

## 4. Career development

### 4.1 Introduction

This chapter covers four sections. It starts by looking at additional responsibilities and views on the promotion of second year teachers from teachers', SLs' and mentors' viewpoints before discussing second year teachers' long term career goals. The chapter then concludes with a discussion on gaining promotional opportunities in order to gain new experiences and new challenges.

### 4.2 Additional Responsibilities

As has been discussed in Section 2.2, whether or not teachers in our case study schools had been given additional responsibilities during their second year of teaching tended to vary depending on whether they worked in a primary or secondary school. This also corresponds to the findings in the *Becoming a Teacher* report (Tracey et al., 2008).

There was a strong expectation in most primary schools that second year teachers would take on additional responsibilities. In some schools additional responsibilities were perceived as compulsory both by SLs and second year teachers themselves. SLs made it clear that second year teachers "had" (Primary SL) to take on more responsibility, and second year teachers talked of taking on extra responsibility because "this is what is expected" (Primary second year teacher). Some SLs also recognised that "second year teachers are frowned upon in this school if they don't take on extra responsibilities" (Primary SL). In one primary school subject leadership was even a requirement in the NQT year: "being an NQT in a small school cannot absolve anyone from subject leadership" (Primary SL), so the second year teacher had already become the maths coordinator in her NQT year. However, in contrast some primary SLs took a more measured approach. For example in one school the Head was keen to give second year teachers responsibilities but didn't want to force things on them and talked of supporting the transition by second year teachers sharing responsibility for a curriculum area rather than being expected to lead it on their own straight away.

Echoing the findings of the *Becoming a Teacher* Study (Tracey et al., 2008) the most frequent additional responsibility mentioned was subject co-ordination. This was identified for nine teachers in eight schools. Subject coordination of literacy or maths was mentioned by four schools (one - literacy; three - maths) and subject coordination of non core subjects by six schools (two - PSHE; one - MFL; two - PE; one - D&T) with some teachers taking on co-ordination of more than one area. Other additional responsibilities that were mentioned included responsibility for gifted and talented, English as Additional Language Learners and foundation stage maths.

Only one teacher mentioned that the pressure of their additional responsibilities was too much and they wanted to concentrate on teaching rather than take on extra responsibilities (Primary second year teacher).

In contrast to primary schools, SLs and mentors in secondary schools tended to see the second year of teaching as one where teachers were given new challenges in their work and training to support them in working towards additional formal responsibilities in the following years. Only two of the second year secondary teachers had been given significant formal additional responsibilities, in one school as a Head of Year and in another as coordinator for gifted and talented. Only in one school did SLs state that additional responsibility was expected of all second year teachers. New challenges were often designed to develop leadership and management competencies, including tasks

such as organising guest speakers or educational visits, responsibility for a key stage within a subject, and other tasks that took them beyond their immediate classroom.

Two of the teachers in our special school sample and two in our independent school sample have also taken on additional responsibilities. While our sample sizes are small for both of these school types these data suggests that these school types may take a similar approach to primary schools in giving second year teachers additional responsibilities.

### **4.3 Views on promotion of second year teachers**

Unlike the data relating to the appropriateness of second year teachers being given additional responsibilities the data pertaining to the promotion of second year teachers, was not divided according to type of school. However, there are a number of different opinions on this subject within all three respondent groups.

Nineteen of our case study teachers stated that they personally were not looking for promotion early on in their careers. Just over half of these (11) were primary teachers. The reason given for this was the need to gain more experience as a classroom teacher before taking on a big promotion.

Some teachers feel that generally speaking it is inappropriate for second year teachers to be promoted (Primary second year teacher). However it was noted that if second year teachers were mature entrants and had prior educational experience e.g. as teaching assistants that they may be ready for promotion sooner than traditional entrants (Primary second year teacher).

A number of our other case study teachers (15) stated that they thought that the appropriateness of promotion for second year teachers depended on the individual and wasn't necessarily right for everyone:

"Promoting early career teachers depends on the individual. It's not about age or experience, it's about the skills and qualities they can bring to a role. Early career teachers should be given the same opportunities as all other members of staff."  
(Special school, second year teacher)

Twelve SLs and thirteen mentors also agree that the appropriateness of promoting second year teachers depends on the individual teacher.

