know. Around a sixth of respondents (15 per cent) felt that home circumstances or lack of parental support were an issue; while 12 per cent cited disrupted schooling and poor attendance, particularly in relation to traveller children. While there were no notable variations in responses by phase, there were a few by seniority. Higher proportions of senior leaders than classroom teachers suggested the following reasons for the disproportionate exclusion rate: clash of cultures (cited by 46 per cent, compared to 35 per cent of classroom teachers); and schools not adapting to pupils needs (cited by 24 per cent, compared to 15 per cent of classroom teachers).

Equality Act 2012

In the final questions of the survey, we asked respondents whether their school had informed staff about the requirements of the Equality Act 2012. The results are presented in Table 30 below.

Table 30. Has your school informed staff about the requirements of the Equality Act 2012?

	All	Primary	Secondary
Yes	38%	43%	33%
No	22%	18%	26%
Don't know	40%	39%	41%
Local base (N)	1607	800	809

Due to rounding, percentages may not sum to 100.

Due to the secondary and all teacher categories being weighted separately and the primary teacher category being unweighted, the number of primary and secondary respondents may not sum to the number of teachers in total. Source: NFER Omnibus Survey November 2012.

Slightly less than four in ten teachers (38 per cent) said that their school had informed staff about the requirements of the Act, while a further four in ten did not know. However, respondents in primary schools were proportionally more likely than those in secondary schools to say that their school had informed staff about the Act; 43 per cent did so, compared with only a third (33 per cent) of their secondary counterparts. Conversely, a greater proportion of secondary teachers than primary teachers, said that their school had not informed staff of the Act's requirements (26 per cent compared with 18 per cent).

The variation in responses by seniority is striking. A far greater proportion of senior leaders than classroom teachers responded that staff at their school had been informed about the Act (seven in ten compared with three in ten). This disparity in opinion suggests that the Act's requirements have not been adequately communicated to classroom teachers. As we might expect, a far smaller proportion of senior leaders than classroom teachers did not know whether their school had told staff about the requirements of the Act (17 per cent compared to 45 per cent). Nonetheless, it is perhaps surprising that almost a fifth of senior leaders do not know whether their school has informed it staff about the Equality Act 2012.

Conclusions and implications for the client

The survey gives us a nationally representative and up-to-date picture of teachers' understanding of exclusions policy and practice in schools in England. As such, the survey provides a valuable set of results, to inform the Office of the Children's Commissioner's school exclusions inquiry.

Policy development on exclusions mainly falls to headteachers or, to a much lesser extent, to governing bodies. The most commonly reported exclusion *practices* are reported to be fixed-term, and to a much lesser extent permanent, exclusions for poor behaviour. A minority of schools were using practices that may not be condoned by the statutory guidance. Just over a fifth of respondents said that their school had encouraged pupils to move to a different school, without recording such a move as a permanent exclusion, while a very small minority of teachers reported that their schools had engaged in the other illegal or uncondoned practices that we asked them about. Nonetheless, the data supports the need to raise awareness of good (and legal) practice in this area, so that no child is disadvantaged by unfair practices, which fail to conform to the statutory guidance and the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child. Given that higher proportions of secondary teachers than primary

teachers reported all types of exclusion practice taking place in their school, focussing awareness raising activities on secondary schools may be merited.

Teachers' awareness of the content of the statutory guidance on exclusions was mixed. While a majority of teachers knew which exclusions practices are permitted by the statutory guidance, a sizable minority did not. Senior leaders have a more accurate grasp of the guidance than classroom teachers. This is unsurprising, given that senior leaders are generally responsible for setting their school's policies on behaviour management and exclusions. The data suggests that more communication with teachers, particularly classroom teachers, to raise awareness of the details of the statutory guidance is needed.

High proportions of teachers felt that their school is responding to the needs of pupils with specific needs, with only very small proportions of teachers disagreeing. However, in most cases the percentages of teachers who considered that their school is meeting these pupils' need 'to some extent' exceeded those saying that their school does so 'to great extent'. This would suggest that many schools could be providing better support to pupils. Identifying what schools need in order to do this will be crucial.

Encouragingly, the large majority of teachers (three-quarters at least for each type of training) told us that they had received training to help them meet the needs of particular vulnerable groups of pupils. However, a significant minority of teachers had not received such training. Of particular note, around a quarter of teachers had not received training on how to meet the needs of learners with a physical disability or those with EAL, which could indicate a particular gap in provision. The majority of teachers felt that their training had been at least satisfactory, but only very small proportions felt that it was excellent. Furthermore, while a large majority of respondents believed that the training they had received had impacted on their behaviour as a teacher, only just over a third said that it had had a lot of impact. This suggests that there is a need for better training provision, in order to equip teachers to adequately support pupils with specific needs.

