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DEPLOYMENT AND IMPACT OF SUPPORT STAFF IN SCHOOLS

REPORT ON FINDINGS FROM THE SECOND NATIONAL QUESTIONNAIRE SURVEY OF SCHOOLS, SUPPORT STAFF AND TEACHERS (STRAND 1, WAVE 2, 2006)

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Background

This Research Brief reports on the deployment and characteristics of all categories of support staff in primary, secondary and special schools in England and Wales. It presents results from a second large scale, nationally representative postal survey of schools, support staff and teachers, conducted in 2006. The first wave was conducted in 2004. It is the largest study of support staff yet undertaken and was commissioned by the DfES¹ and the Welsh Assembly Government.

For the purposes of the research, support staff have been classified into seven categories, on the basis of similarities in tasks carried out (see Table 1 below)

Key Findings

- There was a significant increase in both the numbers of and Full Time Equivalent (FTE) support staff from Wave 1 (2004) to Wave 2 (2006). There were increases in FTE for all categories of support staff and large increases in certain post titles: Higher Level Teaching Assistants (HLTAs) (232%), ICT Support Staff (other) (317%), Cover Supervisors (471%), Catering staff (100%), Data Manager/Analyst (69%), Examination Officers (68%), and Creative Arts Specialists (96%). The TA Equivalent staff category was the most prevalent.
- At both Wave 1 and 2, secondary schools were most likely to have a vacancy and report more turnover problems, but less likely to report problems of recruitment. At both waves, problems of vacancies, recruitment and turnover were most commonly reported for 'other pupil support' staff.
- Only 10% of support staff had no qualifications and over a third (38%) had qualifications above GCSE level. Site staff, along with other pupil support and especially facilities staff, had the lowest qualifications, while pupil welfare staff and technicians had the highest level of qualifications.
- Over two thirds of staff reported working extra hours. Staff reported working extra hours on a voluntary basis three times as often as extra time required by a member of staff. Most worked up to 3 additional hours per week. Site staff were more likely than other support staff to both feel required to, and to voluntarily, work more hours than other support staff groups. Only one half of staff were always or sometimes paid for this extra work, a significant drop from Wave 1.
- In comparison to Wave 1, support staff in Wave 2 were significantly more likely to be provided with a job description, and to have been appraised over the last year.
- There was little sign that attendance at training and INSET had increased over the past two years.
- The majority of teachers (75%) had not been trained to work with support staff, either in the classroom or as line managers.
- Since Wave 1 there had been a large increase in teachers' contacts with pupil welfare staff, technicians, other pupil support staff, facilities staff, administrative staff, and site staff. The amount of contact with TA equivalent staff had not increased much but teachers already had a good deal of contact with them. From a teacher's perspective, school life is now far more connected to the presence of a support staff.
- As at Wave 1, the majority of teachers did not have allocated planning or feedback time with support staff they with in the classroom (66% and 71% respectively). Once again secondary schools stood out in having less of such time.

¹ Department for Education and Skills. As from 28th June 2007 replaced by the Department for Children, Schools and Families (DCSF)

- At both Wave 1 and 2 support staff were generally positive about their jobs. At Wave 2 there were also high rates of satisfaction with their contracts and conditions of employment (79%), working arrangements (78%), and training and development they had received for their role (76%). There was less satisfaction with training and development opportunities available to them (64%) and still less with their pay (51%) A third of staff were dissatisfied with their pay.
- By Wave 2 most of a list of 26 administrative tasks were no longer being performed by teachers. Administrative staff were far more likely than other support staff to perform tasks previously undertaken by teachers.

Introduction

In the past few years there has been a huge growth in the range and number of support staff in schools. A major context for policy and resourcing involving support staff in schools was the introduction in January 2003 by the Government, local Government employers and the majority of school workforce unions of the National Agreement (NA): 'Raising Standards and Tackling Workload'. It set out a number of measures designed to continue to raise pupil standards, tackle teacher workload, including a concerted attack on unnecessary paperwork and bureaucracy, and review support staff roles. The NA also brought about a number of new support staff roles, as part of the remodelling agenda, including Higher Level Teaching Assistants (HLTAs) and cover supervisors.

Previous research provided only limited information on the impact of support staff in schools, and on the processes in schools through which impact is maximised or inhibited. This study was designed to help fill these gaps.