One primary SL highlighted a concern that teachers should have experience teaching different year groups before being promoted, therefore restricting the possibility of promoting second year teachers. Two additional primary SLs stated that they were not in favour of promoting second year teachers at all. Four mentors also support this last assertion (one primary; one secondary; two independent):

"Post NQTs get promotions over time, not in the second year but the third or fourth year. Second year teachers need to embed their teaching within the school and get experience before a big promotion." (Primary, SL)

A number of SLs (eight in total - two primary, five secondary and one independent) also caution that it is possible to promote early career staff before they are ready to take on the additional responsibility that comes with the new post.

However a large number of our case study SLs (29) from across all four school types (12 primary; 13 secondary, one independent, three special schools) stated that they and the

SLT team in their school supports development opportunities for second year teachers which can (and are expected to) ultimately lead onto promotion opportunities.

#### **4.4 Second year teachers' long term career goals**

Five of our case study second year teachers (three primary; two secondary) stated that they have no long term career goals at present, but are rather concentrating on gaining teaching experience in the here and now.

Thirteen of our interviewees would like to take up a middle management position in the longer term. Four of these respondents are primary teachers, seven are secondary teachers and the remaining two work in special schools.

Two primary teachers stated that their main goal was to build confidence in their main subject area so that they could become a subject leader. Two primary teachers were also considering a career outside of teaching.

There were a few teachers in all types of school who stated that they wanted to move on to a new school to develop their career, and teachers in all three sectors discussed the need to move on at some point to develop as a teacher, not simply in terms of career development:

"I am leaving to go to a school in [City] in July. This is not directly a result of the lack of training here as my family were moving anyway, but it is an opportunity to get proper training. The new school has offered to provide training... many retention issues are personal, but the structure the school has for promotion is also an important one." (Secondary, Second Year Teacher)

This is a similar finding to that of the survey conducted in the Becoming a Teacher Study (Tracey et al., 2008). Our case study primary teachers tended to describe their plans as only leaving for promotion if opportunities did not arise in their current school, whereas secondary school teachers were more likely to describe their plans as seeking promotion *per se*, which could be either in the school they were currently teaching in or elsewhere.

#### **4.5 Promotion for experience/new challenges**

Resonating with the Becoming a Teacher findings career development was not the only reason given by our second year teachers for seeking promotional opportunities. Four primary teachers and one secondary stated that they had gone for or were looking for a promotion because they wanted to gain new experiences and challenges to broaden their horizons of teaching and develop their individual identities as teachers.

One SL in a special school mentioned that they use CPD specifically to give staff a variety of experiences and in particular help them to expand their knowledge and skills of their own teaching and learning. A mentor in a secondary school stated that it is important to give staff new experiences in this way to show that you have confidence in them and their capabilities as teachers.

#### **4.6 Summary**

There was a strong expectation within our primary case studies that second year teachers would take on additional responsibilities. This wasn't shared by secondary schools, which tended to view the second year of teaching as an opportunity to give teachers new challenges and support in working towards gaining additional responsibility in future years.

Views on the promotion of second year teachers were not divided by type of school. A number of our second year teachers asserted that they personally were looking to gain

more experience of teaching before going for promotion and that the appropriateness of promoting second year teachers depends on the individual. Several SLs and mentors agreed that appropriateness of promoting early career teachers depends on the individual. However, some SLs also cautioned that it is possible to promote teachers too early on in their careers. Nonetheless a large number of SLs (again across all school types) support development opportunities for second year teachers that can (and are expected to) ultimately lead onto promotion in future years.

A small number of our case study teachers stated that they didn't have any long term career goals, though a number expressed an interest in a middle management post. Primary teachers tended to describe their future plans as leaving their school for promotion only if no opportunities arose where they currently work. On the other hand, secondary teachers spoke of seeking promotion per se irrespective of location. Seeking promotion to gain experience and new challenges rather than for career development was also important for a small number of teachers.