Teachers' suggestions about why some groups are disproportionately excluded included reference to the social hinterland inhabited by key groups of learners and parental attitudes to learning. However, a smaller group of respondents cited issues such as the nature of the curriculum and indicated that schools had not responded to those learners' needs, leading to disengagement and disaffection. This was noticeable in response to the question about why learners with SEN were more likely to be excluded. The responses suggest that schools need to be encouraged to consider how to address the background factors influencing the lives of learners from these backgrounds in order to engage them positively in school life. There is certainly a need to raise awareness of the requirements of the Equality Act 2012 too, as fewer than four in ten teachers said that their school had informed staff these.

Taken together, these findings provide an interesting set of data on teachers' views, knowledge and awareness of exclusions and equalities issues. The findings will complement the OCC's planned qualitative work with teachers, which will delve further into these areas.

Supporting information

How was the survey conducted?

This report is based on data from the November 2012 survey. A panel of 1609 practising teachers from 1252 schools in the maintained sector in England completed the survey. Teachers completed the survey online between the 9th and 21st November 2012. During the survey period, a team of experienced coders within the Foundation coded all 'open' questions (those without a pre-identified set of responses).

What was the composition of the panel?

The panel included teachers from the full range of roles in primary and secondary schools, from headteachers to newly qualified class teachers. Fifty per cent (801) of the respondents were teaching in primary schools and 50 per cent (808) were teaching in secondary schools.

How representative of schools nationally were the schools corresponding to the teachers panel?

There was no significant difference between the primary sample and primary population in terms of eligibility for free school meals. There was an under-representation of schools in the highest quintile and second lowest quintile in terms of eligibility for free school meals in the sample of secondary schools. In the overall sample (primary and secondary schools) there was under-representation in the highest quintile in terms of eligibility for free school meals. To address the issues with the primary and secondary samples, weights were calculated using free school meals factors to create a more balanced sample. Due to the differences between the populations of all schools and secondary schools, different weights were created for secondary schools and then for the whole sample overall. The weightings have been applied to the secondary schools and overall sample analyses referred to in this commentary and contained within the tables supplied in electronic format (via Pulsar Web)⁶. No weights have been applied to any of the primary sample analyses.

Tables S.1, S.2 and S.3 show the representation of the (weighted) achieved sample against the population. Table S.4 shows the representation of the (weighted) teacher sample by role in school.

⁶ The sample was not weighted for missing free school meal data

Table S.1 Representation of primary schools compared to primary schools nationally

		National Population	NFER Sample
		%	%
(Overall performance by KS2 2011 data)	Lowest band	18	15
	2nd lowest band	18	16
	Middle band	17	19
	2nd highest band	21	23
	Highest band	25	24
	Missing	1	<1
% eligible FSM (5 pt scale) (2010/11)	Lowest 20%	20	19
	2nd lowest 20%	20	20
	Middle 20%	20	21
	2nd highest 20%	20	23
	Highest 20%	20	17
	Missing	1	<1
Primary school type	Infants	8	9
	First School	5	4
	Infant & Junior (Primary)	74	72
	First & Middle	0	0
	Junior	7	11
	Middle deemed Primary	0	1
	Academy	5	4
Region	North	31	23
	Midlands	32	29
	South	37	48
Local Authority type	London Borough	11	14
	Metropolitan Authorities	21	20
	English Unitary Authorities	18	18
	Counties	51	49
Number of schools		16753	726

Due to rounding, percentages may not sum to 100

Some information is not available for all schools and some schools included more than one respondent

Source: NFER Omnibus Survey November 2012

Table S.2 Representation of (weighted) secondary schools compared to secondary schools nationally

		National	NFER
		Population	Sample
		%	%
Achievement Band (Overall performance by GCSE 2011 data)	Lowest band	17	15
	2nd lowest band	19	18
	Middle band	19	22
	2nd highest band	19	21
	Highest band	20	21
	Missing	6	3
% eligible FSM (5 pt scale) (2010/11)	Lowest 20%	19	19
	2nd lowest 20%	20	20
	Middle 20%	19	20
	2nd highest 20%	19	19
	Highest 20%	19	20
	Missing	4	2
Secondary school type	Middle	6	3
	Secondary Modern	2	1
	Comprehensive to 16	21	23
	Comprehensive to 18	24	29
	Grammar	5	6
	Other secondary school	<1	0
	Academies	42	39
	North	29	26
	Midlands	33	33
	South	38	41
Local Authority type	London Borough	13	14
	Metropolitan Authorities	21	22
	English Unitary Authorities	19	18
	Counties	47	46
Number of schools		3227	526

Due to rounding, percentages may not sum to 100.

