

JP 892/03 - 07

Y Gwir Anrh/Rt Hon Rhodri Morgan AC/AM  
Prif Weinidog Cymru/First Minister for Wales



Llywodraeth Cynulliad Cymru  
Welsh Assembly Government

Eich cyf/Your ref  
Ein cyf/Our ref : ETL-02-01-085

Nick Bourne, Esq AM

May 18, 2005

Dear

**First Minister's Questions – Follow up  
OAQ 1512 (FM)**

I am writing in response to your follow-up questions to OAQ 1512 on May 9, 2006.

In light of recent media coverage, you initially raised concerns in relation to the recruitment of head teachers in Wales. You will be aware that the Minister for Education & Lifelong Learning issued a written Cabinet statement focusing on headship appointments in Wales earlier this week. This statement provided a comprehensive response in relation to this matter.

In response to more general recruitment issues, as I mentioned in Plenary, there is an oversupply of primary school teachers in Wales at present. The last published figures from the Schools Census indicated that between 1 January and 31 December 2004, 22 applications were received for every primary school post advertised. At secondary level, there are lower levels of applications in some subjects, although overall, between 1 January and 31 December 2004, just under 9 applications were received for every post advertised.

We have teachers who do not wish to work elsewhere but who cannot gain permanent posts in Wales. It has been noted on a number of previous occasions that there will be a clear and significant downturn in pupil numbers over many years. It is in recognition of these circumstances that we reduced initial teacher training (ITT) intake targets two years running and established a formal review, led by Professor John Furlong, to look at how we could bring the future supply of teachers more closely in line with the needs of schools in Wales.

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The outcome of that review was that we have accepted as a working basis, subject to continuing detailed analysis, that primary ITT intake needs to fall by 50% by 2010-11 compared with 2004-05 and secondary by 25%. The general conclusion of the main stakeholders is that the scale of the reductions needed is broadly right.

In response to workload issues, there are many factors affecting the workload of head teachers and other school staff - and many organisations that have an impact on schools. These are not issues that the Welsh Assembly Government can solve alone.

The Welsh Assembly Government is a signatory to the School Workload Agreement. This Agreement was negotiated between head teacher, teacher and school support staff unions, local and central government and set out a plan to reduce school workload, enable teachers to focus on the teaching and learning of their pupils and improve work life balance for the whole school team.

A key element of the Workload Agreement was the establishment of the School Workload Advisory Panel. The Panel members are all practitioners appointed from schools in Wales. Their remit is to raise awareness of workload implications amongst all those involved in developing and implementing policy in our schools and to advise on ways that the bureaucratic impact of initiatives may be eliminated or minimised.

The Panel have developed a very productive relationship with officials from a range of organisations and have been working to influence policies and working methods to have a positive impact on head teacher workload. You may wish to consider the Panel's Annual Report at <http://www.swapwales.co.uk/> which outlines future priorities for action.

Assembly Government officials continue to work with the signatories to the Workload Agreement and non signatory unions such as the NAHT to ensure that we reap the full benefits of the Agreement in Wales.

I trust that my response has addressed your concerns in relation to recruitment and workload issues impacting upon the profession in Wales.

Yours sincerely

**Y Gwir Anrh/Rt Hon Rhodri Morgan AC/AM**  
**Prif Weinidog Cymru/First Minister for Wales**