

23rd Annual Report of Senior Staff Appointments in Schools in England and Wales

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Education
Data
Surveys

Main Findings

- Over 2,600 schools advertised for a new head teacher for the first time during 2007. These included nearly 400 secondary schools, some 2,100 primary schools and 144 special schools and units.
- Over 40 Academies sought a school leader during 2007, mostly as the result of the establishment of a new Academy.
- Re-advertisement rates fell in the secondary sector to their lowest level since 2001/02: they also fell in the special school sector.
- Re-advertisement rates remained at a high level in the primary sector for the fourth year in a row reaching 37% in 2006/07.
- Inner London schools found recruiting a new head easier in 2006/07 but in the North West, East of England and Wales re-advertisement rates reached new record high levels.
- Church schools continued to face greater difficulties in recruiting a new head teacher than community schools. There was a small improvement amongst Roman Catholic schools in 2006/07 but a slight worsening of the situation for Church of England schools.
- Generally, schools continued to find little difficulty in recruiting new deputy or assistant head teachers.
- The expected surge in the number of advertisements due to increased retirement levels has not yet materialised, possibly due to amalgamations and federations: 2008 may be a critical year in this respect.
- Governing Bodies still do not have enough information about the likely number of candidates they can expect when they advertise a vacancy: too much is still left to chance and the market. The National College for School Leadership has a key role to play in ensuring that the market for school leaders works effectively for all schools.

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23rd Annual Report of Senior Staff Appointments in Schools in England and Wales

Introduction

This is the twenty third annual survey of senior staff appointments in schools published by Education Data Surveys. These surveys provide a continuous record of leadership turnover in schools since the mid-1980s.

Methodology

The methodology for the survey has been consistent since the outset. All nationally advertised posts for head teachers, deputy head teachers and, since September 2001, assistant heads, in maintained schools and academies, have been recorded using our own *Headbase* software. As it has been a requirement that at least head and deputy head teacher posts are nationally advertised, the database contains details of almost all such posts advertised during the year. The only exceptions are some schools in the Welsh speaking authorities where not all posts may be advertised in English language publications.

Most posts appear in the Times Educational Supplement (TES), with a smaller number advertised elsewhere on web sites such as Eteach. Some Roman Catholic and Church of England schools also advertise in the religious press. However, this does not yet seem to have become a significant 'sole' method of advertising senior posts in schools, although the amount of dual listing has increased. However, if anything, there may have been fewer adverts for senior posts solely on the web during 2007 than in the previous year. Nevertheless, the market for senior staff recruitment is likely to undergo some changes as new players review the market. The present system is expensive, especially when schools are required to place advertisements in local as well as national newspapers.

The following sections of the report review specific aspects of the labour market, starting with that for secondary school head teachers. Finally, there are some general comments on the overall health of the market. This report essentially forms an update on to our longer and much more detailed report issued each September on behalf of the NAHT and ASCL that can be accessed through our web site at www.educationdatasurveys.org.uk under the publications page.

Head Teacher Posts

For some years there has been a concern that the latter part of the current decade would see a peak in demand for head teachers as the large number of heads who entered the profession in the late 1960s and early 1970s reach retirement age. Whilst the number of first time advertisements for head teachers has remained high, at over 2,600, there has not yet been a surge in advertisements. This may partly be due to the trend towards amalgamations and federations that has emerged during recent years.

