

# The changing face of education recruitment in the UK



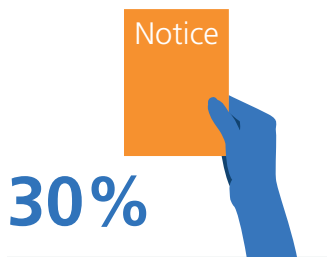
# Introduction

New research from Randstad has revealed the face of education recruitment is changing with teaching establishments increasingly relying on specialist recruitment agencies.

At a time when education is facing a worrying exodus of teachers from the profession, combined with difficulties in hiring teachers, the need to have planned recruitment and a positive employer brand is greater than ever.



## Key takeaways



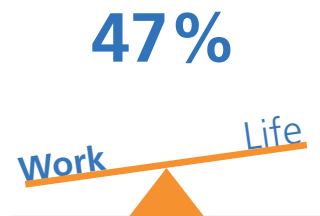
30% of teachers are considering leaving the profession within the next 12 months



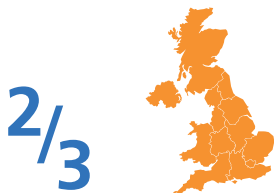
Creating a positive employer brand is key for schools wanting to attract and retain outstanding teachers



79% of experienced teachers feel pressure to retire at state pension age



47% cited poor work/life balance as one of the main reasons for leaving



Two-thirds of teachers say location is the most important factor for accepting a job

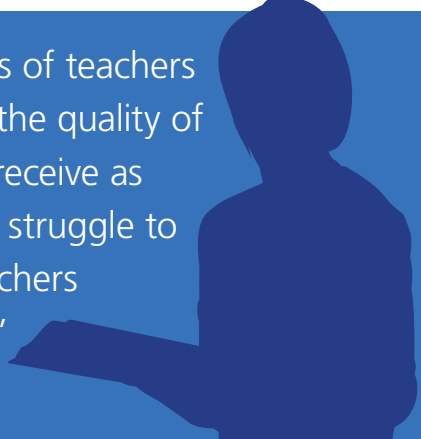
# Education crisis

Education is facing an unprecedented recruitment crisis with 30% of teachers considering leaving the profession within the next 12 months and schools correspondingly finding it difficult to attract and retain the best staff.

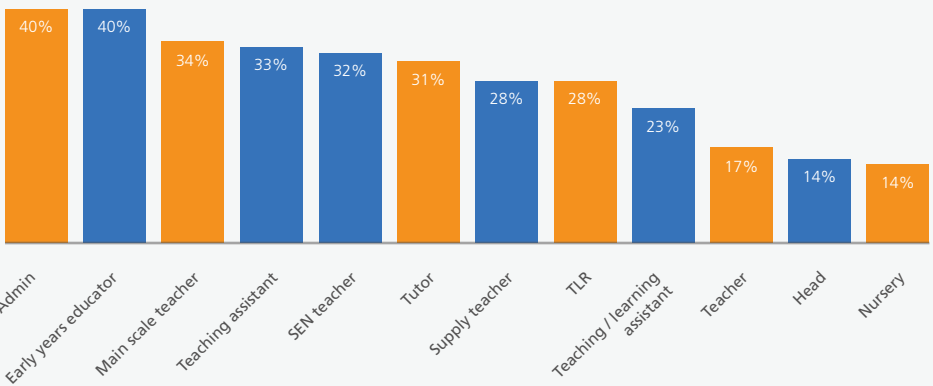
Almost a third of all education professionals intend to leave in the coming year because of plummeting morale, poor work/life balance, heavy workloads and a narrow and uncreative curriculum. 34% of main scale teachers, 40%

of Early Years teachers, 33% of teaching assistants and 32% of Special Educational Needs (SEN) teachers who were asked said they were considering leaving in the next 12 months. The general rate of the so-called teacher brain drain is increasing, up 11% in the last three years, according to the National Audit Office. The proportion of teachers leaving for reasons other than normal retirement increased from 64% to 75%.

“The rising numbers of teachers leaving is affecting the quality of education children receive as schools increasingly struggle to recruit the right teachers for certain subjects”



Graph: Thinking about leaving education in the next 12 months



The rising numbers of teachers leaving is affecting the quality of education children receive as schools increasingly struggle to recruit the right teachers for certain subjects. The Government has failed to hit its recruitment targets for 4 consecutive years,

despite an annual budget of £700m. It means more secondary school subjects are being taught by teachers without a relevant post-A-level qualification with 14 out of 17 subjects having unfilled training places in 2015-16.

In subjects, such as physics, the proportion of those teaching without a relevant qualification has risen from 21% to 28% between 2010 and 2014.

# Poor work/life balance and age discrimination blamed for teachers leaving the profession

The reasons teachers are leaving in their droves are myriad, from salary and 60 hour weeks, to location and too much red tape.