## 5. Progression to the second year and retention

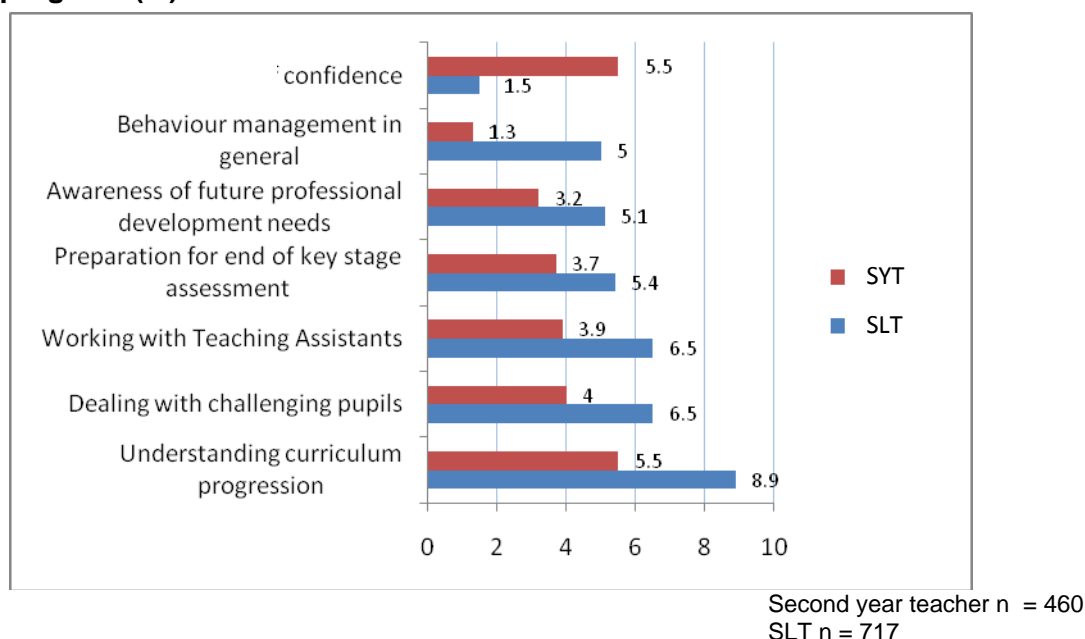
### 5.1 Introduction

In this section, we examine SL views on whether there is an issue in relation to progression and retention of second year teachers, and review intentions regarding staying or moving from their current school. We then examine the major influences on their retention in the school and profession, examining in particular the related issues of professional development, career development support and being valued.

### 5.2 Progression to the second year

Our qualitative and quantitative data indicated that there was not a major issue in relation to progression from the NQT year for the vast majority of teachers. From our qualitative sample, although eight of the 50 teachers we spoke to in their NQT year had moved schools, seven had remained in teaching (and we had no information on the destination of the eighth). We did not gather similar data from the Part 2 questionnaire (since that survey concentrated on the NQT year itself), but we did ask about strengths and weaknesses in relation to key areas of progression. For most of these areas, SLT and teacher responses indicated that fewer than 5% of schools felt there were serious weaknesses. The major exception was in relation to Multi-agency working e.g. working with social workers. Here, nearly 27% of SLT members felt there were weaknesses in NQTs' ability to progress in this area, and around the same proportion of teachers felt they were weak or very weak in this area too. Note, though, that there were a large number of missing responses to this question, indicating that many SLT members did not feel this was relevant, so this finding needs to be treated with caution. Other areas where 5% or more of SLT members or teachers themselves felt there were weaknesses are included in Figure 5.1 below. Note that for these areas (except NQT self confidence) and all those not reported here too (see appendix 2 Table A2.1) SLT members saw more weakness than did the teachers themselves. The biggest areas of weakness identified by SLT members (other than multi-agency working) were seen to be understanding curriculum progression across key stages, dealing with challenging pupils and working with teaching assistants. For the teachers the biggest weaknesses (other than multi-agency working) were seen to be understanding curriculum progression across key stages and self-confidence.

**Figure 5.1: Percentage of NQTs perceived to have weaknesses in their readiness to progress (%)**



There were some significant differences by sector for these key areas of weakness. As Table 5.1 below shows, whilst primary teachers had less self confidence and felt less prepared for end of key stage assessment, secondary teachers were significantly more likely to indicate they felt they had issues in dealing with teaching assistants and over 40% felt they were weak in terms of multi-agency working (compared with 16% of primary teachers).