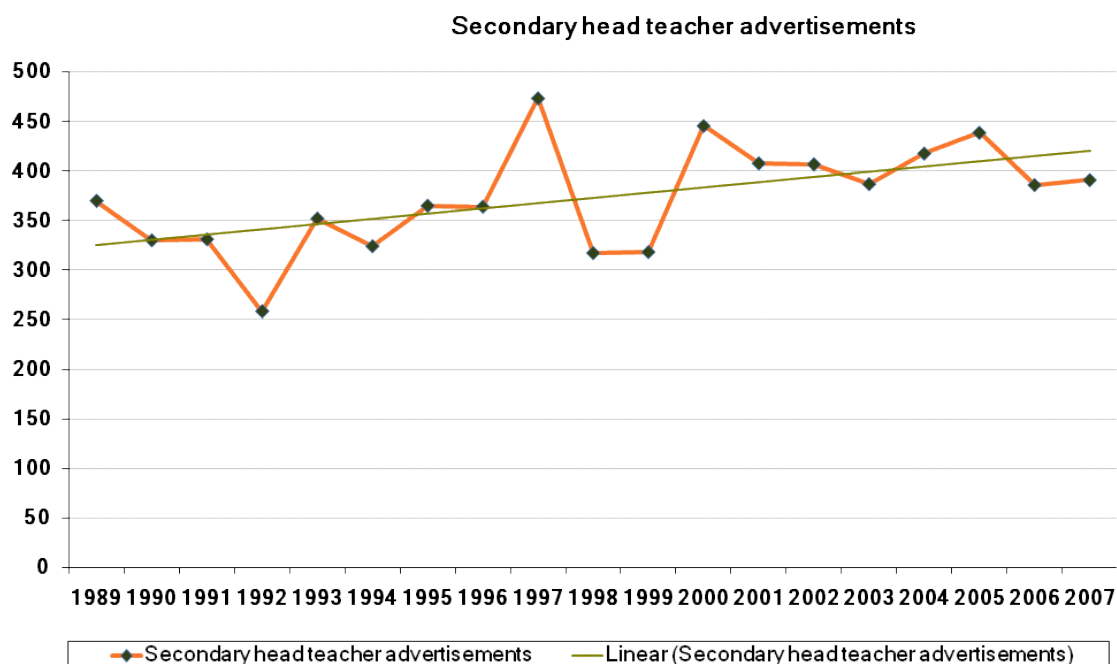
1. Secondary School Head Teachers

The market for secondary head teachers was very similar in size during 2007 to that of the previous year. The total for first time adverts, at 394 posts, was towards the lower end of figures for recent years despite over 40 advertisements for leader of Academies, most of which were for new schools.

Table 1: Number of secondary head teacher posts advertised

2007	394
2006	386
2005	439
2004	418
2003	387
2002	407
2001	408
2000	446
1999	318
1998	317
1997	474
1996	364
1995	365
1994	324
1993	352
1992	258
1991	331
1990	330
1989	370

Since the appointment of the new leader of an Academy often takes place at least a year before the school opens, the overall numbers of these depend upon the government's enthusiasm for the programme as few of the original leaders have so far needed replacement.



The largest number of advertisements for Academy posts came towards the end of the year, and included six new academies headships that were advertised in one week by Manchester local authority.