Some information is not available for all schools and some schools included more than one respondent.

Source: NFER Omnibus Survey November 2012.

Table S.3 Representation of all schools (weighted) compared to all schools nationally

		National Population	NFER Sample
		%	%
Achievement Band (By KS2 2011 and GCSE 2011 data)	Lowest band	18	16
	2nd lowest band	18	17
	Middle band	17	20
	2nd highest band	21	22
	Highest band	24	23
	Missing	2	1
% eligible FSM (5 pt scale) (2010/11)	Lowest 20%	20	20
	2nd lowest 20%	20	20
	Middle 20%	19	20
	2nd highest 20%	20	20
	Highest 20%	20	20
	Missing	1	1
Region	North	30	24
	Midlands	32	31
	South	37	45
Local Authority type	London Borough	11	14
	Metropolitan Authorities	21	21
	English Unitary Authorities	18	18
	Counties	51	47
Number of schools		19942	1252

Due to rounding, percentages may not sum to 100

Some information is not available for all schools and some schools included more than one respondent

Source: NFER Omnibus Survey November 2012.

Table S.4 Comparison of the achieved (weighted) sample with the national population by grade of teacher (not including Academies)

Role	Primary schools				Secondary schools			
	National Population ¹		NFER Sample		National Population ¹		NFER Sample ³	
	N ¹	%	N	%	N ¹	%	N	%
Headteachers	15.4	8	63	8	2.1	2	5	1
Deputy Headteachers	10.8	6	82	11	3.3	2	19	4
Assistant Headteachers	6.4	3	54	7	7.6	6	51	10
Class teachers and others	155.6	83	567	74	119.2	90	424	85

1. National population figures are expressed in thousands and for headteachers, deputy heads and assistant heads are based on full-time positions. NFER sample figures include all staff with these roles and so may include part-time staff.

2. The NFER sample for classroom teachers and others is based on headcount whereas the national population data is based on FTE teachers

3. Secondary sample data is weighted.

4. Due to rounding, percentages may not sum to 100

5. Sources: NFER Omnibus Survey November 2012, DfE: School Workforce in England, November 2011, <http://media.education.gov.uk/assets/files/pdf/s/sfr06-2012v6.pdf> [10 December 2012].

Table S.5 Comparison of the achieved weighted Academies sample with the national population by grade of teacher

Role	All Academies (primary and secondary)			
	National Population ¹		NFER Sample ³	
	N ¹	%	N	%
Headteachers	1.4	2	6	2
Deputy Headteachers	2.1	3	11	3
Assistant Headteachers	4.0	5	25	7
Class teachers and others	67.7	90	306	88

1. National population figures are expressed in thousands and for headteachers, deputy heads and assistant heads are based on full-time positions. NFER sample figures include all staff with these roles and so may include part-time staff.

2. Due to rounding, percentages may not sum to 100

3. Secondary/all teacher sample data is weighted.

4. Sources: NFER Omnibus Survey November 2012, DfE: School Workforce in England, November 2011, <http://media.education.gov.uk/assets/files/pdf/s/sfr06-2012v6.pdf> [10 December 2012].

How accurately do the results represent the national position?

Assuming that our data is representative of the population at large (and we have no evidence to suggest otherwise) we can calculate the precision of results from each of our

samples based on the number of respondents. The smallest number of respondents is for the primary school sample where we have 801 respondents. In this case we can calculate that all results based on the full sample will be precise to within at worst plus or minus 5 percentage points. This means that we are 95 per cent sure that if we were to collect results from all primary schools in the country the results we would get would be within 5 percentage points of the results presented in this report. We have marginally more respondents within the secondary school sample and hence can be even more confident about our results. For this reason, **within any of our samples, the precision of results based on all respondents will be precise to within at worst plus or minus 5 percentage points.**

Certain questions within the survey were filtered and in these cases the number of respondents to questions may be much smaller. In these cases we may need to be more cautious about the precision of the percentages presented within the report. The table below gives a rough guide to the level of precision that can be attributed to each table based upon the total number of respondents. For example, if a table is based upon just 40 respondents we can only be sure that the percentages within that table are correct to within plus or minus 16 percentage points.

Table S.6 Precision of estimates in percentage point terms

Number of respondents	Precision of estimates in percentage point terms
30	18
40	16
50	14
75	12
100	10
150	9
200	7
300	6
400	5
650	4