But the top factor teachers gave was the desire for a good work/life balance with 47% citing this as the main reason for leaving. This was a particularly important deciding job factor for those aged between 26 and 35 and teachers over 46. 73% of teachers in both age brackets gave this as a top reason, compared to 66% of 18 to 25-year-olds and 69% of 36 to 45-year-olds.

Many senior teachers are also leaving because of a perception that older teachers should retire at state pension age, regardless of what skills and

experience they still have to offer. Nearly four-fifths of teachers reported feeling such pressure with 36% saying the pressure on them to leave is significant. Almost a third of teachers (32%) said they planned to retire early as a result of such implicit discrimination and 85% of education workers said the belief “they won’t be wanted in the workforce when older” was a key factor behind accelerated retirement plans.

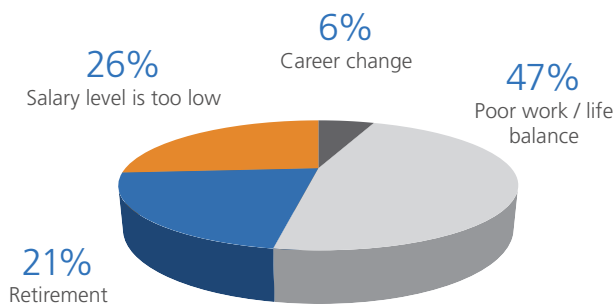
The remaining 15% cited age discrimination in schools as a reason to retire early. Older teachers are feeling undervalued and shut out of schools and figures show that, despite increasing teacher shortages, nearly 40% of teachers over 40 who have completed a teacher training course did not get employed in a

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school, compared to just a quarter of under 25-year-olds.

The flight of this baby-boomer generation because of work-related ageism risks creating a major skills shortage. There is already a war for talented teachers in certain hard-to-fill subjects. With recruitment down and the rate of teachers

leaving up, the growing skills shortage within the sector could be further exacerbated by failing to value older teachers.



Graph: Reasons why main scale teachers want to leave education



# More effective recruitment needed

Automatic pay progression based purely on length of service was abolished in September 2013, giving schools more autonomy when it comes to paying staff. Head teachers now have more control over how they negotiate and what they can pay.

However, the perception that schools don't have the budget to pay staff properly still persists and it is difficult to pay higher salaries to new staff over and above existing staff.

Schools also have limited options when it comes to recruiting staff

because of budgetary constraints and whilst experienced hirers believe they have more control to influence outcomes, less experienced hirers fear they don't have much negotiating power. Schools need to adopt a more strategic approach with a solid employer brand to counteract difficulties in negotiation of salaries. Having an attractive employer brand i.e. good awareness of who they are, a reputation as a good place to work for with decent pay, training and reasonable benefits, would counteract some of the limitations in relation to pay.

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Schools are however, placing increased value on collaborations with recruitment agencies to find teachers rather than making last-minute, reactive decisions. 33% of Academy CEOs look for consultative advice, partnerships and exclusive candidates when they consider using a recruitment agency, perhaps as a result of looking at the bigger picture e.g. for a group of academy schools, one professional could move between the sites with their travel expenses covered by the school.

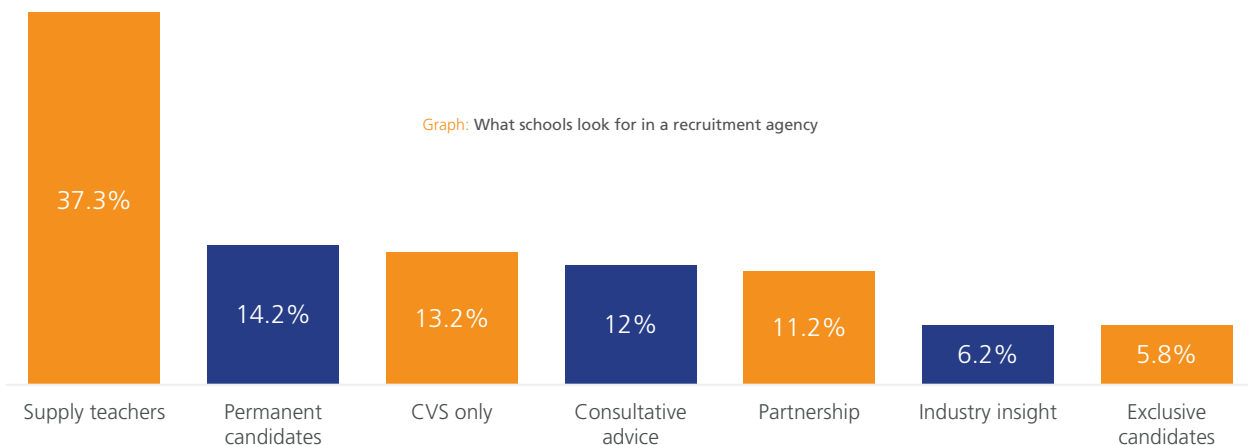
This will go some way towards challenging the status quo of 1 person equals 1 job. Flexibility and innovative work/lifestyle solutions will be crucial for schools to attract and retain outstanding teachers.