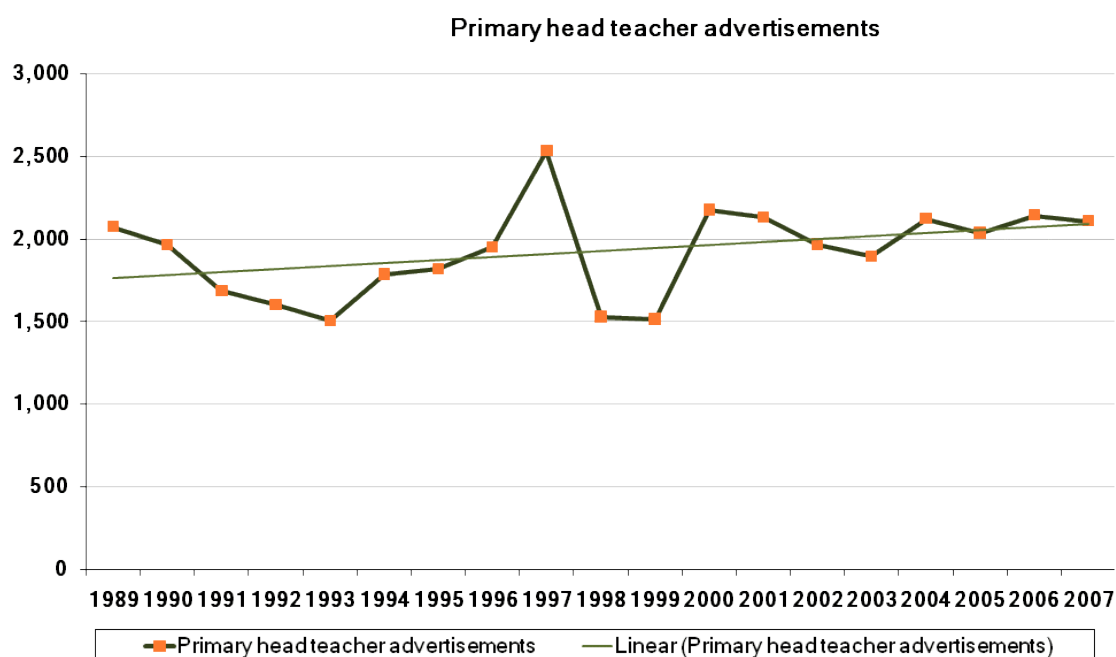
2. Primary School Head Teachers

The number of primary school head teacher vacancies advertised for the first time in 2007 was once again over two thousand one hundred, towards the upper end of the range and almost exactly in line with the predicted level of advertisements.

Table 2: Number of primary head teacher posts advertised

2007	2,120
2006	2,147
2005	2,038
2004	2,125
2003	1,898
2002	1,969
2001	2,134
2000	2,177
1999	1,519
1998	1,533
1997	2,534
1996	1,954
1995	1,821
1994	1,790
1993	1,509
1992	1,604
1991	1,689
1990	1,968
1989	2,075

Since the number of school in the primary sector continues to decline as a result of closures and amalgamations exceeding the number of new schools opening, the percentage of schools seeking a new head teacher each year has, therefore, been rising. This means that heads are spending, on average, less time in post. Nevertheless, despite the large number of schools advertising there has been no significant increase in the number of schools advertising since 2003.



3. Special School Head Teachers

The number of advertisements was the highest recorded since 2004, when a spate of amalgamations and re-organisations boosted the turnover in this sector. There seems no such reason to explain the increase to the second highest number ever recorded. It may be that the increase can be put down to the start of the retirement of the ‘baby boomers’ as they reach pension age in large numbers.

Table 3: Number of special head teacher posts advertised

2007	144
2006	126
2005	134
2004	151
2003	146
2002	143
2001	127
2000	99
1999	87
1998	90
1997	94

includes PRUs from 2001 onwards

The turnover of headships in this sector each year is always more volatile than in either of the other two sectors. This is partly due to the wide range of different schools that make up the sector. Heads in the special school sector are often appointed at an older age than in the other sectors because of the need for specialist knowledge.

4. Re-advertisement ratio

To be included as a re-advertisement in this survey an advert must be part of a sequence of adverts for the same posts that appear more than three but less than fifty-two weeks after the previous advert. Once there has been a gap of fifty-two weeks a new recruitment cycle is considered to have commenced. To allow time for re-advertisements to occur the extent of any re-advertisements is measured on the basis of a school-year rather than the calendar year used in the previous section of this report.

