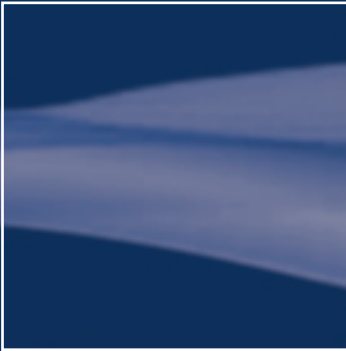


Teachers' Mental Health

A study exploring the experiences of teachers with work-related stress and mental health problems



Research report for the **NASUWT**

First published in the UK in 2010 by
NASUWT
Hillscourt Education Centre
Rose Hill
Rednal
Birmingham
B45 8RS

www.nasuwt.org.uk

© NASUWT Copyright 2010

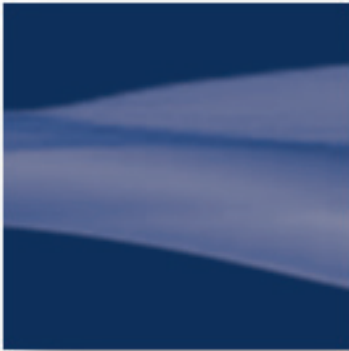
All rights reserved.

ISBN 978-1-906611-13-2

Printed in the UK by Clarkeprint Ltd
45-47 Stour Street
Birmingham
B18 7AJ

Teachers' Mental Health:

A study exploring the experiences of teachers with work-related stress and mental health problems



Research report for the **NASUWT**

Authors:

Despina Rothì

Gerard Leavey

Kate Loewenthal



C O N T E N T S

Introduction	7
1.1 Workload, Occupational Stress and Mental Health	8
1.2 Managing Teachers with Work-based Stress	8
Executive Summary	8
1.3 Key Findings	8
1.4 Key Findings In Diagrammatic Form	10
1.5 Recommendations	10
Methodology	11
1.6 Terms of Reference	11
1.6.1 Aims	11
1.6.2 Objectives	11
1.7 Method	11
1.7.1 Data Collection	12
1.7.2 Participants	12
1.7.3 Research Team	12
1.7.4 Steering Group	13
Part One: Teachers' Experiences	13
Work-based Stress: Research Findings and Relevant Literature	15
1.8 Identity and Burnout	15
1.8.1 Professional Identity and Self-esteem	15
1.8.2 Burnout	16
1.9 Prolonged Work-related Stress Repercussions	17
1.9.1 Stress and Health Problems	17
1.9.2 Work Impact	20
1.9.3 Case Study One: Psychological and Physical Health Repercussions of Prolonged Work Stress ..	21
1.10 Factors that Impact on Teachers' Mental Health	22
1.10.1 Role-related	22
1.10.2 Workload	23
1.10.3 Peer Relationships	25
1.10.4 Management and Professional Autonomy	25
1.10.5 Systemic Factors	26
1.10.6 Case Study Two: Multiple Factors in Work-based Stress	27
Sources of Support, Advice and Guidance	31
1.11 Resources For Teachers	31
1.12 Support, Advice and Guidance For School Leaders	32
1.13 Case Study Three: Good Practice In Teacher Support	34

Part Two: Senior School Leaders	35
Managing Teachers with Work-based Stress and Mental Health Difficulties	35
1.14 Teaching in the Current Climate	35
1.15 School Response To Teachers’ Stress and Mental Health Difficulties	37
1.16 Management Process and Style	38
1.17 Stress and Mental Health Difficulties in Senior Leaders	40
1.18 Additional Concerns	40
Concluding Comments and Recommendations	41
1.19 Concluding Comments	41
1.20 Recommendations	43
References	44
Appendix i Case Study One: Diana’s Story	13
Appendix ii Case Study Two: Peter’s Story	28

INTRODUCTION

1.1 Workload, Occupational Stress and Mental Health

The World Health Organization (WHO) has predicted that by 2020 depression will be the biggest single disease burden, costly to individuals, families, communities and the economy as a whole through lowered productivity, absenteeism and unemployment. Perhaps in response, the prevention of mental illness and the promotion of health and wellbeing appears to have risen up the policy agenda in the UK and the rest of Europe (Europe, 2008; European Union High-level Conference, 2008). Thus, there is an acknowledgement that while we can never eradicate mental illness there is much that government, in partnership with communities, employers, trade unions and individuals, can do to prevent it being experienced by so many and for so long. In the UK, various policy documents acknowledge the need for new approaches in how we live and work (Department of Health, 2009; Leavey, Galway, Rondon, and Logan, 2009). Particularly relevant to the current study, employment is a key site in which people may find a sense of purpose, belonging, satisfaction and personal identity (Black, 2008). Conversely, when things go wrong in work, it can become the source of much unhappiness, anxiety and depression, in some instances leading to self-harm and suicide.

Stress and professional burnout among teachers in the UK has contributed significantly to an unnecessary and wasteful exodus from the profession (Smithers and Robinson, 2003). Indeed, there has been mounting concern among policy makers and the teaching unions about the recruitment and retention of teachers in UK maintained schools over the past two decades¹ (Angle et al., 2008). To illustrate the problem of workload, a study by the School Teachers' Review Body (STRB) indicated that despite the recent National Agreement,² many teachers at all levels are working well beyond 50 hours per week. Thus, Angle et al. state that there is 'mounting concern among the profession about teacher workload and its effect on morale' (p.1), a statement that is supported by an NASUWT workload audit in which 64% of respondents stated that they have not achieved a reasonable work/life balance (NASUWT, 2008c).

Such a work/life imbalance can lead to high levels of occupational stress. Significantly, stress and workload are two recurring reasons cited by those leaving the profession. Indeed, these two factors, together with Government initiatives, form the top three interrelated factors cited. Occupational stress in the teaching profession is a long-standing problem, for example, in a review of occupational stress, Borg (ONS, 2008) suggested that approximately a third of all UK teachers find their occupation extremely stressful. More recent surveys indicate that this trend is continuing: for example, a survey by the NASUWT found that 69% of teachers reported experiencing work-related stress, which for 31% resulted in work absence. Indeed, in 2007, 57% of teachers took sick leave of, on average, 9.3 days per year (Stansfeld, Head, Rasul, Singleton, and Lee, 2003). While most people who experience stress do not develop a psychological disorder, high levels of stress can lead to a greater vulnerability to common mental health problems such as depression and anxiety, as well as a myriad of other psychological, behavioural and physiological difficulties (2003). Moreover, research undertaken by the Health and Safety Executive (HSE), showed that school teaching is one of the occupations with higher than average levels of common mental health disorders (J. Brown, Gilmour, and MacDonald, 2006). Psychological difficulties generally lead to more days of work absenteeism than non-psychological illnesses, for example, Stansfeld et al. (Bowers and McIvor, 2000) report that those with psychological disorder took an average of 19 days of sick leave in the preceding year compared with an average of 5 days in those without psychological disorder. This equates to 29% of reported days off sick. In addition, studies that have examined factors leading to early retirement due to ill health showed that the most common cause was mental disorder, which accounted for 37% in Scotland (NASUWT, 2008a) and 48% in England (Jeffrey and Woods, 1996).

¹ Figures from DfES-commissioned research indicate that 10% of primary school teachers and 7.2% of secondary school teachers were lost from maintained schools. Recruitment and retention is particularly worrying in certain secondary education subjects, i.e. mathematics, science, modern languages, music and technology. An additional concern is the age profile of school leaders, which indicates that over 60% of school leaders will retire during the coming decade. Furthermore, while Government incentives and bursaries have attracted more individuals to teacher training, research indicates that 30% of these newly qualified teachers (NQTs) never enter the profession and a further 18% leave during the first three years. Unfortunately, evidence of a 'crisis' in teacher recruitment and retention is available from multiple sources; the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development warn of increasing 'teacher exodus' and a 'meltdown scenario'.

² ATL, DfES, GMB, NAHT, NASUWT, NEOST, PAT, SHA, TGWU, UNISON, WAG (2003). *'Raising Standards and Tackling Workload': a national agreement.*

1.2 Managing Teachers with Work-based Stress

In addition to the impact on professional functioning, anecdotal evidence suggests that teachers' mental health problems are difficult to manage and that teachers may not receive prompt intervention. More recently, this has received empirical support from an NASUWT survey in which 48% of school leaders stated that staff illness/stress was the most complex health and safety matter to manage (36% in primary, 63% in secondary), with 48% of school leaders (41% in primary, 55% in secondary) also stating that this issue took up most of their time (Sleegers, 1999). Additionally, only 8-9% of staff were given access to an occupational health service by their employer and only 9% had access to an employee assistance programme (EAP) or teacher helpline.

Commissioned by the NASUWT, this study was undertaken by Compass – the Centre for Mental Health Research and Policy. Obtaining the powerful, and often very painful, first-hand accounts of teachers and school leaders we sought to examine what happens when teachers begin to suffer stress and psychological disorder within the school system, the events and circumstances leading up to such problems and also, how leadership and others respond to these crises. Lastly, we have attempted to locate these within the current national educational policy on wellbeing in the workforce.

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

1.3 Key Findings

Professional Identity and Self-value

- Teachers' self-concept of what constitutes a 'good' teacher is embedded in notions of professionalism within which a holistic regard for pupils encompasses social, emotional and educational wellbeing.
- Central components of teachers' professional identities appear threatened by increasing policy development that may be too narrowly focused on academic achievement within a restricted, measurable range of subjects, abilities or competencies.
- The reshaping of teacher practice has eroded valued components of teachers' professional identity with negative consequences for teachers' sense of professional self-esteem.
- Teachers tend to 'conceal' their experience of work-based stress, concerned that such problems imply weakness or inability to cope and, if known, would injure their career prospects.

Mental and Physical Health Stress Repercussions

- Teachers believe that the current teaching climate results in high levels of stress, psychological disorder, and physical ill health.
- Manifestations of high stress levels included work-related fatigue, which was often accompanied by feelings of depression, anxiety, cynicism and a sense of inefficacy and low self-value.

Work Impact

- Teachers' stress and mental health problems diminish job performance, productivity, enthusiasm and/or commitment. This leads to increased absenteeism, a decrease in 'good will' availability and withdrawal of extracurricular support and other non-teaching responsibilities.
- Teachers believe there is an indirect adverse impact on standards of pupils' academic achievement relating to the teaching quality of temporary staff, disruption to pupil learning and the lack of specialist teachers.

Factors That Impact on Teachers' Mental Health

- High levels of work pressure, workload, conflicting expectations, impractical innovations, unacceptable pupil behaviour, unsupportive working environments, unsatisfactory workplace interpersonal and intergroup relationships, bad school management, unacceptable or bullying senior leader behaviour and lack of support from management.

Teaching Today: Senior School Leaders' Perspective

- Senior leaders believe that teaching is increasingly a very challenging job in which there is a worrying shift from a holistic approach towards a narrow academic focus and a lack of consideration of the wider social difficulties faced by both teachers and the children. This may have a detrimental effect on children's general wellbeing.
- Continuous and increasing levels of professional inspection are considered damaging to professional integrity of teachers and factors that increase stress.
- Many senior leaders believe that inspection fails to provide a fair and accurate picture of the school and thus lacks any real value.
- There is significant consonance between the causal factors of stress mentioned by senior leaders and those highlighted by teachers.
- External pressures for improved academic outcomes require an application of increasing pressure on teachers, which provokes conflict for many in school leadership.

School and Senior Leader Response to Teacher Stress and Mental Health Difficulties

- Senior leaders argue that they try to tailor their response to individual needs. Once made aware of a problem, they attempt to identify an immediate solution to reduce stress and/or avoid further stress. They highlight the use of extra classroom support where possible, the provision of a confidential mentor, timetable and responsibility adjustments where possible and phased returns.
- The financial implications of additional teacher support are a concern for school leaders.
- Stigma associated with stress and mental health problems remain a major obstacle to early intervention and appropriate management.

Management Process and Style: Senior Leader Perceptions

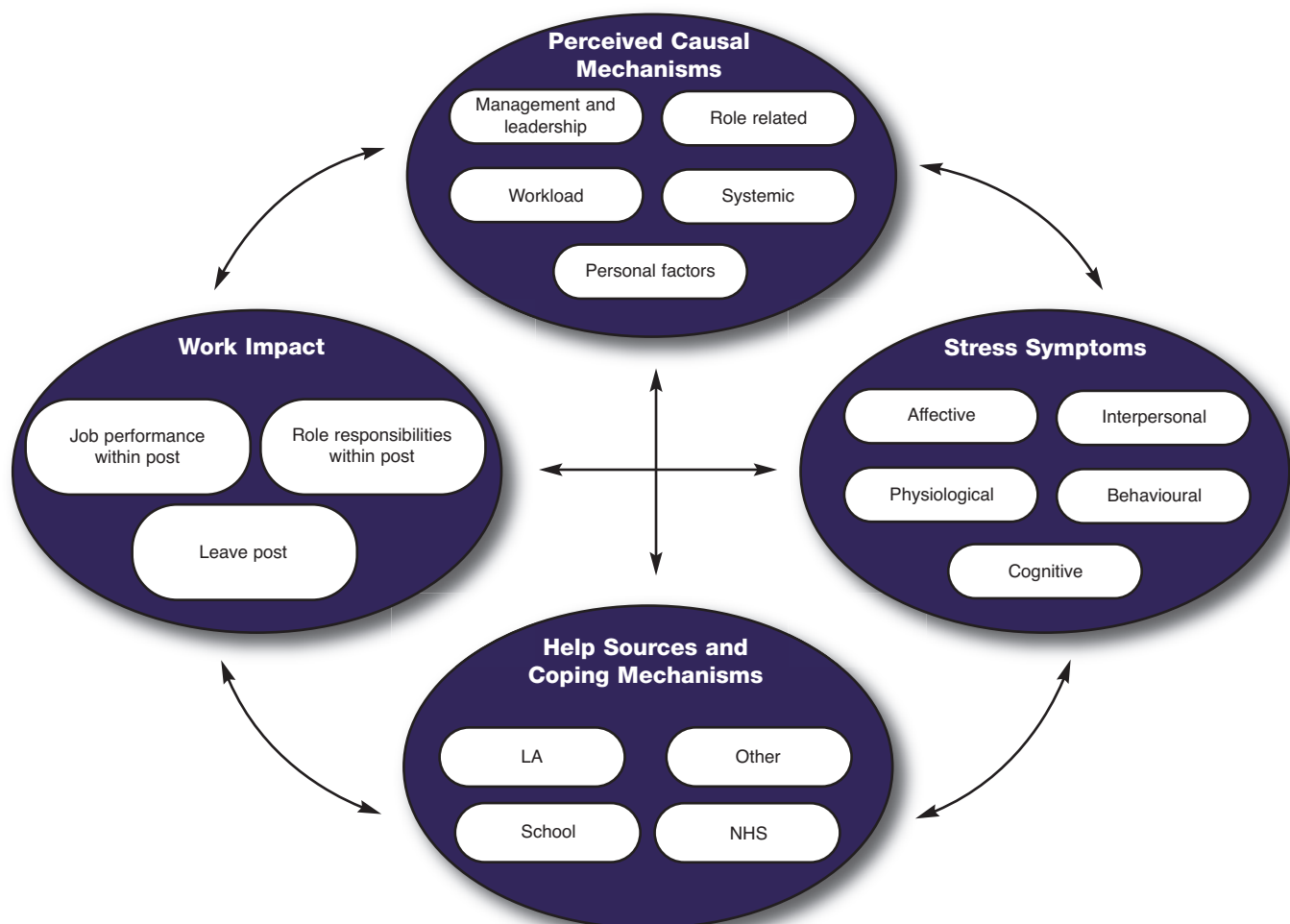
- Although the problem of stress is generally regarded as systemic, senior leaders feel that such a view may not be compatible with those of governing bodies or authorities and may harm career prospects.
- They highlight incidents of inadequate support, bullying and unacceptable behaviour from senior managers and headteachers in particular, an increasing part of the institutional culture.
- The issue highlights instances when teachers' stress and mental health difficulties may be caused by, in some cases, an individual manager's personality, management style or behaviour towards the school workforce.

Stress and Mental Health Difficulties in Senior Leaders

- Senior leaders regard their jobs as highly stressful. Sources of stress tend to emanate from 'role-conflict' provoked by the difficulties inherent in balancing the needs of individual teachers experiencing stress against the needs of the school as a whole.
- They also have concerns about the budgetary repercussions of supporting a teacher on long-term sickness absence where costs are accrued in terms of 'buying in' support services (e.g. extra in-class support, employee assistance insurance, occupational health, human resources, psychotherapy/counselling and cover supply teachers).
- Dealing with the emotive difficulties disclosed to them from both colleagues and pupils was an additional stressor.
- In general, there appears to be very little 'self-care' and few support services specifically aimed at senior leaders.

1.4 Key Findings in Diagrammatic Form

Summary of Key Findings



1.5 Recommendations

The following recommendations were developed by the researchers and based on the dominant issues identified from the teachers'/senior leaders' interview data. They are entirely in keeping with current knowledge and emergent national policy on wellbeing in schools. The recommendations are also consistent with the recent report by Dame Carol Black, *Working for a healthier tomorrow*.

Reducing Stressors

- There is a need to reduce the paperwork and burdens associated with pupil assessment and tracking systems.
- There is a need to review the contribution and cumulative impact of accountability systems in schools and school inspection on the workforce.
- Good educational policy implementation requires longer bedding-in prior to fresh initiatives.
- Commensurate with recent Government wellbeing policy and initiatives, there must be greater emphasis on a holistic approach to education, with acknowledgement and consideration given to the non-academic role performed by schools and teachers.
- Truly 'whole-school' approaches to wellbeing in schools must include a consideration of teachers' health and psychological needs.
- There is an urgent need for improved training in behaviour management, particularly within current new teacher training.

Acting Proactively and Systemically

- Stress is experienced institutionally as well as individually; there is a need to engage with work-based stress systemically. A system approach to promoting workforce wellbeing is essential.

- Changes are necessary within school management structures in order to detect and deter inappropriate or bullying behaviour from senior leaders.
- Consonant with a whole-school approach to wellbeing, there is a need to initiate regular anonymous stress audits that are assessed externally and independently. Schools have a duty to act upon any concerns raised.