**Table 5.1: proportion of NQTs with weaknesses in their readiness to progress (by phase) percentage**

	Primary	secondary
Multi-agency working e.g. with social workers <sup>3</sup>	16.4	41.1
Working with Teaching Assistants	0.8	8.0
Dealing with challenging pupils	2.8	5.2
Self confidence	6.4	4.3
Preparation for end of key stage assessment	4.8	2.5

Primary n = 250  
Secondary n = 211

### 5.3 SL overview – retention in the second year

Once NQTs successfully made the transition to second year teachers, thoughts turn to retaining them. As we found in the Part 2 report, there was a group of perhaps half of the schools whose SL representatives stated clearly that retention was not a major issue, often despite challenges, even if recruitment could be difficult, as with one primary school:

"Have trouble getting good quality staff at every level. There does not seem to be the applicants. Lots of TAs and support staff just not the teaching staff. The school

<sup>3</sup> There were only 213 primary responses and 157 secondary responses here, indicating large numbers of SLs did not see this as relevant to early career teachers, so this finding should be treated with caution

does not tend to get a very good response to job adverts i.e. lack of numbers and quality applications. The school overcomes this problem by headhunting. Staffing is stable at the moment; there are no retention issues. Once the right people have been appointed they tend to stay at the school for a long time as they are well supported and valued within their different teams." (Primary SL).

In contrast, a small number of schools (at least 4 or 5) indicated a retention problem, in some cases linked to difficult catchment and temporary contracts.

#### **5.4 Views on staff staying or leaving**

In line with the previous report, there was broad agreement with the view that staff leaving for the right reasons – career development, promotion – was expected and seen not to be problematic (at least 10 schools), for example one school noted that they were "aware that we might be investing in people, preparing them to get promotion elsewhere, but we accept this. We are developing people to be creative and dynamic, not to tread water." (Primary mentor). One SL and one mentor, both also in primary schools, stated they actually encourage early career teachers to move schools to broaden their experience of teaching:

"[It's] better to go to other schools to see different ways of doing things [I] would advise someone not to get 'trapped' too long in a school even though they enjoy teaching there." (Primary mentor)

In fact, some schools noted that in more experienced teachers they looked for variety of experience themselves so had to expect that staff would leave, for example one SL noted that:

"Some early career teachers need to move on after 3 to 4 years for experience and promotion as it is beneficial for the individual. It is not viewed in a positive light if they stay at one school too long when early on in career." (Primary, SL).

Two former mentors stated that their school would support an early careers teacher to move to another school for promotion if they were unable to offer them a suitable promotion opportunity.

#### **5.5 Second year teachers' future plans: staying or moving on**

We began the interviews with teachers in the NQT year asking about their future plans, and at that point the vast majority intended to stay in teaching, with many intending to stay in their current school for at least the short term. The picture had not changed significantly by the time of their second year of teaching. This is also in line with the *Becoming a Teacher Second year report*, in which 80% of their sample expected to remain in the same school in the near future. Well over half of the second year teachers, including the vast majority of primary school teachers, intended to stay in the school in what might be characterised as the medium term - two to four years - to develop enough experience as early career teachers. One primary teacher noted:

"it is important that NQTs stay at the school for at least a few years to get the experience taking on more responsibilities as they progress. If early career teachers change schools early on they are not getting the right experience and not enough time to learn the teaching strategies." (Primary second year teacher);

Another made a similar point: "I do not need any inducements to stay. I do not want to take on too much responsibility until I have proved myself to be an outstanding teacher, as I will not be able to suggest what others should do until I have shown I can do it myself."

(Primary second year teacher). This group included some who had been considering leaving, and for perhaps two to four of these, some circumstances in the school had changed. For example, one teacher who had intended to leave at this point, decided to stay on to develop her experience under a new Headteacher and another now felt "comfortable and happy" in her department which had a new Head of Department who had made "a huge difference" (Secondary second year teacher).

Around a further 10 teachers – including all three special schools and all three independent school respondents who discussed the issue – intended to stay in the school for the long term. For these teachers, the culture and character of the school tended to be the main factor here (contrasting with other teachers who were more orientated towards promotion). For example, one special school teacher told us she thought she would "stay here forever" noting that "the tiny achievements make the job worthwhile." (Special, second year teacher).