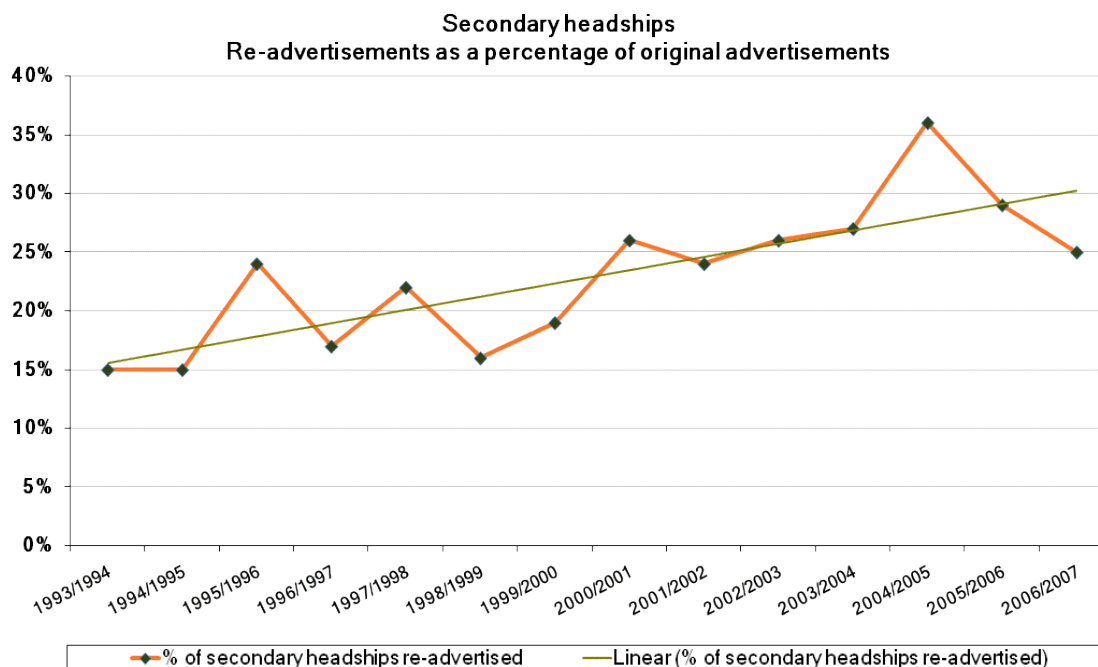
The good news is that, at least for secondary schools, the school year 2006-2007 witnessed the second year in succession when the rate of re-advertisements fell. It is now some 11% points below the peak reached in 2004/2005.

Table 4: Percentage of secondary head teacher posts re-advertised

Academic Year	Percentage
2006/2007	25%
2005/2006	29%
2004/2005	36%
2003/2004	27%
2002/2003	26%
2001/2002	24%
2000/2001	26%
1999/2000	19%
1998/1999	16%
1997/1998	22%
1996/1997	17%
1995/1996	24%
1994/1995	15%
1993/1994	15%

There are several probable reasons for the welcome fall in the number of schools needing to re-advertise. Firstly, the national attention focussed on the difficulties of head teacher recruitments during the past few years will undoubtedly have had an effect. Secondly, salary rates have increased, no doubt funded by the revenue from increasing school rolls of the few years. The National College for School Leadership

has also been active in promoting greater awareness of leadership issues. However, the most significant reason for the spike in re-advertisements in 2004/2005 was probably the introduction of the mandatory requirement for the NPQH (National Professional Qualification for Headship).