Encouraging Help-seeking and Providing Support

- Schools should be enabled to create a culture in which there is a comfortable recognition that stress may be a useful and natural part of living. As a corollary, the stigma of psychological disorder and mental illness must be challenged within schools.
- Schools should provide confidential in-house support services offering advice and guidance to teachers and headteachers, possibly through trained mentors.
- There is a need for an expansion of accessible and discreet counselling services, possibly through EAPs, which can be approached by teachers through self-referral.
- An examination of current EAPs for teachers across the education system is urgently needed.
- There needs to be established high quality support and training for senior leaders, which includes the emotional support of colleagues.

METHODOLOGY

1.6 Terms of Reference

1.6.1 Aims

Through an exploration of teachers' phenomenological accounts of their personal experiences within the school system, we aimed to:

- explore and describe the factors that negatively impact on teachers' mental health;
- provide an overview of how these teachers' mental health needs were managed and addressed at school level; and
- identify and describe available advice and guidance relating to the management of teachers' psychological wellbeing.

1.6.2 Objectives

From the teachers' personal experience and perspectives, our objectives were to identify, describe and discuss:

- individual and related stressors that have an adverse impact on mental health;
- pathways to care and school management responses to teachers' stress and mental illness;
- the helpfulness of management interventions towards teacher recovery and wellbeing;
- the context of local and national policies relating to the management of teachers' mental health;
- the nature of school management styles and procedures and how these contribute to teachers' stress, absence and exit from the profession.

1.7 Method

In order to gather richly detailed information on teachers' personal experiences of stress and mental health problems, their perceived causes of such problems and how these are managed by school leaders, a qualitative method was deemed to be the most appropriate way of obtaining useful insights and generating recommendations. Given the particularly sensitive focus of the study and the ethical and practical difficulties in identifying teachers who had suffered from stress and mental illness, we decided to recruit participants through the placement of an advertisement in the teaching press. In this, we simply outlined the overall aim of the study and that we were seeking in-depth interviews with teachers who had experienced mental health problems and had been absent from work due to these problems in the previous 12 months. We also indicated that we were seeking interviews with school leaders who had experience of dealing with mental health problems

among staff. We purposively selected from those who responded to the advertisement in order to achieve a range of teachers' views based on socio-demographic characteristics, length of teaching service, type of school and geographical area.

1.7.1 Data Collection

In Phase One we undertook in-depth interviews with 39 teachers on their experience of work-based stress and mental health difficulties and in Phase Two we undertook in-depth interviews with six school leaders who have managed teachers with work-based stress and mental health difficulties. The interviews were undertaken at a time and place convenient and safe for the participants, usually their own home. The length of the interviews varied from 90 minutes to 180 minutes approximately. Prior to interview, all participants were reassured that the interview data would be anonymised and all discussion would be treated with the utmost respect and confidentiality.

1.7.2 Participants

The teachers who participated in Phase One were all qualified professionals who had experienced work-based stress and/or mental health difficulties within the 12 months prior to interview. The participants from England and Wales included 14 males and 25 females from primary and secondary schools. The senior leaders included three deputy headteachers, one assistant headteacher and two headteachers.

Participant Identification:

We have gone to considerable lengths in order to protect the identity of our participants. All the names used in this report are pseudonyms. For the same reason, most of the subjects taught by secondary school teachers are not disclosed; rather, they are referred to, for example, as subjects X, Y or Z. The only exception to this is when the subject must be named in order for readers to understand the specific subject-related difficulty discussed. Given the level of detail contained in the case studies and extended quotes, those participants whose experiences have been recounted in this manner have kindly given their explicit permission for their data to be used in this way.

Analysis

We used semi-structured audio-recorded interviews with all participants. These were transcribed and transferred to a software programme for qualitative analysis. We used a thematic analysis to explore the issues relevant to the research area – teachers' causal explanations of stress, pathways to care and management response to illness.

In undertaking a thematic analysis, the researchers attempt to identify and group all data that fit within recognisable and coherent categories or concepts. These, to some extent, have been pre-identified. For example, in this study, we sought to identify all instances where teachers described physical and psychological symptoms of stress and mental illness. Themes are defined as units derived from patterns such as conversation topics, vocabulary, recurring behaviour, meanings or feelings. Themes and sub-themes that emerge from the informants' stories are pieced together to form a comprehensive picture of their collective experience. Importantly, while we sought to uncover common experiences, we were also interested in finding instances where experiences diverged from the main. The data from Phases One and Two were analysed separately and these are included in parts 1 and 2 of the report respectively.

In adopting a qualitative method, we considered it essential to capture, as far as possible, the experiences and world-views of the participants and to examine these in the context of known current educational policy and practice. Understanding the teachers' experiences through this or that particular contextual lens will, necessarily, provide a more interpretive element to the analysis.

1.7.3 Research Team

The principal investigator for this study was Professor Gerard Leavey. He is currently the Research Director for Compass (Centre for Research and Policy in Mental Health, Northern Ireland Association for Mental Health (NIAMH)). The fieldwork was undertaken by Dr Despina Rothì, CPsychol: Senior Research Officer, NIAMH. Professor Kate Loewenthal, Emeritus Professor of Psychology, Royal Holloway, University of London, assisted with the design and analysis of the study.

1.7.4 Steering Group

- Fred Brown: National Executive Member, NASUWT.
- Julian Chapman: President, NASUWT.
- Brian Cookson: Honorary Treasurer, NASUWT.
- Sue Foreman: National Executive Member, NASUWT.
- Jennifer Moses: National Official, Equality and Training, NASUWT.
- Michael Philips: Senior Official, Salaries, Pensions and Conditions of Service, NASUWT.
- Jim Quigley: National Official, Legal and Casework, NASUWT.
- Dr Patrick Roach: Assistant General Secretary, NASUWT.

In addition, although not part of the Steering Group, the following have also advised and supported the research team:

- Rebecca Lubansky: Research Officer, Teacher Support Network.
- Hannah Essex: Head of Communications and Business Development, Teacher Support Network.
- Janeet Rondón: Research Co-ordinator, NIAMH.

PART ONE: TEACHERS' EXPERIENCES

Case Study One: Diana's Story

"When the Ofsted call came again, I realised I could lay my past difficult experience with them to rest, so I pulled out all the stops. Down in First School we worked really hard. We were a really good team; all three of us came out as 'good'. Overnight I could hold my head up high again. But the school went into special measures. It was horrendous. The whole school fell apart. The headteacher and all the staff were crying. Nobody believed it: we were a good school, but our headteacher wasn't in school most of the time because he was training to be an Ofsted inspector. He hadn't done many lesson observations or implemented the tracking system. Ofsted threw the book at us. The headteacher resigned, but we carried the can.

Suddenly, we were awash with County Advisors. They said: 'Everyone has to improve.' There were some 'unsatisfactory' lessons, not many; they had to go to 'satisfactory'. The 'goods', the three of us and others, we had to get 'outstanding'. They changed everything. We had inspections every half-term: Her Majesty's Inspectors (HMI) and County, and senior school managers once a fortnight.

Inspectors would pull our lessons apart. It was decided that year 7s weren't doing enough minutes in the day so they lopped out morning playtime. A decree came down: an hour of literacy, an hour of numeracy, then assembly. We said, 'We can't run two and a quarter hours of high-powered lessons with 5 year olds'. They just said, 'It's a whole school initiative. You've all got to do it'. We had free school fruit: no time for that. We had tired little infants crying and wetting themselves: it was inappropriate. Nobody would listen. We needed to be 'outstanding' on a roll – because...we just had to. But they ruined our way of being 'outstanding'. Everybody forgot the little ones and us were being wagged along.

Senior management was under fire because of Ofsted and HMI. My colleague had three young children, she wasn't seeing them. She was working too late; County and HMI were battering her. Consequently, I got the job of keeping us at 'outstanding'. I did all our planning, photocopying, made new resources for everything. They put in SMART Boards, we did inspections and we were 'outstanding': that's just rubbish. I could see we had these exhausted little children doing 'outstanding', high-powered lessons day after day. I tried to make lots of games and apparatus to give the little children nice things amongst this high-powered learning.

My colleague lost the feeling in the side of her face and one of her arms: she was in this terrible state. She just kept going. I wasn't leaving school until 7pm, then working at home till 2am every day. Weekends I was up at 5am working all day Saturday and Sunday until gone midnight. This went on for 15 months. I was exhausted. Only my love of teaching was holding me together. Every inspection was 'good/outstanding' followed by 'What you need to do next to improve is...'. I thought, "I can't do more than I'm already doing".

It was damaging the children and the school. Over 50% of the staff left, including our Advanced Skills and really innovative teachers. The deputy headteacher was teaching, trying to hold everyone together, trying to find supply teachers – difficult in a special measures school. Supply teachers would go off with stress: we had supply teachers for the supply teachers. We also had four different headteachers. Still, we ploughed on.

One day, HMI were coming. I arrived early, switched my computers on, got my stuff ready but my computer wasn't working. All my lessons for the whole day relied on the SMART Board. Eventually, the deputy headteacher came past: I said 'I'm in trouble, my computer's not working'. She flew around, grabbed anybody that knew about computers: four teachers and the caretaker all trying to sort out my computer when I had a panic attack. I lost my breathing and the use of my hands. They were stuck, absolutely rigid. The deputy headteacher was shouting 'Diane, remember you're outstanding, remember you're outstanding'.

I was watching the clock: quarter to 9, 10 to 9, 5 to 9... just before the inspector walked into the classroom, they got my computer going and everybody vanished. I'd got my breathing under control. Eventually, my hands came back. I taught the lesson: it was 'good/outstanding'. Basically, I'd found the formula, that's all that means. I was able to do it – even in that state. From that moment I lost my soul, I did the job completely without wanting to. We were still in special measures, working at the same speed: nothing had changed. This continued for two years, I'd done 15 months when I had that panic attack. My emotions had vanished. I was just dragging myself through every minute of every day.

In my class was a naughty little chap. His mum was worried she was going to hit him: we'd got a system going. She would come in every evening and I would tell this little boy how it was going to work for that night. In the morning he'd tell me how he'd got on. It was working and mum was delighted. One day he was misbehaving. Because I had no emotions I couldn't rise above it. Suddenly I slammed my hand down on the table: I missed his hand by millimetres. Absolute anger – it just came out of me: I could have really hurt him. So I went to the deputy and said, 'I'm going to the doctor's because something is wrong inside me'. That evening the deputy phoned to see how I'd got on. She said, 'You look very tired, just stay home and rest'. But I went in on Monday and said, 'It's only three weeks before Easter, I'll carry on, if I get that feeling again I'll just walk out of my classroom'. That Wednesday, I found my breast lump and was referred to hospital.

I remember lying on the consultant's couch while he took sample lumps. I felt no emotions; just one little tear fell from my eye. I looked at his face and thought, 'HMI or cancer? It's got to be cancer so I can't go back'. When he told me that it was cancer I didn't say a word, I just started shaking and laughing. If he'd asked why I was laughing, I'd have told him. I was thinking 'It's got to be really bad because I can't do it anymore'. I stopped work on Good Friday and had the operation on Tuesday. There was a three-week Easter holiday so I thought 'five days to recover from the operation, I might be back in school after three weeks. He's got to tell me it was worse'. By the day of the operation I was hanging on to the side of a black hole, not falling in it – just hanging on.

Then I was knee-deep in doctors. I was seeing the consultant oncologist, consultant surgeon and 24 times up to the hospital to have radiotherapy: still I didn't speak to anybody. Every day I thought, 'I'm going to tell them how bad I am feeling'. At the six-month check I went back to the surgeon – I still wasn't speaking and he still didn't ask why. He was about to examine me when I thought 'You're still banging on about cancer. It's not going to be there and I'm about to fall down a black hole, if somebody doesn't catch me I'm going to disappear'. Once you've got cancer nobody sees you as anything other than a cancer patient, they're all doing this sterling job getting rid of cancer, nobody noticed I wasn't functioning. I was worried about school, feeling terrible

that I'd let everybody down: they were still battling with HMI. The cancer was a way of getting out of HMI: that was its only purpose.

I flashed my eyes at the surgeon, at that point, he stopped. He said, 'My first duty of care is to my patient. What's wrong?' and I said 'they think I'm an outstanding teacher and it's just rubbish, rubbish, rubbish, it's rubbish', it kept coming out, 'rubbish, rubbish'. I just couldn't stop. He must have thought, 'oh dear, something is wrong here'. He sent me to a psychologist.

Then I got a phone call from occupational health and I went to a tiny office in County Hall. A man, Dr XX, was sitting inside: peace and quiet. I walked in and he said, 'Now, you've had breast cancer, an operation and radiotherapy'. I said 'Yes, but that's not what's wrong'. He was brilliant. He put his clipboard and fountain pen down slowly, leaned forward and said, 'Then you tell me what's wrong'. I told him all about HMI, special measures and the panic attacks. He said 'You need to go to your doctor and get antidepressants'. So I went. I didn't think I was depressed. I couldn't tell anyone about this black hole, if I stopped thinking about hanging on long enough to say 'I'm about to disappear into oblivion', I would fall. But that's what the antidepressants did, they just shot me down into the black hole and there I was, nice and cosy and tucked up: it was fine.

Dr XX just said 'What's wrong with you is very serious but common, you will be all right, just not yet'. That was the first time anybody had said 'stop'. Until that point, six months into it, I hadn't stopped thinking about HMI. I hadn't rested; I worried about school and how I'd let them down. For the first time, I stopped.

I was still seeing the psychologist; I knew at that point there was a way out of the black hole. She got me as far as seeing that. But the most helpful person was Dr XX at County Hall. He listened. He didn't have an agenda. He was amazing; you'd go in and be there no more than a quarter of an hour, yet you felt you'd told him everything you needed to and he'd said everything he needed to. He didn't rush; he listened and said what he said. Then he would send a report back to me and my headteacher, same letter. It would only be two or three lines but those lines were absolutely bang on! When you went in you didn't see anybody. It was like there was all the time in the world. This tiny room in the depths of the County Hall: a man who would listen and a man who saw me.

I had left school on Good Friday; I had my operation on Easter Tuesday. I came back on a managed return after the following Easter holiday: one year."

WORK-BASED STRESS: RESEARCH FINDINGS AND RELEVANT LITERATURE

1.8 Identity and Burnout

1.8.1 Professional Identity and Self-esteem

It has been argued that the changing nature of the teaching profession has eroded many of the teacher-valued components of professional identity, resulting in a transformation of the teacher role from that of educational expert to technician (Lasky, 2005, p.908). Others refer to this as the 'de-skilling' of teachers (Lasky, 2005, p.908). For example, teachers in our sample stated:

"It's almost like part of your professionalism is taken away from you because so many decisions are made for you."

Research on professional motivations indicates that teachers' primary and moral purposes are twofold: to teach the curriculum and academic skills and "to teach the whole child, to be an integral part of their students' safety net of support" (Hogg and Abrams, 1990). Lasky states that teachers' "feelings of job satisfaction came largely from their interactions with students and the feeling that they had some kind of positive influence on students' academic, social, and emotional development". He further argues that teachers' beliefs on how to be a good teacher are tied to their notions of professional identity and that teachers' "higher moral purposes" and central components of their identities were under threat from new policies that focused on "raising student achievement within a restricted, measurable range of subjects, abilities, or competencies" (1988). This teacher, for example, illustrates these very issues.

“Oh I absolutely passionately believe that what schools are doing to children nowadays is harmful. There is very little positive going on in the world of education and what there is that’s positive is happening despite government targets and all the rest of it and not because of it. I didn’t value what I was doing. I was getting good exam results but as far as I was concerned that’s 10% of the product. It was the human development, getting kids to enjoy what they’re doing, getting kids to enjoy learning things, getting kids to lift their eyes up.”

Erosion of these important components of professional identity are, ultimately, likely to undermine professional self-value. It is generally accepted that self-esteem is identity specific, in that one can have low self-esteem related to, for example, their professional identity but high self-esteem in other domains (Freudenberger, 1974). The role of self-esteem has been proposed to be important to psychological functioning. Indeed, Taylor and Brown (Warr, 1987) suggest that self-enhancement and high self-regard contribute to a ‘healthy’ self-concept and thus regard the pursuit/maintenance of high self-esteem as a universal human motivation. Indeed, low self-esteem is associated with many forms of dysphoria, including depression and anxiety (Bakker et al., 2000). This teacher, for example, had difficulty accepting she was depressed, even though her GP had diagnosed her. For her, it was a sign of weakness, a sign that she was unable to cope with a profession that was central to her positive self-perception.

“I’ve fought that. ‘Depression? What’s the matter with you? Pull yourself together!’ I’ve said it to myself! ‘Pull yourself together! Of course you haven’t got depression. That’s a made-up word. That is a namby-pamby word for people who cannot do, or they don’t want to. They’re bone idle! Right?’ That is what my view on depression has always been and it’s taken me a very, very long time to accept that it’s an illness and it’s not your fault. And that’s why I blamed myself for a very, very long time.”

This view was shared by most of the teachers interviewed.

1.8.2 Burnout

The two terms ‘stress’ and ‘burnout’ are often used to describe the effects on individuals from highly demanding professions. Stress is used to describe the psychological experience, which in moderate levels can be functional but in high levels is distressing, exhausting and leads to feeling overwhelmed. The term burnout (Maslach, Schaufeli, and Leiter, 2001) on the other hand was coined to describe psychological and physical ‘depletion’. Burnout, a job-related syndrome (Maslach, 1982), is mainly applied to those working in human service professions and manifestations may include symptoms akin to those observed in anxiety and depression. However, it is a distinct concept (Maslach, Schaufeli, and Leiter, 2001) characterised by work-related fatigue, which is often accompanied by feelings of depression and anxiety. Therefore, some now argue that burnout is itself a form of mental illness (Maslach, 2003).

