

# England Country Summary

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Please note: The majority of the information in this document was taken directly from the UK Background Report (IPSE, 2003) that was written for the publication of *Teachers Matter: Attracting, Developing and Retaining Effective Teachers* (OECD, 2005). Country representatives provided additional information. This country profile was created for the Aspen-OECD Bellagio Seminar, How Can Teacher Policies Improve Student Learning? October 17-20, 2006, Bellagio, Italy.

## England

### Country Summary—General Facts and Information\*

**Population:** ~50,100,000

**Education expenditures:**

- As a percentage of GDP (includes primary, secondary and tertiary): 5.5%
- Per pupil expenditure in US dollars (includes primary, secondary and post-secondary non-tertiary): \$7,551

**Teacher demographics: (414,000 teachers)**

- Gender distribution (% female):
  - Primary: 81%
  - Lower secondary: 59%
  - Upper secondary: 60%
- Percentage of unqualified teachers: 2.7%
- Salary after 15 years experience (equivalent US \$): \$42,000 (OECD, 2005)
- Trends:
  - Rise in unqualified teachers from 1997 to 2006 (0.6% to 2.7%)
  - Nearly half of current teachers retiring in 15 years

**Student demographics: (7.6 million students)**

- In public institutions: 91%
- Eligible for free school meals: 16% primary; 13.6% secondary
- Minority ethnic population: 20.6% of primary; 16.8% secondary
- English as an Additional Language (EAL): 12.5% primary; 9.5% secondary
- Graduation rate (Upper secondary): 97%
- PISA Math mean score: n/a

**Structure of the education system:**

- Governance:
  - Department of Education and Skills (DfES) governs system under direction of Secretary of State for Education
  - 4 types of local authorities (LAs) – rural, urban, metropolitan, within London
  - Governing bodies of individual schools highly autonomous
- Teacher employment:
  - Teachers are employed by LAs or schools.
  - Teacher pay is based on a national salary scale, although LAs decide point on scale.
  - Initial teacher training involves a 2-4 year undergraduate degree, or a one-year postgraduate certificate of education or employment based routes.
  - Unionization: High percentage (>80%) of public school teachers are union members.
- Average class size:
  - Public & private primary: 26
  - Public & private lower secondary: 22

**Curriculum and Assessment:**

- Schools are required to provide a balanced curriculum reflecting their needs.
- Specific statutory requirements for some subjects (time allocated and teaching methods are not prescribed by law).
- Some subjects follow a national curriculum (primary school numeracy & literacy, high school mathematics, English, science).
- Statutory assessments at key intervals (although promotion is not dependent upon results).

\*Where sources are not provided for statistics and figures, information was provided by the UK Department for Education and Skills because OECD publications did not offer specific information for England

## **Current Education Context in England**

This section summarizes current education initiatives to provide a sense of the education reform context for the discussion of teacher policy initiatives that follows.

### The Schools Standards and Framework Act (1988)

- Establishes monitoring systems track achievement goals for pupils through assessments and national examinations.
- Includes national strategies for numeracy and literacy (integrating research-based pedagogy and staff development).
- Requires student attainment results (aggregated) be published as part of the accountability process (this has been controversial -- educators argue they do not allow for socio-economic factors).
- Uses value-added results to show how schools are contributing to student progress relative to students' individual starting points.
- Requires that the Office for Standards in Education (Ofsted) assesses school improvement through inspections. Schools not meeting standards are subject to additional inspections.

### The Education Act of 2005

- Creates statutory support for numerous major strategy documents published by the Department for Education and Skills (DfES).
- Aims to raise standards for every child in every school by developing a new relationship with schools and promoting greater autonomy and diversity in the education system.
- The key reform components are:
  - A more efficient and effective school inspection system;
  - Guaranteed three-year budgets for every school; and
  - School profiles providing a balanced assessment of a school's ethos, characteristics, performance and improvement priorities.
- Includes changes to the Teacher Training Agency (renamed the Training and Development Agency for Schools (TDA)) to reflect its new role in leading and developing the whole 'remodelled' school workforce.
- Establishes standards and competencies for teachers, and a national teacher training curriculum. Teachers must 1) complete either an undergraduate, postgraduate training program or employment based program; 2) achieve the standards and competencies; and 3) pass skills tests in literacy, numeracy and information/communications technology.