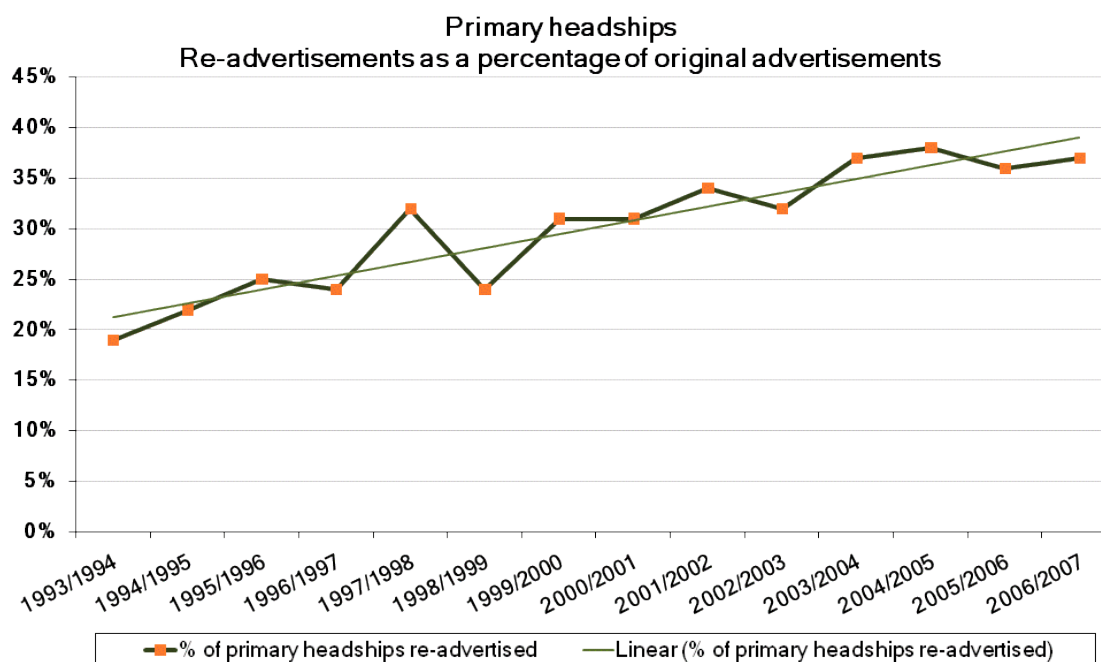


The market was probably also adversely affected by the introduction of the assistant head grade. This new grade, introduced in 2001 may have restricted the number of individuals able to access promotion by adding an extra step on their career ladder. Now that supply levels have returned to normal, re-advertisements rates have reduced: nevertheless, they are not yet at the levels seen a decade or so ago and the need for a quarter of schools to re-advertise cannot be considered satisfactory.

Table 5: Percentage of primary head teacher posts re-advertised

Academic Year	Percentage
2006/2007	37%
2005/2006	36%
2004/2005	38%
2003/2004	37%
2002/2003	32%
2001/2002	34%
2000/2001	31%
1999/2000	31%
1998/1999	24%
1997/1998	32%
1996/1997	24%
1995/1996	25%
1994/1995	22%
1993/1994	19%

The position in the primary sector has not seen the improvement in re-advertisement rates noted in the secondary sector.



For the fourth year in succession, rates have been well above the equivalent of a third of advertisements. Indeed, at no point in the current decade has the percentage of schools needing to re-advertise dropped below the 30% mark. We have expressed concern about these high levels of re-advertisements in the past. To date, the efforts of the National College for School Leadership seem to have had little obvious impact in this sector when it comes to improving succession planning by those responsible for the oversight of the primary school sector.

Table 6: Percentage of special school head teacher posts re-advertised

Academic Year	Percentage
2006/2007	35%
2005/2006	54%
2004/2005	45%
2003/2004	39%
2002/2003	33%
2001/2002	34%
2000/2001	30%

This year, we are publishing a table of re-advertisements for the special school sector. This is a much more disparate sector than either the primary or secondary school sectors and some schools can take a number of advertisements over a relatively long

period of time before they appoint a new head teacher. The present reduction from the very high levels experienced in the previous two academic years is to be welcomed. However, we do not expect the present 35% re-advertisement ratio to be the final figure for 2006/2007. Once the January advertisement round starts, we expect the percentage to rise. However, it is unlikely that the exceptionally high percentage of 2005/2006 will be repeated. Nevertheless, this is a sector that is often overlooked in succession planning and it deserves more attention to ensure schools are able to recruit suitable head teachers with appropriate knowledge and experience.

5. Regional Trends

As in past years, the position regarding the need to re-advertise a headship is not uniform across the country. The present position seems to be that improvements in one region are being offset by a deterioration of the position in other regions.

Table 7: Regional trends in the percentage of all head teacher posts needing re-advertisement (by Government Office Region)

	2006/07	2005/06	2004/05	2003/04	2002/03	2001/02	2000/01	1999/00	1998/99
Inner London	39%	57%	59%	51%	42%	45%	54%	65%	54%
Outer London	40%	39%	55%	42%	48%	45%	41%	37%	33%
North East	22%	25%	16%	24%	20%	24%	10%	15%	11%
North West	45%	40%	37%	40%	30%	28%	30%	28%	24%
Yorks & Humber	23%	29%	35%	30%	26%	23%	22%	21%	16%
East Midlands	32%	31%	31%	33%	20%	29%	27%	21%	21%
West Midlands	37%	31%	30%	28%	25%	24%	25%	21%	18%
East	46%	37%	39%	39%	37%	42%	36%	29%	23%
South East	38%	35%	46%	44%	43%	39%	30%	39%	24%
South West	33%	46%	40%	29%	28%	32%	35%	23%	21%
Wales	22%	19%	16%	19%	16%	21%			