Table 1: Classification of support staff

The two main aims of the project were:

1. To provide an accurate, systematic and representative description of the types of support staff in schools, and their characteristics and deployment in schools, and how these change over time;
2. To analyse the impact or effect of support staff on teaching and learning and management and administration in schools, and how this changes over time.

The study involves a large scale survey (Strand 1), followed by a multi method and multi informant approach (Strand 2) which is designed to study the deployment and impact of support staff in a smaller sample of schools. The aim of Strand 1 is to provide comprehensive and reliable information on support staff in schools in England and Wales. The first Wave was in the summer term 2003/4 for the Main School Questionnaire (MSQ) and the Autumn term 2004/5 for the Support Staff Questionnaire (SSQ) and Teacher Questionnaire (TQ). These results were reported in a previous Research Report and Research Brief. Available from the DfES (Blatchford et al, 2006, RR776; Blatchford et al, 2006, RB776). This Research Brief covers results from the second wave of these surveys, which was the Spring term 2005/6 for the Wave 2 MSQ and TQ, and the summer term 2005/6 for the SSQ. Throughout this Brief comparisons are made between the first and second Waves in order to see what changes have taken place since the first phase of the NA. Results are analysed in relation to differences between school types (primary, secondary, special), country (England vs Wales), school background characteristics, and differences between support staff, using the classification of support staff into seven categories, derived in Wave 1 on the basis of similarities in tasks carried out (see Table 1). Unless stated otherwise all results are statistically significant.

Groups of support staff post titles			
TA Equivalent	Pupil Welfare	Technicians	Other Pupil Supp.
Higher level TA	Connexions Advisor	ICT manager	Bilingual Support
LSA (SEN pupils)	Education welfare	ICT technician	Cover Supervisor
Nursery Nurse	Home liaison	Librarian	Escort
Therapist	Learning Mentor	Science Technician	Exam Invigilator
TA - primary	Nurse	Technology Tech.	Lang Assistant
TA - secondary	Welfare Assistant		Midday Assistant
TA - special			Midday Supervisor
Facilities	Administrative	Site	
Cleaner	Administrator	Caretaker	
Cook	Bursar	Premises Manager	
Other catering	Finance Officer		
	Office Manager		
	Secretary		
	Attendance Officer		
	Data Manager		
	Examinations Officer		
	PA to Head		

Methodology

Main School Questionnaire (MSQ).

As with Wave 1, the Wave 2 MSQ was sent to a large, randomly selected and therefore nationally representative sample of schools. It collected basic information on support staff in schools, such as ease of recruitment, vacancies, problems with turnover, and numbers of support staff and reasons for changes since the summer term 2004. The design of the questionnaire was similar to the Wave 1 questionnaire, which itself was based on schedules developed in previous studies. In order to achieve a large enough sample for reliable estimates it was judged that a 40% random sample of all schools in England and Wales would be needed (10,000 schools). The overall response rate was 21%, marginally down on the response rate of 23% for the same questionnaire in Wave 1. This consisted of 1,356 primary schools (response rate 22%), 482 secondary schools (response rate 18%) and 233 special schools (response rate 22%). Statistical analyses found no significant differences with schools who did not respond in terms of main school and area characteristics.

Support Staff Questionnaire (SSQ)

The aim of the SSQ was to collect information from support staff including their general characteristics, qualifications, working practices, wages, training, and opinions on their jobs. The questionnaire was based on the Wave 1 SSQ, although some questions were revised and added. The MSQ provided information on the exact type and number of support staff working in each school and this was therefore used to obtain a spread of responses from different support staff types. It was decided to increase the sample size from around 5,000 in Wave 1 to roughly 10,000 in order to increase still further the number and representativeness of staff in the main seven categories. This strategy resulted in over-sampling some groups of support staff relative to their prevalence in schools, and so results were weighted by the prevalence of each support staff group. The overall response rate was 27%, which was somewhat lower than that in Wave 1 (41%). However, the higher number of questionnaires sent out in Wave 2 meant that responses were obtained from more support staff in Wave 2 than in Wave 1 (2693 vs. 2127 in Wave 1).

Teacher Questionnaire (TQ)

This questionnaire included information on communication with support staff, training to work with support staff, and the impact of support staff on pupils and themselves. Teachers then answered further questions about two different categories of support staff who supported them within the last week. The TQ was based on the Wave 1 TQ, with some additional questions added, and carefully piloted in the same way as the other two questionnaires. Questionnaires were sent to four teachers in each school who responded to the MSQ. The sample consisted of 8,056 questionnaires distributed to 2,014 schools. The response rate was 16%, a little down on the 20%

response rate from the Wave 1 questionnaire. Results were appropriately weighted by the prevalence of each group of support staff in schools.