### The National College for School Leadership (NCSL) (launched in 2000)

- Supports leaders in schools and revises existing leadership development programs to ensure every school leader benefits from a more tailored provision to fit their needs.
- Ensures we attract and keep sufficient, good quality head teachers .
- Reviews the National Professional Qualifications for Headteachers (NPQH) to ensure that the training continues to match the needs of our school leaders.
- Works with its partners to develop provision for leaders of the most complex and challenging schools, including Academies and urban schools.

- Currently identifying a new group of national leaders in education (NLEs) drawn from those who are succeeding in our most challenging roles. Starting in 2006 they will:
  - Advise Ministers on policy;
  - Take on leadership roles outside of their immediate school working with local authorities and the National Strategies to support nearby schools that are struggling.

#### Early Years Policy (Childcare Act 2006)

- Reforms and simplifies the childcare regulation framework to raise standards.
- Introduces the Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) which aims to improve outcomes of children under 5 by ensuring the early years service is integrated and accessible.
- Introduces Early Years Professional Status for teachers to lead practice and raise the quality of the early years preparation and support.

#### 14-19 Strategy

- Aims to ensure all young people are offered learning paths that develop their interests and provide routes to success.
- Focuses on 3 key priorities: raising attainment of those in the system now, qualifications and curriculum reform, and supporting local delivery.
- £315m (approx. \$650 US dollars) is available for the next 2 years to personalize learning for pupils at Key Stage 3 (14 years), including extra support for those falling behind in the basics.
- In 2008, three types of employer-designed specialised Diplomas will be offered focusing on:
  - Students preparing for university courses;
  - Students planning to enter the workforce directly at 18; and
  - Students who are currently not well engaged with the current school-based provision.

#### Extended Schools

- Extended schools provide services and activities beyond the school day to help meet the needs of children, their families and the community including year-round childcare (8am-6pm), homework clubs, referrals to specialist support services, adult learning, etc.
- All children should have access to these activities through schools by 2010.
- Over 9,000 schools are engaged in the program with their local authorities and Training and Development Agency working to extend their services.

## England Teacher Policy Highlights

### Attracting and Supporting New Teachers

#### *Recruitment:*

- Recently, progress has been made in improving pay, workload and morale (as detailed in the National Agreement described in the final section of this document), and these are seen as crucial to making the profession more attractive.
- A variety of non-traditional teacher training routes have been devised to attract people who might not otherwise become teachers.
- The Teach First Scheme is a business-led program which attracts graduates to hard-to-staff, low achieving schools in London and Manchester.
- Advertising campaigns and financial incentives have been employed to attract teachers throughout England, especially in certain secondary subjects.

#### *Induction:*

- A one-year induction period must be provided for newly qualified teachers.
- Teachers receive support to meet the standards for qualified teachers.
- Induction is both a support and an assessment process provided by the school.
- Support is individualised (includes observations, demonstrations and professional reviews).
- Teachers should not teach more than a 90% teaching load during this period.

### Improving Schools as Places to Work and Learn

#### *Professional Development:*

- There is a “New Professionalism” agenda underway in which professional development and evaluation for teachers are being strengthened through the use of career stages for teachers.
- Schools may require professional development for teachers to move among the various career stages (described in more detail in the next section) including:
  - Crossing the pay threshold by obtaining Senior Teacher Status
  - Working towards Excellent Teacher Status
  - Applying to be an Advanced Skills Teacher
- Advanced Skills Teachers (described in the next section) spend 20% of their time providing professional development to other teachers, usually in the form of outreach to other schools.
- Teacher appraisals have been refocused to become teaching and learning reviews which look for evidence that the teacher is:
  - Focused on effective classroom practice, using assessment effectively and using a range of teaching styles to promote personalized learning;
  - Involved in the professional development that best matches the needs;
  - Offering coaching and mentoring to other teachers where they have the teaching and subject skills from which other teachers can benefit; and
  - Rewarded in ways that fairly reflect their classroom expertise and commitment to their professional development.
- Virtually all funding for professional development has been devolved to schools.

