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Teacher mobility in challenging areas

Research report

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Executive Summary

In July 2018, CFE Research was commissioned by the Department for Education (DfE) to explore what interventions might work to attract good teachers to work in schools in challenging circumstances or areas. The interventions utilised in this research were purely hypothetical and were explored to build upon the current evidence base on teacher mobility. This report presents the findings from the research with a variety of headteachers, teachers and newly qualified teachers (NQTs).

Context

Teacher recruitment has become a significant focus in recent years and there is a need for effective, long-term strategies to ensure the consistent supply of good teaching staff. These concerns are exacerbated for schools in challenging circumstances. For instance, those schools with persistent underperformance and/or in areas of particularly low teacher supply generally find it harder to recruit good teachers.

The DfE's recruitment and retention strategy¹ acknowledged that there are too few career incentives encouraging good teachers to work where they are most needed (p.25). One key approach to address recruitment challenges in schools in challenging circumstances could be the incentivising of teachers with excellent track records to move to such schools. However, there is a need to generate robust evidence on the factors that might encourage good teachers, including NQTs, to move to challenging schools and what influences headteachers' decisions to support this approach.

This research provides insight into the types of intervention favoured by the target audience of teachers in schools which are not in challenging circumstances, and the perceived effectiveness of methods/incentives. This insight will allow government to make informed decisions regarding strategies to address this particular teacher mobility challenge.

Methodology

The research was designed as an iterative process with two phases of data collection. The first phase explored existing attitudes and behaviours to inform intervention design, and the second phase explored attitudes to the resulting interventions to identify which had the most potential to influence behavioural change.

¹https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/786856/DFE_Teacher_Retention_Strategy_Report.pdf

Schools were identified using Get Information About Schools (GIAS)², with the main sampling criteria being: Ofsted grade one or two³; and within 25km⁴ of schools with challenging characteristics.⁵ Other sampling characteristics were phase, type and size of school and demographics (region and rurality). Identified schools were sent a recruitment survey by email and asked to take part in the study by telephone.

Phase one qualitative fieldwork consisted of 19 in-depth telephone interviews with headteachers and six focus groups with teachers (including NQTs). Phase two qualitative fieldwork consisted of 20 in-depth telephone interviews with headteachers; 12 with teachers and 13 with NQTs; and three focus groups with teachers and NQTs.

Theoretical Framework

The COM-B system⁶ was used as the main theoretical framework, as it is one of the most comprehensive models to describe barriers and facilitators of behaviour. The COM-B model recognises that behaviour is part of an interacting system involving three key components; capability, opportunity and motivation.

A workshop was held with DfE stakeholders between the two phases to aid the development of the interventions for the second phase. The COM-B model and the Theoretical Domains Framework (TDF) (a set of 14 lower-level theoretical determinants of behaviour that have been mapped onto the COM-B)⁷ were used to analyse phase one findings and identify emerging findings for interventions to explore in phase two.

Key Findings

The main key findings are summarised below, presented under the two phases of data collection.

² <https://get-information-schools.service.gov.uk/>

³ Ofsted grade one: outstanding; Ofsted grade two: good.

⁴ Analysis conducted by DfE suggests 25km is an average distance that teachers are likely to travel to work. https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/682892/SFR11_2018_Main_Text.pdf

⁵ Current analysis by DfE suggests that challenging schools (in terms of performance and supply, among other metrics) show no specific pattern in geography. Achieving Excellence Areas (AEA) methodology which identifies the lower third of Local Authority Districts (LADs) i.e. tier 5 and 6 areas was utilised to sample schools. https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/682023/SFR86_2017_Main_Text.pdf

⁶ Michie S et al. (2011). The behaviour change wheel: A new method for characterising and designing behaviour change interventions. *Implementation Science*, 6:42.

⁷ Atkins L et al. (2017). A guide to using the Theoretical Domains Framework of behaviour change to investigate implementation problems. *Implementation Science*, 12:77.

Phase one findings

- There was a lack of strong desire to relocate due to family and housing commitments, but teachers were more open to discussing a move to schools in challenging circumstances that are in a commutable distance.
- For teachers, the overall barriers to move to schools in challenging circumstances, in order of importance⁸ were; existing job satisfaction due to ethos and support; perception that a work-life balance would be difficult to obtain; no financial reward for moving; perception that working in a school with Ofsted grade three or four would reflect negatively on their teaching ability; geographic considerations and an overall lack of awareness of other teaching opportunities.
- The initial pushback to the idea of moving, whether relocating or within commuting distance, is based on teachers' negative perceptions of what working in a school in challenging circumstances might mean (i.e. perceived increase in workload). Analysis of this insight against the COM-B model identifies that teachers need to hold the belief that moving would be worthwhile to drive a change in existing behaviour.
- Headteachers would typically encourage the professional development of staff but the idea of supporting teacher mobility created a sense of loss. This led to strong feelings about the uncertainty, and financial expense, of finding quality replacements.

Phase two findings

Headteachers

- Headteachers reported needing interventions that build their belief that supporting mobility would be worthwhile. The scenarios which best achieved this were based on secondments, as these were seen to provide funding and enable staff development – not just of staff who moved but may also open up opportunities for staff in the headteacher's school.
- Part-time secondment was seen as less desirable as it could increase administration and management time. However, it was seen as particularly useful for the senior leadership team (SLT) or teachers of specialist subjects.
- Response to the idea of a teaching pool, with staff working in multiple schools, was driven by what was 'normal' to the headteacher. For those who were heads in

⁸ Respondents were asked to discuss the most important barriers, and these have been aggregated thematically across the sample.

multi-academy trusts (MATs), this idea was seen as successful for all parties. For headteachers with no experience of sharing resource with other schools, there were questions over the quality of staff such a pool would attract and questions over how to ensure 'fairness' in distributing staff across schools involved. Case studies demonstrating the benefits to teachers, and most importantly to pupils and pupil outcomes, of such movement would be necessary to create a new 'norm' for those schools which have not yet experienced this type of resource sharing.

Teachers and NQTs

- As with phase one, there was a lack of a desire to relocate and participants were less willing to discuss or consider scenarios aimed at incentivising relocation.
- Response to the scenarios for those willing to commute to a new role was more positive, and elicited some core insight into how to create a positive emotional response to the idea of moving:
 - Shadowing and secondment opportunities were most appealing, as they offered immersive experiences in schools which the majority of respondents had not previously had. Ultimately, this experience may not need to be particularly long; what teachers are looking for is a way to understand what the job would actually be like, so short visits to spend time in target schools may be a useful tool.
 - Offering leadership development opportunities addresses concerns over the impact moving to a school in challenging circumstances could have on professional identity, and demonstrates to teachers that they are valued.
 - To be attractive⁹, less contact teaching time would need to be framed in terms of the amount of time this would be per week, although caution is needed as this may exacerbate the perception that a role in a school in challenging circumstances creates greater demand on a teacher's time.
 - The idea of working across two schools did not appeal to the majority, as they said it is seen to have the potential to reduce their ability to build positive relationships with pupils and increase workload. However, headteachers of MATs were in favour of the idea as they have experience of this in practice and have seen the benefits to both teachers and pupils.

⁹ Respondents were asked which scenarios they found attractive, and what specific elements of scenarios would need to be altered to become an appealing incentive.

Conclusions

The majority of teachers and headteachers involved in this research indicated that there are significant barriers to the notion of moving to schools in challenging circumstances. In particular, the reluctance to consider moving resulted from a set of perceptions of what working in a school in challenging circumstances would be like. Typically, they perceived that this would involve more demands on their time (which they say is already pressured) due to low aspirations, poor pupil behaviour, and lack of parent/carer support or additional scrutiny on teaching staff. This research has found a starting point in eliminating some of these negative perceptions would be to provide shadowing and secondment opportunities since they allow for first-hand experiences, without the risk associated with making a long-term commitment.

1. Introduction

In July 2018, CFE Research was commissioned by the Department for Education (DfE) to explore what interventions might work to attract good teachers to work in schools in challenging circumstances or areas. The interventions utilised in this research were purely hypothetical and were explored to build upon the current evidence base on teacher mobility. This report presents the findings from the research with a variety of headteachers, teachers and newly qualified teachers (NQTs).

1.1 Context

Teacher recruitment has become a significant focus in recent years and there is a need for effective, long-term strategies to ensure the consistent supply of good teaching staff. While national challenges are caused by multiple factors, including increasing pupil numbers, teachers leaving the profession in the early years of their careers and a decline in the number of trainee teachers, concerns are exacerbated for schools in challenging circumstances.¹⁰ For instance, those schools with persistent underperformance and/or in areas of particularly low teacher supply generally find it harder to recruit good teachers.

Some evidence suggests that lower Ofsted grades are associated with higher proportions of teachers moving to different schools at both primary and secondary level or leaving the profession altogether (NFER, 2018).¹¹ However, other research has found that schools' inspection grade does not necessarily have a negative association with either job satisfaction or staff turnover, once working conditions have been controlled for (Sims, 2017)¹². Factors such as effective professional development and school leadership are strongly associated with higher teacher job satisfaction (Sims, 2017).¹³ Schools in challenging circumstances need to improve their teachers' job satisfaction as one means of reducing staff turnover and creating a stable supply of experienced teachers.

The DfE's recruitment and retention strategy¹⁴ acknowledged that there are too few career incentives encouraging good teachers to work where they are most needed (p.25) and that they are committed to creating development and progression opportunities for teachers in such schools (p.27). One approach to address recruitment challenges in schools in challenging circumstances could be the incentivising of teachers with excellent track records to move to such schools. However, there is a need to generate robust

¹⁰ See page 14 for definition of 'challenging circumstances' used in this research.

