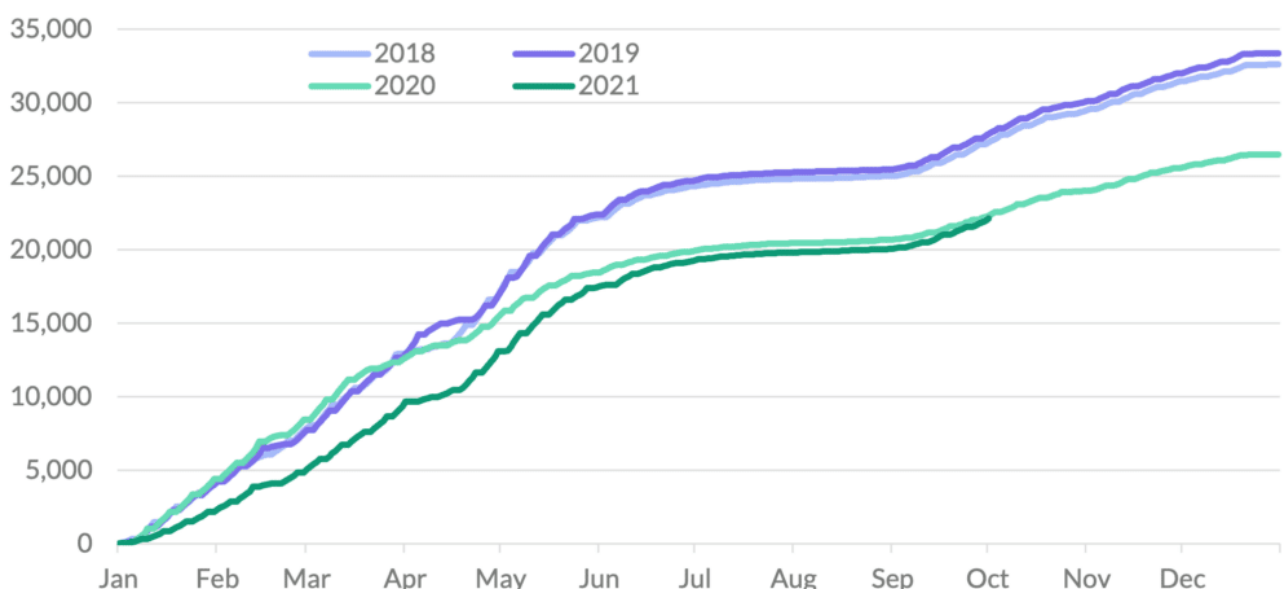


Teacher recruitment and career intentions during the COVID-19 pandemic

Sometimes we need to find out what 'normal' looks like so that we can see when things aren't 'normal'. As Teacher Tappers, you are all part of a longitudinal study where we get to see what schooling looks like in good times and in less good times. Back in 2019, when things were 'normal' we asked you lots of questions about teacher recruitment, filling vacant posts and future career intentions. This meant that as the pandemic struck in Spring 2020, we could see that things were severely disrupted in the annual teacher recruitment round.

Today we are publishing the latest survey results, alongside SchoolDash who monitor job advertisements on school websites. Our report shows that teacher recruitment has been depressed throughout the 2020 and 2021 recruitment rounds, particularly in secondary schools. The 2021 recruitment season appeared to return to more normal activity in the primary phase, but with no 'bounce' to account for the missing promotions and job moves in 2020. The market for school technicians currently seems to be more buoyant than ever before, more closely reflecting current activity in other parts of the labour market.