Burnout is generally conceptualised as a three-dimensional construct consisting of emotional exhaustion, cynicism and a sense of inefficacy (2001). All three dimensions are necessary in order to consider burnout present. Emotional exhaustion is defined as chronic fatigue resulting from overtaxing work and reflects the stress dimension of burnout. Inefficacy has been found to be a function of either exhaustion or cynicism and sometimes both, and is thought to develop either in parallel or sequentially with these other two dimensions (1984). In addition, it is more consistently found when there is a lack of relevant job resources (Palmer and Cooper, 2007). Cynicism, on the other hand, refers to a disinterest in one’s work and indifference towards the people one works with. In essence, it refers to a feeling that work is no longer meaningful, while a sense of professional inefficacy refers to reduced feelings of competence and of accomplishment (Milner and Palmer, 1998).

“Crying, shaking in bed not wanting to go to work, physically shaking, a wreck. [...] I felt like I couldn’t cope. [...] I lost all my confidence and I felt like I was no good at anything and I couldn’t do anything and I was the most useless person ever [...] I was so worried that it would all be worse if I had time off and then went back and I just couldn’t face going back.”

Emotional exhaustion and cynicism are thought to result from work overload and social conflict, and often occur together. Maslach, Schaufeli and Leiter (APA, 1994) argue that cynicism represents the attempts an exhausted individual makes to distance themselves from ‘service recipients’ – to depersonalise them, in the case of teachers, from their pupils. As such, it may be considered to be an exhaustion management strategy.

The narrative below was provided by a highly regarded teacher (pseudonym 'Diana') whose long career (19 years) had always resulted in good/outstanding Ofsted evaluations. Her experience is further recounted in case study one in this report. Here she describes how cynicism set in after suffering panic attacks following unacceptable treatment by an Ofsted inspector whose report was later withdrawn by the local authority.

Extended Participant Quote: Case Study One – Diana

“He was just like black thunder. He didn’t speak, he didn’t say hello, he didn’t look. So I brought my class in, I didn’t know what to do. I didn’t speak to him and he didn’t speak to me. My class came in and they all sat around his legs, around the chairs. So I started the lesson with him in there and of course the class, being only five years old, they didn’t respond to me. Usually they’d be singing and answering questions and clapping. Whatever I’m doing, they’d be doing, I couldn’t get them to do anything. They were just, I think, as frightened of him as I was.

He stayed for the whole lesson...without moving at all and without speaking. [...] When the bell went he should have gone because they’re not supposed to waste our preparation time...we’re supposed to have our breaks. Well, he didn’t. He stood up and he just slated my lesson. He just slated it and slated it and slated it for the whole of playtime. When the bell went at the end of playtime, he went. So I stood there and I thought I was going to have a heart attack actually, it was so horrible. I had a terrible, terrible pain across my chest.

[...] I pulled myself together and brought the class in and taught the rest of the morning. [...] it was lunchtime [...] but I didn’t ever reach the staffroom because I got halfway down the path when this inspector came the other way, he was towering over me and he said ‘I hear you’ve been saying things about me’ [...] and he continued like that, shouting at me until the end of lunch [...] the bell went again for the end of lunch and he disappeared, I very nearly ran home [...] I went back into my class having not talked to anybody and taught for the rest of the day and nobody came to inspect me again.

[...] The only thing that was holding me together anyway, apart from exhaustion, was my in-built love of the job and it was in there even when it was so exhausting. It was still there. What the panic attack had done was removed my love of the job completely...my inner soul if you like, had gone. [...] In a way, the job had been easy. Although it was very, very hard, it was easy because I wanted to do it. So actually, everything, every minute of every day, I didn’t want to do any of it. [...] people started saying to me ‘you look very tired’. And I said ‘well, I’ve got no emotions’. My emotions went. I couldn’t cry, I couldn’t laugh. My emotions had completely gone – vanished. And I was just dragging myself through every minute of every day.

[...] Now it’s just a job and it was never just a job. It was...I don’t know...my joy, I suppose. [...] I never had trouble with parents, my classes loved to work for me. Now I look at this class in Reception and I think ‘how long is it to the end of the day?’ Not because I’m not doing a good job and not because they are not learning [...] but because there’s isn’t any passion there – at all anymore.”

1.9 Prolonged Work-related Stress Repercussions

1.9.1 Stress and Health Problems

A generally accepted definition of stress is that it is an imbalance between the pressure or demands placed upon an individual and their coping resources. Lazarus and Folkman (Leahy and Holland, 2000), for example, argue that individuals continuously monitor events in their lives and evaluate whether a problem or difficulty may exist. If a problem or threat is identified, the individual also evaluates their coping resources and options. If this two-pronged appraisal process indicates that the individual’s resources are adequate to effectively manage the identified difficulty or threat, the individual will experience this as a challenge. Indeed, there is evidence that moderate levels of pressure are required for individuals to reach optimal performance (J Brown, Davis, and Johnson, 2002; Jepson and Forrest, 2006). However, if demands outweigh the individual’s resources and the situation is psychologically important to the individual (internal pressure), stress will occur (see figure 2). Extreme and/or prolonged periods of stress are thought to have serious physical and psychological health repercussions to the individual, including: heart attack, stroke, hypertension, ulcers, diabetes, angina, cancer, panic attacks, panic disorder, anxiety and depression (2003). Palmer

and colleagues outline a stepped stress model that describes how the individual's response to stress leads to these psychological and physical health repercussions (figure 2).

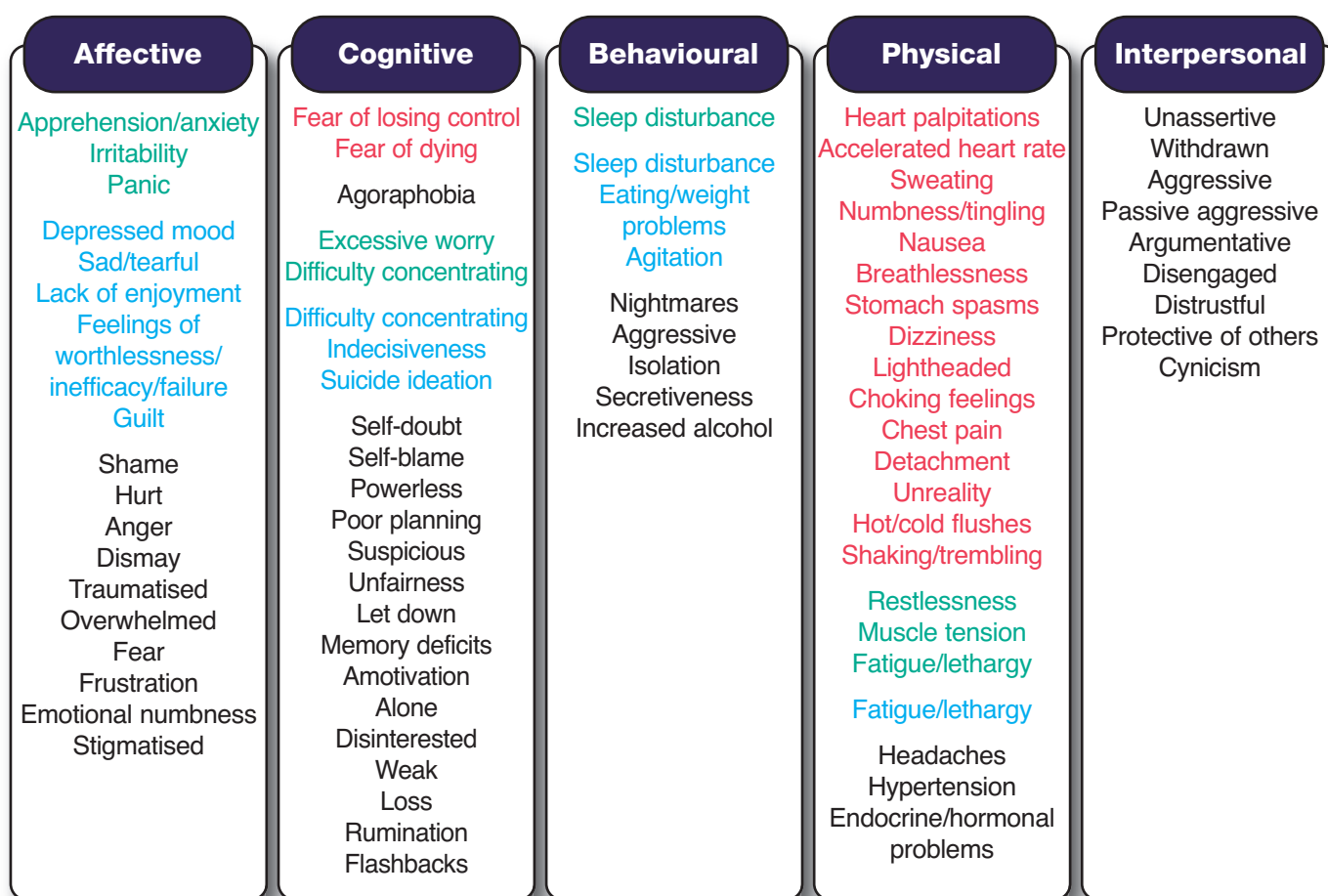
The results of the teachers' interviews indicate that teachers experiencing prolonged work-based stress do indeed experience symptoms in all five areas of the identified stress response (see figure 1). Many of our 39 interviewees were experiencing panic attacks and had been diagnosed by their general practitioners with work-based stress, anxiety and/or depression (see table).

Frequency Table of Diagnosed Mental Health Problems

Mental Health Problem	Work-based Stress	Depression	Anxiety	Other
Frequency	36	28	33	7

Panic attacks consist of numerous physical symptoms that can be quite frightening for the individual concerned (see symptoms depicted in red in figure 1). These can develop into panic disorder, which is accompanied by a fear of further panic attacks and concern about the implications of these. In addition, panic disorder may also be associated with agoraphobia where the individual fears being in open, crowded or public spaces because they experience high levels of discomfort. Therefore they may avoid these places or only go if accompanied (see, for example: Pithers and Soden, 1998; Travers and Cooper, 1996). The unpredictability and uncontrollability of panic attacks can lead to the additional development of depressive symptoms (figure 1: depicted in blue) (European Trade Union Committee for Education, 2007). In its more serious forms depression is accompanied by feelings of hopelessness and suicide ideation. For some, a more generalised anxiety may be present (figure 1: symptoms depicted in green) with or without panic attacks.

Figure 1 Interviewed Teachers' Reported Stress Symptoms

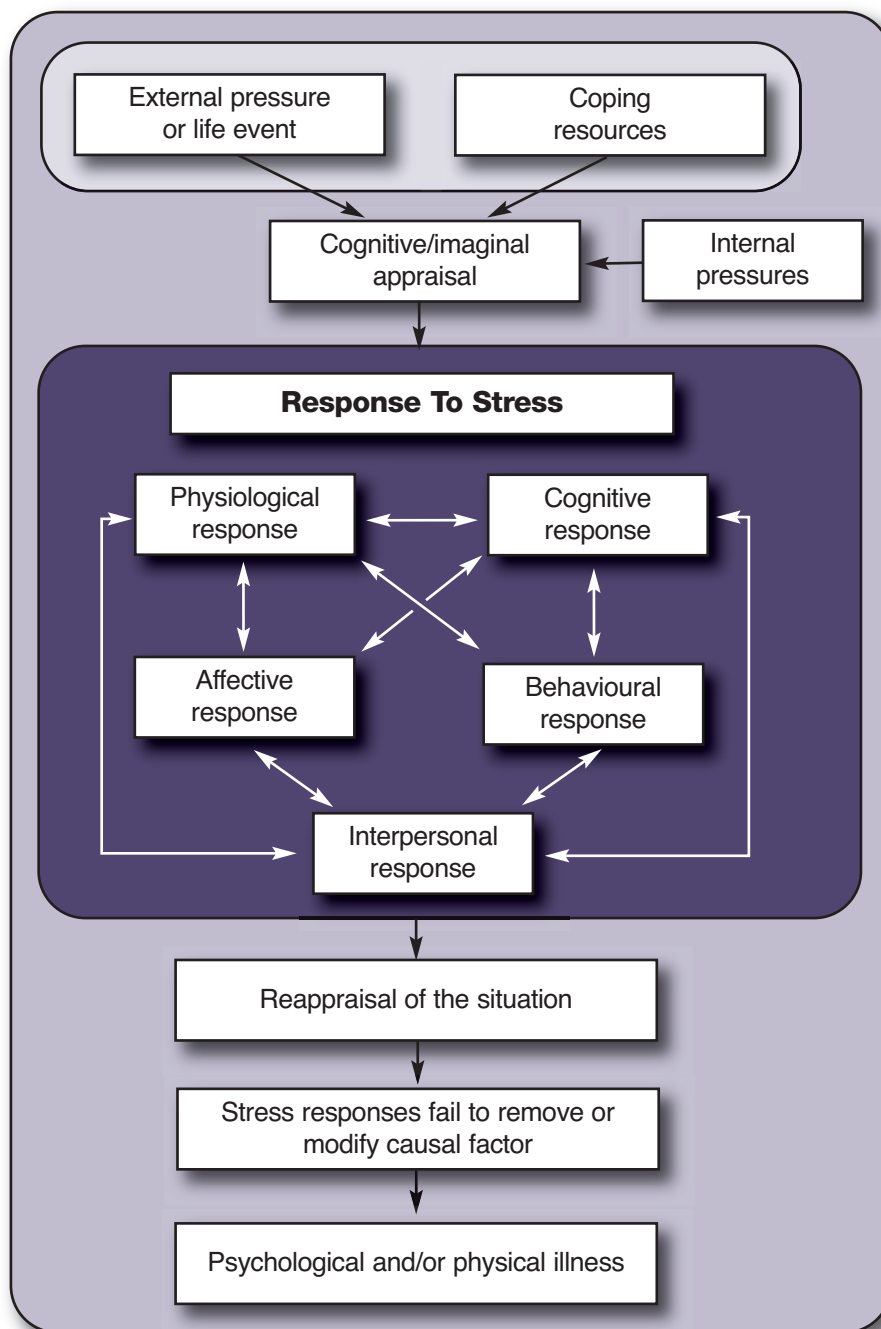


NB 1: Repeated items represent items that manifest in more than one mental health problem: **Red Items = Symptoms in Panic Disorder**; **Green Items = Symptoms in Generalised Anxiety**; **Blue Items = Symptoms in Depression**. **NB 2:** Although every effort has been made to categorise these reported experiences into distinct categories, it should be noted that all these components are interlinked, influencing and being influenced by each other. Many of these experiences could occupy multiple categories.

The following quote, from an experienced secondary school teacher, describes just such a combination of panic attacks, agoraphobia and depression brought on by prolonged work-based stress.

"I wasn't sleeping at night. [...] I felt very pressurised [...] and sort of headachy. [...] I would get up and say 'okay, I really don't want to go to school. I've got to go. I've got to do this; I've got to do that'. But it's almost like a wall building up you've got to the point where you're looking over the top and thinking, 'Yeah, okay, everything's fine' and then somebody puts the last brick in and you go, 'that's it! That's as far as I can take it'. [...] I started to get panic attacks. [...] If I was out, quite often in a shop, say a supermarket and waiting to pay I would get palpitations and feelings of 'I've got to get out. I've got to get out of here, it doesn't matter, I've just got to get out and breathe fresh air'. [...] I can remember those panic attacks and I can remember my heart beating faster. But it isn't until someone actually says 'okay, you are stressed to the point that it's tipped over into depression' [...] My doctor put me on a course of Seroxat [an antidepressant...]. He refers to it as an anxiety state created by stress."

Figure 2 Stepped Stress Model



(Farber, 1991)

1.9.2 Work Impact

The work performance, productivity, enthusiasm and/or commitment of all the teachers in our sample were negatively affected by stress in multiple ways (see figure 3).

"I was constantly feeling overwhelmed. If I had a set of reports to write I'd be worrying sick about doing them rather than doing them. And eventually I would do them but I never did them as well as I had four or five years earlier. The actual quality of my work, not the actual physical interaction with the kids, but the actual quality suffered.

I started having headaches and not sleeping and depression, just a lack of interest, a sort of going through the motions, you know? When I say my teaching didn't suffer, it only didn't suffer because I'd been doing it for so long I knew exactly what was. [...] But I didn't seem to have the energy or the time to contemplate developing new projects.

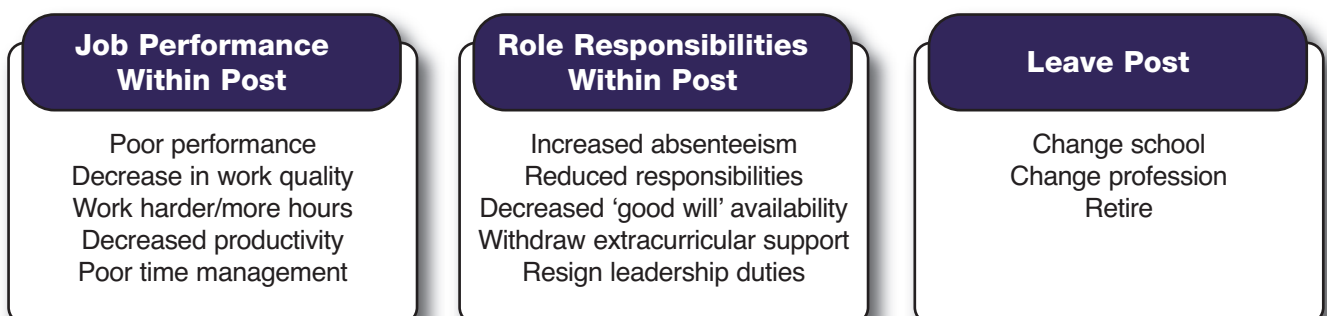
[...] It seemed that that was all there was in my life, work. There was nothing else. I felt, this last summer holidays, I've felt absolutely terrified about going back to work in the September. I was absolutely frightened that I wouldn't be able to...that I wouldn't be able to do it. Not that I wouldn't be able to do the teaching. I could walk now probably into a class of 11 year olds and say 'right we're going to do a project on this' but all the other things like interviewing people for their performance management, listening to them, leading, I didn't feel I could do that anymore because I didn't really care about it anymore."