Results

Numbers and estimated FTE of support staff in schools

There was a significant increase in the numbers of support staff from Wave 1 (2004) to Wave 2 (2006). At Wave 1 just 17% of schools had 41 or more staff but by Wave 2 this had increased to 29% of schools. Conversely, at Wave 1 there were 46% of schools with 20 or less staff but this had reduced to 36% by Wave 2. The number of secondary schools with 41 or more support staff had dramatically increased from 52% at Wave 1 to 80% by Wave 2. The biggest increases were for the TA equivalent category; there were 50% more at Wave 2 compared to Wave 1.

Estimates of the number of full time equivalent (FTE) staff in England and Wales also showed marked increases and changes in the composition of support staff in schools since Wave 1. There were increases in FTE for TA equivalent staff (20%), Pupil Welfare staff (23%), Technicians (24%), Other Pupil Support staff (33%), Administrative staff (13%) and Site Staff (10%) (comparisons between waves for facilities staff were not really valid as cleaners were not included in the main list of post titles at Wave 1). The TA Equivalent category was the most prevalent. In terms of post titles, at Wave 2 there were now fewer Classroom Assistants and nearly double the number of Teaching Assistants, probably because of a change of title as well as the creation of new posts. Apart from Teaching Assistants, there were large increases in Higher Level Teaching Assistants (HLTAs) (232%), ICT Support Staff (other) (317%), Cover Supervisors (471%), Catering staff (100%), Data Manager/Analyst (69%), Examination Officers (68%), and Creative Arts Specialists (96%).

Results also showed other ways in which the NA was having an effect on the increase in support staff. By Wave 2, implementation of PPA (Planning, Preparation and Assessment time), which took effect from September 2005, was the main reason given for an increase in support staff numbers. The other reasons given for changes in support staff numbers were similar to Wave 1: changes in the number of pupils with SEN and new school-led initiatives. At Wave 1 another common reason given was a change in school budgets, though this was as likely to lead to a decrease (47%) as an increase (53%) in support staff numbers. However, by Wave 2, in contrast, a change in the school budget was more likely to lead to an increase (75%) as a decrease (25%) in support staff numbers.

Once one has controlled for the number of pupils in schools there were proportionately more support staff in special schools, a result also found at Wave 1. This no doubt reflects the greater levels of

special need in these schools, and will also be reflected in higher levels of funding that will be provided for pupils with special needs.

Vacancies, and problems of turnover and recruitment

About a quarter of all schools at both Wave 1 and Wave 2 said that they had vacancies for support staff. For all schools together there were no differences between waves but this varied between support staff categories. Schools were significantly less likely to have vacancies in the TA equivalent, pupil welfare and administrative support staff categories. This was particularly marked for TA equivalent staff. There were no differences in vacancies between Wave 1 and 2 for technicians and site staff, but an increase in vacancies for facilities and other pupil support staff (though the latter result was not statistically significant).

36% of schools reported problems of recruitment at Wave 2, and this was a small but statistically significant increase from 32% at Wave 1. Results also showed that 12% of schools reported problems of turnover, and this had not changed from Wave 1.

At both waves, secondary schools were most likely to have a vacancy and report more turnover problems, but less likely to report problems of recruitment. As they have more support staff posts there is likely to be more chance of a vacancy. This may also reflect the higher turnover of staff in secondary schools, though we also found that secondary school support staff were also relatively less satisfied across a range of measures than staff in primary and special schools. Turnover may be higher in secondary schools, but recruitment does not seem to be a problem for them.

A consistent picture emerged, at both Wave 1 and 2, that problems of vacancies, recruitment and turnover were most common for 'other pupil support' staff. This category includes mid day supervisors and seems to reflect reported recruitment difficulties attached to this role, connected to hours and pay.

Further characteristics of Support Staff: gender, age, experience, ethnicity, qualifications

As at Wave 1, and in line with other studies, we found that most support staff were female (89%), and we also found more female support staff in primary than special and secondary schools. Again most respondents were aged 36 and over (90%), and almost all classified themselves as being of white ethnic background (97%).