Three teachers - all secondary - intended to leave due to relocation or promotion. There was also a small group of around four who were unhappy in the school and wanted to leave. The issues here tended to be related to pressures of working in schools in more deprived or challenging circumstances, or problems with department or school leadership. One primary teacher who, working in a deprived, low attaining school, felt she would leave the profession in the long term had decided to stay for the time being, in part because she was getting married over the summer and couldn't face stress of getting a new job. She had tried to leave in October, but didn't find a new school and was persuaded to stay because the school had not anyone to replace her.

The other group that were significantly more likely to feel less likely to stay – and overall came across as more anxious about their futures, unsurprisingly – were those on temporary contracts. One can get a good sense of this anxiety from one of our sample of primary teachers. She told us her contract is "a big issue" - she was "only temporary and now looking for another job" as the person she was covering for was coming back from maternity leave. She was "looking in the same area and online for vacancies although not many are advertised". She had "completed a couple of applications although competing with candidates who have just completed their training and these may seem more attractive to schools as cheaper." so she was

"worried that it maybe difficult to get a new job because so many people are applying.... may have to consider supply but [I don't] really want to go down that route; even though the money is good, it's not a permanent job. [I] would like to get a job in a school where [I] can progress and move on." (Primary second year teacher)

There was a clear sense of relief reported by those who had managed to secure permanent contracts following their NQT year.

Looking to the longer term, as in the Part 2 Report, only a small minority intended to leave the profession for fresh challenges, to teach abroad or - in two cases - due to pressures of the job.

The vast majority of our teachers were thinking about going for promotion opportunities in the future. Seven of the 45 second year teachers interviewed stated that they would think of moving to a new school in a few years time if no promotion opportunities became available in their current school. Three of these are primary teachers, two are secondary teachers and the remaining two work in Independent schools:



"[I] would consider going for another promotion but [it's] hard in school as not many people move on as can't see a way up unless someone leaves. If in a couple of years nothing becomes available would consider moving on." (Secondary, Second year teacher)

As has been discussed in the previous section there were a few teachers in all school types who wanted to move onto a new school to develop their career.

## 5.6 Factors associated with retention

For the majority of second year teachers we spoke to, professional development was not seen as related to retention. For example one secondary teacher noted that she didn't "make a connection between EPD and retention – [I think] EPD is organised because they have to, not because they think it will make [teachers] stay." (Secondary). In fact, some noted it might have the opposite effect, for example one primary teacher said she thought that "the school is investing in CPD opportunities to encourage [me] to stay, but the experience [I have] been given may actually lead to [my] leaving." (Primary)

The prevailing view was that promotion opportunities, not professional development, kept staff as one secondary school teacher noted: "I think [the school] try to retain staff, but not necessarily through CPD – instead they use promotion, responsibility and TLRs to motivate staff.". The view from SLs was more mixed and more nuanced, given that they had a broader perspective. On the whole, whilst they said that professional development per se did not lead to retention in some instrumental way, they supported the view that development in its broader sense was helpful. One SL (whose second year teacher was quoted immediately above) pointed out that NQTs may not be able to see that professional development was useful: "staff get good CPD here – it helps retain them, but I'm not sure they're consciously aware of this" (Secondary SL), and at least three other SLs agreed that professional development was in fact important to retention. A number of SLs, at least 8, made the point that professional development and responsibility together were important in keeping the right staff, as illustrated by these quotations:

"[I have] noticed that post induction teachers "want more". [I don't] think it's a bad thing, but they are not content to sit back and be a class teacher. Some want management experience; others want to develop highly specialised subject leadership. They are keen to take all CPD opportunities and are more active in this. In performance management meetings they are much more interested in seeking opportunities than they used to be... they will look for jobs elsewhere if they don't get offered opportunities...[We do] use CPD as a way of keeping staff. If people feel they're in a dead end job and not developing they want to move on. It takes years to be a fantastic teacher, but CPD (not necessarily the kind that involves going on courses) gives you instant results; it enthuses and motivates. Any school who doesn't consciously offer CPD opportunities is foolish." (Primary SL)

"The school prides itself on its ability to retain a high proportion of staff and [we think] it is a reflection of the way [we] structure CPD/career development, plotting a trajectory for [teachers] for several years after the NQT year. [The school] maintains a record of how all recruits over the past 8 years have fared in terms of career progression within the school. " (Secondary SL).