There is increasing evidence of a link between low teacher retention in UK maintained schools (Farber, 1991; Smith, Brice, Collins, Matthews, and McNamara, 2000) and workplace stress (Everaert and van der Wolf, 2006; Hastings and Bham, 2003). This not only impacts on the psychological and physical wellbeing of teachers but also impacts on the school organisation as a whole by affecting job performance and productivity, as well as the financial costs of covering sick leave and recruiting replacement staff (Byrne, 1999). In a report by Ofsted (PricewaterhouseCoopers, 2001) concern was also raised about the indirect adverse impact that teacher recruitment difficulties were having on standards of pupils' academic achievement: this relates to the quality of temporary and support staff, schools arrangements for integrating and managing such staff and the lack of specialist teachers. All of this can place additional work pressure onto teachers employed at the school. P47, who teaches a specialist area, highlights these problems.

"It is hard to get good cover teachers but [...] she should still be able to work out that they've got to do every chapter in the book. [...] She's not very good at it, she admits that she's not very good at it. [...] She still teaches her topics but not very well [...] so the pupils got absolutely no hope. [...] The current year 12s will probably do really badly in the Summer, I'll be doing retakes next year with them.

[...] I may end up teaching extra lessons to get them through. [...] They [the senior leadership team] can't do anything about the quality of supply teachers, but they could monitor them properly. They can give my head of department time to mark their work, for example, if the supply teacher's not willing to do that. Because if it's coursework it's quite difficult to get supply teachers to do that in the way the school would do it."

Figure 3 Work Impact of Work-based Stress and Mental Health Difficulties



1.9.3 Case Study One: Psychological and Physical Health Repercussions of Prolonged Work Stress

The following case study narrative recounts more fully 'Diana's' experiences (P19). The school within which Diana was employed was a first and middle school that included a foundation year 7. Following her experiences with the Ofsted inspector, recounted earlier in this report, the school had received a good Ofsted result. However, Diana believes this experience with the Ofsted inspector marked the beginning of her problems with work-based stress and subsequently with more serious psychological and physical health problems. Here she describes how it affected her everyday demeanour at work.

"I just felt embarrassed really [...] I shouldn't have done because the following morning...it went around the school like wildfire that I'd had this bad inspector, and all sorts of members of staff had left me really nice cards. [...] I was just on hold...everything was on hold. I didn't...I couldn't speak in a staff meeting, I couldn't do anything...I couldn't do anything except go into my classroom and teach and sort of organise First School a bit."

Diana vowed that she would leave the profession as soon as they were notified of the next Ofsted inspection. Below, in the table, is a summary of Diana's experiences, summarised from the interview data, recounted in her own words in appendix i (the narrative in appendix i has been verified and authorised for publication by Diana).

Case Study One: Diana – Experienced Primary School Teacher

Causes of Work-based Stress

- Ofsted inspector
- Workload
- Work stress
- Special measures
- HMI

Psychological Problems – Anxiety and Depression Symptoms

- | | | |
|----------------------------|--------------------------|------------------------|
| • Apprehension and anxiety | • Self-blame | • Chest pain |
| • Panic | • Powerlessness | • Detachment |
| • Depressed mood | • Unfairness | • Shaking/trembling |
| • Lack of enjoyment | • Let down | • Fatigue |
| • Guilt | • Flashbacks | • Headaches |
| • Shame | • Isolation | • Withdrawn |
| • Traumatized | • Heart palpitations | • Disengaged |
| • Overwhelmed | • Accelerated heart rate | • Protective of others |
| • Emotional numbness | • Numbness/tingling | • Cynicism |
| • Agoraphobia | • Breathlessness | |

Physical Health Problems

- Breast cancer

Work Impact

- Demotivation
- Lost 'passion' for and love of the job
- Deteriorating relationships with pupils
- Decreased peer group immersion
- Decreased contribution to school in general
- Extended absence (sick leave)

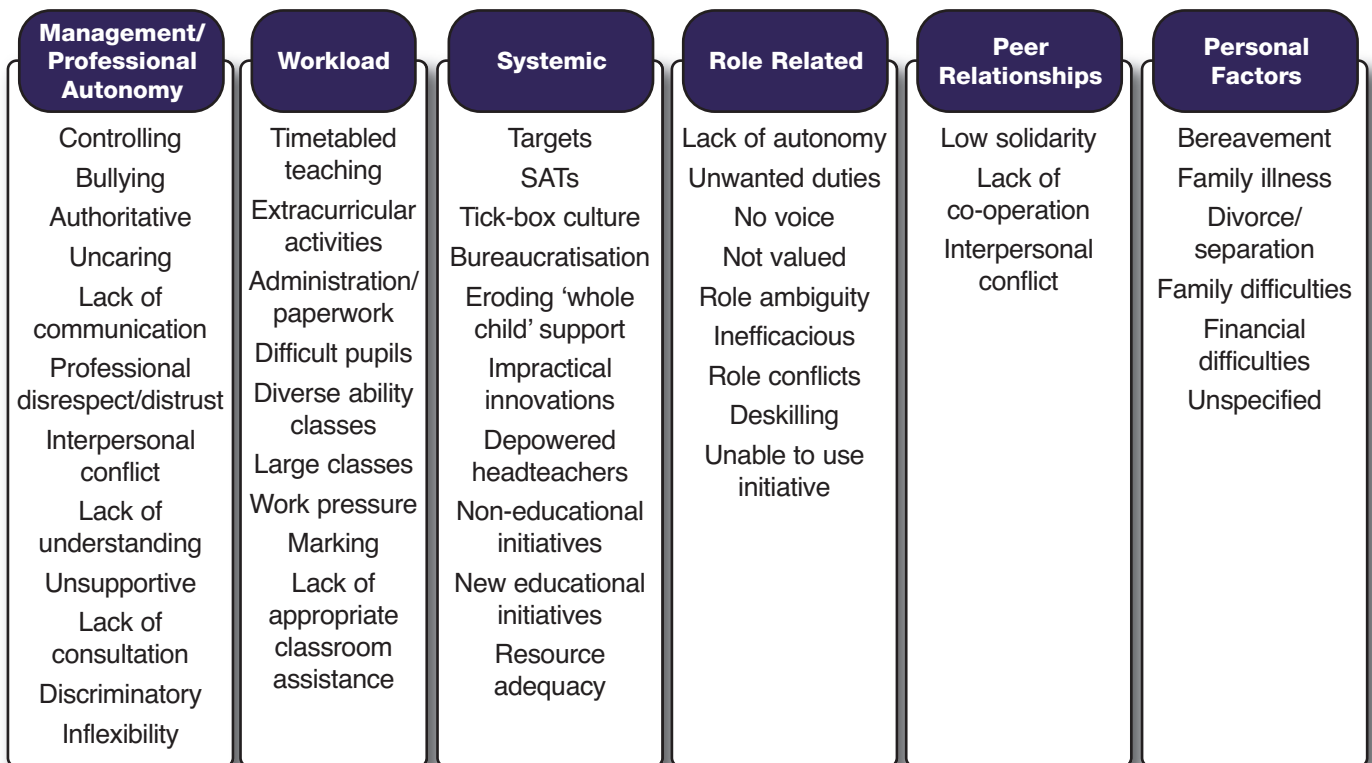
1.10 Factors that Impact on Teachers' Mental Health

The general factors considered to exacerbate the potential for job-related stress, psychological distress and burnout relate to high levels of work pressure, conflicting expectations, impractical innovations, unsupportive working environments and unsatisfactory interpersonal and intergroup relationships (Dorman, 2003). A survey by the European Trade Union Committee for Education (ETUCE) found that the top five stressors for teachers were:

- workload/working intensity;
- role overload;
- increased class size per teacher;
- unacceptable pupil behaviour; and
- bad school management/lack of support from management. (Dorman, Fraser, and McRobbie, 1995.)

Through our literature review, 11 factors were identified as most likely to negatively impact on teachers' emotional and psychological wellbeing as well as their sense of professional identity and self-esteem. These are detailed in the next section under five main categories: role-related; workload; peer relationships; management and professional autonomy; and systemic. The results of the teachers' interviews indicate teachers experiencing prolonged work-based stress do indeed perceive all these factors as contributing to their difficulties (see figure 4).

Figure 4 Perceived Causal Factors



1.10.1 Role-related

Role conflict can be defined as a clash of two or more expectations, duties or responsibilities, such that efforts to fulfil the requirements dictated by one make the accomplishment of the other more difficult. Commonly, the conflict may occur within the same dimension where task decisions may be based on quantity of work delivered versus quality (Steptoe, 2001). For example, in the current climate of school inclusion and large, diverse ability classrooms, teachers may find themselves unable to provide for the educational and discipline needs of both the whole class and individual pupils. Role ambiguity, on the other hand, refers to uncertainty in terms of job expectations, duties and responsibilities or even rights and status (Leithwood, Menzies, Jantzi, and Leithwood, 1999). Lack of clarity in, or frequently changing recommendations of, 'best practice' guidelines can lead to such ambiguities, for example, in teaching delivery methods, strategies for student discipline or acceptable pupil behaviour. Indeed,

student support, including dealing with (in particular, repetitive) unacceptable or disruptive behaviour, can deplete teachers' emotional, physical and coping resources (Farber, 1991).

The following extended quote, from 'Deborah', a secondary school teacher, is an example of such ambiguity. 'On paper' the school advocates a 'no violence' policy, but in practice this is not adhered to. Deborah was made to continue to teach a year 10 pupil who had physically assaulted her and who had continued to threaten her.

Extended Participant Quote: Deborah

"He pushed me really hard twice and went to punch me in the face. Fortunately I put my arm up, [...] he had twice pushed me with quite a force I lost my balance. I was just really shook up by what had happened. So he got his exclusion and then when he came back into school, every time I made contact with him he would make threats to me. He made it very uncomfortable, I was very nervous about what he could do and your mind starts working overtime and you think this could happen and this could happen...I didn't get any support from management. I had said that I feel uncomfortable about being in the same room as him.

I had to teach him again [...] and it seemed to escalate. Every time I went in there was threats, 'I should have hit you', 'I'm going to hit you' that sort of thing. I just felt that there was no support at all. [...] I thought, 'I've got to do something, I need something to happen because it can't continue like this'.

[...] I went to [senior management] and said that I was being threatened and felt uncomfortable being in a room with him and I didn't feel I should be put in that situation really. They just laughed and said, 'It'll be fine' – their answer was 'you're never on your own with him'. [...] The fact that I am not on my own with him doesn't make it safe. That's not the issue. The issue is, I'm coming to work and having to suffer that. It's not appropriate for me to be put in that situation.

[...] After that I went to the doctor and said, 'Look I can't cope with things.' [...] So I had three weeks off. [The GP] said it was stress on the sick note.

[...] But she [the headteacher] almost expects that...Oh she said 'you're in the wrong job if you don't expect to receive some violence from the kids'. Which, I'm sorry but if you've got that impression, what message is that giving out to your staff and also what message is then given out to the kids?

No, no matter where you work, you don't come to work to be assaulted. You just don't and whether it's a shove or whether it's a punch, if it's physical contact with staff it's got to be deemed inappropriate, and in my opinion it's got to be treated seriously enough that it's actually dealt with in a serious way."

1.10.2 Workload

Such ambiguities and conflicts can contribute to feeling overwhelmed and unable to cope with job demands. Work pressure or 'load' can also result from both task complexity or quantity (1999). Work overload is increasingly considered to be a major problem for teachers. A recent study reports that teachers work an average of 52 hours per week in term time, with middle/senior managers and headteachers working an average of 57 and 60 hours per week respectively (Angle, Fearn, Elston, Claire Basset, and McGinial, 2009). Numerous factors have been identified that are thought to contribute to teachers' workload, such as excessive paperwork, large diverse ability classes and pupil discipline issues.

Extended Participant Quote: Trisha

"It was a year last September and there were a lot of changes in literacy and numeracy yet again [...] change coming from government [...] I'd been in the foundation stage moving to Key Stage 1. It's a different way of working so I was getting to grips with subjects like history, geography, science and so on, finding all those resources and knowing what I should be doing and so on. [...] We were also working with Advisors from County to improve standards. So they were imposing loads of extra grids that had to be filled in to track children.

[...] I was the literacy co-ordinator so I had to work with the literacy advisor who was, I felt, a bully. I felt very intimidated by her [...] we had this tracking grid to plot the children at the

beginning of the term – what level of attainment they'd achieve. The idea was at the end of the term you would test them again or make a judgement as to what level they were now. They were supposed to move up three levels. From this tracking grid you chose six children who were performing just under the level that they should be. They were your six target children who you were going to specifically keep an eye on and do extra work with to move them up to where they should be. I felt that that was wrong anyway, from a moral point of view because the government had this thing called Every Child Matters but actually – no! Guess what? Not every child matters, it's these six target children that matter [...] We were given the names of the children that we were going to have in our classes at the end of the Summer term, I'd already taught these children when in reception; some of the levels they were given were absolutely bonkers!

[...] I said to the person who was a Key Stage 1 co-ordinator, 'I'm sorry but I think these are wrong'. We went to the headteacher [...] we were to look at their levels and decide where they'd be best placed, in a higher, middle or lower level working group. The headteacher said, 'Oh just sort it out from the data that you've been given' – even though we were saying we felt it wasn't right.

[...] As we worked within these sets it became apparent it wasn't going to work, some of the children in the higher level sets just couldn't manage that work, children in my middle sets were good younger children who needed to be in the higher set and so on. [...] We saw the headteacher and we said, 'Look, this is ridiculous. We can't work like this.' So having worked in those groups and done all the associated tracking, the headteacher then retested everybody and reallocated the groups. That was a huge upheaval, it involved a lot of children – with the paperwork to go with them. Then you were in the situation where some children came to your group, having done different things to what you'd been doing with yours. So you had to do a kind of evening out, finding out again what everybody knew, redo the tracking grid, reselect your target children, blah blah blah. By now it was half term of the first term.

I went to the headteacher and said I was struggling with the amount of things we were being asked to do. There were too many new things being imposed all the time. There was the major change with the literacy and numeracy [...] the Key Stage 1 curriculum was new to me. I hadn't taught that for about six years. I didn't have the resources I needed [...] I was spending all my weekend working to be ready for Monday and when Monday came I just felt too tired. So I thought if I went down to a four-day week, I could stay at home and work all the Friday that I had off, and then I would get a weekend. I couldn't go on not having a break. I needed to find some way of having a break.

[...] The headteacher had said I was going to get the support I needed, I didn't feel I was getting it. I hadn't ever taught SATs because the last time I taught year 2 children was 1978 and they hadn't been invented then – it was lovely! You could actually enjoy teaching.

[...] Things gradually seemed to start falling into place because I had children who were working at the level that they were supposed to be. I began to get more used to working with the new curriculum. I was beginning to feel I was getting a grip on things, even though there was an underlying tension to do the paperwork and you were constantly being harried for paperwork about planning and targets.

In the last week of the term, December, I had begun to think 'I'm not actually planning so hand to mouth' [...] and I had this meeting with the head guy in this team of advisors [...] I was singing everybody's praises, saying how hard all the staff had worked to get to grips with all the new material, I was really trying to be very positive. He looked at the tracking sheets, he didn't think people had done enough; he was so unappreciative of everything we'd done. [...] The advisors decided we would no longer set the children in literacy and numeracy, the children would work in their class groups, back to where they were before they had been set.

[...] When I heard that I just burst into tears. I thought I've had enough! I just ran out of the room in tears, another ***** change! People have absolutely no idea. It's not just 'oh change' so you just move the children and then you carry on. I thought 'I'm going to have children who've been working in different sets, how am I going to know what they've covered?' How were you going to know which areas of the curriculum had been done? [...] And now? It's going full circle back where it was when I first came into teaching, back to topic-based teaching. [...] So the children and the staff are all facing a third re-juggle, in the same – well one and a half terms."

1.10.3 Peer Relationships

A supportive workgroup may help mitigate the effects from work overload. It is generally accepted that group cohesion and co-operation is conducive to a healthy working environment and may help protect workers against stress and burnout. It is important that teachers feel supported and accepted by their colleagues because a sense of social support from and affiliation with one's colleagues is significantly and negatively associated with emotional exhaustion (Taris, Schreurs, and van Iersel-van Silfhout, 2001). The extended quote from Jennifer (P64) that follows the next section illustrates well how much difference supportive colleagues can make to an individual who has experienced mental health difficulties. In addition, an atmosphere of professional interest where teachers discuss and share information on professional matters and further development is positively associated with co-operation and order and organisation in the classroom (Leithwood, Menzies, Jantzi, and Leithwood, 1999).

"The first two years of teaching, that was at a different school, it was fantastic. I had a great time. It did seem to be far more fun, the things we did. I was team planning, so there were three year 3/4 classes and we had lots of meetings and lots of communication and all sort of things. So you felt supported all the time and anything you weren't sure about you could say or any ideas you had you could say and it was very much a sharing experience and very supportive."

1.10.4 Management and Professional Autonomy

The issue of how teachers are managed and the impact this can have on teachers' motivation and wellbeing is primarily discussed in section 1.16 of this report. Here, however, we discuss how the beneficial effects from colleague support are not restricted to work peers alone. Rather the support from and attitude of school leaders is considered to be an important factor in determining how teachers respond to demanding situations. In the quote below, 'Jennifer' illustrates how an open and supportive management attitude breeds a school ethos of interpersonal caring and support.

Jennifer had been off work with depression. Here she describes how both she and her colleagues benefit from an accepting attitude towards mental health difficulties and a positive school ethos.

Extended Participant Quote: Jennifer

"I can be upset about things and find things hard to deal with, even if they're just small things – mostly, you know, you let that out when you're at home but occasionally here [in school], and I have the most supportive colleagues you could possibly wish for so it doesn't really get in the way here if it happens [...] they're so wonderful here. [...] If I feel upset] I tell my colleagues and the headteacher's very good. I can tell him things but the colleagues I have in the XX department, I mean we've been colleagues for about 18 years now so I can just go and find them. So I don't feel I need anybody else. [...] I think [staff] feel that there's room here where we can let off a bit of steam [...] and the headteacher does value that. I can think of some schools where some staff or senior management would think it was stuff and nonsense and why do staff need that. But it isn't stuff and nonsense at all, our headteacher doesn't think it's stuff and nonsense and thinks we do need to have somebody who can just be there.