¹¹https://www.nfer.ac.uk/media/3111/teacher_workforce_dynamics_in_england_final_report.pdf

¹²https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/656249/TALIS_2013_Evidence_on_Working_Conditions_Teacher_Job_Satisfaction_and_Retention_Nov_2017.pdf

¹³ Ibid

¹⁴https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/786856/DFE_Teacher_Retention_Strategy_Report.pdf

evidence on the factors that might encourage good teachers, including NQTs, to move to challenging schools and what influences headteachers' decisions to support this approach. This research provides insight into the types of intervention favoured by the target audience of teachers in schools which are not in challenging circumstances, and the perceived effectiveness of methods/incentives. This insight will allow government to make informed decisions regarding strategies to address this particular teacher mobility challenge.

1.2 Aims and objectives of the research

The main aim of this exploratory research, using two phases of qualitative interviews and focus groups, was to provide information and evidence on what interventions or incentives might work to attract good teachers to work in schools in challenging circumstances or areas with those circumstances.

Phase 1 objectives:

- To provide robust qualitative evidence of the attitudes of teachers (including NQTs) and headteachers to relocating staff to challenging schools, and explore what would make teachers move, why headteachers would let them, and what barriers exist.
- To identify what needs to happen for the target behaviour to occur (teachers moving to schools in challenging circumstances) and to inform the design of potential interventions, to be tested in Phase 2, to create this change.

Phase 2 objectives:

- To provide robust qualitative evidence of the attitudes of teachers (including NQTs) and headteachers to specific interventions, developed from Phase 1 of the research, and therefore to explore how successful these interventions might be.

1.3 Methodology

The methodology (see Figure 1) for this study was designed in partnership with DfE, and incorporated a user-led approach that consisted of two distinct phases separated by a workshop. The research was designed as an iterative process with two phases of data collection. The first phase explored existing attitudes and behaviours to inform intervention design, and the second phase explored attitudes to the resulting interventions to identify which had the most potential to influence behavioural change.

Figure 1: Overview of methodology



The core of the method was underpinned by qualitative techniques of in-depth interviews and focus groups. With reference to Table 1, the key sample characteristics of the participating headteachers, teachers and NQTs for both phases of the research were:

- Ofsted grade one or two and within 25km¹⁵ of schools with challenging characteristics.¹⁶
- Phase of school, incorporating a mix of primary and secondary schools.
- Type of school; maintained, academy or voluntary aided.
- Size of school; large or small using total number of teachers in headcount as a variable of school size as used for Teacher Workload Survey¹⁷ in two categories (1-25, 26+).¹⁸
- Other demographic criteria included: region and rurality.

¹⁵ Analysis conducted by DfE suggests 25km is an average distance that teachers are likely to travel to work. https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/682892/SFR11_2018_Main_Text.pdf

¹⁶ Current analysis by DfE suggests that challenging schools (in terms of performance and supply, among other metrics) show no specific pattern in geography. AEA methodology which identifies the lower third of LAD's (i.e. tier 5 and 6 areas) was utilised to sample schools. https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/682023/SFR86_2017_Main_Text.pdf

¹⁷ Teacher workload survey 2016 https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/594696/TWS-2016_FINAL_Research_brief_Feb_2017.pdf

¹⁸ The Teacher Workload definition was utilised to be consistent with previous research.

Table 1: Sample profile of respondents

Sampling criteria	Headteachers, Teachers and NQTs	
	Phase one	Phase two
Phase	Interview respondents	
Secondary	26	22
Primary	28	37
Type		
Maintained	21	34
Academy	33	24
Voluntary Aided	0	1
Size		
Large	27	23
Small	27	36
Other Criteria		
Urban	39	51
Rural	15	8

The sampling for this study was purposive; schools, and subsequently headteachers, teachers and NQTs, were sought to cover a variety of contexts relevant to teacher mobility.

It was recognised that 'schools in challenging circumstances' was a term that encompasses a variety of definitions and a pragmatic definition was utilised to ensure there was consistency across the interviews. Therefore, respondents were asked to interpret the interview questions by considering the following two circumstances and definitions:

1. Commuting to schools in challenging circumstances:

Schools in the local area that have an Ofsted ranking grade three (requires improvement) or grade four (inadequate).

2. Relocating to areas that have schools in challenging circumstances:

These areas were defined by utilising category 5 and 6 areas (based on a range of factors such as school performance and initial teacher training (ITT) supply).¹⁹ Thus, those areas that have a high concentration of underperforming schools.

1.3.1 Recruitment – phase one

A sample of 240 schools were identified using Get Information About Schools (GIAS)²⁰, they were all sent a recruitment survey by email and asked to take part in the study by telephone. Schools were given book vouchers up to a value of £30 for organising and hosting a focus group, and £20 per teacher participant.

Phase one qualitative fieldwork consisted of:

- Nineteen in-depth telephone interviews with headteachers, lasting approximately 45 minutes, to understand their perspective on recruitment and retention challenges, supporting teacher mobility and broad themes to encourage mobility to schools in challenging circumstances.
- Six focus groups with teachers (consisting of four to six teachers and NQTs, lasting 45 minutes) to explore in detail their perceptions of enablers and barriers to working in schools in challenging circumstances.

1.3.2 Recruitment – phase two

Initially for phase two, CFE recruited schools through two avenues; respondents who agreed to be re-contacted from the first phase and identifying an additional 2,548 schools through GIAS by applying the sampling characteristics and disseminating a recruitment survey. Approaches to recruitment were then widened, and incorporated a variety of other routes, including: snowballing through respondents and social media²¹. The same incentive as phase one was offered to schools who agreed to organise a focus group, and in phase two a £10 book voucher was given to telephone interview participants. Recruitment challenges for phase two of the research are reflected in disproportionate imbalances in the sampling criteria. Phase two qualitative fieldwork consisted of the following methods to explore attitudes to the interventions that emerged from the first phase of the research:

- Twenty in-depth telephone interviews with headteachers; 12 with teachers and 13 with NQTs, lasting approximately 45 minutes.

¹⁹https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/696257/TLIF_-_Category_5_and_category_6_Local_Area_Districts_1_.pdf

²⁰ <https://get-information-schools.service.gov.uk/>

²¹ Teacher and NQT specific groups on Facebook and Twitter.

- Three focus groups with teachers and NQTs (12 teachers and two NQTs), lasting approximately 45 minutes.

1.3.3 Theoretical framework

The COM-B system²² was used as the main theoretical framework, as it is one of the most comprehensive models to describe barriers and facilitators of behaviour. The model suggests that whether behaviour occurs (or whether a behavioural intervention is successful) is a function of: an individual's psychological or physical capability to carry out the behaviour (for example, their knowledge and skillset); the opportunity for the behaviour afforded by the physical and/or social environment (such as social support, information availability); and the individual's automatic (emotions and drives) and reflective (planning and intentions) motivation to enact the behaviour.

The COM-B system was used alongside the Theoretical Domains Framework (TDF) (a set of 14 lower-level theoretical determinants of behaviour that have been mapped onto the COM-B)²³. Together, these models informed the design of topic guides for interviews and focus groups, and the development of the interview scenarios.²⁴

In addition, qualitative analysis was informed by the COM-B and TDF models as a theoretical lens to interpret the thematic framework analysis, in terms of capability, opportunity and motivation for teacher mobility. This process enabled the development of interventions for phase two of the research and further details of this development are provided in Chapter three.

1.4 Limitations of the findings

The purposive sampling approach resulted in qualitative samples at both phase one and phase two which are not representative of the population of schools or teachers from which the sample was drawn. The project is limited to teachers currently working in 'good' or 'outstanding' (Ofsted grade one/two) schools and does not include the attitudes of teachers currently working in schools in challenging circumstances. It would be important to explore the impact on this group should any interventions be considered in future.

The study was qualitative in nature and sought to identify and explore a range of attitudes from the perspectives of respondents (headteachers, teachers and NQTs); the report

²² Michie S et al. (2011). The behaviour change wheel: A new method for characterising and designing behaviour change interventions. *Implementation Science*, 6:42.

²³ Atkins L et al. (2017). A guide to using the Theoretical Domains Framework of behaviour change to investigate implementation problems. *Implementation Science*, 12:77

²⁴ Phase one themes are discussed in chapter two, phase two scenarios are discussed in chapter four.

does not attempt to quantify findings, which cannot be generalised beyond the sample. However, qualitative transferability can apply i.e. relating to Bassey's (1998)²⁵ concept of 'fuzzy generalisations', where findings demonstrate instances of a broader set of recognisable similarities among other headteachers and teachers. While the sample size was limited, the findings provide insight into, and a coverage of, the breadth and depth of attitudes and differences among respondents, which constitutes an important contribution to the developing evidence-base around perceptions on teacher mobility.

This research method can only uncover what teachers say would encourage them to move; this is not necessarily how they would act in the face of a real choice. However, a proportion of the respondents have previously moved schools and influencing factors underlying this behaviour have been captured.

1.5 Report structure

The remainder of this report presents findings from the research activities in chronological order to illustrate the user-led approach. First, there is an overview of the findings from the first phase of the research, providing an exploration of the barriers and enablers to teacher mobility and attitudes towards what types of benefits would encourage teachers to consider working in schools in challenging circumstances. The subsequent chapter describes the process taken to develop phase one findings into interventions that were explored in the second phase of the research. Thereafter, an exploration of the views of these interventions is offered. Finally, the report concludes by summarising the key findings in relation to how successful the proposed interventions may be.

²⁵ Bassey M (1998) Enhancing teaching through research, *Professional Development Today*, 1, 2, 39-46 (A shortened version was published in *Research Intelligence*, July 1997)

2. Phase one findings

CFE conducted 19 in-depth telephone interviews with headteachers and six focus groups with teachers and NQTs to explore attitudes regarding working in schools in challenging circumstances, and to identify the barriers or enablers to making this move. This exploration was specifically designed to inform the development of interventions, using the COM-B and TDF framework to identify where change was needed to drive the desired behaviour (teachers moving schools).

This chapter provides an overview of the emerging findings from phase one, and where appropriate, any commonalities and differences between headteachers, teachers and NQTs.