Thus, this year, Inner London - the boroughs that made up the former ILEA - witnessed a marked improvement with their lowest level of re-advertisements since this table was compiled in 1998/99. However, there was no similar improvement elsewhere in London: in fact, there was a slight worsening over the previous year amongst schools advertising elsewhere in the capital. Other regions where the position improved last year included, The North East, Yorkshire and The Humber and the South West. However, these improvements were offset by the fact that three regions, the North West, West Midlands and East of England all had their worst year on record, as did schools that advertised for a new head teacher in Wales. It is difficult to pinpoint specific reasons why these regions fared badly, but, in the case of the North West, it

may be due to difficulties within the Roman Catholic sector in a region where previously these schools have not experienced the problems as much as Roman Catholic schools in some other parts of the country. In the East of England, there are a large number of small primary schools that are often in high cost areas and some of these schools may have struggled to pay attractive salaries to candidates.

6. Church Schools

Traditionally, we have commented on the difficulties church schools have in attracting new head teachers in an increasingly secular society. Although 2006/07 was no exception, and Church of England schools fared worse than in the previous year, it was pleasing to note a small improvement in the in the re-advertisement rate in the Roman Catholic sector.

	2006/07	2005/06	2004/05	2003/04	2002/03	2001/02	2000/01	1999/00	1998/99	1997/98
Church of England	43%	40%	44%	42%	34%	41%	32%	36%	27%	26%
Roman Catholic	55%	58%	59%	58%	54%	58%	52%	52%	45%	44%

This represented their best year since 2002/03 and was partly due to an improvement in the London area where significant work has been on-going to ensure schools can find replacement leaders when they are required.

Deputy Head Teacher Posts

Deputy heads are the head teachers of tomorrow. Despite amalgamations and closures, the number of advertised posts remained at the level of the past few years.

Table 9: Number of deputy head teacher posts advertised

All Schools	
2007	2,339
2006	2,345
2005	2,278
2004	2,471
2003	2,277
2002	2,697
2001	2,930
2000	2,417
1999	2,132
1998	2,413
1997	2,956

Generally, schools have less difficulty in appointing at this level than to a headship. The re-advertisement rate has remained within the 18-20% range for the past four academic years. However, it should be possible to reduce the percentage of schools re-advertising even further.

Table 10: Percentage of deputy head teacher posts re-advertised

Academic Year	
2006/07	18%
2005/06	18%
2004/05	19%
2003/04	19%
2002/03	21%
2001/02	24%
2000/01	24%

Generally, the type of school needing to re-advertise is similar to the profile for schools re-advertising headships.

Assistant Head Teacher Posts

Table 11: Number of assistant head teacher posts advertised

Academic Year	
2006/07	1,093
2005/06	1,026
2004/05	891
2003/04	923
2002/03	763
2001/02	691
2000/01	781

Assistant headships do not need to be advertised nationally. Thus, the number of recorded adverts may underestimate the real position in terms of recruitment to this level of post. The grade has now been in existence for over six years and, although 2007 saw a record number of first-time adverts, there was levelling off in the rate of increase.

One problem is that the distribution of assistant head posts is not uniform across the country, with more schools in some regions using the grade than in others. In regions where the grade is becoming more widely used, there is a risk that its existence will create the same supply chain problems in the primary sector that may have caused the spike in schools re-advertising in the secondary sector. We believe that more research is necessary to understand the implications of the more widespread use of the assistant head grade in the primary sector.

Conclusions and Outlook for 2008

This survey concentrates on an analysis of the demand side for leadership posts in schools. As such it provides a snapshot of the health of the profession. Unlike DCSF vacancy data, collected on a single date in January each year, this survey considers all nationally advertised posts as they appear throughout the year. We believe this to be a more valid approach, since only schools with exceptional problems would record an actual vacancy for a school leader in January.