- There are also training and development offerings for support staff including an induction program for teaching assistants. Other programs are being developed to support the development of staff who aspire to become classroom teachers.

*Improving Working Conditions/National Agreement:*

- A major national effort is focused on reducing teacher administrative burden and workload in order to ensure teachers have time to focus on teaching and learning. This initiative is discussed in detail in the final section of this country brief.

Improving Pay and Career Opportunities

*Performance-based pay:*

- The pay system for teachers has been restructured to increase teacher retention and teachers' skills and to create career advancement opportunities for classroom teachers.
- Until 1999, movement up the pay scale generally happened annually until a teacher reached the top for that position. This was theoretically based on satisfactory performance, although only in extremely rare situations were teachers not given annual increments.
- In 1999, new salary scales were implemented for teachers who voluntarily apply for and pass a performance threshold. This assessment is made at a fixed point in a teacher's career and gives experienced teachers access to an upper pay scale.
- A series of professional development initiatives are also linked to teacher promotion.
- This process was met with initial resistance from professional associations, but ultimately 80% of those eligible to pass the performance threshold applied in the first two rounds and 97% were successful.
- Evaluations have indicated it was stressful and time consuming for teachers, and head teachers. However, head teachers and teachers are now familiar with the system, and there is currently a manageable steady rate of application each year.

*Advanced Skills Teachers:*

- A career grade of Advanced Skills Teacher (AST) was introduced in 1998 as a route for career advancement without leaving the classroom.
  - ASTs provide pedagogic leadership within their school and others.
  - They must pass an assessment including a portfolio, interviews, and observations of practice evaluated by an external assessor.
- The goal is to have 3-5% of the teaching force in this category.
- AST teachers are paid on a separate salary scale that is higher than the performance threshold scale. For example, point one teachers on the regular pay scale earn £19,641 (approx. \$36,850 US dollars) while point one teachers on the AST salary scale earn £34,083 (approx. \$63,590 US dollars).

*Excellent Teacher Scheme (ETS) (introduced Fall 2006)*

- Excellent Teachers are excellent classroom practitioners, with an established track record of

sustained high quality teaching, whose pupils show consistent improvement in relation to prior and expected attainment.

- The role requires length, breadth and depth of experience, pedagogic excellence and coaching and mentoring skills of a high order.
- Excellent Teachers will have a clear role in helping other teachers in their school to improve their effectiveness, but (unlike Advanced Skills Teachers) there is no outreach commitment.

*Revised Teacher Evaluation (Performance Management) (introduced in 2000):*

- All teachers annually agree to objectives with their head teachers. Objectives include improving professional practice (and leadership for head teachers) and pupil progress.
- Performance against objectives is reviewed (including observations and feedback). In 2003 the Office for Standards reported that this initiative was largely welcomed although the objective-setting process needed improvement, particularly in the area of pupil progress.
- The second stage of performance management will be introduced in 2006, concentrating on two key areas:
  - Performance objectives will be used to make pay decisions to award 'performance points' to a teacher's salary.
  - An enhanced focus on professional development.

## **Focus on Current Policy Initiative**

### **The National Agreement: Raising standards and tackling workload**

#### Summary

In 2003, the government, employers and school workforce unions culminated five years of working to solve teacher workload issues by jointly signing *Raising standards and tackling workload: a national agreement*. (See Appendix A for timetable of the development of the Agreement and Appendix B for the Signatories of the Agreement.) Addressing workload issues is a major lever towards improving issues of recruitment, retention, and quality within the field of teaching. The Agreement identifies three phases of reform jointly undertaken by government, employers and unions to raise standards and tackle teacher workload issues.

#### Context

This Agreement grew out of a shared recognition by all stakeholders that the world economy was changing and students needed to be able to meet rising standards for achievement. Schools and teachers were working hard to meet these needs, but raising standards placed great demands on teachers already facing an excessive workload. An independent study documented the nature of teacher workload and showed that two-thirds of teacher time was spent on non-teaching burdens. As a result, the profession had suffered in recruitment and retention. Following this study, stakeholders worked to develop policies and an action plan that would raise standards while tackling teacher workload; there was firm agreement among the involved parties that these two goals had to go hand in hand. A central element of the path forward requires schools to use more support staff as a means of releasing teachers to focus on first-rate instruction.