[...] We have one person who has bi-polar and takes Lithium – s/he had about two bouts of absence because s/he eventually gets into such a state s/he can't cope but you wouldn't see it in school. [...] We do have a little action plan should s/he feel unwell but it's never needed to be put into operation. But, you know, I might say to her/him every so often, 'How are you doing?' But you would never know, like you would never know about me.

[...If someone is off sick] the head of department would just have to swing into action and help out [...and] I ring up, 'Oh, this is XX, just wondered how you're doing'. But I don't ring up to check on them, it's out of concern. [...] I rang up [a colleague] who'd had an operation and s/he said, 'I can't believe you're ringing me up! It's so lovely of you to bother ringing me up!'. And we send people flowers if they're off long term, you know, for over a couple of weeks and that kind of thing.

[...] E-mails are very handy because if you're not feeling very well you can still write a little e-mail and [when I was on sick leave] the headteacher would drop me a little e-mail and the deputy headteacher would drop me a little one [...] and my head of department – and texts are wonderful because you can keep in touch with people without them having to explain everything. [...] I felt I was always supported [...] I met colleagues for coffee at half term in the town. Yes, it was distressing for me to do that because I would become very tearful but they understood.

An additional factor, lack of staff freedom within the work environment, is thought to have a negative impact on employee health, that is, lack of perceived control and autonomy negatively affects psychological and physical wellbeing (Coladarci, 1992). Indeed, low perceived job control has been significantly associated with high blood pressure and heart rate in a real time study (Galton and MacBeth, 2008). Prior to the quote below, this teacher had been explaining how the headteacher attempted to control how she performed her job. This teacher, who experienced work-based stress, anxiety, depression and deterioration in her physical health, explains how the headteacher attempted to control social interaction between staff members.

“Just to tell you how bad it was. Just somebody watching you is just horrible. Just looking at you – looking through the window. Another thing was he’d ask the kids about me. How unprofessional is that? [...] At the hospital the [specialist] said it’s quite likely that stress has brought this [physical illness] on. [...] He [the headteacher] ruled the staffroom; you weren’t to go in the staffroom. He didn’t like people in the staffroom. It was a place where people would start...He didn’t want chat amongst staff. He didn’t want them communicating. At lunchtime he liked it if departments kept themselves to themselves in their department. That’s how he kept it. It wasn’t an open kind of thing. So you’d have your sandwich in your department watching a kid on the computer, you just told them what to do and then go and eat your sandwich. You were constantly going all day. I just couldn’t believe, going to this [new] school, how different it is. At break time, I have a break. Lunchtime is lunchtime. It ought to be important.”

Relatedly, the lack of freedom to be innovative and make full use of one’s skills is also related to increased job-related stress. While the effects of this may be somewhat mitigated by a participatory decision-making management structure, lack of such an approach has the potential to increase the likelihood of burnout (2007) and has a significant negative effect on teacher morale in general (e.g. NASUWT, 2008b). Ultimately, staff freedom, innovation and participatory decision making are influenced by leadership factors. On the basis of their own research and a review of 18 studies examining the influence of leadership on burnout, Leithwood et al., 1999, argue that leadership factors are underestimated in terms of their influence on teacher burnout.

“You feel like ‘how about allowing us to use a bit of initiative? How about professional respect?’ I know what children are like. It feels like they’re treating all teachers like NQTs and you definitely get that ‘teaching grandmother to suck eggs’.”

1.10.5 Systemic Factors

Finally, the last factor highlighted by our literature review relates to systemic factors. Firstly is the issue of resource adequacy. Lack of job resources directly increase the likelihood of burnout (e.g. DCSF, 2008). Inadequate resources also indirectly affect burnout likelihood through other variables such as lack of perceived job control (Acas, 2006a, 2006b), low access to information (Nash, 2000) and perceptions of inadequate supervisory support (Teacher Support Network, 2001). It is difficult to do one’s job well if the tools one needs are in short supply or one’s working environment is inadequate. Case study two illustrates the impact an inadequate working environment can have.

Over the last three decades, there has evolved a repetitive introduction of school reform, new policies and educational initiatives, which, coupled with a greater emphasis on pupil testing, measurable competencies, school inspection, accountability, performance management and so-called ‘league tables’, has led to increasing pressure on teachers and the bureaucratisation of the teaching profession. The Primary Review (2007) for example, reports: ‘In the matter of raising the standards of teaching, Ofsted was seen as more of a hindrance than a help, because it was believed to require compliance rather than analysis and debate’. On the matter of national tests and pupil assessments, this same report argues that the high-stakes nature of the Key Stage 2 tests – SATs (Standard Assessment Tests) – contributes to pupil and teacher stress. This view was apparent in our study too. ‘Katie’ highlights all these issues.

Extended Participant Quote: Katie

“Year 6 should be a year when the children have a really good time. It’s their last year at primary, they should be enjoying their learning and learning life skills, becoming confident people [...] rather than it just being about ‘the test’. And it is very much about the test. All year, [...] right from September you’re just English, maths, science, English, maths, science and it’s just awful. I wouldn’t want [my child] to have to spend her/his year 6 year like that. All that pressure! The other thing as well, you feel guilty – well I did [...] I didn’t want [the children] to feel how they did about year 6 either. People would come in in tears. Parents would come in saying, ‘Oh my child, they’re not sleeping because they’re so stressed, they’re so worried about the SATs’.

I felt I was almost giving them feelings that I was feeling myself about ‘is this good enough?’ It’s too much. You don’t do it purposely but when you’ve got somebody saying to you ‘we’ve got to get these results’ it’s very difficult to not have some of that go through to them. [...] You try to say to them, ‘just do your best. It doesn’t matter’. You’re telling them all this, you’re trying to make them feel good about themselves as people but then on the other hand, you’re saying, ‘Right. You’re this level. This is what you need to do to get to the next level. Look at your work. Where can you improve?’ and all this sort of thing. It’s not a very positive experience for some children: definitely not.

[...] It just can’t be new and inspirational because it’s revising and you don’t have the time either. To try and fit everything in you have to fit in just for the tests is impossible. I don’t think they enjoy it. [...] The SEN children – the speed at which you’re having to work is just far too quick for them, they’re not consolidating their learning before you move onto something else. So their feelings of self-worth are reduced and you think, ‘Well I’m not doing my job properly as a teacher’. [...] But then you think, ‘what else can I do? How else can I manage this?’

[...When] I started teaching in year 6 that was when it was just overwhelming. The thing is I do love teaching that age group because they’re fantastic. The thing that I don’t like is that I feel as though they’re short-changed and you have such a fantastic time with them because they are that much more mature obviously than other age groups, and I would teach year 6 for the rest of my teaching career if you didn’t have to do all this work towards SATs.

[...] Twice, different years, I sat opposite the headteacher and s/he just said, ‘It’s up to you’ and no matter how many times people say, ‘Oh it’s not just you. It’s the whole of their schooling’, it doesn’t matter. You just feel as though it’s up to you to get those children into a level four by the end of that year and that’s that. If they don’t do well in their SATs it’s because you’ve done a rubbish job.

[...] The LEA obviously set targets for the school, which sometimes you just look at and you just think, ‘That’s just so unmanageable, so unrealistic’. Right from the beginning of the year you just think ‘that’s ridiculous!’ Why have they said we’re going to get 75% level four in English when you know that 20% of your children are SEN? It’s ridiculous. So you won’t meet those targets, so when Ofsted come, the school as a whole will be seen as – well not achieving really. [...] It’s impossible! You are, you’re set up to fail – definitely.”

1.10.6 Case Study Two: Multiple Factors in Work-based Stress

‘Peter’, a secondary school teacher, was carrying a heavy teaching workload, extra responsibility in his role as head of year, teaching in multiple rooms in different parts of a large school and carrying teaching resources across the school multiple times per day. In addition to his work duties, his work environment was inadequate and causing physical and psychological health problems. Case Study 2 on page 28 contains a summary of Peter’s experiences, his difficult struggle with these issues and his repeated attempts to convince management to instigate change, which is summarised from the interview data and recounted in his own words below (the narrative below has been verified and authorised for publication by Peter).

Case Study Two: Peter's Story

"It was the teaching rooms I had that were the main cause of the problems that came later. But there were a number of issues. I was in three rooms; all three were enclosed, interior rooms without any windows. Heat all day long. There was no respite from it at all. My small office, it had these skylights so I had a little bit of sunlight, but they had the effect of allowing the heat to come in. These rooms were in three different parts of the school.

The heat was really bad. I mean, at the time I was getting skin rashes and all sorts of things. So I said to the management, 'I can't stand this. The rooms are ridiculous. What are you going to do about it?'

There is an air system there. It's one of these hot air blowing systems, where one blows in and one blows out. But it wasn't working properly. It was actually blowing hot air in but not taking anything out. So in the end I got some gaffer tape to tape up the vents, which is crazy. Even in Winter it was still blasting hot air in there – unbearable.

One of the deputy headteachers, who's since retired, came in and covered a lesson before the one I take. He did his hour and said 'I don't know how you can stand it in here'. 'Well, I have been saying this is crazy'. That went on for quite some time with various complaining and what have you and they then put in one of these humidifiers into one of the rooms, which they thought would solve the problem. Well, all they did was make it like a tropical jungle. I said, 'hang on a minute, you've got computers in there, you're making the atmosphere humid, isn't there a problem here? You are going to cause all sorts of electrical problems to the equipment; shouldn't there be air conditioning here?'

The children complained all the time. The children would come in and say...well, you couldn't get them to work sometimes it was so hot. They'd come in and go 'phew' and you'd think 'well, right...it is'.

The school has always had these sorts of issues with these rooms, you know...because down the one side where I taught IT, you have all the [subject] department and the people teaching there, they say it's hot. To which I say, 'well, put 20 computers in there, switch them all on, particularly with the old monitors, and you see how hot it is and deal with that one!' So, that scenario doesn't appear anywhere else. So, this is where you start to think to yourself 'Is it just me?' And then people walk in and sit in the room for a while and say 'how do you teach in here?' Then a little tick goes on in your head.

Now they've moved me to another room, I go in, in the mornings and have to open all the windows. I switch the computers off every night; they go on stand-by, but if I leave them on its unbearable the next day. So I manually flip them off. In stand-by mode there is a certain amount of heat being generated. I said to the headteacher, 'this is crazy. You've got a budget you're looking after and you've got me with all my windows open, but you've still got to have the heat on because it's too cold otherwise. If you leave it, it's freezing cold so you balance this by opening the windows to control the temperature. It cannot be right'.

There are a number of issues here: at one point they had me teaching X, I had the dilemma of teaching the year 10 and 11 GCSE course on the Y course. I was also doing year 10 and 11 IT and some low school technology as well, plus head of year – all in different rooms, every single one, carrying teaching resources across the school multiple times per day. And the senior management said to me 'well, you need a box and carry it around with you'. I thought 'put your hands in your pocket and try not to hit somebody!' I'd been teaching something like 25 years at that time, for someone to say that, it was insulting to say the least. But you don't know what to say to that, quite frankly.

I was working up to 12 midnight at least three or four nights per week. A lot of the younger classes need different resources and things to keep the lessons interesting for them. It's a little less stressful with year 10 and 11 because a lot of the work with IT is on the computers and you can pool resources and have them all on there. But when you're doing something like X, you are pulling out resources and books. You'd be in one room teaching. Then you'd go to the other room to teach and the resources are over there so you're sending a kid to get those. You've brought your books, the lesson's started, you're 15 or 20 minutes in and not much has happened yet. You're getting stressed about that and kids' problems and all the rest of it comes in on top of that. You might get a reasonably small amount of work done and then you're clearing away again, then on to the next room.

You tell people and they go 'Yeah, yeah, yeah, you're an experienced teacher, don't worry about it. Just do the best you can'. But you want to do better than just coping, that's probably where all my problems came from, wanting to do a lot more than just coping.

Finally, senior management said, 'you have a choice. Do you want to continue with Y? Or you can relinquish that and carry on with X in these three rooms?' So at least they identified that I was all over the place. I felt awful leaving these kids who were going from year 10 to year 11. The pupils were saying, 'Why aren't you teaching us?' So, that was pressure because you have a commitment, don't you? I didn't want to release it. But in the end I said, 'Well, I can't do everything' so I let that Y subject go.

One of the things that was happening at the time, as well, was the head of IT was seconded so we didn't have a head of IT. There were three of us doing bits and pieces. So he'd gone, he was back and forth giving stuff but there was no one leading it. I remember him saying to me 'you'll look after it, won't you?' I said 'hang on I'll teach what I'm doing but I can't be doing everything else!' I couldn't believe it when the head said he would go on the secondment and just leave us to cope. I think one of the things that really hit them was when the results went way down. We now get something like 70% of the kids, A to C in IT. It went down to something like 24% that one year when he'd gone. What am I supposed to do? The guy's not here. At the end of the day, somebody's got to set targets for when work's got to be put together, they've got to liaise with the exam board to know when things have got to be done; go out to meetings, find out what the course is supposed to be. So, you're left with the situation of trying to do the coursework but you're not really sure on how to do it because you're working to an old schedule and you find out later things have changed.

The classic one was the year before he'd left, he was thinking of the move and he'd write some bits of coursework for us, we'd work on it together and then we'd all go off to do it. So, I'd be teaching this and I'd do it for half or nearly a term, we'd get back together again...and he'd say 'Oh, don't bother with that. It's rubbish'. 'Pardon? I've just been doing that for the last term'. 'Oh, don't be doing that. Use this'. He'd put new stuff on the table and say 'here's what we're going to be doing now'. And you think 'I'm teaching this tomorrow morning, I haven't seen it before and now you want me to teach it to the kids?' You then go away and you think, 'I've got to do it properly'. So you're up preparing and sorting that out on top of everything else, stuff that you didn't expect to happen. Then don't feel you've done it properly, that builds up stress as well.

Something I haven't mentioned yet was you'd come in some days, we didn't have technicians to start with, and you'd have 20 computers in the room, of which 15 were working, and 20 kids would turn up. I remember the curriculum head at the beginning of the year saying 'we've had 24 children opt for your subject'. 'But I've only got 18 computers'. 'Oh well, give them something else to do'. So you think 'okay, let's try it'. It's just chaos because the kids without computers won't work because they can see their mates on the computers. And you say 'well, you come off there and you go on'. It's just farcical. You wouldn't say 'I know. We'll have a maths lesson. We'll have 20 kids and 15 books. You five go over there and do something else'. One of the worst scenarios was you'd get some kiddies who were disruptive and I remember the head saying 'this boy has been really disruptive around the school can you make sure he has a computer every single lesson?'. I said, 'I'm to take one of the kids who's working hard, concentrating on their work and say "sorry, you can't work today" so that disruptive person can have a computer?'

I wasn't getting any sleep...always on the move, not being able to relax, just not knowing how to deal with it all, I suppose. You're trying to do your job but at the same time you're fighting against conditions that are so awful. I think that made it difficult to...be as relaxed about your work as you should be. It just continues on and on and on. There's no proper resolution to it at all.

The waking up at night, the anxiety, is all caused by all of this. You're just running around in your head all the time, 'why you're off, you should be at work, you shouldn't be letting this happen, you're bigger than that, you can deal with it', that sort of thing. The worst part of it was when I went to see the doctor and he said 'I'll sign you off for this and - its anxiety'. And you think 'Oh gosh! Where's this going?' The anxiety was a shock, because you don't consider yourself as susceptible, or that that sort of thing will happen to you. It was very unpleasant and it took quite a while to accept that that's what was happening. After sick leave I had a phased induction back in again and I moved rooms, those were positive things they did. But I remember saying 'well, it's great that you've done that but you haven't really dealt with the issue of those rooms and how you're going to handle IT in the school'.

They moved me to a demountable, which was part of the return package after my sick leave. I was on light timetable then. I had a cover teacher so I was just coming in and getting myself back in, looking at what work the children had done and how I would work my way back into it. Lots of people covered my classes. I was in the school but not actually teaching for a while. So, from that point of view, they did what they could but they still haven't actually addressed the root cause of the problem.

Going back to last year and the absence that I had then, I had said to the health and safety guy 'if you look at where these happen, as the term goes on, the stress builds up. I'm in that room day in and day out, day after day, these things are causing me problems. You can see it. It's there in black and white. Viruses, colds, flu, that sort of thing, more than you would expect is normal'.

I'd been off before Christmas because I had a virus, a scalp infection and an eye infection and the health and safety people were involved and the deputy headteacher was a part of that as well, they were all involved in having a look at it and it's all gone quiet again. Nothing's happening again. Just put an air-cooling system in there, a controlled environment. It's as simple as that.

I just want to get on with my job. You get to the point when things are busy during the term and you get a condition, like what happened in my eyes, and you go to the doctor's and he says, 'you'll have to have some medication for that and stay off work to sort it out'. And you say 'the room's caused that, hasn't it?' to which he is basically saying 'yes'. But he can't go further than that.

It just went on and on and on. I was actually told at one point, by the headteacher, who's left since, 'if you want them to do something, you must go and really make your point'. 'What do you want me to do? Bang doors, jump up and down?' I couldn't believe that. It has been three years.

It makes you feel that you've got to push it and push it and push it before something happens. When I got moved, because they realised the situation was wrong, they put me on the north side of the building so we don't get the sun. It's much better from that point of view but you're still in a room with 23 or 24 computers and a bunch of kids and it's just a demountable, temporary building, which has been there for 10, 15 years or something.

The conversation last week with management was exactly this 'what can I do to make the conditions better so you don't have time off?' I said 'I've done this, I've written things, I've told you, what more can I do?' It's quite possible to solve the problem but you've got to get somebody who knows what they're talking about. It's no good asking me because I'm not an expert in that. All I know is I want a better working environment, an environment where the temperature is controlled and you feel healthy. The conversation last week was 'what can we do to reduce your absences because of this?' To which the answer is 'sort the environment out. It's been going on for years'.