2.1 Understanding of schools in challenging circumstances

Headteachers and teachers reported that all schools have challenges regardless of Ofsted grading, locality and socioeconomic background of pupils. However, when asked to define a challenging school, all headteachers and teachers defined schools in challenging circumstances relating to two key factors: locality and Ofsted grading. The perception among interviewees was that schools in challenging circumstances are more likely to be situated in areas of deprivation, and consequently pupils are likely to have low aspirations, poor pupil behaviour and a lack of support from parents/carers. Additionally, Ofsted grading was another marker, whereby those schools with grades three or four²⁶, are thought to have difficulties with teacher supply, high turnover rates, poor leadership and challenging pupil behaviour.

2.2 Challenges in recruiting and retaining teachers

The majority of headteachers in phase one highlighted that in recent years they have struggled to recruit staff; in particular, the number of teachers applying to posts has declined considerably. These issues are exacerbated for specialist roles such as special educational needs coordinators (SENCOs), and for certain subjects, for example science and maths. Typically, headteachers reported two key factors that influence teacher recruitment; geographical location and schools' reputations. Schools that are in areas of deprivation and/or have a poor reputation are perceived among teachers to be associated with challenging pupil behaviour, lack of parental/carer involvement, and poor senior leadership, and consequently those schools face recruitment difficulties. These observations by headteachers echo what teachers and NQTs themselves stated when

²⁶ Ofsted grade three: requires improvement; Ofsted grade four: inadequate

defining schools in challenging circumstances, and are evidence of the emotive response that prevailed through the interviews. Typically, these perceptions existed among teachers despite them having no experience of working in schools with lower Ofsted grades than their own, or schools in more deprived areas than their current school.

While many of the headteachers interviewed alluded to experiencing recruitment difficulties, they also described using various strategies to address this issue. In particular, it was noted that working closely with universities and teacher training programmes, including Teach First, were sometimes the most successful methods to overcome some of their recruitment challenges.²⁷ As demonstrated in the quote below, a lack of progression opportunities has limited how successful this has been for one headteacher. Accordingly, headteachers emphasised they required additional support to address recruitment and retention difficulties.

"Recruitment's hard in the STEM²⁸ subjects. We currently have two vacancies within science. Retention tends to be okay but we're getting to the stage where a lot of the young teachers are looking for promotions so retaining them is harder and harder because we don't have the finances to offer them financial incentives to stay on in the school or to keep moving up in the school. It is getting more of a challenge for us."

(Headteacher, secondary school)

2.3 Headteacher attitudes towards supporting teacher mobility

All headteachers interviewed expressed concern towards allowing or encouraging members of their own staff to move to schools in close proximity to their own, either on a temporary or permanent basis. While some felt they had a role in contributing to the wider education in their local areas, and the majority would encourage the development of their staff, there were barriers in supporting teaching mobility. The three main concerns were: it would create a capacity shortage in their school, it is expensive to recruit teachers, and there was a lack of motivation to encourage teachers to move to a direct competitor.

Headteachers felt that if they encouraged teachers to move to other schools, it would create a capacity shortage in their own school, which would be difficult to manage since the pool of teachers is decreasing more widely. There were additional worries about the uncertainty of the quality of replacement staff, which was exacerbated among specialist

²⁷ Data from Teacher Tapp suggests growth in teachers staying in their training placement school <http://teachertapp.co.uk/2017/11/train-stay-new-teaching-trend/>

²⁸ Science, Technology, Engineering and Maths – although used to denote Science and Maths here.

teachers. An additional concern raised by some headteachers at phase one, was consequent effects such as lower pupil outcomes caused by the loss of their 'best teachers'.

The main preoccupation of all headteachers in phase one, when presented with the idea of encouraging staff to move to schools in challenging circumstances, was to ensure they received better than sufficient funding to recruit replacements. At this point, several of the interviewed headteachers referenced the high cost of using supply teachers, their thoughts turning to this as the most likely immediate action they would have to take. The feeling of loss by the idea of encouraging staff to move was evidenced through their discussion of the need to overcompensate them financially to replace staff. There are numerous behavioural biases²⁹ at play here, but overwhelmingly loss aversion (see Kahneman & Tversky, 1979³⁰) is driving headteachers' response – the loss of a teacher is more painful than the idea of gaining a new teacher. Even if it could be guaranteed that the replacement teacher was exactly the same quality as the lost teacher, loss aversion would still suggest that the headteachers would feel worse off as a result of the change. This powerful emotion drives headteachers' immediate thoughts turning to fiscal compensation.

Many interviewed headteachers of standalone state schools reported that they are less inclined to encourage their best teachers to move to a direct competitor in the local area, since they compete for pupils and funding. One headteacher highlighted that the competitive schooling system has resulted in a lack of transparency and communication between schools.

Despite the generally negative response towards encouraging teacher mobility among the headteachers interviewed, the majority acknowledged the positive impact it could have on teachers' professional development. In particular, gaining experience at a school in challenging circumstances would be valuable since it is perceived, typically, that these schools have to work harder to achieve a better Ofsted grading, which inherently provides teachers with more opportunities for career development and progression.

It was notable that those headteachers who had themselves been involved in schemes that promote mobility were more positive towards the ideas presented at phase one. The most prevalent example was headteachers of schools in MATs, who were more likely to report having a wider responsibility towards education in the local area, and consequently favoured teacher mobility. These headteachers described how they shared resources and learning within their trust and, in some cases, they had teachers working across two

²⁹ <https://www.behavioraleconomics.com/resources/mini-encyclopedia-of-be/heuristic/>

³⁰ Kahneman, D., & Tversky, A. (1979). Prospect theory: An analysis of decision under risk. *Econometrica*, 47, 263-291.

schools. This flexibility was described as working well to support progression into leadership or to develop a specific skill or expertise. However, this attitude did not appear to expand outside of their trust, as they felt barriers of competition, finance and a shortage in capacity would exist if teachers moved to schools outside their trust.

2.4 Teachers' attitudes to relocation

Across the six focus groups with teachers and NQTs, the majority reported that they currently had little desire or motivation to relocate. They cited their family and housing commitments as the most prominent barriers to moving, which they felt made moving to another area unfeasible. It is important to note, there were no differences found between teachers based in a rural location compared to urban areas. In the same respect, there was little difference in attitudes between NQTs and experienced teachers.

Those teachers who had no family commitments³¹, recognised that they were in a position to relocate, but the cost of moving house and particularly to areas with a higher cost of living (especially if remaining on the same salary) were concerns. Other barriers discussed were a high level of job satisfaction and good support in their current schools. Teachers and NQTs in all groups discussed that a school's ethos and culture was vital to their decision to move schools. When presented with the idea of moving to schools in challenging areas, their definition of these schools as having a lower Ofsted grade or being in areas of deprivation led to uncertainty that they would be able to find a school where the ethos and culture fit with their own values and identity. It is important to stress here that risk aversion and a tendency to prefer the status quo (both of which are common behavioural traits) will heavily influence teachers' perceptions of a move where the outcomes are uncertain.

This immediate negative response should not be taken too literally. Indeed, many of the teachers and NQTs acknowledged that while financial inducements had the ability to make them consider relocation, they expected that the additional money they had in mind was unrealistic for the government to fund. However, teachers and NQTs in the six focus groups were more open to talking about moving to schools in a commutable distance, rather than relocating, and it is from this that the majority of insight is drawn (section 2.5).

2.5 Moving to challenging schools within a commutable distance

Whilst teachers perceived relocation to be largely unfeasible, working in other schools within a commutable distance was not unrealistic, but did have barriers. This section provides an overview of the barriers to moving to schools in challenging circumstances

³¹ Note these individuals were both teachers and NQTs.

that were reported from both teachers and headteachers.³² These have been listed in order of importance³³ from the interviews and analysis. Where differences among types of teachers (headteachers, teachers and NQTs), locality (urban and rural) and school (primary and secondary) exist, distinctions are discussed.

Satisfaction

The majority of teachers and headteachers interviewed stated that they were satisfied at their current school for several reasons, including:

- The schools' culture and ethos (discussed further below);
- Teaching in their subject specialism, and for some teachers, they thought jobs in their subject are rare (for example, art and design);
- A well-structured and supportive management team;
- Positive working relationships where they are immersed in a supportive culture of sharing learning and workload;
- Preferred part-time working hours.

Therefore, teachers indicated they had no desire to move jobs, and suggested a common reason for moving previously was if they were unhappy or dissatisfied at a school. Push factors that caused dissatisfaction and subsequent movement included a lack of opportunities for progression, that the ethos of the school did not align with their values or teaching style, and too little support from senior management.

School ethos

The majority of teachers and headteachers reported that the school ethos was an important factor in contributing to their job satisfaction. School ethos was not linked to Ofsted grade but rather stemmed from two key factors: independence and supportive leadership. Some teachers indicated that some schools micro-manage their staff; giving specific techniques or guidelines on how to teach their lessons. However, in their current schools, they were trusted to teach their lessons in their own way, which may not be guaranteed in other schools. They also felt well supported by their senior leadership team (SLT) and suggested by moving, there is uncertainty associated with this type of culture and support.

³² Headteachers were asked about their opinions on how teachers would respond, they were not being asked to relocate or move schools themselves.

³³ Respondents were asked to discuss the most important barriers, and these have been aggregated thematically across the sample.

“If I was to look now, having a bit more experience, I think I’d want to go and look round somewhere before [applying]. I don’t think I would just apply somewhere without going to see the school, or speaking to someone who worked there. I think, the ethos of the school, it’s very difficult to get that on paper.”

(Teacher, secondary school)

Work-life balance

Many teachers in the focus groups believed that Ofsted grade three or four schools may have additional challenges such as poor pupil behaviour, low aspirations and lack of support from parents/carers. Teachers perceived that it would be impossible to gain a work-life balance if they were to move to work in one of these schools. For example, teachers highlighted that they currently worked outside of their contracted hours in their own (Ofsted grade one/two) schools; and suggested that this could only increase in schools with a lower Ofsted grade. Many teachers also reported a factor that would contribute to the perceived high workload would be the increase in Ofsted observations, and subsequently the added pressure would negatively influence their work-life balance.