The benefits to schools using recruitment agencies include

having candidates put forward who are suitable for the role, reducing time wasted on filtering out the ones who aren't a match and being able to access key strategic skills quickly. Agencies can also help schools to develop their employer brand.

According to the survey results, schools are increasingly relying on recruitment agencies with 15% of all educational professionals, regardless of position, looking to them when it comes to hiring permanent staff. Getting CVs only was particularly valued by heads of department (39%), cover managers (21%) and administrators (10%). 17% of head teachers, 33% of CEOs and 15% of business managers looked for consultative advice. Access to supply teachers was the most important aspect of a recruitment agency across all roles.

Graph: What schools look for in a recruitment agency



# Top factors influencing teachers' job choices

Salary is not the number one factor when it comes to teachers accepting a job offer, according to the survey, indicating there are other considerations which motivate teachers more.

An overwhelming 72% said location was the top factor closely followed by work/life balance at 71%. Just over half cited salary as the deciding factor (57%) whilst 49% looked for strong management.

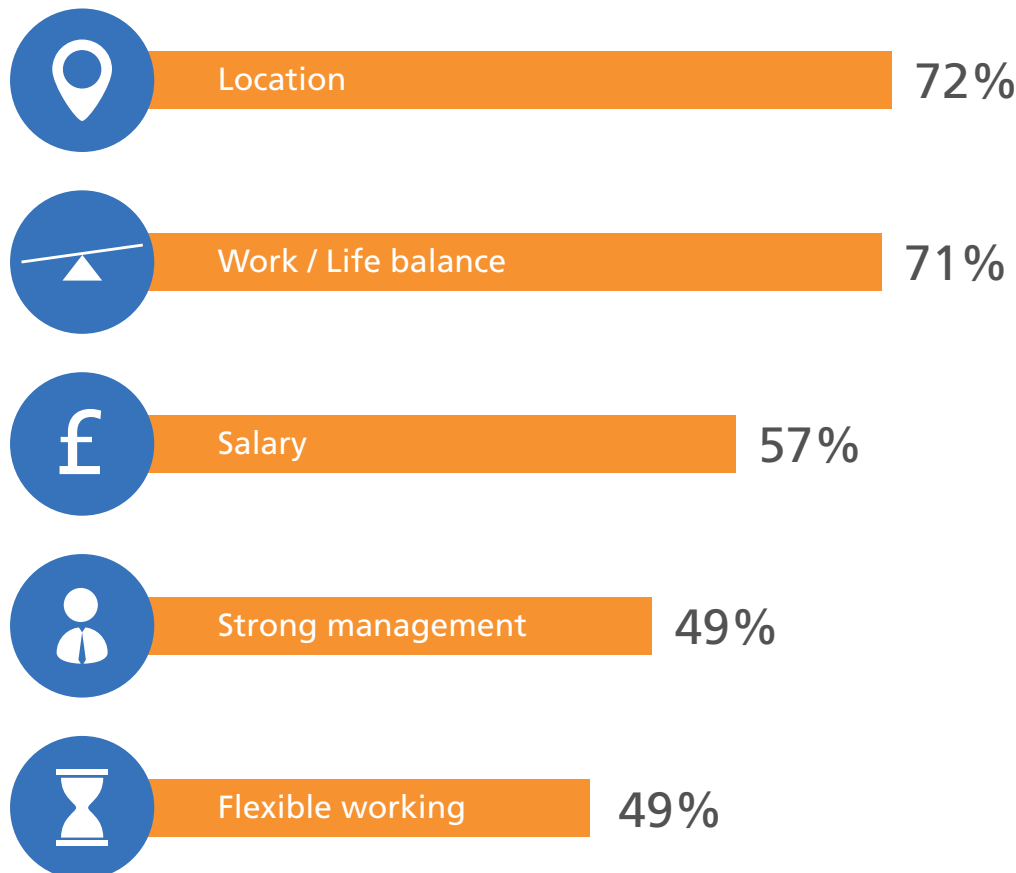
The figures indicate just how important employer brand is in attracting the right candidates by promoting the other soft benefits

employees can access working at a particular school such as location, parking, transport links, technology and flexibility, not just salary.

43% said increased flexible working would also make them stay in the profession longer and nearly 50% said it would be a key factor in accepting a job. How schools manage their staff's needs for taking time off work also has an impact. Just over one quarter of teachers stated that they take time off to care for a family member, which demonstrates the importance for planning around these kinds of absences.