Case Study Two: Peter – Experienced Secondary School Teacher

Causes of Work-based Stress

- Inadequate work environment
- Workload
- Work stress
- Inadequate course leadership from colleague
- Lack of effective management

Psychological Problems – Anxiety

- Apprehension
- Depressed mood
- Lack of enjoyment
- Guilt
- Shame
- Overwhelmed
- Self-blame
- Fatigue
- Lethargy
- Headaches
- Disrupted sleep
- Powerlessness
- Unfairness
- Let down

Physical Health Problems

- Skin problems
- Eye infections
- Repeated viral infections

Work Impact

- Concentration affected
- Decreased pupil attainment
- Decreased contribution to school in general
- Extended absence (sick leave)

SOURCES OF SUPPORT, ADVICE AND GUIDANCE

1.11 Resources for Teachers

There is a wealth of information on stress and mental health difficulties available to teachers. In general, these are in the form of written information and advice that can be accessed over the Internet or appear in various publications aimed at the school workforce. The main sources include:

- teaching unions (see, for example: Giga, Noblet, Faragher, and Cooper, 2003);
- UK National Work-Stress Network (European Agency for Safety and Health at Work, 2000a, 2000b, 2002);
- Teacher Support Network (for numerous leaflets/booklets see: www.teachersupport.info);
- Department for Children, Schools and Families (DCSF) (e.g. DfES, 2000, 2001, 2008);
- International Management Association (e.g. Acas, 2006a; Acas, 2006b);
- The Chartered Institute of Personnel and Development (CIPD) (e.g. mental health at work factsheet available at: www.cipd.co.uk); and
- more general information from various mental health organisations and charities (e.g. the National Institute for Health and Clinical Excellence (NICE): www.nice.org.uk; the Mental Health Foundation: www.mentalhealth.org.uk or NIAMH: www.niamh.co.uk).

However, useful though these sources are, an individual experiencing stress, burnout or other psychological difficulties may, as a function of their current mental state, find seeking out and navigating these sources rather daunting. Instead, what may be more useful is a more individual approach: access to someone who is prepared to listen to each individual teacher's problems and offer support and advice that is specific to them.

"I can hear people saying 'well did you ask for, look for help?' But actually, the state I was in at the end of the last academic term, I just couldn't. You would have to have been a blind man on a horse riding backwards not to have seen the state I was in. So I actually think that that is where I was failed. That is where somebody should have said hang on here... you know? [...Someone to have] a sympathetic chat, [to say] 'what can we do' sort of thing, 'how can we help?'"

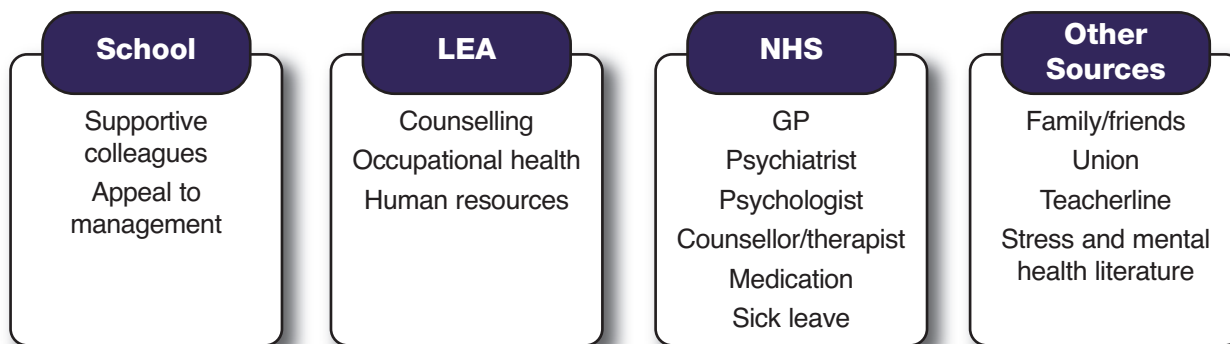
This need for an individual approach was partially met on a national level in 1999 by Teacherline. Teacherline is the main support network for teachers in distress. It is a counselling, support and advice service for teachers and was launched in September 1999 by the then Teachers' Benevolent Fund (TBF), now the Teacher Support Network. Their first report (e.g. HSE, 2005) indicated that 29% (rising to 50% in 2001 (e.g. NASUWT, 2008b; and NASUWT Stress Leaflets)) of teachers had heard of the service, which received 7,260 calls. However, they estimate that had all teachers been aware of the helpline they would have received 41,000. The concerns raised by callers is broadly in line with other research findings in that the top four concerns were: stress, anxiety and depression (29%), conflict with managers or colleagues (14%), pressure or workload issues (9%) and loss of confidence and performance anxiety (9%).

Despite the demand for support, identifying local resources and services available to teachers has proven more difficult. In a review of workplace interventions for people with common mental health

problems (including stress and burnout), Seymour and Grove report a large gap in published literature that evaluates workplace mental health policies or EAPs aimed at teachers. Moreover, although teachers are recognised as a professional group with a high incidence of work-related mental illness, there has been scant examination of workplace interventions for teachers and a tendency to promote an individualistic model of stress rather than systemic.

Figure 5 lists the various sources of support mentioned by our interviewees. In general, however, the teachers interviewed were more likely to seek the support of family, friends and their GP.

Figure 5 Main Sources of Support



1.12 Support, Advice and Guidance for School Leaders

As with advice and guidance available to teachers, there is a similar wealth of information available to school leaders and managers. In addition to those outlined above, other sources include:

- National Government department for education (Prendergrast, Foley, and Richmond, 2008; Sainsbury Centre for Mental Health, 2008);
- Acas (Advisory, Conciliation and Arbitration Service) (Schneider, 1998; Waddell and Burton, 2006);
- Health and Safety Executive (HSE) (Black, 2008)
- Teaching unions (Dewe and Kompier, 2008).

The NASUWT offers extensive support to members suffering from work-related stress. The Union’s lay officers, either at school level or Local Association level, will seek to address the cause of the work-related stress by representing and supporting the member at meetings with the school’s Senior Management Team (SMT). If the problem cannot be resolved satisfactorily and the member develops a long-term psychiatric injury as a result of the work-related stress, the NASUWT’s Regional or National Centre will assist the member in identifying and collating the necessary information and evidence required for a personal injury claim. This information will then be forwarded to the Union’s expert solicitors for them to undertake a merits assessment of the potential claim.

During 2008, 30 members contacted the NASUWT because they wished to progress claims for compensation against their employers as a result of suffering from stress-related illness. These claims remain enormously difficult to pursue to a successful conclusion. However, each application is carefully assessed by the Union’s solicitors. Where a claim is deemed to have reasonable prospects of success of overcoming the significant legal hurdles involved, the Union will fund the cost of pursuing the claim to the High Court.

The Union successfully settled a personal injury claim arising from stressful working conditions in 2006. The member suffered numerous assaults by pupils at her school; the final assault occurring when she attempted to intervene in a racially motivated fight between pupils. As a result, as well as suffering physical injuries, the member developed severe psychological difficulties. The member received £165,000 in full and final settlement of the claim. The NASUWT has also lodged court proceedings on behalf of a member who suffered severe post traumatic stress disorder following a vicious verbal assault involving death threats by the parent of a pupil. The Union is also seeking to pursue a claim on behalf of a member who tragically committed suicide as a direct result of work-related stress.

Employers and governing bodies have a duty of care towards their employees under the Health and Safety at Work Act 1974 or the Health and Safety at Work (Northern Ireland) Order 1978. These are intended to safeguard the health and wellbeing of staff. These Acts include the duty of conducting appropriate risk assessments for workplace hazards and responding to the health and safety issues that affect an organisation's workforce (see also: The Management of Health and Safety at Work Regulations 1999 and 2000, and the Disability Discrimination Act 1995 (DDA)). HSE offers a complete model for tackling stress through the Management Standards approach. This is a three-phase stress preventative process involving:

- the Management Standards (Isles, 2005);
- the risk assessment process; and
- the risk indicator tool.

These are discussed more fully elsewhere (Waddell and Burton, 2006) and will not be reviewed in depth here.

This approach includes six Management Standards considered to cover the main sources of work-related stress (National Social Marketing Centre, 2008):

1. Demands – including workload, work patterns and work environment;
2. Control – including how much say the person has in the way they do their work;
3. Support – including the encouragement, sponsorship and resources provided by the organisation, line management and colleagues;
4. Relationships – including promoting positive working to avoid conflict and dealing with unacceptable behaviour;
5. Role – whether people understand their role within the organisation and whether the organisation ensures that they do not have conflicting roles;
6. Change – how organisational change (large or small) is managed and communicated in the organisation.

The MS approach helps an organisation engage its workforce in a collaborative and consultative process of problem or risk identification, with the view that once an organisation understands the risks, strategies can be employed to directly tackle those areas. However, as with any intervention, good evaluation studies are required to assess effectiveness; at present, there is a paucity of such research (Baxter, Goyder, Herrmann, Pickvance, and Chilcott, 2009). Indeed, it is currently unknown and difficult to ascertain how many schools have organisational or individual level interventions in place.

Guidance and advice is offered by the DCSF (Baxter, Goyder, Herrmann, Pickvance, and Chilcott, 2009) in their publication *Common mental health problems: Supporting school staff by taking positive action*. This publication is aimed at employers, human resources and occupational health staff, school governing bodies, line managers and school staff. The guidance covers risk assessment for compliance with health and safety regulations and guidance on making 'reasonable adjustments' to accommodate the needs of employees. Suggested reasonable adjustments include:

- provision of a confidential mentor;
- regular contact between the employee and the school during sick leave;
- phased return to work strategies;
- timetable adjustments;
- flexible working hours;
- protected time for planning, preparation and assessment (PPA);
- additional class support;
- temporary reassignment of any additional or extracurricular responsibilities.

Case study three, 'Barbara', in the following section, is an example of a good application of this advice and guidance.

1.13 Case Study Three: Good Practice in Teacher Support

Extended Participant Quote: Barbara

"I rang [the headteacher] in the half term week to say I'd been to the doctor and I'd got depression and anxiety and I'm signed off work. He was lovely. I was crying [...] and he said you can't rush back and that he's known it a lot in his career in teaching. He wanted me to completely relax for the half term. He said 'I only want you to ring me when you feel ready'. There was no pressure at all for me to come back. The school was brilliant. I had visits from them; they all said 'don't rush back. You have to come back when you're ready because if you come back now it might occur again if you're not 100% better'.

[...My colleagues] were brilliant. If they hadn't been so good I would have been more stressed about it. The headteacher said 'I want you to come in for half an hour, for a cup of tea and sit with me' he knew that I was scared of coming back to the school. I hadn't seen everyone for so long and I was just really nervous about it. I was off for 7 weeks; it would have been week 5 of that. So I'd gone in, I was feeling really nervous going in but I just sat in his office, he gave me a hug and just said 'it's so good to see you', and one by one he kept going and getting people to come and see me because he said, 'they've all been so excited to see you'. They all kept coming in and I was crying when I saw them. Everyone was just lovely.

[...] At that point I wasn't ready to go back to work but it was nice to know everyone has missed me; I felt so appreciated. The headteacher said, 'when you're ready I just want you to do two mornings a week'. He eased me back really slowly. So I started doing two mornings then built up to all mornings and then I did some days as well because the headteacher said 'you'll be feeling tired so you won't be able to do it'. So he eased me back in really slowly and then I had counselling as well. So I had to ask for more time and he used to say, 'don't ask me. Just tell me what day it is and you don't have to ask me. You just go to your doctor and you go to your counselling' – because I had it every single week. At first I was thinking, 'oh God it's more time off...', but he said, 'no you need to do it'. So to be honest, if it wasn't for them, I don't think I could have gone back so easily, they made it so nice. And everyone is always still now like, 'are you okay? If you ever feel the signs coming on you've got to tell us'. Yeah, they all have been really supportive."

Case Study Example: Barbara

- Young teacher: post NQT
- Three years into career

Causes

- Workload
- Difficult pupils
- Work stress
- Decreasing self-perceptions of professional efficacy and competence
- Decreasing self-value
- Personal difficulties

Mental Health Problems: Anxiety and Depression

- Apprehension and anxiety
- Panic
- Depressed mood
- Sad/tearful
- Lack of enjoyment
- Fear of dying and of losing control
- Feelings of failure
- Excessive worry
- Fatigue

- Demotivation

School ethos followed HSE Management Standards guidance

- Demands
- Control
- Support
- Relationships
- Role
- Change

Senior leadership team applied DCSF advice

- Provision of confidential mentor
- Regular contact between the employee and the school during sick leave
- Phased return to work strategies
- Timetable adjustments
- Flexible working hours
- Protected time for planning, preparation and assessment
- Additional class support
- Temporary reassignment of any additional or extracurricular responsibilities.

Outcomes

- Teacher's recovery swift
- Sickness absence minimised – seven weeks
- Teacher retained in profession
- Positive example of good team support
- Positive contribution to school ethos
- Open, understanding and accepting attitudes to mental health difficulties
- Pupils benefit from minimal disruption and change
- Person's value communicated to all school staff

PART TWO: SENIOR SCHOOL LEADERS

MANAGING TEACHERS WITH WORK-BASED STRESS AND MENTAL HEALTH DIFFICULTIES

1.14 Teaching in the Current Climate

All senior leaders stated that teaching is increasingly stressful. Consonant with the teachers' views in phase 1, they expressed fears about the shift from holistic methods towards a much narrower focus on academic outcomes. Moreover, teachers at all levels believe that this shift has a detrimental effect on children's general wellbeing as it ignores the wider social context and the problems experienced by both teachers and the children.

"You're getting pressure from the hierarchy within the school and told that you're not doing a good job even though you have split up four fights that morning and in the middle of that you've made provision for some of these children to go onto further education or you've done a whole load of paperwork and you're not good enough; you're never good enough. And I think that's the thing that makes people feel stressed. [...] You then have staff shouting because this child has upset them or that child has upset them or the child won't put the pen to paper, because that's actually what they're employed to do, to make sure that they've got the maths on the paper. But the bigger issue is that that child has had a major row with his mother before he came out to school in the morning and the problem for mother is that she's beaten up by father."

A singular focus on academic outcomes was considered to negatively affect teachers in various ways. Firstly, it reduced teachers' capacity to meet pupil needs fully and was seen as psychologically harming through a diminution of cherished core values. Secondly, their morale suffers when they feel that they uphold, albeit unwillingly, a system that adds to the stress of vulnerable young people and fellow teachers. This headteacher put it this way:

"Now I've seen kids who start wetting their beds, who have nightmares and I think if you had evidence like that given in a courtroom it would be deemed as abuse because we know that this is happening to these children. [...] In schools in difficult circumstances, certainly in urban areas and areas of economic deprivation your results are never going to be as good as the leafy suburbs of Surrey and if you're saying that's a bad school because its SATs results are bad, that is completely unfair, it's doing a disservice to the parents, the children and the staff who work in those schools, it demotivates them and the whole purpose of education is to motivate people to learn. To get children to learn effectively the staff need to be motivated."

However, there is also concern about the impact of the new Assessing Pupils' Progress (APP) system.

"The APP proposals and the abolition of SATs would cause massive workload implications in the primary sector and I think there's a lot of naivety and propaganda over the last few years. Yes, SATs don't help children, aren't beneficial to children's education but if I'm looking after the interests of my teachers, I don't want their conditions of service detrimentally affected, and imposing an APP system as it is now, which is what we've been told locally from our local authority would happen, with five hours per pupil, every pupil in a class of 30 x three terms, is going to crucify teachers. The work/life balance that they supposedly gain from the workforce reforms would be out the window immediately on that one initiative alone."

A second stressor mentioned by teachers at all levels was the focus on inspection, particularly through Ofsted. The senior leaders view inspection as failing to give a comprehensive and thus accurate picture of the school. From this position, inspection was seen as meaningless.

"It's a three-part lesson; you have to do the introduction, the main course, and the plenary. It's not a very good lesson if it's not an Ofsted sort of a lesson. [...] Kids are treated very much as numbers, as bums on seats. You deliver your lesson say cheerio, get the next, deliver your lesson, say cheerio. And I think that's very sad. Yes you've got to learn, yes you've got a curriculum but you've also got children in front of you. They are children with needs and wants, and some of that time has to be given over to that. It's got to be that balance hasn't it? [...] When we do lesson observations, we've not pushed the three-part lessons, saying this is what you need to be doing and [our teachers] know that. But we're saying you have got to deal with these children we want you to keep these children in your class. So we're trying to make staff realise that it's got to be this fine balance, yes you've got a curriculum and you have to teach it because the kids need the GCSEs, in the end they've got to compete with other children and they need that little bundle of certificates at the end. [...] When Ofsted come in] we put on a show! [...] So yeah, of course you do, you have to because that's your window to the world isn't it? But you get damned if you do and damned if you don't I suppose."

The stressors highlighted by senior leaders were generally similar to those mentioned by teachers in the first phase: increasing accountability/inspection; bureaucracy; workload; performance pressure from targets; 'league tables'; paperwork; the relentless pace; the sheer number of issues schools are expected to tackle; and the eroding of teacher creativity and professionalism. Senior school leaders felt conflicted in their roles because they felt that they, in turn, are obliged to cascade externally driven performance pressures onto teachers below them. For example:

"It's from management, [...] so the work-related stress that we get [...] is because we're asking them to do x, y and z, and deal with the kids. [...] You need to do it, you want to do it, and you want to get everything right. But certainly since the league tables have come in, that has caused a tremendous amount of stress because, as managers, we have Ofsted, we have the LEA, we have got to get statistics and we are bound by statistics all the time and so we have to get the teachers to provide the stuff. And it's not a happy medium between working with the kids, knowing the kids, dealing with all their difficulties, dealing with all their behaviours and then reaching all these targets."

"The education changes over the last 10/15 years have squeezed out teachers' abilities to be creative, imaginative and independent." (headteacher)

"It's heavily bureaucratic, there's a great deal of pressure on people to perform to targets. There seems to be a loss of spontaneity that teachers used to have: that sadly has gone. So it's all conforming to the syllabus and rigour of that syllabus rather than responding to the children you've got in your care."

"The Summer term was always the 'easy' Summer term because you had time to get stuff ready for next year and you'd got some free lessons and you could go out and sit in the field with sports day. [...] That has gone. So it's relentless throughout the year now. [...] People do feel that there is never time when they can let up."

"Accountability is really important about the big issues but I think a lot of the smaller issues...you could be filling in paper forever. [...] You have to have everything documented all the time."