Annual cumulative secondary school job adverts

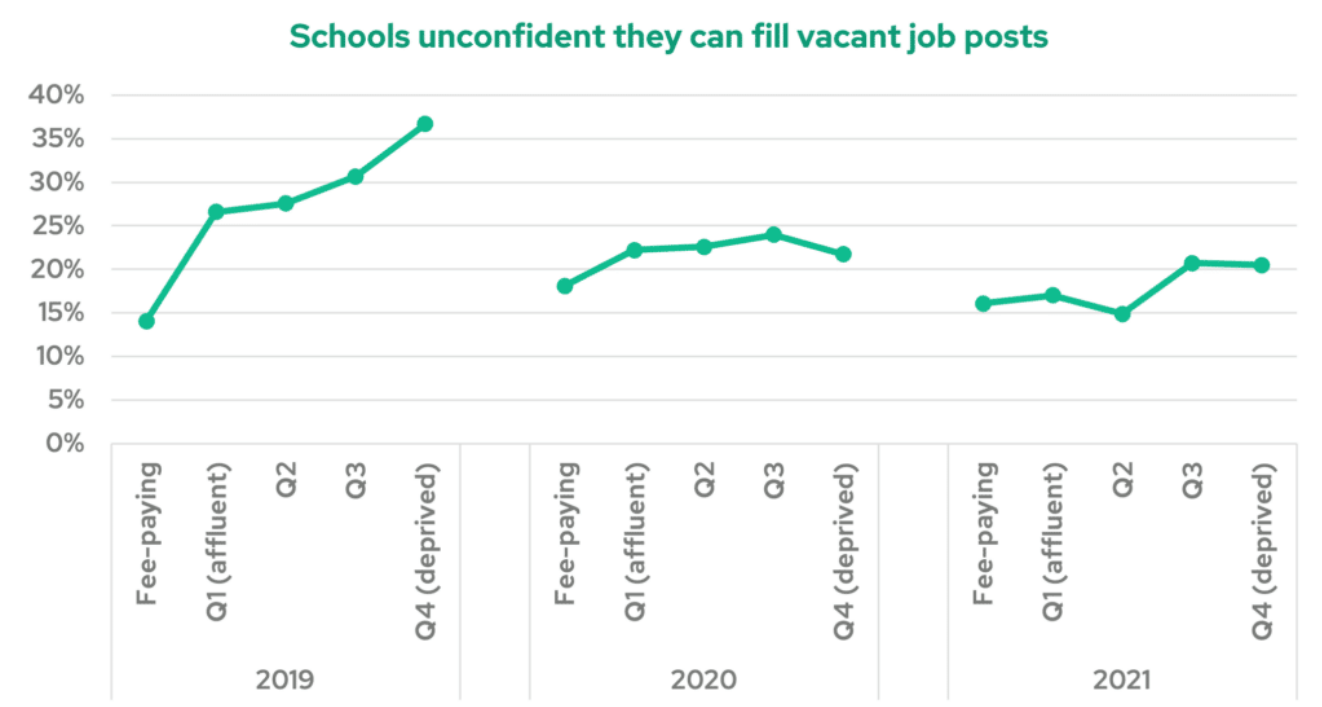


Fewer teacher job moves bring the advantage of greater stability. This year, 53% of

secondary teachers said there had been no resignations in their subject department, compared to 41% in a pre-pandemic year.

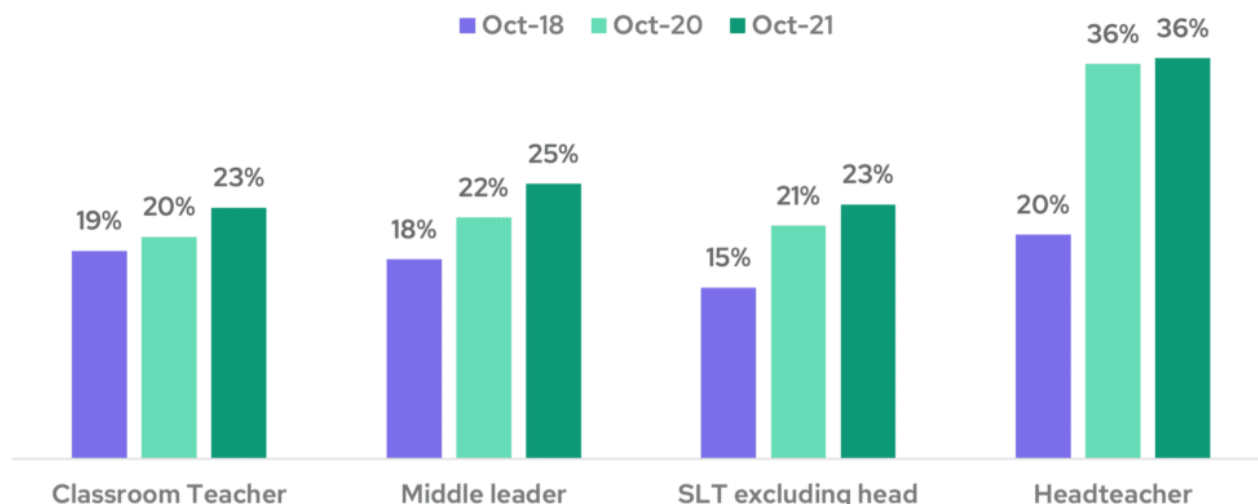
It appears to be a buyer's market for teachers, with many senior leaders saying they have more applicants for jobs than normal. There are signs that teachers remain unwilling or unable to consider moving to other types of jobs outside teaching. They are currently more likely to report they feel they will still be teaching in 3 years' time and are less likely to be considering a move to teach overseas.