A particular issue was raised by teachers at a school in a rural area who suggested that although working in other schools in the area was feasible, the additional travel time would be detrimental to their work-life balance. For example, additional time would impact on the amount of childcare they would have to pay for as well as reducing the amount of time they would spend with their own children. While a pragmatic distance of 25km was employed, travelling this distance in rural areas may be more difficult compared to urban areas since there may be limited number of available travel routes.

Some NQTs reported that they felt they needed more experience in their current schools before moving, since they may struggle dealing with the perceived additional challenges.

Financial reward

In the group setting, teachers stated that they did not pursue a career in teaching for financial rewards and used this as a platform to dismiss the idea of moving. This should not necessarily be taken as strong evidence that financial reward is not an important (or even vital) tool to drive the desired move. Social expectations and perceived norms around teaching as a vocation are likely to influence teacher responses, and these factors are likely to have an even stronger influence in a group setting.

Some teachers perceived they would be financially worse off in a school in challenging circumstances, creating significant barriers:

- Some teachers believed that they would start at the bottom of their current pay range if they moved to a different school, suggesting that their historical yearly pay increments would be disregarded and subsequently their salary would decrease.
- Other teachers suggested that with teachers now receiving performance-related pay, if pupils' progress is slow in schools in challenging circumstances, this would reduce the likelihood that a teacher could achieve a pay increase.

Professional identity

Some teachers felt that by moving to an Ofsted grade three or four school it would throw their professional capabilities into question. This appeared to be driven by an (in most cases) unconscious link between their professional identity as a 'good' teacher and the Ofsted grade of their existing school. As the quote from a headteacher below evidences, sometimes this link is conscious.

"If I'm honest, I did feel slightly embarrassed saying I was in that school, because I'm highly qualified. I've fallen into teaching, made a huge career change [...] and actually I have pride in saying I'm at this school (Ofsted good), because I feel it's a reflection of me, which may be wrong."

(Headteacher, secondary school)

Awareness

Some teachers also reported their lack of awareness of issues related to teacher recruitment and retention resulted in little effort to research other potential roles in schools. This was more prominent in primary schools, since the majority of secondary school teachers interviewed were aware there was a shortage of teachers for certain subjects such as maths. This lack of knowledge has had an impact on their behaviour, as those who were unaware of recruitment challenges suggested that if they had further information regarding other opportunities in schools where they felt they could make an impact, they would possibly consider moving.

Summary

The initial pushback to the idea of moving, whether relocating or within commuting distance, is based on the teachers' negative perceptions of what working in a school in challenging circumstances might mean (i.e. perceived increase in workload). Analysis of this insight against the COM-B model identifies that teachers need to hold the belief that moving would be worthwhile, (reflective motivation) and establish positive emotional connections with moving (automatic motivation). To do this, some way of offering teachers an immersive experience in the target schools was the priority for interventions, to address the deficits in motivation.

2.6 Overall attitudes towards themes

To promote discussion and exploration of potential interventions in phase one, headteachers' and teachers' attitudes were shown high level themes³⁴ that may encourage teachers to move, or headteachers to support a move, to schools in challenging circumstances. It is important to highlight that these findings describe what respondents said they might do and are in most cases post-rationalisations of their current behaviour. They do not necessarily evidence how they would actually respond given the chance to move or support a move.

Similarities among all types of teachers

Among all types of teachers, changes to teaching time was attractive. All of the teachers interviewed worked in an Ofsted grade one/two school, and found time-management difficult. They indicated that they would be concerned their workload would increase in schools in challenging circumstances due to additional difficulties such as poor pupil behaviour or lack of parental/carer support. Additional time to plan lessons was discussed as an important factor in incentivising teachers to move to these schools.

“For me, it would be about having the time to do it properly, having my lesson hours cut so I can plan a lesson, see the progress these kids are making, and actually feel like I’m making a difference. The problem I struggle with anyway in teaching is, I’m so overwhelmed all the time, it’s very rare to sit back and see what’s going on [...] in more challenging environments, you can’t.”

(Teacher, secondary school)

Many teachers also expressed that proactive recruitment would be flattering since it would affirm that they are performing well, and provide them with some confidence that they could make a difference in another setting. However, a couple of teachers felt uncomfortable about the idea of ‘headhunting’ because it would exacerbate the existing competition between schools for good teachers.

The least appealing theme among teachers was mentoring and peer support; the perception is that they already have access to these opportunities, or support is provided on an informal arrangement among teachers.

The majority of teachers indicated that while financial incentives would be attractive, they would not be the most prominent factor in their decision. As discussed earlier in the chapter, this could be more a result of the group setting and the desire to conform to the

³⁴ Phase one themes can be found in appendix 6.1.

ideal that teachers follow the career as a calling rather than for financial gain. With the overriding need to tackle a deficit in motivation, it is important that (financial) incentives form part of the intervention as these are a key tool to use to create a positive emotional response to the idea. Further, standard labour economic models predict that financial compensation is the principle means to increase labour supply to meet demand; and that compensating wage differentials can be used to reward challenging circumstances.³⁵

Differences between types of teachers

Largely, career progression for those aspiring to middle and senior leadership was the most attractive incentive across experienced teachers. Headteachers acknowledged that those in middle and senior leadership tend to stay in their roles for a long period of time and thus there is little opportunity for progression in their schools. Many teachers suggested that they would consider moving to schools in challenging circumstances for professional development, and if they felt their skillset and experience would be impactful for that specific school.

However, teachers noted that fast-tracking all teachers to leadership would also not work; there needs to be a way to identify those with the right experience and skills.

"I worry when I see 'fast-track'. It's that depth of experience and knowledge that you've got to draw on, I think speaks volumes. Often, if people are being fast-tracked into a senior leadership role with only a couple of years' experience, actually, do they have that depth of experience and knowledge to draw on? Probably not."

(Teacher, primary school)

Some current middle leaders reported, with the offer of some of these ideas, that they were more likely to move to a school in challenging circumstances for a short period of time, to enhance their skills and expertise. These teachers indicated that the incentives would be appealing for short-term moves since they did not want to jeopardise the security of their current job; a secondment was viewed as a less risky way of experiencing a potential move without giving up their current position.

The second group of teachers that were more likely to consider moving were those who were a few years on from their NQT year, since they have gained experience from one school and were likely to want to build on their professional development. While these teachers were a little more likely to be looking for new opportunities, they wanted to

³⁵ A compensating wage differential is the additional amount of income that a given worker must be offered in order to motivate them to accept a given undesirable job.

better their existing packages and reported that financial incentives and CPD opportunities, alongside changes to contact and teaching time, would be appealing.

Headteachers

As noted earlier, headteachers expressed concern that if they encouraged teachers to move to other schools, it would create a capacity shortage in their own school. When shown four high level themes for discussion of potential interventions³⁶ (financial incentive, generating evidence to support funding applications, resource exchange to enhance CPD, enhance employer reputation), although they recognised the potential benefits of all four of the incentives, the majority indicated that the financial incentive would be most appealing to their school, since this would enable them to afford a high quality replacement teacher.

“More money. That’s the bottom line, as a school you’re going to have to help somebody or I would need financial incentive myself to make sure I could afford to either replace that teacher with a good quality teacher while they were doing something.”

(Headteacher, secondary school)

2.7 Existing programmes/incentives

It is important to note that some schools who participated in this research have implemented their own schemes to tackle teacher recruitment and retention. These learnings from the first phase were included in the testing phase to explore how other teachers and headteachers would perceive them. Below, is a brief description of these incentives.

- **Employment pool:** A headteacher in a standalone maintained school described working in collaboration with other schools in their area to focus on recruitment of teachers. Teachers are employed to the local area (rather than a specific school), and resource is shared among the schools, for example, one teacher can work across two schools, which enables the sharing of expertise, skills and personal development for teachers.³⁷
- **Additional leave:** One school offers their staff a few days additional leave per year that they are able to book during term-time. Teachers valued the opportunity

³⁶ See appendix 6.1 for full details.

³⁷ This sharing of resource across schools was a feature described by headteachers and teachers in MATs, but this specific example came from a standalone secondary school.

to have flexible holidays and suggested it distinguishes their schools' offer compared to others.³⁸

- **Part-time teaching:** A couple of headteachers reported that by offering teachers part-time working, they are able to address some of their recruitment challenges since it increases the number of applications they receive. Teachers suggested that they have had to turn down other opportunities where part-time working was not offered.
- **Secondments/shadowing:** A few teachers had previously moved to another school on secondment, and have subsequently taken permanent promotions in these schools. Others, have gone temporarily to support capacity shortages and returned to their jobs. These teachers found the experience rewarding since it developed their skills and would recommend the opportunity to other teachers.

2.8 Chapter summary

Phase one key findings were:

- There was a lack of strong desire to relocate due to family and housing commitments, but teachers were more open to move to schools in challenging circumstances that are in a commutable distance.
- The overall barriers to move to schools in challenging circumstances for teachers in order of importance³⁹ to respondents are; existing job satisfaction due to ethos and support; perception that a work-life balance would be difficult to obtain; no financial reward for moving; perception that working in a school with Ofsted grade three or four would reflect negatively on their teaching ability; geographic considerations and an overall lack of awareness of other teaching opportunities.
- Headteachers would typically encourage the development of staff but the idea of supporting teacher mobility created a sense of loss, which led to strong feelings about the uncertainty and expense of finding quality replacements needing significant financial support.
- Teachers typically found changes in contact/teaching time, enhanced career progression and proactive recruitment the most appealing themes. The least

³⁸ It should be noted that additional (paid) leave is actually a form of financial compensation. Individuals may respond differently to financial compensation in the form of higher wages or less hours, but essentially they are the same incentive. It is not unreasonable to expect that teachers who feel very time pressured may prefer more holiday to a direct pay rise for the same hours.