"Now schools have to deliver on community cohesion, on knife crime, on sex in relationships, on a huge range of society issues. [...] It's difficult to fit it all in because you have to take something out if you put something else in. [...] I'm not saying it's wrong to have all those things for kids, I'm just saying it's a struggle to reconcile it with what's going on in a classroom all the time."

None of the teachers rejected the idea of accountability or the tracking of pupil progress, rather it was the apparent relentlessness of the scrutiny that was felt most strongly. Moreover, it was argued that it can be difficult to provide evidence of what constitutes a good school, at least according to the limited criteria set by Government, because schools assist and support pupils in ways that aren't measured, such as with parenting, social or emotional difficulties.

1.15 School Response to Teachers' Stress and Mental Health Difficulties

In general, senior leaders argue that they attempt to tailor their response to each individual teacher's needs. If aware of a teacher's difficulty, they began by consulting the teacher concerned in order to hopefully identify a strategy for stress reduction.

"If it has been appropriate, [I] let their line manager know that there is a confidential problem that I am dealing with. [...] In other cases, if I felt that the person needs it, then if I've allowed them to go home because they need a bit of time and space then I would go to the headteacher of the school and let her know what I have done so that s/he would be aware. [...] We try to respond and we try to be as flexible as we can. Sometimes it's as simple as giving some phone numbers and saying if it's bad at this point, phone me. All senior staff in school carry a little mobile phone and if the problem is something to do with a specific school thing then we can say right, if this specific school thing happens then phone this person at that time because they'll be on duty then."

Where possible, extra support is put in place:

"We have changed his timetable, we give him another assistant when he's not coping with particular groups, so he's got two assistants. If we don't do that support we end up having a bigger problem, so we've given him another classroom assistant, a really strong one that will then help him, [...] it will not only help him [but] has a positive effect for the children, which is what we're here for."

A recent publication from the DCSF, *Common mental health problems: Supporting school staff by taking positive action* (2008), was highlighted by various professionals as key background material to the study. However, only one senior leader had ever seen or heard of the publication.

"There's the direct approach to occupational health and stress counselling [...] We've also, in the past, altered contracts under the DDA. We've come to terms with the idea that if somebody becomes disabled in some way, we can make workplace adjustments for that. We've altered people's contracts to give them a shorter working week if the stress of a full-time job has been what they thought was the trigger or the issue. We do phased returns to work as well if somebody's absence has been related to a mental health issue. And we've taken away

responsibilities and substituted other responsibilities if there seems to be a theme or a factor within the responsibility that is causing people to become upset or anxious. We also made sure that, as senior leaders, we took part in wellbeing and welfare training opportunities.”

However, there were additional concerns about the degree of support that could feasibly be provided.

“If I haven’t got extra teaching assistants I can’t put them in. And teaching assistants that are prepared to work with somebody that’s highly charged, so you have to work around different individuals and everybody’s different aren’t they. And there are time constraints, sometimes ‘I need to see you now’. Well actually you can’t because I’m busy doing something else. But I know with one particular guy if I don’t see him there and then he won’t cope, he’s gonna go. And you think well am I doing the right thing and this is what’s crossed my mind with this one. Should I not do all this support, would it be kinder to him to get so stressed he has to leave? And I thought no, it isn’t, and so I carry on.”

They worried about the financial costs of supporting teachers, for example, the additional classroom support needed, especially for teachers who needed long-term cover for sickness absence.

“We’ve had to manage people as they became mentally ill and perhaps that’s an area where we’re not as successful as we wanted to be, although we did try and apply all that went before in terms of adjusting their expectations in order to accommodate that person’s growing depression in one particular case. But it didn’t work out for us. I think it was the home situation became the trigger to quite a long stay in hospital and as a result of that, of course, the contract was terminated. But the advice was that it was very unlikely that the person would recover sufficiently to be able to come back into teaching. We’d gone through the process of the six months’ full pay and six months’ half pay and then, of course, we had got to the end of that twelve months and had to seek to dismiss, which wasn’t a very pleasant thing to have to do. But nonetheless, the school couldn’t function without that person and without closing that incident off, couldn’t progress either. So we’d got to try and balance our desire to be helpful with the fact that we were a school and had a responsibility to the children as well, because we’d gone through a series of supply teachers and part-time teachers in order to cope with this situation.”

Also of profound concern was the level of stigma attached to a formal record of work-based stress or mental health difficulties and the possible repercussions to that teacher’s career prospects.

“You can’t really go to the centre for help and support as an individual teacher or as a headteacher, you could do, but if you care about your staff’s future wellbeing...it’s difficult. [...if I] said ‘well this member of staff is suffering from stress’ that would be a negative point in their career progression.”

“We were an open type of school and we wouldn’t debar anybody for applying for a post with us because of a disability, [...but] I think it would be a hard thing to admit, that you’ve got a disability. [...] My experience of meeting people from other schools and talking about issues of welfare and wellbeing, I don’t think there are many schools that are as open and welcoming of disability as perhaps we were [...] Well to be fair, we did have discussions about how far we could go to support our staff before we actually changed the purpose of our school from being a place of education of young people to being a place of sanctuary, if you like, for people with some disability within themselves. And there was always that difficulty of balancing the two things and sometimes we got it right and I think sometimes we nearly got it right and at least once we weren’t successful at all.”

1.16 Management Process and Style

The demands made on other teachers by seniors were thought to exacerbate work-based stress and was linked by them to any subsequent mental health difficulties. However, somewhat worryingly, they felt that they had no alternatives to this type of management. The problem was considered as embedded within the system and failure to conform was likely to have career repercussions for the senior leaders. As one headteacher stated:

“The stress is caused by excessive workload, by excessive demands, by unrealistic demands, which are foisted upon schools. With great difficulty you can say no to those demands, [...] if you do rock the boat a bit there could be negative consequences for you professionally. [...] I go to meetings with the authority advisors and they’re giving you advice, which you know [...]

is not conducive to either workload or wellbeing of staff. It's not following the letter of the law, the spirit of the law. [...] On the ground it's just not being enforced. You'd enforce decent conditions of service where you've got a strong activist base because the people would take action. So to a degree, it's irrelevant that you've got a national workforce agreement [...] I am cynical about my colleagues, you're not a popular person representing classroom teachers, because [...] I'm causing them aggravation [...] and so I can sometimes get a bit of hostility from colleagues [...] So it is difficult. There is a distinct conflict, there shouldn't be but it's the way the system is."

Many of the participants from phase 1 of the study recounted incidents of inadequate support, bullying and unacceptable conduct from senior managers, headteachers in particular. Many attributed this behaviour as motivated by a desire for resignation – for various reasons. Needless to say, this had a devastating effect on some of these teachers. Some, quite unprompted, mentioned similar perceptions, arguing that the current system leads to a deterioration of staff support and, in some instances, encourages bullying and 'scapegoating' by headteachers. The school system and its activities lack transparency and this has a tendency to permit bad management practice.

"The only people the local authority speak to really is the headteacher. They don't speak to anyone else. Very rarely give any support whatsoever. They're not even aware of the issues because to me, they just seem to be bothered about money and accountability to Government. They're not concerned really with individual schools or individual teachers. The headteacher doesn't ever want people outside to know that he might have weak staff or that he's got staff who aren't coping, because the headteacher is all about PR most of the time. Because they want to be the best school in the area, they don't want Ofsted coming in and giving them poor reports, so they don't want to let anybody outside know they may have any weaknesses whatsoever – as an individual, as a headteacher or as an organisation, and the teachers make up that organisation. For instance, in [school name] where I used to work, we had at least four staff at one point who were weak teachers. The authority was aware but not to the extent that it impacted on what was going on. And the headteacher would maybe blame one teacher for being poor but 'no, no, no, we're doing really well now'. But I think it would rotate. It would be a rotating person...like he might use one as a scapegoat and then when that person moved off or left, then he would find somebody else to blame. It would never be his organisation or his attitude to his staff. That was never an issue."

The issue here is that although there may be instances when teachers' stress and mental health difficulties may be either exacerbated or even a result of an individual manager's personality, management style or behaviour towards the school workforce, more often than not, both teachers and senior leaders believed it was the way the system was organised that allows such negative management behaviour to occur.

"I've been party to conversations at Head meetings and things where people have been asking for advice on how to get rid of members of staff. [...] I know that there is a bullying culture."

The following headteacher, together with his senior leadership team, attempts to act proactively and in consultation with the workforce to prevent stress. He believes teaching is a very stressful occupation and the senior leaders should work to actively reduce stress using every strategy at their disposal. For him, this includes keeping the workforce informed, giving people a forum to be heard and a chance to debate. This, he believes, leads to a more effective and contented workforce. For example:

"I think the advent of performance management puts teachers in a state of anxiety. [...] When we got the new situation, we involved all staff in how many objectives we were going to set, how many they thought were reasonable [...] We got the timetable organised so that there was not any distress in having to squash in meetings prior to deadline dates and things like that. Everybody was aware of what the significant points were and what the purpose was of say the five-day standstill after having a review meeting and receiving feedback from that and another stand still in order for somebody to absorb what was written. And we tried to identify training opportunities for set piece objectives, so people could see quite clearly, through the year, what was happening. That would, we thought, give them confidence and destress them because they knew clearly where we were going with it and they were able to argue the point about it, not

always successfully because you can't have it all your own way, but at least if you've expressed your disquiet then we're alerted to it and we can begin to build something, some comfort stops into it – and a knowledge of where you're going. I think the anxiety, particularly over things like performance management, comes from not being aware of what is happening and why it's happening. So I think we tried hard with that, and successfully I think."

1.17 Stress and Mental Health Difficulties in Senior Leaders

All the senior leaders acknowledged that their jobs were stressful. Indeed, we found it difficult to recruit senior leaders for this phase of the project. While we cannot be certain as to the reasons for this, we were contacted by some senior leaders who, although willing to discuss their own work-based stress and mental health difficulties, were unwilling to discuss their management of teachers' stress-related issues. However, what was informally brought to our attention was the perceived conflict of the senior staff as they tried to reconcile the needs of teachers and the demands placed on the school from external sources. Such role conflicts were apparent in all the senior leaders in the current study. As one deputy headteacher put it:

"Mum has pressures, she puts that onto the child, the child brings it into school, they give it to the teacher, the teacher gives it to the deputy headteacher and the deputy headteacher also gets it from the headteacher about why haven't you done this, why haven't you done that? So I think often, deputy headteachers are the meat in the sandwich, they're the people that are stuck between the two, which produces the pressure and there's not really much recognition for that."

As mentioned previously, while some senior leaders are reticent to stigmatise teachers, others are also anxious about the budgetary repercussions of long-term sickness absence where costs are accrued in terms of 'buying in' support services (e.g. extra in-class support, employee assistance insurance, occupational health, human resources, psychotherapy/counselling and cover supply teachers). However, they are also felt in terms of the disruptive effect this can have on colleagues and pupils.

Additionally, senior leaders at times alluded to their psychological wellbeing. They were obliged to manage heavy workloads and also deal with disturbing emotional difficulties experienced by colleagues and pupils. Despite this, there appeared to be very little 'self-care' and few support services specifically aimed at senior leaders. As this deputy headteacher indicated:

"I think the trouble is, that in creating that sort of atmosphere, people become quite used to passing on their emotional distress. And I think where the whole system has slipped up for us, and that's why I'm here and not at work, is that I don't know what to do with people's emotional distress when it gets to me. So whereas we as a leadership team may have created all sorts of resources and protocols for meeting the needs of our teachers as they changed and evolved and came under stress and moved away from it, we didn't look after ourselves.

I still had access to occupational health and to the support services that are provided by the insurance. But I may have left it too late for me; maybe I should have done that a long time ago.

I think there's a process of evolving in your ethos and philosophy towards stress and anxiety in the teaching profession. You're to balance the new initiatives that are coming into school, you're to protect staff from being overburdened from that, you've also got to devise ways of looking after their emotional wellbeing and I think whilst you're busy devising them, you're not applying them to yourself. [...We need] some sort of cohesiveness through the authority in meeting the emotional needs of leaders as well as teaching staff so that there's a rounded approach.

I mean we always give people discretion to choose either a peer or a member of the leadership team if they just want to destress themselves by just letting free with their thoughts and feelings. [Researcher: But for the senior leaders?] Yes, not quite there. I suppose we used to try and be mutually, the headteacher, deputy headteacher use that sort of a mutual arrangement but I don't think that really works satisfactorily."

1.18 Additional Concerns

Finally, the senior leaders raised concerns regarding the more modern teacher training routes and whether these adequately prepare new teachers for the reality of the job of teaching, in particular the complex social and psychological problems experienced by young people and the repercussions these can have in school.

“They’re being trained how to teach a lesson, they’re taught to teach a lesson, not to teach children. And that seems to be what’s coming through. So when you have children displaying bad behaviour, then ‘you have to go out of my classroom because I can’t teach, I can’t get to the end of my lesson plan, I have to get to the end of my lesson plan’. And again some of us oldies have had conversations about this and we are concerned about it for the future generation of teachers and children.”

“I think the training of teachers is very remiss at the moment. I think a lot of teachers are people who’ve got a degree, they do one year and they go out into teaching. [...] So we all have to have degrees but actually they’re not training you for your depth of knowledge in education and learning, they’re teaching you about the art subject or business studies or whatever and then they’re shoving you into a classroom. And behaviour management is all about understanding why children learn in particular ways.”

“But you’ve now got people who are coming in [to teaching...who] haven’t got the abilities, haven’t got the aptitude, haven’t got the training because the training sometimes from some institutions is not good enough. Especially as one of the biggest things for stress in a difficult school is behaviour. [...] Teachers are not prepared when they come out of college for dealing with extreme behaviour and also the other thing is for dealing with parents who will not back up the school when the children are showing extreme behaviour. [...] We’ve got a bit of a shortage of teachers and I’ve certainly come across people who are doing foundation degrees who I wouldn’t let anywhere near my own kids in a million years – because of their attitude, not because of their intellect.”

CONCLUDING COMMENTS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

1.19 Concluding Comments

The impact of mental ill health on the economy is substantial. The Sainsbury Centre for Mental Health estimated the total cost of mental health problems to employers to be nearly £26 billion per year in the UK (Waddell and Burton, 2006). In terms of absenteeism, it has calculated that in 2007 some 40% of all days lost due to sickness absence were as a result of mental ill health. Moreover, mental ill health also represents a growing concern for the benefits system as an increasing percentage of invalidity benefits claimants cite mental health problems, with figures rising from 26% in 1996 to 42% in 2007. There is increasing recognition that maintaining people in employment when they suffer a disability or period of ill health is the best way to prevent long-term disability and reduce the numbers moving onto benefits. More generally, and quite simply, work is beneficial for both physical and mental health and it is better for individuals to remain in employment whenever possible, particularly if the working environment provides a healthy element of emotional support (Smithers and Robinson, 2005). Recently published policy documents, such as the *Working for a healthier tomorrow* report and the Foresight report, highlight the significance of workplace factors in the health of the population. Other documents aimed at employers from The Work Foundation (Smithers and Robinson, 2001) have strongly articulated the wellbeing in the workplace agenda. This concept has drawn attention to the role of employers in promoting not only physical health, but also mental wellbeing, with increasing recognition that the workplace is an effective site for interventions to improve health and reduce health inequalities (Angle et al., 2008; OECD, 2001; Smithers and Robinson, 2003). Moreover, the National Social Marketing Centre (NSMC) suggests that the smallest of effects from interventions designed to promote wellbeing in the workplace may still have substantial impacts on public health. Importantly, the report highlights the tendency for employers to implement individually targeted interventions rather than addressing organisation-wide factors where most evidence of effectiveness is currently to be found. Moreover, ‘the emphasis on individual interventions also tends to imply a responsibility on individual employees, rather than on change within the workplace’. However, a recent review of the evidence suggests that the area of organisational interventions is more difficult to implement and research.

More specifically related to the current study, it is important that government policy development in employment and health are considered alongside emerging policy on children, families and young people. Much of this policy is directed towards the school system and articulated through concepts and

projects such as the 'extended services' in which the school becomes much more than a site of pupil education but rather a whole community resource in which health, social care and community organisation are allowed to develop and flourish. Witness also the increasing policy initiatives on children's mental health and wellbeing – arising from evidence on the alarming rise in mental illness and self-harm among young people – and, while many of these are targeted interventions, directed at developing emotional intelligence and resilience among vulnerable children, the best evidence available points to developing a whole-school approach to wellbeing in schools. This concept has found favour among many within the education system. The Department of Education Northern Ireland (DENI) is working towards a universally accepted implementation of the whole-school approach.

Such initiatives appear sensible and right but they are also, strikingly, at variance with current policy on academic achievement, which appears to demand precedence over pupil and staff wellbeing. There is little evidence, beyond the anecdotal, that high-stakes accountability and inspection has significantly contributed to the mental health problems of pupils and staff, but that doesn't rule out a causal connection – epidemiological studies of this type have not been undertaken. Qualitative studies such as ours are unable to make this link but nevertheless offer the direct, unambiguous perceptions of teachers, supported by school leaders, that current educational policy and practice creates an undue and pathogenic burden on teachers and their mental health. Moreover, the commonplace assertion of many participants is that the response by school management is ill-judged and insensitive at best and, at worst, hurtful and punitive.

The findings from this study chime with previous research in this area – that teachers believe their profession is a highly stressful one and that they are vulnerable to mental health problems, such as depression and anxiety, albeit with a certain level of hindsight. They worry that the current educational context accentuates and perpetuates such problems. The focus of our research was to understand, from the teachers' experiences and perspective, the causes and impacts of work-related stress and psychological problems. In the current study, teachers do not perceive their profession as one that simply 'delivers' academic education, rather, our teachers referred to their 'job' as more of a 'calling'. They perceive as highly important their professional role in the social, emotional and academic development of the children and young people in their care. For example, various teachers expressed a psychological conflict between being available for a young person in distress and using their time to complete the latest paperwork that they were required to do. Often these teachers would do both, working evenings and weekends on paperwork in an attempt to fulfil the inherent responsibilities of teaching as they perceive them. Commonly, teachers believed they could reduce their workload somewhat by focusing solely on delivering the curriculum.