Only 10% of support staff had no qualifications and over a third (38%) had qualifications above GCSE level. Site staff, along with other pupil support and especially facilities staff, had the lowest qualifications, while pupil welfare staff and technicians had the highest level of qualifications.

Support staff working practices: Number of hours of work per week, contract type and contracted weeks per year

As at Wave 1, contracted hours were lower in primary schools than in secondary and special schools. There were no significant differences between Wave 1 and 2 in contracted hours. A third of all part time support staff said that they would like to work more hours and TA equivalent staff were most keen on extra hours.

Most support staff (82%) said that they were on permanent contracts and this had not changed from Wave 1. Staff in categories associated with less pupil contact, and therefore less connected to pupil related needs, appeared to be most likely to have a permanent contract, that is, facilities staff, administrative staff and site staff.

One of the most obvious changes between Wave 1 and 2 concerned the doubling in the number of support staff contracted to work all 52 weeks of the year, from 22% to 45%. The single status agreement in LAs, and extended schools/services initiatives in schools, were being introduced at about the same time as the increase in support staff working 52 weeks a year, though it is not clear that these developments fully explain such a large increase. The increase varied between support staff, with most site staff contracted to work 52 weeks per year but administrative and TA equivalent staff more likely to be contracted for less than 52 weeks per year (65% and 63% respectively). The biggest increases from Wave 1 to Wave 2 in working 52 weeks were for other pupil support, technicians, facilities, site and TA equivalent staff.

Working extra hours: Are support staff required, or voluntarily wish, to work more hours than specified in their contract?

The DISS project provides systematic data on the frequency of additional hours worked by all types of support staff. Over two thirds of staff worked extra hours. In Wave 2 we distinguished between extra work that was required of support staff and that work done voluntarily. Staff worked extra hours on a voluntary basis three times as often as extra time required by a member of staff. Just over half of those who were required to work more hours than specified in their contract did so at least once a week. Most worked 3 or less hours per week. Site staff were most likely to be required to work extra hours, while the balance shifted more to voluntarily working extra hours in the case of TA equivalent, pupil welfare, technicians, and administrative staff.

In Wave 2 it was found that only one half of staff were always or sometimes paid for any extra hours they worked. This was a significant drop from Wave 1 (53% to 49%). Staff most likely to be paid for extra time were facilities and site staff. For the most part staff worked on their usual tasks but over a quarter of them found themselves working on tasks that were not a part of their usual job.

Job descriptions, appraisal, supervision and line management

Previous studies have shown the problems arising from a lack of clarity over support staff roles (see Blatchford et al, 2006 for a review), and problems arising when so few have job descriptions and are part of appraisal systems. However, staff are now significantly more likely to be provided with a job description, and to have been appraised over the last year. There are therefore encouraging signs of improved management practices in schools.

At Wave 2 we found that fewer support staff (33%) were being supervised by teachers than at Wave 1 (43%). Rather than a drop in supervision overall it appeared that supervision was being spread across more people and perhaps part of a more developed staff management system. However, another third reported that they were not being supervised by anyone (though this does not necessarily mean they were not being managed by someone).

There was a wide variety of staff who were line managers. In a similar way to supervision, most staff were line managed by head and deputy headteachers, followed by teachers, administrative staff and SENCOs.

Support staff in special schools were more likely to have a job description and have been appraised in the last 12 months. This suggests that special schools are still further ahead in terms of these aspects of staff management. Staff in secondary schools were less likely to have a job description, less likely to be supervised by a teacher, more likely to be supervised by someone else, and also not supervised by anyone.

Wages of support staff

The highest average salaries were paid to pupil welfare staff and administrative staff (over £11 per hour on average), while the lowest salaries were paid to other pupil support staff and facilities and site staff (£7.49 and £6.64 on average respectively). Higher average wages were paid in England than Wales, and staff in secondary schools received a higher average wage than those in special schools and especially those in primary schools. The wages of TA equivalent, facilities and site staff had increased since Wave 1, but there was no statistically significant difference between waves for pupil welfare, technician, other pupil support and administrative staff.

Qualifications and previous experience required

It has been noted previously that the absence of required specific qualifications and experience is a significant factor in hindering the career progression of support staff (see Blatchford et al, 2006). It is therefore encouraging to see signs by Wave 2 that schools were more likely to require specific qualifications from staff. There were, however, large differences between support staff categories. TA equivalent staff were more likely at Wave 2 to be asked for specific qualifications and previous experience. Pupil welfare staff were most likely overall to require specific qualifications and

previous experience for the post. This category includes therapists, counsellors and mentors.