³⁹ Respondents were asked to discuss the most important barriers, and these have been aggregated thematically across the sample.

appealing was mentoring and peer support, since all schools participating in the research were perceived to currently offer this type of support.

3. Development of benefits to schemes

A workshop was held with the DfE to draw on the insights from phase one and to develop scenarios to explore in the second phase of fieldwork. This chapter provides an overview of the workshop and how the COM-B framework informed the schemes.

3.1 Overview of approach

Figure 2 below, demonstrates the four steps that were followed to develop interventions for the second phase.

Figure 2: Designing phase two scenarios



3.2 Data analysis and COM-B

The findings that have been discussed in the previous chapter, were mapped onto the key dimensions of the COM-B and TDF framework⁴⁰. The COM-B model recognizes that behaviour is part of an interacting system involving the three components of “capability”, “motivation” and “opportunity”. Interventions need to change one or more of these in such a way as to put the system into a new configuration to drive a change in behaviour and minimise the risk of it reverting.

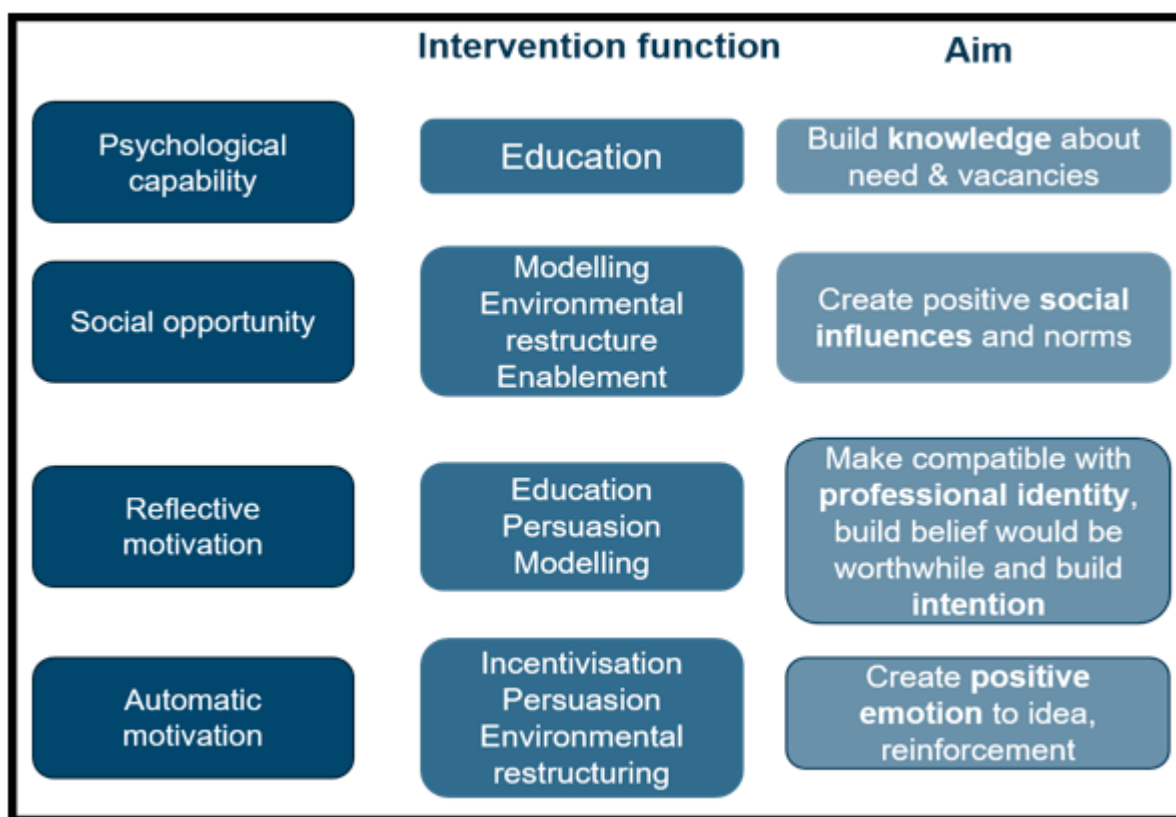
Mapping the thematic analysis from the exploration stage (phase one) to the three components (capability, motivation and opportunity) informed where interventions were most needed to drive behaviour change. Phase one findings provided evidence that

⁴⁰ See appendix 6.2 for further information

moving to a school in challenging circumstances is complex and that multiple intrinsic and external factors influence the behaviour, particularly for teachers.

To support the workshop aim of identifying interventions to explore in phase two, potential intervention functions⁴¹ were mapped out for each of the COM-B components to identify potential intervention ideas. Figure 3 gives a summary of all intervention functions considered in the workshop. The second column of the diagram shows which intervention functions in the COM-B system can be used to target each element, with the third column explaining the aim each intervention has in addressing the deficit in capability, opportunity or motivation.

Figure 3: Overview of COM-B intervention functions and aims



⁴¹ See Appendix 6.2.1 for further information

3.3 Workshop

Working through the phase one findings, it was identified and agreed that for both teachers and headteachers the priority was to target reflective motivation (make the move compatible with professional identity, and build the belief it would be worthwhile) and automatic motivation (create a positive emotional response to the idea). However, where possible it was also identified that interventions which tackled the deficit in social opportunity (create positive social influences and norms) were needed. Intervention ideas to address the psychological capability gaps, to build knowledge about the need for teachers to move and vacancies that exist, were identified by DfE as already being developed, so were removed from the process.

Reviewing the intervention ideas generated through analysis of phase one findings which targeted motivation and opportunity, workshop attendees were asked to use the APEASE (affordability, practicability, cost-effectiveness, acceptability, side effects and equity) criteria to determine the feasibility of the intervention ideas.

Ideas which did not meet the APEASE criteria (particularly where it would not be practical or affordable to implement), were removed from the process.

3.4 Scenarios

The intervention ideas were developed as scenario packages for two reasons:

1. **Complex behaviour**; the insights from phase one identified that there is a high degree of complexity around the target behaviour of teachers moving schools. The use of COM-B supported the decision to focus on motivation, as this was the main barrier presented by teachers, NQTs and headteachers. For interventions to be successful, ideas needed to reflect that there is a combination of barriers at work, including potential incompatibility with professional identity, lack of belief that it could be successful and no positive emotional connection with the idea of moving.
2. **Practicality**; using distinct scenarios allowed respondents to compare combinations to determine which components they found the most appealing.

While phase one findings suggested that for the majority of teachers there was little desire to relocate, relocation was explored in the second phase as in practice if incentives and circumstances were right for an individual they would consider moving. Phase two scenarios can be found in the appendix.

4. Phase two findings

CFE conducted 20 in-depth telephone interviews with headteachers; 12 with teachers and 13 with NQTs; three focus groups with teachers and NQTs (12 teachers and two NQTs).

This chapter provides an overview of the findings from the second phase, which explicitly focused on exploring the attitudes to the scenarios developed from the first phase and the workshop. Insights on both the teacher and headteacher scenarios are explored, and thereafter components of the scenarios for schools in challenging circumstances in a commutable distance and those in challenging areas are discussed comparatively.

4.1 Overall attitudes towards the headteacher scenarios

Figure 4 below illustrates the three scenario packages that were explored with headteachers in the second phase.

Figure 4: Phase two headteacher scenarios

Scenario	Target audience	Components
Part-time secondment	Flexible teaching resource ⁴² , releasing staff one/two days a week for one academic year	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Grant funding to collaborate with other schools, MATs, and local authorities (LAs) to develop attractive recruitment and retention packages for teachers⁴³ Enhanced funding for being part of the initiative CPD opportunities for staff within their school For teachers with different experience and specialism (e.g. SENCO, subject specialism)⁴⁴
Full-time secondment	Flexible teaching resource, staff released one year full-time	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Incentives and support to collaborate with other schools, MATs, and LAs in to develop attractive recruitment and retention packages for teachers Enhanced funding for being part of the initiative CPD opportunities for staff within their school For teachers with different experience and specialism (e.g. SENCO, subject specialism)

⁴² Flexible teaching resource is the idea of encouraging teachers to work in two or more schools simultaneously as opposed to flexible working patterns such as part-time working.

⁴³ As stated in the strategy, this component will inform DfE's commitment to partner with schools, MATs, and local authorities in challenging areas, to develop attractive local offer packages to increase teacher recruitment and retention locally.

https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/786856/DFE_Teacher_Retention_Strategy_Report.pdf

⁴⁴ Referenced to inform the new career pathways identified in the recruitment and retention strategy.

Teaching pool	Informal links with schools in local area, ability to be involved in recruitment	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Incentives and support to collaborate with other schools, MATs, and LAs in to develop attractive recruitment and retention packages for teachers • Specialist staff – individuals are contracted to work in your and other schools in your 'pool' • Enhanced funding for being part of the initiative • Alternative to supply staff
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Mirroring the findings from the first phase, headteachers suggested that funding was the most important component across all the scenarios, since it would provide them with the financial capacity to back-fill the vacant position. In particular, the combination of enhanced funding and giving them the ability to provide CPD to their staff appears to build belief that participating would be worthwhile (reflective motivation). Some headteachers took this idea further, suggesting that they could use the additional funding to provide CPD opportunities to teachers covering the workload of seconded staff.

Typically, headteachers supported the premise of both of the secondment scenarios since it provides teachers with the opportunity to experience different schools, enhancing their CPD, and schools benefit from new teaching practices that interim staff could offer; it has the potential to be a “win win” situation for both schools involved.

"That kind of scenario [part-time secondment] is a useful one because in that example [when staff were on secondment], it helped the colleagues grow in their professional development, it helped my team benefit from having a seconded head of faculty for a period of time and developed their leadership skills as well as teaching and learning. It was a win win situation."

(Headteacher, secondary school)

That said, there was a general consensus that the part-time model would exacerbate the administrative burden on school timetabling and make it more difficult for headteachers to plan for staff absence. For this reason, headteachers acknowledged they would prefer the full-time model. Teachers would benefit from the ability to commit to their role for a set period and still have the opportunity to return to their previous roles.