Last year, although demand for school leaders, and head teachers in particular, remained at a high level there does not seem to have been a significant surge in the number of advertisements that might have resulted from increased levels of retirements. It may be that the high numbers of early retirements recorded over the past few years in our other survey for the NAHT and ASCL has meant that some of the retirement bulge was in effect brought forward rather than being concentrated in just a couple of years. In this respect, 2008 may be a critical year. Any significant increase in demand this year might well be difficult to meet, at least in some parts of the country.

As far as 2007 is concerned there was both good news and bad. The good news was that the percentage of secondary schools needing to re-advertise a headship fell to its lowest level since 2001/02. This cannot be entirely explained away by the fact that the number of vacancies on offer was towards the lower end of the range of recent years, although this may have played a part. Increased salaries on offer and a better awareness by governors and others responsible for recruitment may have played a part as well. The role of the National College for School Leadership, who launched a campaign an information pack on succession planning in late 2006, may also have played a part. There was also a fall in re-advertisement rates the special school sector even though the number of posts advertised was above average. This is especially welcome, as these schools often struggle to find a new head teacher. Clearly, some types of school in this sector face greater problems than others.

The biggest recruitment challenge is now in the primary sector where re-advertisement rates remained stubbornly high for the fourth year in succession. Although progress has been made in some areas, such as Inner London, other regions faced record levels of re-advertisements. In 2006/07 both the North West and East of England recorded exceptionally high levels of re-advertisements. Two factors may account for the problems faced by the schools in these regions. One is the ever present problems faced by church schools. Although the Roman Catholic Church seems to have made

some progress in parts of the country in reducing the level of re-advertisements amongst its schools, the increase in re-advertisements in the North West may have been partly due to the larger number of Roman Catholic schools in the region who were unable to find a new head teacher at their first attempt. In the East of England, as in many other areas, there seemed to be a dearth of applicants for the smallest primary schools where the differential in pay between the classroom teacher and the head can be less than £6,000. Such a small differential may not make the head teacher post attractive to a teacher on the top of the main salary scale who is also on the top of the Upper Pay Spine even if they have no any additional allowances such as a Teaching & Learning Responsibility post. Headships in small schools may also be unattractive to some deputy heads who might regard the extra pay as not sufficient reward for the extra responsibilities.

Although the market for head teacher remains out of balance, most schools have fewer problems recruiting either a deputy or an assistant head teacher. This suggests that there is no real unwillingness to take on a leadership role. The key question that only the National College can answer is whether the supply of trainees with NPQH is sufficient to meet the demand for new head teachers amongst all the many different types of schools? As around 75-80% of head teacher appointments each year are of first time head teachers, and sufficient data on the location of schools seeking a new head is now available, it should be relatively simple for the NCSL to confirm that the supply of trained and qualified candidates is not the issue. The question would then be: why these candidates with NPQH are either not coming applying for headships or, if they are, why they are not deemed suitable by school governing bodies?

Looking forward to 2008, our main concern would be how the market would cope with any significant upturn in demand due to any increase in retirements. We believe that governing bodies need to have access to much more information about current the state of the market, especially with so much of the recruitment of new head teachers for September packed into the first three months of the year. Although we are able to identify the possible level of risk particular types of school face when entering the recruitment market, there is no universal system available to governing bodies to help them assess the current state of the market. This may lead some schools into spending unnecessarily on fees to outside agencies whilst other governing bodies, which have never been faced with recruiting a new head teacher, remain unaware of market conditions.

Sadly, we still do not know enough about the actions of those seeking headships: how many posts do they apply for at any one time, how far afield are they prepared to look and what types of school will they consider? These are some of the drawbacks associated with a market based system.

Looking further ahead than just 2008, there must be hopes that the market will settle down. The vastly improved teacher supply position of the past few years should eventually help, providing that a successful scheme for accelerated promotion within a market based labour market can be created. Attempts using the Fast Track Scheme have so far been of limited success and every success has been very expensive to achieve.

Finally, the goal should be that every school that advertises for a new head teacher should be able to fill their vacancy within a reasonable timescale that would mean that only in exceptional circumstances was a school deprived of the continuity of leadership that is an important part of a successful school.

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January 2008