Training and INSET

Previous research has pointed to the patchy nature of support staff support and training, and that this is a major barrier to professional development. The DISS results from both Wave 1 and Wave 2 are consistent in showing that two-thirds of support staff had attended school-based INSET. There is less information available about attendance rates for non-school-based INSET. We found that around a half of support staff had attended non-school based INSET or other education and training relevant to their post. Only just over a quarter had attended education or training leading to a qualification in the previous two years. Comparison of results for Wave 1 and 2 showed that there was little sign that attendance at training and INSET had increased over the past two years.

There were a number of differences by school phase. Support staff in special schools were more likely to have attended school based INSET, other education or training relevant to their post, and education and training leading to a qualification in the previous two years. Special school teachers were also most likely to have had training and development to help them work with support staff, and were more positive about training they had received and training and/or development opportunities available to help them work with support staff in the classroom. Secondary school support staff were least likely to have attended school based INSET.

There were also some differences between support staff categories. TA equivalent staff and pupil welfare staff were more likely to have attended school based INSET, non school based INSET and other courses. Other pupil support, facilities, and site staff were the least likely to have attended school based INSET, non school based INSET and other courses.

Working with and training support staff

The majority (three quarters) of teachers at Waves 1 and 2 had not had training to help them work with support staff in classrooms, even though the number of teachers involved in training support staff themselves had increased from 40% to 50% at Wave 2. Half of the teachers who had received training were positive about the training received but 16% were negative and one third were neutral. Teachers in special schools were more positive about the training they had received compared to teachers in primary and secondary schools.

Most (three quarters) of the training and development provided by teachers for support staff was actually informal support on the job. Just over half took part in formal sessions, e.g., INSET days, and this was more likely to be done by special school staff. Slightly fewer staff were involved in coaching and mentoring schemes with support staff. The majority of teachers (70%) not involved in

training or developing support staff, would have found it useful.

We also found that only a third of the teachers who were line managers of support staff had received training or development to help them with this role and only half rated this training and development as useful. Moreover, only a quarter of teachers who had received training or development in their role as a line manager of support staff were satisfied with it, and a further 30% were dissatisfied, indicating that this is an area that could also benefit from attention.

Supporting pupils and teachers

The results were conclusive in showing that from a teacher's perspective they had experienced much more contact with support staff in Wave 2 compared to Wave 1. This was particularly marked in support staff categories with whom they had previously not had much contact. Contact with pupil welfare staff had increased from 16% to 27%, technicians from 37% to 47%, other pupil support staff from 38% to 60%, facilities staff from 36% to 55%, administrative staff from 55% to 71% and site staff from 34% to 62%. The amount of contact with TA equivalent staff had not increased much (from 92% to 96%), but teachers already had a good deal of contact with them. From a teachers' perspective, school life is now heavily connected to the presence of a support staff.

Planning and feedback time between teachers and support staff

As at Wave 1, the majority of teachers did not have allocated planning or feedback time with support staff they worked with in the classroom (66% and 71% respectively). This is in line with most other studies and all point to this as a factor undermining good practice. Once again secondary schools stood out in having less planning and feedback time. Moreover, while both forms of communications between teachers and support staff had increased between Wave 1 and 2, this had not happened in secondary schools. While there has been investment in providing support staff in schools, the impact of teachers and support staff on pupils may well be compromised by the lack of time they have to plan together.

Support staff satisfaction with their jobs

The DISS project is among the first to seek the views of all support staff. Responses to two closed questions in the SSQ asking for support staff to indicate their level of job satisfaction and how much they felt appreciated by schools showed at both Wave 1 and 2 that they were generally positive, although the extent to which they felt appreciated by schools had declined between the two waves. In addition, at Wave 2 we found high rates of satisfaction with their contracts and conditions of employment (79% were very or fairly satisfied), working arrangements (78%), and training and development they had received for their role (76%). There was less satisfaction with training and development opportunities available to them

(64%). There was least satisfaction with pay with only 51% satisfied and a third of staff dissatisfied.