Schools in disadvantaged areas benefit disproportionately from this greater teacher supply since they were the schools that previously found it most difficult to fill their posts. In 2019, 37% of schools in the highest quartile for free-school meals (FSM) said they were not confident in filling their job vacancies with suitable candidates, versus 27% of the most affluent state schools. In 2021, these figures showed a much smaller gap with 20% of high FSM schools reporting a concern about filling posts, versus 17% in low FSM state schools.



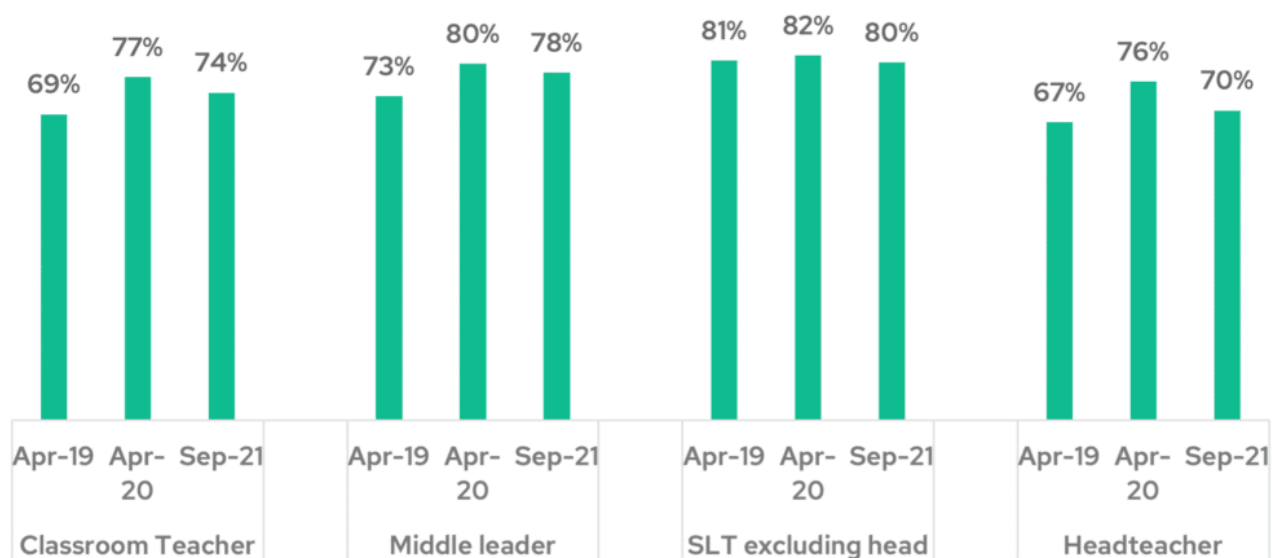
Headteachers are clearly experiencing very high levels of stress and burnout during the pandemic, with one-third reporting sustained feelings of burnout as early as mid-October (versus one fifth in 2019). These increases in burnout are not as pronounced amongst other teaching staff.

Proportion feeling sustained burnout in October 2018, 2020 and 2021



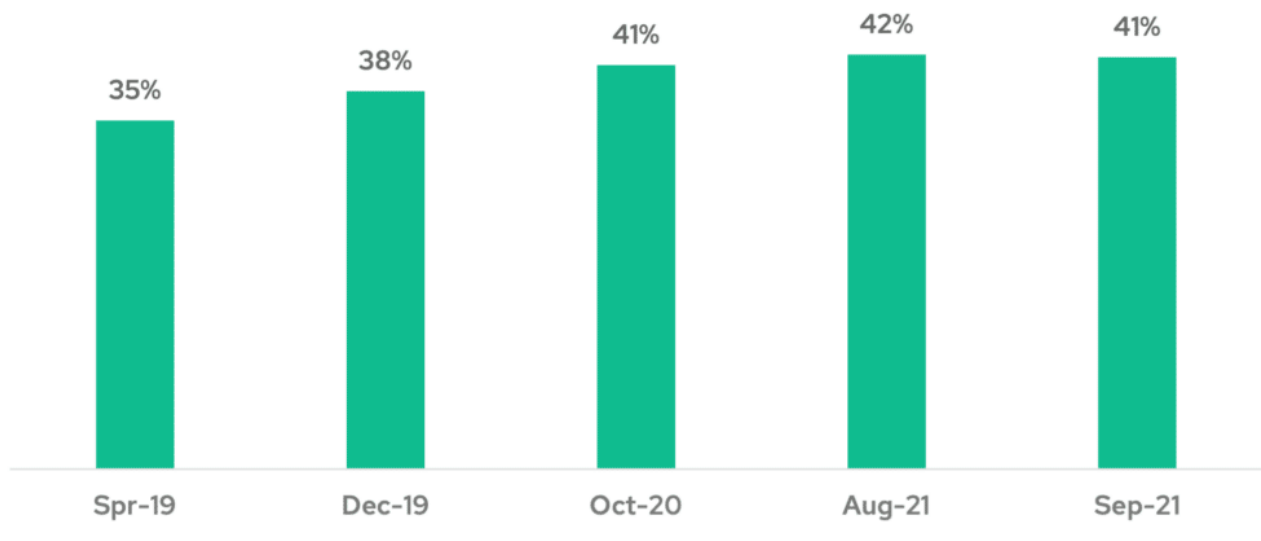
However, greater numbers than normal have remained in their post throughout the pandemic and the number of heads who say they are still likely to be in teaching in 3 years' time remains at or above pre-pandemic levels. This serves as a reminder that crises in teacher retention only manifest themselves if teachers both have a desire to leave, and a place to go which provides them with sufficient income.