#### Key Tenets of the National Agreement

The Agreement includes a seven-point plan to create more time for teachers and head teachers:

1. Progressive reduction in teachers' overall hours.
2. Changes to teachers' contracts to ensure all teachers:
  - Do not routinely undertake administrative and clerical tasks;
  - Have a reasonable work/life balance;
  - Have a reduced burden of providing cover for absent colleagues;
  - Have guaranteed planning, preparation and assessment time within the school day;
  - Have a reasonable allocation of time in support of their leadership and management

- responsibilities;
  - And that head teachers have dedicated time which recognizes their significant leadership responsibilities for their school.
3. A concerted attack on unnecessary paperwork and bureaucratic processes.
  4. Reform of support staff roles to help teachers and support pupils. Personal administrative assistants for teachers, cover supervisors and higher level teaching assistants have been introduced.
  5. Recruitment of new managers, including business managers and others from outside education to contribute to school leadership teams.
  6. Additional resources and national “change management” programs to help school leaders achieve the necessary reforms of the teaching profession and restructuring of the school workforce.
  7. Monitoring of progress on delivery by Signatories to this Agreement by creating the Workforce Agreement Monitoring Group (WAMG).

### Funding/Resources

The Government pledged additional funding to ensure that by 2006 at least 10,000 additional teachers and 50,000 extra support staff were appointed. The government has also provided grants to assist schools in this change management effort and a national network of remodelling advisors has been in place since autumn 2003.

### Responsibility for Implementation and Common Action

The Agreement requires that all Signatories (Appendix B) be responsible for implementation and identifies key responsibilities for the parties. The government must uphold resource commitments and free schools from bureaucratic restraint. School leadership must take ownership of reform at the local level in the context of the national goals. Teachers and staff must deliver high quality instruction. LAs (local authorities) must promote raising standards and ensure school leaders receive the support they need. Unions must support the reform process by promoting reform among members and working to secure the implementation in schools.

Appendix A  
Timeline of the Development of the National Agreement

**1998**

- Publication of Green Paper: *Teachers Meeting the Challenge of Change*

**2001**

November

- Publication of White Paper: *Professionalism and Trust* (sets the pace for the Agreement)

December

- Survey on teacher workload issues

**2002**

May

- School Teachers Review Body confirms survey findings

September

- Transforming the School Workforce Pathfinder begins
- National Agreement negotiations start

October

- Publication of White Paper: *Time for Standards*

**2003**

January

- Raising Standards and Tackling Workload: A National Agreement signed and WAMG established

April

- National Remodelling Team (guidance to schools on practice) and Implementation Review Unit (gatekeepers on bureaucracy) established

August

- Support staff regulations come into force

September

- First phase of contractual change (reduce administrative and clerical tasks)

**2004**

July

- 7600 schools are engaged in remodelling

September

- Second phase of contractual change (reduced cover burden)

**2005**

September

- Third phase of contractual change (guaranteed planning, preparation and assessment time)

**2006**

January

- The introduction of Teaching & Learning Responsibility Points

## Appendix B

### Signatories to the National Agreement

ATL: Association of Teachers and Lectures

DfES: Department for Education and Skills

GMB: Britain's General Union

NASUWT: National Association of Schoolmasters Union of Women Teachers

NEOST: National Employers' Organization for School Teachers

PAT: Professional Association of Teachers

SHA: Secondary Heads' Association

TGWU: Transport and General Workers' Union

UNISON: Trade union

WAG: Welsh Assembly Government

## References

Institute for Policy Studies in Education (March, 2003). *United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland OECD Country Background Report*. IPSE, London.

OECD (2005a). *Education at a Glance: OECD Indicators 2005*. OECD, Paris.

OECD (2005b). *Teachers Matter: Attracting, Developing and Retaining Effective Teachers*. OECD, Paris.

## Additional Information

Updates on the National Agreement implementation:  
<http://www.remodelling.org/programmes/na.php>