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Graph: What factors are influencing teachers job choices?



Over a third also said work-related stress would be the main reason they would take time off. It is therefore crucial for schools to recognize any warning signs that can be addressed sooner rather than later. By encouraging a healthy approach to managing stress and promoting an effective work/life balance, the amount of teaching days lost and potentially leaving the sector all together will start to reduce.

Schools should include their policy in relation to flexibility at the recruitment stage to enhance their employer brand, and demonstrate to candidates they offer flexible working.

They also need to highlight other benefits such as continuous professional development, convenient location, good transport links as well as the chance to make a positive difference to school children's lives.

In addition, a third of respondents also said less obvious benefits were important; so schools should consider promoting things such as discounts, voucher schemes and other perks that they are able to offer. Ofsted results and a strong leadership and management team were also cited as important factors when "selling" a school to candidates.

# Younger teacher training and development

The survey showed newly qualified teachers are full of commitment (98%) and enthusiasm (97%) but this drops once they have been in the role for a while and, according to the Association of Teachers and Lecturers, four in ten quit within the first year with many blaming heavy workloads and over-monitoring. This exodus, which has almost tripled in six years, is contributing to the growing skills shortage and leaving the remaining teachers exhausted and stressed.

Looking into areas that cause the biggest workload for teachers such as marking, planning and data management as well as reducing

red tape and admin could help reverse the trend.

More training opportunities were also cited as the top factor for success by 59% of respondents aged 18 to 25. 81% also said on boarding – the mechanisms through which new employees acquire the knowledge, skills and behaviours to become effective employees – was crucial to teacher success and retention. The value of on boarding cannot be underestimated as it reduces the time it takes to get someone acclimatised to their new role, gives them an understanding of the values, goals and culture of the

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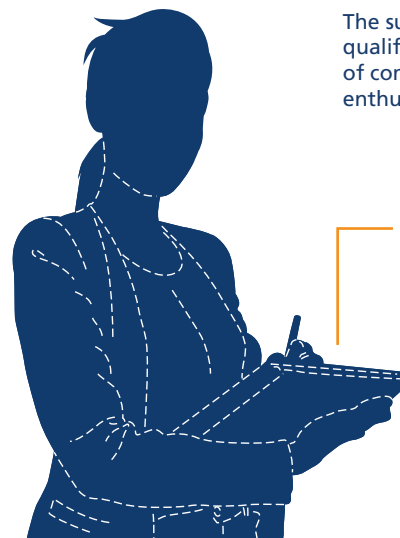
school, fosters loyalty and a sense of belonging and reduces staff turnover – something which is vital if the current teaching crisis is to be reversed.

The on boarding process should be formal but fun, it shouldn't overload new employees with information and extra support should be provided for them for several months.

Current staff could be invited to share their views with new staff

and mentors could be assigned to help them settle in. This could be particularly beneficial for older teachers who feel they don't need further training but who would gain a sense of value, passing on their wisdom and helping younger teachers reach their potential. The training opportunities available and the on boarding process however, need to be evaluated by schools to ensure they complement their employer brand. They also need to be bringing it in at the recruitment stage as a benefit to candidates.

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98%  
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97%  
enthusiasm

# Retaining older teachers

Almost half of teachers asked (45%) said changing their role to become a mentor, allowing them to pass on their wisdom and experience to a new generation of teachers, would encourage them to stay in the profession for longer, compared to 38% of workers in other industries.

Of those asked, 43% said flexible working such as job shares or part-time/flexible hours would also cause them to delay retirement. Having more flexible working arrangements would allow them to fit their responsibilities around other commitments such as caring for relatives, hobbies or learning new skills.

Phased retirement was also important for 38% of teachers who said having such an option would keep them working for longer. Retraining was an issue for 27% who felt that such schemes keeping them abreast of changes to the curriculum, prescribed teaching strategies and IT advances would be beneficial.

A quarter of teachers also felt a change in attitude towards older teachers would have a positive impact on retention.



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## Conclusion

Schools need to overhaul their recruitment processes if they are to attract and retain the best teachers. Gone are the days when a CV or application and an interview were sufficient, they now need to focus on having a recruiting strategy in place rather than reacting in an ad hoc way to vacancies as they arise.

Application processes should be as simple as possible and lengthy application packs could be putting off some of the top candidates. Recruitment agencies are key in helping this change in strategy because they can provide the necessary expertise and help create a successful employer brand which

then allows schools to attract and retain the best candidates.

This shift in recruitment style runs hand in hand with the need to reverse the trend of teachers leaving and the emerging skills shortage. More planned recruitment, greater promotion

of the benefits of working in a school and more help, flexibility and training given to teachers both young and old should start to have an impact on the numbers of teachers quitting early.



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