"[full-time secondment] It gives certainty to the person. It's challenging working in two schools where you've got two different leaders, two different sets of expectations. It gives them the comfort of knowing that when the secondment is over, they have the opportunity to return to the home school."

(Headteacher, secondary school)

However, headteachers suggested there were two circumstances where the part-time model would be preferred over the full-time secondment. Firstly, it would be more appropriate to have a senior leader work across two schools since their loss for a whole year could have a detrimental impact on the school. In addition, for SLT with fewer teaching commitments, it would not be essential to back-fill their position and could provide aspiring teachers the opportunity to gain experience in a senior role.

“If it was somebody who was a full-time class teacher it’s easier to let them go full-time for the year and get somebody to directly replace them. If it’s somebody who’s operating in a senior leadership capacity then it might be better to do the one or two days a week for a year. It depends on the role the person’s fulfilling.”

(Headteacher, primary school)

Secondly, it was thought this would work for secondary school teachers who would like to teach specific subjects and are currently unable to do this to the extent they would like.

For the teaching pool scenario, there were clear disparities in views between headteachers of a school that belonged in a MAT compared to a local authority school. This response highlights that social norms, as well as having actual experience of a scenario, are powerful influences, as headteachers who operated within a MAT were more likely to find the scenario attractive since their school currently operates in a similar way. Interview respondents who were headteachers in MATs felt this idea allows schools to share expertise and encourages collaboration, for example, to address the challenges of shortages in resources for certain subjects:

“It’s that idea, that transferring. It’s just a free flow of the skillset you’ve got in all your academies, including headteachers. That is quite amazing. The whole workforce has got to move, it’s got to go beyond being based in one school and doing one job. You just can’t do it anymore”.

(Headteacher, primary school)

There were more barriers among those headteachers who had not experienced movement of staff between schools, since the idea was unfamiliar. For some of the headteachers interviewed at phase two, this idea sat closest to their previous experiences of Local Authority supply pools or similar initiatives. Despite recognising the benefits of the teaching pool scenario, these headteachers expressed concerns about how the model would work in practice. They were apprehensive about the quality of staff that would be available, alluding to their own experience of recruiting supply staff.

“I worry about the calibre of people you’d recruit to that pool. [...] There’s a risk you’ll end up with a pool a bit like supply staff and a sense of not

belonging. I can see the logic behind it. If they're just sitting there in a pool, you might end up with people who are not particularly strong practitioners. You would need to invest in training that pool if that was the case".

(Headteacher, secondary school)

Some headteachers felt others would 'cherry pick' the best staff from the pool, creating increased competition and conflict between schools. One headteacher indicated that for the teaching pool to work, an independent organisation would need to manage the movement of teachers.

"I suppose, again, being cynical for a moment there's a danger that people would dive in there and cherry pick the best people. There'd have to be some mechanism to ensure fairness and that, because you don't want to be the person left at the end of it and you've only got the least attractive people. You'd have to make sure there was some way to avoid that. I don't see a problem with a teaching pool though."

(Headteacher, primary school)

To overcome this disparity in response, there is a need to highlight to all headteachers that movement has, and can be, successful for all parties. Case studies demonstrating the benefits to teachers (as well as to pupils) would be necessary to create a new 'norm' for those schools which have not yet experienced this type of resource sharing.

4.2 Overall attitudes towards the teacher scenarios

4.2.1 Commutable distance scenarios

In three focus groups with teachers and NQTs, and 25 telephone interviews with teachers (12) and NQTs (13), participants were shown three scenarios (see figure 5) to incentivise them to move to a school in challenging circumstances that was within a commutable⁴⁵ distance to where they currently live.

Figure 5: Phase two teacher commutable distance scenarios

Scenario	Target audience	Components
Leadership – commutable	Willing to commute, looking to progress, seeking a permanent role	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Financial support to complete leadership CPD- for example, National Professional Qualification (NPQ). Reimbursement of travel costs for commuting and/or discounted travel card. Shadowing experienced SLT member with built in support time.
Flexibility – commutable	Willing to commute, seeking a permanent role	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Additional financial payments if teachers work across two schools or more. Reimbursement of travel costs for commuting and/or discounted travel card Less contact teaching time (e.g. one day per half term for planning) Childcare support
Secondment – commutable	Willing to commute, not seeking a permanent (new) role	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Temporary salary increase if commit to move for a full academic year Less contact teaching time (e.g. two hours per week for planning) Option to combine current role with time in new school (e.g. two days a week in new school) Reimbursement of travel costs for commuting and/or discounted travel card Childcare support

Leadership – commutable

Typically, when shown these three scenarios, the majority of interview and focus group participants found the leadership scenario the most appealing. This was particularly attractive for middle leaders looking to progress their career into senior leadership, or teachers with over five years of experience, wanting to progress to middle leadership.

⁴⁵ Respondents were advised that this would be a 25km radius from where they currently reside.

This scenario addresses barriers identified in phase one around reflective motivation and social opportunity. Some teachers were unsure whether or not they could be successful in a school in challenging circumstances; as evidenced by their concerns over their work-life balance and the impact that such a move would have on their professional identity. They perceived it would provide them with experience in a leadership position and credentials if they completed leadership qualifications. Whilst NQTs also found the scenario attractive, they thought that it was not the most applicable scenario for them currently.

The majority of teachers suggested that shadowing a middle or senior leader with built in support time was the most appealing component within the scenario, since the busy schedules of members of SLT make this a rare occurrence. This is in contrast to the phase one groups where teachers found the mentoring and shadowing theme the least appealing as they said this was already available to them. Once this idea was put into the context of leadership development it was more motivating. In particular, teachers in phase two felt that shadowing SLT could provide them with first-hand experience of what senior roles involve and, therefore, enable them to make informed decisions regarding their suitability for that type of role.

“I feel that shadowing an experienced SLT member could open your eyes to what the actual job entails, and then you can judge whether you’d be suitable for the job. If you feel that you still are, then you get better knowledge and experience of what you’re meant to do, and the expectations.”

(NQT, primary school)

Additionally, while shadowing a middle or senior leader was perceived to be appealing in all types of schools, some teachers felt it would be particularly valuable when working in a school in challenging circumstances, as more emphasis is put on implementing ideas to overcome the challenges, and thus teachers are able to experience and better understand these contexts.

“If it was a challenging school that would be even better. You could see how they’re working, what ideas they have, how they manage it. If you’re shadowing them that would make you better as well.”

(NQT, primary school)

This highlights the necessity of immersive experiences to change the existing perceptions of what working in a school in challenging circumstances is actually like. The differences found between phase one and phase two on the appeal of shadowing highlights the need to provide specific opportunities to spend time in such schools.

The financial support component to complete a leadership qualification was attractive as it was seen as a tangible demonstration of a school investing in an individual. In particular, as illustrated in the quote below, one teacher indicated that the financial investment from their school would act as an incentive to develop their career as they would feel well supported and valued by their SLT.

“The financial support would make life easier for you, and would be an extra incentive to push you further on, knowing that you have that support behind you.”

(NQT, primary school)

However, some teachers indicated that their schools already provide staff with financial support to complete a leadership CPD qualification so this did not provide anything new for them.

Secondment – commutable

Teacher and NQT participants typically saw this scenario as an opportunity to widen their experience and found not having to commit to a permanent move attractive. This scenario was commonly discussed as a ‘try before you buy’ model and teachers valued the security of their old roles as a contingency for not liking the seconded roles.

“You don’t want to leave yourself out and expose yourself to going on a secondment and once it’s done, ‘Now what am I going to do?’ So, the opportunity to go back to your previous role is attractive. That would be something that would be on my radar definitely now.”

(NQT, secondary school)

Additionally, many teachers spoke positively about the components within the secondment scenario. They liked that the scenario offered both financial and flexible incentives, with there being a general consensus that less contact teaching time was the most favourable component amongst the scenarios. As the majority of teachers highlighted that their workloads were too high, they felt that less contact teaching time was a key component that could reduce this pressure, and could improve the quality of their teaching.

“The thing that exhausts us is the contact time. It’s emotional, it’s physical, it’s mental, it’s so demanding. When you’ve also got additional pastoral responsibilities, or faculty responsibilities, it becomes very, very, difficult if you’re teaching almost a full timetable. It’s really hard.”

(Teacher, secondary school)

The idea of less contact teaching time is potentially pulled out as particularly of interest due to the perceptions found in phase one that schools in challenging circumstances would have additional demands on a teachers' time, such as more challenging pupil behaviour or lower attainment. Therefore care needs to be taken with this idea as it has the potential to reinforce this perception and therefore, in reality, make such a role less attractive.

Comparatively, some NQT participants did not find less contact teaching time appealing; since they were in the early stages of their career, they valued being in the classroom, growing their teaching experiences.

"I don't know whether it's because I'm an NQT but I like teaching, I enjoy it, I enjoy my time in the classroom so I don't think that would be an incentive for me."

(NQT, primary school)

Flexibility - commutable

The least appealing scenario was the flexibility scenario; the majority of teachers, particularly NQTs, noted that they would not want to work between two or more schools, which they felt was a key component of the scenario, because:

- **Increased workloads:** Teachers thought that they would be too thinly stretched if they were to work in more than one school, as they perceived that their workload could potentially double. For example, they would have to get to know two different schools schemes of work or pupil data management systems.
- **Divided commitment:** Some teachers felt that they would not be able to give their full commitment if they were to work between two schools. For example, this was reported by a teacher who had previously done a part-time secondment.
- **Difficulties in building relationships with pupils:** A large number of primary school teachers indicated that working between multiple schools would inhibit their ability to form strong relationships with their pupils, which for many teachers is central to their teaching success.
- **Impracticalities:** It was also noted that the logistics of working in more than one school would be difficult, for example, travelling between multiple schools.

"If I'm working in two or more schools would my relationships with students be as good as they are now? I think that's part of the reasons I've gotten the results I have in the past."