Staff in secondary schools were relatively less satisfied than those in primary and special schools. They were less satisfied with their posts in general, their contracts and conditions of employment, working arrangements for their post, training and development they had received in their role, and training and development opportunities available to them. There were also noticeable differences between support staff categories. Technicians were less satisfied with their posts in general, felt less appreciated by the school, were less satisfied with their contracts and conditions of employment, working arrangements for their post, training and development they had received in their role, and training and development opportunities available to them. On the other hand, 'other pupil support' staff were more satisfied with their post in general, felt appreciated by the school, were more satisfied with their pay, their contracts and conditions of employment, and working arrangements for their post. This might be seen as an odd result given the difficulties of recruitment and turnover with these posts, the hours worked, and the pay received.

TA equivalent staff were also more satisfied than most other categories of support staff in terms of their post in general, appreciation by the school, training and development they had received in their role, and training and development opportunities available to them. Pupil welfare staff were also relatively more satisfied in terms of appreciation by the school, training and development they had received in their role, and training and development opportunities available to them.

Impact of support staff on teachers' workloads, job satisfaction and levels of stress

Just over half of teachers in Wave 2 said that support staff had led to a decrease in their workload. Administrative staff, technicians, as well as TA equivalent staff, had had most effect on loads. As might be expected, given that they work less directly with teachers, facilities and site staff had less effect on workloads. There were few differences in results between Waves 1 and 2.

In about two thirds of schools, administrative tasks included in the NA had transferred completely from teachers to support staff since January 2003, and in a quarter more schools (26%) transfer was in progress. A very small number (2%) had not transferred tasks at all and in 11% of schools transfer was said to be partial and they would not be making any more changes. Consistent with the NA, most transfer of tasks took place either between September 2003 and August 2004 or September 2004 and August 2005. A quarter of schools had already transferred tasks before August 2003.

At Wave 1 it was noticeable that most routine and clerical tasks were still performed by the teachers. However by Wave 2 there was a clear change with most tasks no longer being performed by teachers.

Only record keeping, classroom displays, administering and invigilating examinations, and giving personal advice were still mostly done by teachers (i.e. more than 60% of teachers). The drop in numbers of teachers now performing these tasks was in many cases very marked, with a number more than halving. Administrative staff are far more likely than other support staff to perform tasks previously undertaken by teachers. They now perform 14 of the 26 routine and clerical tasks listed in the TQ (i.e., more than 60% of administrative staff performed each of these tasks). TA equivalent staff, technicians, and other pupil support staff had taken a few selected tasks, but pupil welfare, and especially facilities and site staff have barely figured in the transfer of these tasks from teachers. Despite this increase in workloads there were no signs from the DISS study that there had been an increase in administrative staff numbers from Wave 1 to Wave 2, or that the hours worked per week had increased.

Results from Wave 1 and 2 were consistent in showing that from the teachers' perspective, support staff had a positive effect on their level of job satisfaction. About two thirds of them (65%) said that there had been a large or slight increase in satisfaction, and only 5% said that support staff had decreased their job satisfaction. As expected, those support staff who worked more closely in the classroom seemed to have the most effect - especially TA equivalent, followed by technicians - and those with responsibilities out of the classroom like facilities and site staff least. It was interesting, however, that administrative staff were not higher in terms of being seen to contribute to job satisfaction, given the major part they have played in the transfer of administrative and routine tasks.

There was a similar positive view about the effect that support staff had in reducing levels of stress. Getting on for two thirds of teachers (62%) said that support staff had led to a slight or large decrease in stress and only 8% leading to an increase in stress. As with Wave 1, different support staff categories had a differing impact on teacher stress, with TA equivalent and technicians most likely to cause a decrease in teacher stress (69% and 69%). This time, administrative staff were also credited with reducing stress (57%).

The future of the DISS project

The first two waves of Strand 1 of the DISS project have produced data that is providing a solid baseline, in the context of which developments in the deployment and impact of support staff can be better understood. They will act as a backdrop against which the third Wave of Strand 1 will be conducted and which will provide a major source of information on the characteristics, deployment, perceptions, training and views of the range of support staff in schools today. Along with results from Strand 2 which comprises an overall survey of pupils in 100 schools, and nested case studies and systematic observations, the study will provide much needed information on the deployment and impact of support staff on pupils and teachers. It

needs to be remembered that the first Wave of Strand 1 was conducted at a relatively early stage in the process of remodelling, and that significant changes have taken place in schools since the summer term 2004. The picture over the next two years is also likely to change significantly. The DISS project aims to take regular snapshots and provide up-to-date, and in many cases, brand new data on support staff and the impact they have in schools.

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Additional Information

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