Percentage who feel they are 'likely' to still be in teaching in 3 year's time



Some life and career opportunities are still partially closed to experienced headteachers. There are restricted opportunities to travel or work in another country. Moreover, the market for professional development and training has been severely disrupted. We see larger numbers of heads who agree that they would leave their job if they could find another that could match their salary.

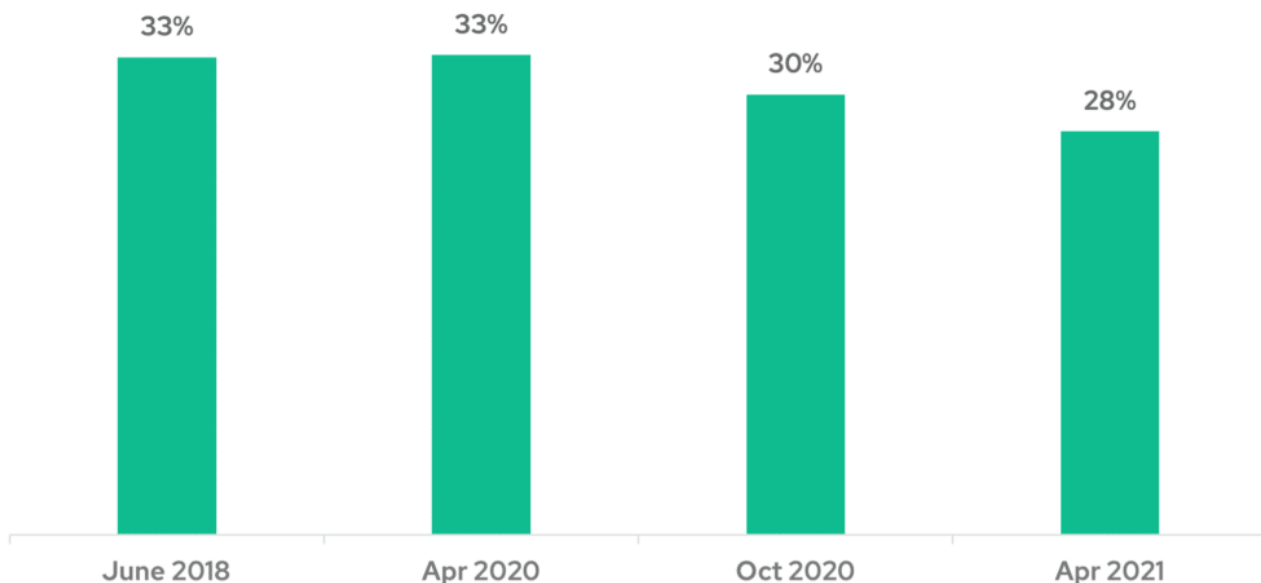
Proportion of heads who would leave their job if they could find another that matches their current salary



All this suggests that whilst headteachers may be tired and burnt out through the stress of running a school during a pandemic, there are not yet any strong signals that they will be handing in their resignations in much greater numbers than normal. However, if travel and employment opportunities increase soon, then there is a significant risk that this unhappiness will translate into resignations.

If headteacher vacancies rise, then how easily they are filled will depend on the willingness of the existing pool of teachers to apply for these roles. In the pre-pandemic period, we typically found that one-in-three teachers said they would like to be a headteacher themselves one day. This has now fallen to 28%, which is perhaps not as much of a decline as some might have expected.

Proportion of teachers (excl heads) who would like to be a headteacher themselves one day



You can read more in our report '[Teacher recruitment and career intentions during the COVID-19 pandemic](https://teachertapp.com/uk/articles/teacher-recruitment-and-career-intentions-during-the-covid-19-pandemic/)'.

And, as always, let us know what other questions we should be asking!