(Teacher, secondary school)

Teachers also felt that the less contact time component in this scenario (one day per half term) was not as appealing as in the secondment scenario (two hours per week), with the majority of participants indicating that one day per half-term was minimal and would not be enough to encourage them to move. Framing any reduced contact time in terms of time per week was a more powerful approach than by half-term.

4.2.2 Relocation scenarios

In the focus group and telephone interviews with teachers and NQTs, participants were also shown four scenarios (see figure 6) to incentivise relocation.

Figure 6: Phase two teacher relocation scenarios

Scenario	Target audience	Components
Leadership – relocation	Willing to relocate, looking to progress, seeking a permanent role	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Financial support to complete leadership CPD- for example, NPQ qualification. Reimbursement of travel costs for commuting and/or discounted travel card. Shadowing experienced SLT member with built in support time. Childcare support Retention payments (after 1,3, and 5 years)
Flexibility – relocation		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Additional financial payments if teachers work across two schools or more. Less contact teaching time (e.g. one day per half term for planning) Childcare support Relocation pack- fixed amount to contribute to moving costs Option for additional annual leave Support for accessing affordable housing
Relocation (1)	Willing to relocate, seeking a permanent role	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Additional financial payments if teachers work across two schools or more. Less contact teaching time (e.g. one day per half term for planning) Childcare support Relocation pack- fixed amount to contribute to moving costs Option for additional annual leave Support for accessing affordable housing
Relocation (2)		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Additional financial payment for first two years Shadowing staff member who moved into the school in the last five years Option for flexible working (e.g. part-time hours or ability to work off site outside of core hours) Childcare support

Similar to the first phase, when shown the relocation scenarios teacher and NQT participants emphasised that their current housing and family commitments would be significant barriers to moving. This immediate negative emotional response to the idea of moving means participants were less willing to discuss the merits of scenarios and components than for the commutable distance scenarios. While the commutable scenarios addressed reflective motivation in a compelling way, here the automatic motivation (emotional response) overrides all other elements of their thinking. This leads back to the idea of immersive opportunities, to provide powerful experiences in new environments to understand how they could be successful in a new role.

Briefly, the following was found for specific components in the relocation scenarios:

- **Childcare support:** Those teachers with young children valued the benefits of childcare support since it is costly but it was not enough to incentivise teachers to relocate. Some teachers felt by moving to areas that have a high concentration of schools in challenging circumstances, it would hinder the opportunity for their children to attend good schools.
- **Additional annual leave:** All teachers found additional annual leave attractive because it provides flexibility. However, some teachers suggested it would create practical difficulties since there is uncertainty around the quality of their replacements.
- **Contribution to moving costs:** All teachers interviewed highlighted that support with moving was an essential requirement as opposed to an incentive. Consequently, for this component to become an incentive it would also need to account for the inconvenience of moving and thus financially overcompensate teachers.
- **Retention payments:** Some teachers reported if retention payments were substantial, it may incentivise them to stay at schools in challenging circumstances for a longer period. However, others recognised it would cause discrepancies with staff who would not be eligible to receive the payments and it would make teachers feel uncomfortable.
- **Less contact time:** As discussed in the previous section, teachers felt weekly approaches would be more attractive than by half-term.

Teachers in interviews and groups were asked to consider what elements would make a relocation package successful, and the majority concluded it would need to be tailored to meet their individual needs and circumstances. Four key components would need to be offered collectively for them to consider relocating:

1. A financial package that would sufficiently address the cost of relocating to that area.

2. A salary increase, or retention payments, that make the inconvenience of relocation financially viable and worthwhile.
3. Increased flexibility such as reduced contact teaching time and additional annual leave to improve their work-life balance.
4. Career progression that encompasses shadowing and CPD support.

“Any of our jobs could be considerably harder in a different school, and yet we’d be paid the same. It doesn’t make any sense”.

(Teacher, secondary school)

On the whole, teachers believed that these components were likely to be unrealistic for the government to provide, and therefore felt that focus should be placed on schools in the local area. However, with the four components they outline above it is clear that with the right circumstances and incentives moving is entirely feasible.

Teachers in both groups and telephone interviews highlighted that the scenarios presented had the potential to be disruptive to settling into a new school by marking them out as ‘different’ to existing staff.

Headteachers were also shown the teacher and NQT scenarios. Many headteachers interviewed expressed concern regarding certain components of the relocation packages, particularly additional annual leave or reduced contact time. Some highlighted that it could cause conflict between staff:

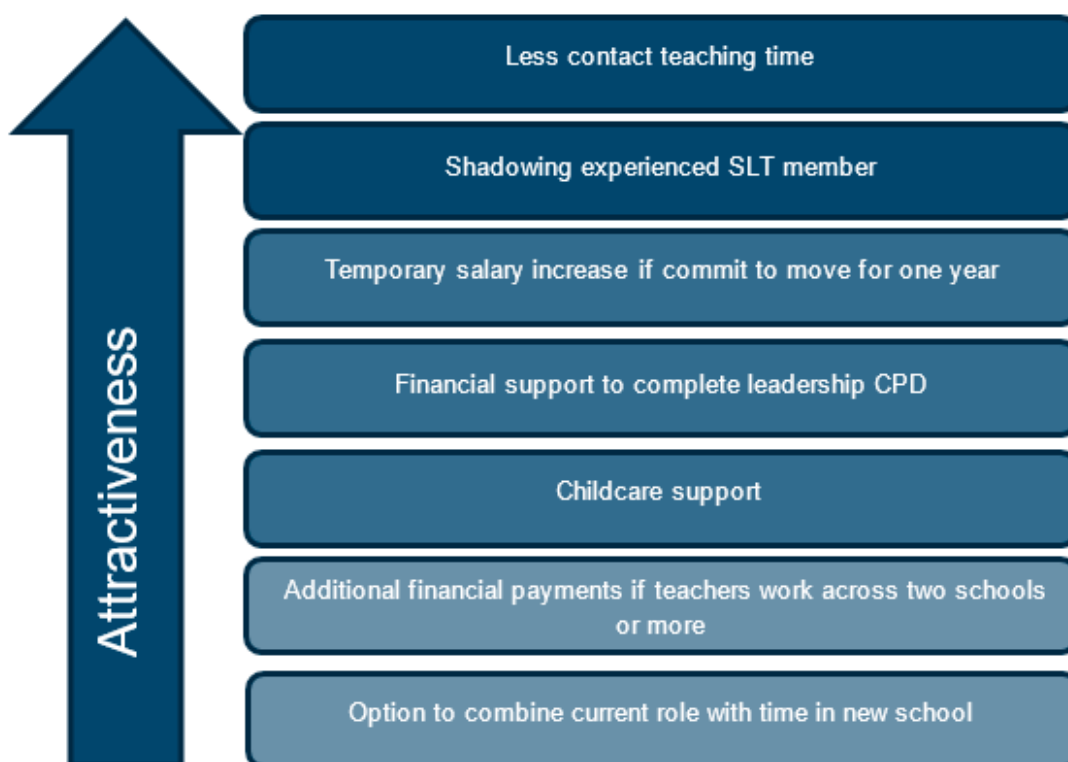
“Options for additional annual leave, again, I can see that being divisive amongst staff. Somebody just comes into the school and they get an extra week or two weeks off a year than you do, I can see that causing some issues and not being particularly conducive to teamwork... Support in accessing affordable housing, if it’s a challenging area there’s probably not going to be a shortage of affordable houses there. Relocation package, useful, additional annual leave, divisive. Why would this person have less contact teaching time than any other member of staff working in that school? They’ve moved there permanently, why should you be treated differently?”

(Headteacher, primary school)

The idea that incentivising teachers to move could exacerbate differences and inequalities in the system that already exist (for example, teachers in inner London have a higher salary than those outside of London) needs further exploration, particularly with teachers already in schools in challenging circumstances.

4.3 Ranking of individual components

When discussing the scenarios in groups and interviews with teachers and NQTs, participants were encouraged to highlight individual components which were particularly attractive. With teachers and NQTs less willing to do this for the relocation scenarios, only the components from the commutable distance scenarios are included in this analysis. Figure 7 below shows the most attractive components at the top and the least attractive at the bottom. Teachers (including NQTs) were asked to discuss which of the components of the scenarios they found the most attractive, and these have been aggregated hierarchically across the sample.



The diagram (Figure 7) illustrates that components that serve as a means for improving teachers' work-life balance and professional development were most favoured. This is unsurprising, since research has found that schools' inspection grade does not necessarily have a negative association with either job satisfaction or staff turnover, once

working conditions have been controlled for (Sims, 2013).⁴⁶ Incentives that focus on improving job satisfaction are most attractive as they address the negative perceptions of an increased workload in an Ofsted grade three or four school.

For teachers, the least appealing component was the notion of working across multiple schools. The scenarios that were used in phase two were broadly focused on ‘incentivisation’ and ‘persuasion’ in the context of the current education system. Understandably then, working in multiple schools was ranked at the bottom, since outside of MAT’s, the norm is to work in one school.

To encourage flexible working in more than one school, it appears that other areas of the COM-B model would need to be addressed. For example, creating a new ‘professional’ norm might include elements of environmental restructuring (such as changing teachers’ contracts away from being a permanent employee in one school) or, as previously discussed, to highlight case studies of the positive impact of teachers working in multiple schools (modelling). During the interviews, teachers appeared to be aware that substantial changes may need to be made to support greater mobility in the profession.

“To make this a better profession to work within, and making this a more attractive profession to come to work in [...], I think, quite significant action and things have to change quite significantly”.

(Teacher, secondary school)

4.3 Chapter summary

Phase two key findings:

Headteachers

- Headteachers need interventions that build their belief that supporting mobility would be worthwhile. The scenarios which best achieved this were based on secondments, as these were seen to provide funding and enable staff development – not just of staff who moved but may also open up opportunities for staff in the headteachers’ school.
- Part-time secondment was seen as less desirable as it could increase administration and management time. However, it was seen as particularly useful for SLT or teachers of specialist subjects.