While teachers often agreed with the broad focus on accountability within the profession and on assessing and tracking pupil progress, they also believed that recent initiatives and processes are inflexible, time consuming and too narrow in their focus. These teachers were keen to acknowledge the multifaceted nature of teaching and learning, as well as the need to treat young people's learning holistically, often arguing that you cannot separate the social from the emotional from the academic. Many bemoaned the loss of adequate opportunities for pastoral care and felt conflicted between 'pushing' the academic agenda and their belief that current school practices were harming young people and inadequately preparing them for adult life. Much teacher stress is caused precisely because these teachers care about their pupils' holistic wellbeing.

The expectation that schools should be the focal point for many community concerns (e.g. knife crime, sex education, etc.) is not in itself considered a bad idea. However, it is how these developments are managed in practice and the fact that teachers are often expected to either lead these initiatives or bring together the many different professionals that should be involved. This seems to happen even when on paper they are not supposed to be in these roles. The reality is that as they are 'on the front line' they often find themselves assuming such responsibilities.

The influx of new educational initiatives was perceived by teachers as a distinct problem, not necessarily because they are perceived as 'bad' or ill thought-out, but because they were so numerous and were often considered prescriptive in a 'one size fits all' manner. This perception was higher amongst those teachers who work in extremely challenging contexts, which require a different approach, or where social, emotional and financial deprivation demand that resources and time are dedicated to preparing pupils to learn before any learning can take place at all.

The current leadership structures were also considered to be a core factor in the stress and mental health difficulties of teachers – at all levels. Our participants believe headteachers have a desire and a responsibility to show how well their schools are performing, even when this may not be a completely accurate representation of ‘reality’. Moreover, there was a perception that there are career repercussions to senior leaders, headteachers in particular, if they do otherwise. There was a perception that this alone led to management styles and behaviours that were in many cases unacceptable, abusive and, in some cases, indicative of serious bullying. However, what should not be overlooked is just how many senior leaders were also experiencing stress and psychological difficulties. There seemed to be an inadequate recognition of such difficulties amongst senior leaders, who did not appear to consider their own self-care. Rather, there appeared to be an unspoken expectation that senior leaders could or should not admit to experiencing such difficulties. Mental health problems often remain undiagnosed or become apparent only when severe enough to force the individual to be absent from work for a substantial period. In part, this is due to the stigma and discrimination attached to mental health problems. It is also the case that colleagues and managers are generally not trained and therefore lack confidence in the recognition of early signs of mental illness.

Using the school budget to provide support services for teachers who experience stress and/or psychological difficulties unfairly penalises those schools working within challenging communities as, inevitably, there will be a ‘knock-on’ effect to the psychological wellbeing of the workforce. This also places headteachers in the difficult position of deciding how much support to provide and to whom, as well as attempting to balance the financial implications of that support against other demands on the school budget. Finally, there was a concern amongst our participants with regards to how new systems for assessing pupils’ progress were being introduced and the manner in which teachers are currently trained. Teachers were concerned by the implications of both; the first with regards to the further impact this may have on their workload, the second in terms of how prepared new teachers are in dealing with the realities of teaching, particularly with pupil behaviour and distress.

1.20 Recommendations

The following recommendations are based on the dominant issues identified from the teachers’ and senior leaders’ interview data. They are entirely in keeping with current knowledge and emergent national policy on wellbeing in schools. They are also consistent with the recent Government-supported report by Dame Carol Black *Working for a healthier tomorrow*.

Reduce Stress-causing Practices

- There is a need to reduce the paperwork and burdens associated with pupil assessment and tracking systems.
- There is a need to review the contribution and cumulative impact of accountability systems in schools and school inspection on the workforce.
- Good educational policy implementation requires longer bedding-in prior to new initiatives.
- Commensurate with recent Government wellbeing policy and initiatives, there must be greater emphasis on a holistic approach to education, with acknowledgement and consideration given to the non-academic role performed by schools and teachers.
- Truly ‘whole-school’ approaches to wellbeing in schools must include a consideration of teachers’ health and psychological needs.
- There is an urgent need for improved training in behaviour management, particularly within current new teacher training.

Acting Proactively and Systemically

- Stress is experienced institutionally as well as individually; there is a need to engage with work-based stress systemically. A system approach to promoting workforce wellbeing is essential.
- Changes are necessary within school management structures in order to detect and deter inappropriate or bullying behaviour from senior leaders.
- Consonant with a whole-school approach to wellbeing, there is a need to initiate regular anonymous stress audits that are assessed externally and independently. Schools have a duty to act upon any concerns raised.

Encouraging Help-seeking and Providing Support

- Schools should be enabled to create a culture in which there is a comfortable recognition that stress may be a useful and natural part of living. As a corollary, the stigma of psychological disorder and mental illness must be challenged within schools.
- Schools should provide confidential in-house support services offering advice and guidance to teachers and headteachers, possibly through trained mentors.
- There is a need for an expansion of accessible and discreet counselling services, possibly through EAPs, which can be approached by teachers through self-referral.
- An examination of current EAPs for teachers across the education system is urgently needed.
- There needs to be established high quality support and training for senior leaders, which includes the emotional support of colleagues.

REFERENCES

- Acas. (2006a). *Stress at work: Advice booklet*. London: Advisory, Conciliation and Arbitration Service.
- Acas. (2006b). *Stress at work: Advice leaflet*. London: Advisory, Conciliation and Arbitration Service.
- Angle, H., Gilby, N., Fearn, A., Bassett, C., Elston, D., and McGinigal, S. (2008). *Teachers' workloads diary survey*. London: School Teachers' Review Body,.
- APA. (1994). *Diagnostic and statistical manual of the mental disorders (4th Edition, DSM-IV)*. Washington, DC: American Psychiatric Association.
- Bakker, A. B., Schaufeli, W. B., Demerouti, E., Janssen, P. M. P., van der Hulst, R., and Brouwer, J. (2000). *Using equity theory to examine the difference between burnout and depression*. *Anxiety Stress Coping*, 13, 247-268.
- Baxter, S., Goyder, L., Herrmann, K., Pickvance, S., and Chilcott, J. (2009). *Mental well-being through productive and healthy working conditions (Promoting well-being at work) Draft Copy*. Sheffield School of Health and Related Research (SchHARR).
- Black, C. (2008). *Working for a healthier tomorrow*. London: TSO.
- Borg, M. G. (1990). *Occupational stress in British educational settings: a review*. *Educational Psychology* (10), 103-126.
- Bowers, T., and McIvor, M. (2000). *Ill Health Retirement and Absenteeism Amongst Teachers*. London: DfEE.
- Brown, J., Davis, S., and Johnson, F. (2002). *Teachers on teaching: A survey of the teaching profession*. UK: Market and Opinion Research International.
- Brown, J., Gilmour, W. H., and MacDonald, E. W. (2006). *Ill Health retirement in Scottish Teachers: process, outcomes and re-employment*. *International Archives of Occupational and Environmental Health*, 79, 433-440.
- Byrne, B. M. (1999). The nomological network of teacher burnout: A literature review and empirically validated model. In R. Vandenberghe and A. M. Huberman (Eds.), *Understanding and preventing teacher burnout: A sourcebook of international research and practice* (pp. 15-37). New York: Cambridge University Press.
- Cecil, M. A., and Forman, S. G. (1990). *Effects of stress inoculation training and co-worker support groups on teachers' stress*. *Journal of School Psychology*, 28(2), 105-118.
- Coladarci, T. (1992). *Teachers' sense of efficacy and commitment to teaching*. *Journal of Experimental Education*. Vol, 60(4), 323-337.
- DCSF. (2008). *Common mental health problems: Supporting school staff by taking positive action*. Nottingham: Department for Children, Schools and Families.
- Department of Health. (2009). *New Horizons: A shared vision for mental health*. London.

- Dewe, P., and Kompier, M. (2008). *Foresight Mental Capital and Wellbeing Project. Wellbeing and Work: future challenges*. London: The Government Office for Science.
- DfES. (2000). *Fitness to teach: Occupational health guidance for the training and employment of teachers*. London: Department for Education and Skills.
- DfES. (2001). *Health and Safety: Responsibilities and powers*. London: Department for Education and Skills.
- DfES. (2008). *School Teachers' Pay and Conditions Document 2008*. London: Department for Education and Skills.
- Dorman, J. P. (2003). *Relationship between school and classroom environment and teacher burnout: A LISREL analysis*. *Social Psychology of Education*, 6(2), 107-127.
- Dorman, J. P., Fraser, B. J., and McRobbie, C. J. (1995). *Relationship between school-level and classroom-level environments in secondary schools*. *Journal of Educational Administration*, 35(1), 74-91.
- Europe, W. H. O. (2008). *European Pact for Mental Health. Declaration at the EU High-level conference Paper presented at the Conference Namel*. Retrieved Access Datel. from URL.
- European Agency for Safety and Health at Work. (2000a). *Facts & Research on work-related stress: Summary of agency report*. Luxembourg: Office for Official Publications of the European Communities.
- European Agency for Safety and Health at Work. (2000b). *Research on work-related stress*. Luxembourg: Office for Official Publications of the European Communities.
- European Agency for Safety and Health at Work. (2002). *How to tackle psychosocial issues and reduce work-related stress*. Luxembourg: Office for Official Publications of the European Communities.
- European Trade Union Committee for Education. (2007). *Report on the ETUCE survey on Teachers' work-related stress*. Brussels ETUCE.
- European Union High-level Conference. (2008). *European Pact for Mental Health and Wellbeing. Paper presented at the Together for Mental Health and Wellbeing, Brussels*.
- Everaert, H. A., and van der Wolf, J. C. (2006). *Stress in the student-teacher relationship in Dutch schools*. In R. Lambert and C. McCarthy (Eds.), *Understanding teacher stress in an age of accountability* (pp. 121-143). Greenwich, Connecticut: Information Age Publishing.
- Farber, B. (1991). *Crisis in education: Stress and burnout in the American teacher*. CA: Josey-Bass.
- Freudenberger, H. (1974). Staff burnout. *Journal of Social Issues*, 30, 159-165.
- Galton, M., and MacBeth, J. (2008). *Teachers under pressure*. Sage: London.
- Giga, S. I., Noblet, A. J., Faragher, B., and Cooper, C. L. (2003). The UK perspective: A review of organisational stress management interventions. *Australian Psychologist*, 38, 158-164.
- Hakanen, J. J., Bakker, A. B., and Schaufeli, W. B. (2006). Burnout and work engagement among teachers. *Journal of School Psychology*, 43(6), 495-513.
- Hastings, R. P., and Bham, M. S. (2003). The relationship between student behavior and patterns of teacher burnout. *School Psychology International*, 24(1), 115-128.
- Health and Safety Executive. (2005). *Tackling stress: The management standards approach*. Norwich: Office of Public Sector Information.
- Hogg, M. A., and Abrams, D. (1990). Social motivation, self-esteem and social identity. In D. Abrams and M. A. Hogg (Eds.), *Social identity theory: Constructive and critical advances* (pp. 29-47). Hertfordshire: Harvester Wheatsheaf.
- Isles, N. (2005). *The Joy of Work?* London: The Work Foundation.
- Jeffrey, B., and Woods, P. (1996). Feeling deprofessionalised: The social construction of emotions during an OFSTED inspection. *Cambridge Journal of Education*, 26(3), 325-343.

- Jenkins, S., and Calhoun, J. F. (1991). Teacher stress: Issues and intervention. *Psychology in the Schools* 28(1), 60-70.
- Jepson, E., and Forrest, S. (2006). Individual contributory factors in teacher stress: The role of achievement striving and occupational commitment. *British Journal of Educational Psychology*, 76, 183-197.
- Lasky, S. (2005). A sociocultural approach to understanding teacher identity, agency and professional vulnerability in a context of secondary school reform. *Teaching and Teacher Education*, 21(8), 899-916.
- Lazarus, R. S., and Folkman, R. (1984). *Stress, appraisal and coping*. New York: Springer.
- Leahy, R. L., and Holland, S. J. (2000). *Treatment plans and interventions for depression and anxiety disorders*. New York: Guilford Press.
- Leavey, G., Galway, K., Rondon, J., and Logan, G. (2009). *A Flourishing Society - Aspirations for Emotional Health and Wellbeing in Northern Ireland*. Belfast: Northern Ireland Association for Mental Health.
- Leithwood, K. A., Menzies, T., Jantzi, D., and Leithwood, J. (1999). Teacher burnout: A challenge for leaders of restructuring schools. In R. Vandenberghe and A. M. Huberman (Eds.), *Understanding and preventing teacher burnout: A sourcebook of international research and practice* (pp. 85-114). New York: Cambridge University Press.
- Maslach, C. (1982). *Burnout: The cost of caring*. Englewood Cliffs, NJ: Prentice Hall.
- Maslach, C. (2003). *Job Burnout: New Directions in Research and Intervention*. *Current Directions in Psychological Science*, 12(5), 189-192.
- Maslach, C., Schaufeli, W. B., and Leiter, M. P. (2001). Job burnout. *Annual Review of Psychology*, 52, 397-422.
- Milner, P., and Palmer, S. (1998). *Integrative Stress Counselling: A Humanistic Problem-Focused Approach*. London: Sage Publications Ltd.
- Nash, P. (2000). *Managing stress in schools: Teacherline first report*. London: TBF: Teacher Support Network.
- NASUWT. (2008a). *Safe to Teach?* Birmingham: NASUWT.
- NASUWT. (2008b). *Stress in the workplace (UK-wide June bulletin)*. Birmingham: NASUWT.
- NASUWT. (2008c). *Workload audit: The workload of teachers and headteachers in England and Wales*. Birmingham: NASUWT.
- NASUWT. (Stress Leaflets). Health and safety at work (No.3) Teachers and stress: Recognising Stress; Preventing Stress and Dealing with Stress.
- National Social Marketing Centre. (2008). *Business success and employee wellbeing. The case for a new cross-Government approach*. London: National Social Marketing Centre.
- OECD. (2001). *Teacher exodus: The meltdown scenario*. Paris: Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development.
- Office for Standards in Education. (2003). *The annual report of her Majesty's Chief Inspector of Schools standards and quality in education 2001/2002*. UK: Stationary Office.
- ONS. (2008). *School workforce in England*. London: Department for Children, Schools and Families
- Palmer, S., and Cooper, C. L. (2007). *How to Deal with Stress*. London: Kogan Page Ltd.
- Pithers, R. T., and Soden, R. (1998). Scottish and Australian teacher stress and strain: A comparative study. *British Journal of Educational Psychology*, 68(2), 269-279.
- Prendergrast, J., Foley, B., and Richmond, T. (2008). *Shifting responsibilities Sharing Costs: Meeting the Mental Health Challenge for Welfare Reform*. London: The Social Market Foundation.
- PricewaterhouseCoopers. (2001). *Teacher workload study*. London: Department for Education and Skills.

- Primary Review. (2007). *Community soundings: The primary review regional witness sessions*. Cambridge: University of Cambridge Faculty of Education
- Sainsbury Centre for Mental Health. (2008). *Mental Health at Work: Developing the Business Case*. London: Sainsbury Centre for Mental Health
- Schneider, J. (1998). *Work interventions in mental health care: some arguments and recent evidence*. *Journal of Mental Health*, 7, 81-94.
- Seymour, L., and Grove, B. (2005). *Workplace interventions for people with common mental health problems: Evidence review and recommendation*. London: British Occupational Health Research Foundation.
- Slegers, P. (1999). Professional identity, school reform, and burnout: Some reflections on teacher burnout. In R. Vandenberghe and A. M. Huberman (Eds.), *Understanding and preventing teacher burnout: A sourcebook of international research and practice* (pp. 247-255). New York: Cambridge University Press.
- Smith, A., Brice, C., Collins, A., Matthews, V., and McNamara, R. (2000). *The scale of occupational stress: A further analysis of the impact of demographic factors and type of job*. London: The Health and Safety Executive: HMSO.
- Smithers, A., and Robinson, P. (2001). *Teachers leaving*. London: National Union of Teachers.
- Smithers, A., and Robinson, P. (2003). *Factors affecting teachers' decisions to leave the profession*. London: Department for Education and Skills.
- Smithers, A., and Robinson, P. (2005). *Teacher Turnover, Wastage and Movements between Schools*. London: Department for Education and Skills.
- Stansfeld, S., Head, J. A., Rasul, F., Singleton, N., and Lee, A. (2003). *Occupation and mental health: Secondary analyses of the ONS Psychiatric Morbidity Survey of Great Britain*. London: Queen Mary School of Medicine and Dentistry, University of London and the Office of National Statistics for the Health and Safety Executive.
- Steptoe, A. (2001). Job control, perceptions of control, and cardiovascular activity: An analysis of ambulatory measures collected over the working day. *Journal of Psychosomatic Research*, 50(2), 57-63.
- Taris, T. W., Schreurs, P. J. G., and van Iersel-van Silfhout, I. J. (2001). Job stress, job strain, and psychological withdrawal among Dutch staff: Towards a dual-process model for the effects of occupational stress. *Work and Stress*, 15, 283-296.
- Taylor, S. E., and Brown, J. D. (1988). Illusion and well-being: A social psychological perspective on mental health. *Psychological Bulletin*, 103, 193-210.
- Teacher Support Network. (2001). *Counselling, support and advice for all teachers in England and Wales: Teacherline progress report*. London: TBF: Teacher Support Network.
- Travers, C. J., and Cooper, C. L. (1996). *Teachers under pressure: Stress in the teaching profession*. London: Routledge.
- UK National Work Stress Network. (2007). *Work stress*. Norwich: UK National Work Stress Network.
- Waddell, G., and Burton, A. (2006). *Is Work Good for Your Health and Well-being?* London: The Stationery Office.
- Warr, P. (1987). *Work, unemployment and mental health*. Oxford: Clarendon.

NASUWT

The Teachers' Union

Hillscourt Education Centre, Rose Hill,
Rednal, Birmingham B45 8RS

Tel: 0121 453 6150

Fax: 0121 457 6208

E-mail: nasuwt@mail.nasuwt.org.uk

Website: www.nasuwt.org.uk

The largest teachers' union in the UK

10/03075