Providing promotion and responsibility is clearly taken very seriously by many of our schools, and the interviews show the care that was taken by many schools (at least 12) over trying to find the right opportunities for the right staff to keep them and make the most of their potential, as the quotations above indicate. At least 5 other SLs and mentors stated explicitly that their school would promote a second year teacher in an attempt to

retain them, for example one secondary SL noted that "In some instances posts are created to keep good quality staff."

However, two schools, one independent and one special school, clearly affirmed that their school does not use career development as a way to encourage staff retention.

The reasons given by SLs and mentors for their second year teachers leaving did largely centre on promotion, although some mentioned leaving due to not being suited to the profession. As we noted in the Part 2 report, this is not seen by schools as negative, with some attrition being expected.

Despite its lack of emphasis by the second year teachers, support beyond professional development was seen to be important by several SLs, at least 12, linked often to valuing staff. The issue of support was clearly more prevalent amongst primary SLs, and this was often linked to ethos of the school, again largely by primary schools. For example, the SL interviewee from one primary school in challenging circumstances said they were able to maintain good retention "because the children are delightful ... but challenging, people like the school (atmosphere), staff work well together and visitors comment positively on the ethos once they are here".

The difficulty, of course, in separating all of these related issues – offering development, valuing staff, supporting them – means that it is important to see them all as being inextricably linked; making a statement like "the school places a lot of emphasis on good support and training opportunities and tends to attract staff who are looking for this" (Secondary, SL) was common. We conclude this subsection by presenting an extended quotation from one school that indicates the links between many of the themes relating to retention:

"We have no problem with retention because we offer so many opportunities. After about three years staff start to move on for promotion. This year two staff are leaving to be Heads of Department and one is going to be a senior teacher. This is not a problem as we have managed to recruit quality replacements. It would be a problem if staff were leaving the English department. We advise staff to stay for five years. Some stay seven or ten. However, we are happy for people to stay as long as they would like to. When we appoint people for their second job, they tend to come here for the development opportunities and because it's a training school. We ask at interview why they are leaving their current post and have been surprised by the lack of development opportunities some have had. They also cite lack of support as a reason for looking to move on. Professional Development is a key thing for the school. It's conscious; it's the hub of the school. We are also keen to give people the opportunity to develop their leadership skills, and we also create opportunities for shadowing colleagues to learn about different roles and to engage in research. The ethos of the school and the support structures are good – individuals feel supported." (Secondary SL)

## 5.7 Summary

There were no major issues in relation to progression emerging, with the majority of NQTs progressing smoothly to their second year. However, the quantitative data indicated there was a significant issue in progression in relation to key areas, especially multi-agency working (seen as a problem with 40% of secondary NQTs and 16% of primary NQTs overall), and working with teaching assistants for 8% of secondary teachers (just 1% of primary teachers). SLs also say that there is a major problem with multiagency working for

over a quarter of NQTs, and also thought there were issues in relation to understanding curriculum progression across key stages and dealing with challenging pupils.

Across the piece, most schools did not have a major retention problem in relation to second year teachers. But, as with the NQT year, a small number indicated there was a problem either related to the school's challenging circumstances or the use of temporary contracts.

Most schools, as in the Part 2 report, took the view that staff leaving for promotion was positive, or at least acceptable, although those that had trouble recruiting replacements were understandably sometimes less sanguine.

The vast majority of second year teachers intended to stay in their current school in the near future, although a small number intended to leave due to promotion, or relocation, or due to problems in the school/department; or due to the end of temporary contracts. In the longer term, again the vast majority of teachers were looking to promotion, and almost all of these were prepared to move schools if necessary, and in some cases preferred to move to get a variety of experience.

There was disagreement over the importance of professional development to retention, with most second year teachers not seeing it as a factor, whereas some SLs thought it was important. For second year teachers, providing promotion opportunities was the single most important factor in retention. The combination of development and promotion opportunities was seen to be an important retention factor, however, by both second year teachers and SLs. This analysis indicates a complex relationship between professional development, support and career opportunities. Supporting and valuing teachers was seen to be important to SLs, but not mentioned as often by second year teachers, and value and ethos were seen to be particularly important by primary SLs. Again, there are important relationships between all of these factors - professional development, career opportunities, valuing staff and providing support - that indicate that schools that consider all of these together are in a particularly good position to manage their staff retention and recruitment most effectively.