⁴⁶https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/656249/TALIS_2013_Evidence_on_Working_Conditions_Teacher_Job_Satisfaction_and_Retention_Nov_2017.pdf

- Response to the idea of a teaching pool, with staff working in multiple schools, was driven by what was 'normal' to the headteacher. For some, all of whom were heads in MATs, this idea was seen as successful for all parties. For headteachers with no experience of sharing resource there were questions over the quality of staff such a pool would attract and questions over how to ensure 'fairness' in distributing staff across schools involved. Case studies demonstrating the benefits to teachers, and most importantly to pupils and pupil outcomes, of such movement would be necessary to create a new 'norm' for those schools which have not yet experienced this type of resource sharing.

Teachers and NQTs

- As with phase one, there was a strong negative emotional response to the idea of relocation and participants were less willing to discuss or consider scenarios aimed at those willing to relocate.
- Response to the scenarios for those willing to commute to a new role was more positive, and elicited some core insight into how to create a positive emotional response to the idea of moving:
 - Shadowing and secondment opportunities were most appealing, as they offered immersive experiences in schools which the majority of respondents had not previously had. Ultimately, this experience may not need to be particularly long; what teachers are looking for is a way to understand what the job would actually be like, so short visits to spend time in target schools may also be a useful tool.
 - Offering leadership development opportunities addressed concerns over the impact that moving to a school in challenging circumstances could have on professional identity and demonstrated to teachers they were valued.
 - Less contact teaching time needs to be framed in terms of the amount of time this would be per week to be attractive, although caution is needed as this may exacerbate the perception that a role in a school in challenging circumstances has more demands on a teachers' time.
 - The idea of working across two schools did not appeal to the majority, as it is seen to have the potential to reduce their ability to build positive relationships with pupils and increase workload. However, headteachers of MATs were favourable to the idea as they have experience of this in practice and have seen the benefits to both teachers and pupils.

5. Overarching discussion and conclusions

All teachers and headteachers involved in phase one and two of this research indicated that there are significant barriers to moving to schools in challenging circumstances. For teachers, the barriers to relocation, such as housing and family commitments, currently outweigh the possibility of having incentives to motivate them to move. The findings suggest, without any other activity to address the current 'social norm' of teachers working in one school, attention would be more effectively focused on incentivising teachers to move to a role within a commutable distance.

Headteachers were hesitant to support teacher mobility due to it driving a feeling of loss as it is initially perceived to create a lack of resources in their own school. The uncertainty that they could find quality replacements leads headteachers to focus almost exclusively on the financial implications of finding and employing new staff, including the potential need to pay for supply teachers. However, headteachers of schools within a MAT were more enthusiastic as their experience of teacher mobility has encouraged collaboration and created more opportunities for staff development. On the whole, headteachers supported mobility where they could see the potential for professional development of their staff, particularly if this also created opportunities for the staff that remain in their school.

Altering the status quo

Some headteachers acknowledged that the profession does not currently support or actively encourage teacher mobility, resulting in a set of perceptions of what working in a challenging school would be like. Therefore, changes are required that remove the pervading negative perceptions of what a role in a school in challenging circumstances would be like in practice.

Similarly, some teachers alluded to the idea that the current structure of teacher training does not enable all teachers to feel ready to deal with schools in different contexts. The majority of teachers and NQTs in both phase one and two disclosed that their training had not involved working in schools that were in challenging circumstances. They therefore felt they may not have the ability to be successful in a school in challenging circumstances. As a result, teachers decided to take up jobs in schools where they felt they could fulfil their roles to a good standard.

The reluctance to consider moving is driven by the emotive response to what challenging circumstances mean. Teachers, NQTs and headteachers were asked to define what challenging circumstances were for schools in the context of this discussion. The perception among almost all participants was that this meant schools in areas with high levels of deprivation and/or Ofsted grade three or four. This definition led to teachers

thinking that roles in these schools would mean more demands on their time (which is already pressured) due to low aspirations, poor pupil behaviour, and lack of parent/carer support or additional scrutiny on teaching staff. This overshadows almost all of the discussions in both phases of research, and highlights the need to provide immersive experiences for teachers who have no previous experience of schools in challenging circumstances. Shadowing and secondment opportunities were most appealing, as they offered this experience without the risk associated with making a long-term commitment. It would be a simplification to rely solely on this approach to what is evidently a complex behaviour, but providing this experience would be a powerful start point.

6. Appendices

6.1 Phase 1 themes

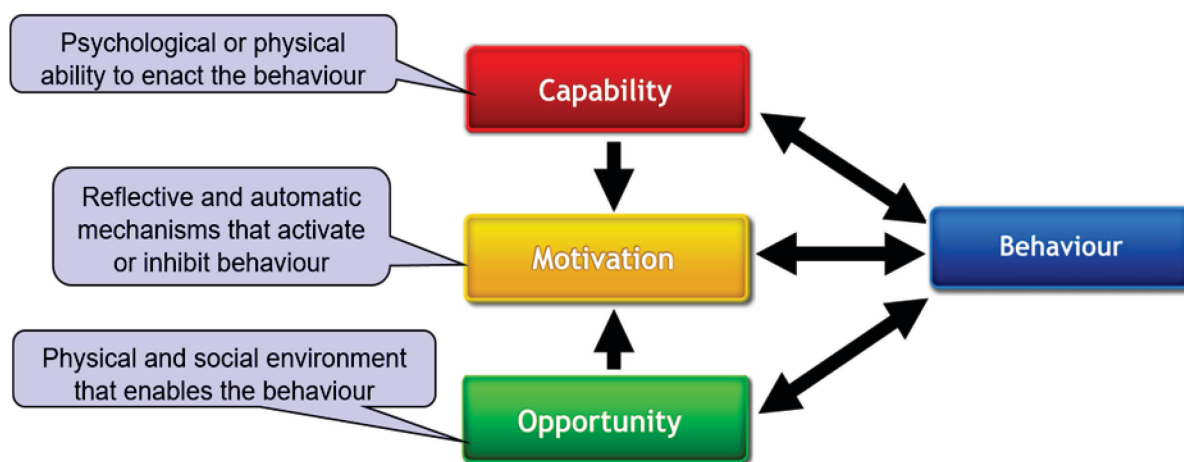
The table below illustrates the themes that were discussed in phase one of the research, which guided the development of scenarios for phase two.

Themes
Teachers
<ol style="list-style-type: none">1. Changes to contact/teaching time: reducing contact time, to give teachers more time to plan their lessons.2. Financial incentives for individuals: this includes a range of propositions such as a bonus, reimbursement of travel costs etc.3. Enhanced career progression: a fast-track programme to move to middle or senior leadership.4. Mentoring or peer support: scheduled time with a local senior leader to support development.5. CPD opportunities: any specialist training, including short courses or other qualifications.6. Proactive recruitment: schools/headteachers asking specific individuals to work with them since their skillset would be beneficial or impactful for that particular school in challenging circumstances.
Headteachers
<ol style="list-style-type: none">1. Financial incentive for schools: additional financial funding for the following academic year.2. Generate evidence to support funding applications: this includes more funding to increase the supply of NQTs.3. Resource exchange to enhance CPD: schools being involved in a teacher pool of flexible resource.4. Enhancing school employer reputation: promoting quality of employment experience.

6.2 The COM-B Model

6.2.1 Overview of the COM-B Model

The COM-B model⁴⁷ recognises that behaviour is part of an interacting system involving three key components; capability, opportunity and motivation (as shown in the diagram below). The system suggests that whether behaviour occurs (or whether a behavioural intervention is successful) is a function of: an individual's psychological or physical capability to carry out the behaviour (for example, their knowledge and skillset); the opportunity for the behaviour afforded by the physical and/or social environment (such as social support, information availability); and the individual's automatic (emotions and drives) and reflective (planning and intentions) motivation to enact the behaviour.



Michie et al (2011) Implementation Science

⁴⁷ Michie S et al. (2011). The behaviour change wheel: A new method for characterising and designing behaviour change interventions. *Implementation Science*, 6:42.

6.2.2 COM-B intervention functions

A particular advantage of the COM-B approach is that it provides a series of 19 mapped intervention and policy functions,⁴⁸ providing guidance on which interventions and practical policy levers may be most useful to facilitate teacher mobility, and for the different groups interviewed, based on where the deficits in enabling behaviour lie (i.e., on the capability, opportunity, and/or motivation dimensions). For example, deficits in opportunity can be best addressed through environmental change generated through policies of environmental restructuring. Deficits in motivation, on the other hand, can be addressed through increasing knowledge and understanding via information sources, or through associate learning based on generating positive feelings relating to relocating to challenging schools, depending on whether the deficit in motivation is reflective or automatic. These latter techniques are associated, for example, with policy levers of increased tailored communication and marketing.⁴⁹

Intervention functions were mapped out for each of the COM-B components to identify potential intervention ideas. For example, for reflective motivation, the intervention function can be best addressed through increasing knowledge or understanding (education), using communication to induce positive or negative feelings to induce action (persuasion) and providing examples for people to aspire to or imitate (modelling). The aim of this intervention would be to ensure it is compatible with individuals' professional identity, and to build the belief it would be worthwhile. Ideas to achieve this aim were created:

- Offer enhanced progression opportunities (with mentoring/senior support)
- Offer less teaching contact time/increased planning time (continuum – planning time each day through to longer term CPD time)
- Create/use head-hunters to proactively recruit effective teachers to these vacancies
- Accreditation for teachers who have spent period of time in a school in challenging circumstances to create positive (identity) associations
- 'Try before you buy' scheme where teacher spends time in target school to see what it is like

This process was followed for both teachers and headteachers and completed for each of the COM-B components to develop the scenarios used in the second phase.

⁴⁸ *ibid*

⁴⁹ Michie S et al. (2011). The behaviour change wheel: A new method for characterising and designing behaviour change interventions. *Implementation Science*, 6:42.



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