Skills Builder PARTNERSHIP

EDGE FOUNDATION

ESSENTIAL SKILLS TRACKER 2024

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Contents

Comment from the report partners 3

Summary 5

- Teachers' demand for essential skills 6
- Perceptions of the teaching profession 7
- Current state of essential skills in schools 7
- A roadmap for success 7
- Policy recommendations 8

0. Context 10

- What are essential skills? 11
- Literature on return to skills: why to build them 12
- Beyond the classroom: demand for essential skills from employers 13
- Literature on skills in schools 13
- Current challenges facing teaching 15
- Study method 17

1. Teachers' demand for essential skills 18

2. Perceptions of the teaching profession 21

3. Current state of essential skills in schools 24

4. A roadmap to success 28

- Motivation and accountability 29
- How teachers want to build essential skills in education 31
- A system-wide approach 33

Appendices

Appendix 1: Methodology 35

Appendix 2: the Universal Framework for essential skills 38

Comment from the report partners

Tom Ravenscroft,
CEO & Founder, Skills Builder Partnership

Fifteen years ago, I founded Skills Builder Partnership with a team of fellow teachers because we saw that we weren't giving our learners the complete education they deserved.

We aspired for our learners to be clear and effective communicators, able to collaborate and lead others. We wanted them to be creative and solve problems with enthusiasm. We hoped they would set themselves big goals, and have the tools to create aspirational plans and the resilience to achieve them.

Since then, we've seen a growing movement of teachers demonstrating that it is possible to build these essential skills with the same rigour as any academic learning. And in doing so, they unleash the potential of their children and young people.

This research hears from teachers across the country. It shows that if we can share structured models for building essential skills in their classrooms, backed by policies that recognise and support teachers' efforts, then we can unleash their energies and drive too.

Olly Newton,
Executive Director, Edge Foundation

Essential skills – like speaking, listening, problem solving, and teamwork – are critical for success in modern life and work. Sadly, they are frequently sidelined by our education system's obsession with a narrow range of performance metrics.

This new report from Skills Builder Partnership illustrates that effectively integrating essential skills into the curriculum requires more than a sticking plaster solution. It means nuanced, multi-faceted and system-wide reform – a cause long championed by the Edge Foundation, a longstanding supporter of Skills Builder's work.

With 85% of teaching professionals advocating for the integration of essential skills across subjects, there's a clear appetite for change. However, a renewed focus on essential skills necessitates a move towards pedagogies like project-based learning (which our Deeper Learning UK Network is championing) and holistic, equitable and multimodal forms of assessment. While these broader implications mark a substantial shift in approach, they are well-supported by organisations like Rethinking Assessment, a diverse educational coalition we helped to found, focused on enhancing assessment practices through research-informed strategies.

If nothing else, educational reform should always put learners and educators first. This is why, alongside Edge's recent 'Joint Dialogue' reports on this theme, I am delighted that the Essential Skills Tracker is contributing to a growing body of evidence reflecting the perspectives of those on the ground. Policymakers seeking to drive change should view this report as essential reading for the future.

Summary

Summary

Essential skills are those highly transferable skills that everyone needs to do almost any job, which make knowledge and technical skills fully productive.[1]

There is a significant body of literature demonstrating the impact of higher levels of essential skills across a variety of domains: from efficacy to wage premia to life satisfaction. The importance of these skills is widely recognised in the wider population as well as by business.

So with huge demand for these skills, which despite the evidence base do not feature materially in English policy at a strategic level, the question moves to the practicalities of how they can be taught in education.[2]

There is a lot of evidence of what works in practice, but views of teaching professionals - as the people who will be teaching the skills in schools - are vital: both to understand demand from teachers and potential impact on job satisfaction, and to gain insight into how these professionals think the policy should work.

This paper shows that teaching professionals are overwhelmingly in support of building essential skills in education. The nationally representative findings, based on YouGov sampling of 1,006 teachers, reveal they have positive views on how they can be taught. It is clear that a system-wide approach to teaching essential skills is required if it is to succeed. And we present evidence that shifting policy to value essential skills in education would be likely to - by better aligning with teachers' own values - improve job satisfaction.

Teachers' demand for essential skills

- 98% of teaching professionals see essential skills as important for employment opportunities. This compares to 99% and 96% for literacy and numeracy respectively.
- 92% of teachers think essential skills are important for success in education.
- In the opinion of teachers, there is a mismatch between what the education system prioritises and what leads to success in employment. While literacy and numeracy are viewed to be both prioritised by the education system and important for employment, academic knowledge is viewed to have a bigger role in education relative to its role in success in employment. Essential skills are perceived to have too little priority relative to their impact on employment success, suggesting that a better balance is possible.
- 92% view explicitly teaching essential skills as important in preparing learners for both life and work, with 47% believing this to be very important.
- For 67% of teachers, being able to prepare young people for successful lives - including through teaching essential skills - is important to them remaining in the profession.

1. UK Commission for Employment and Skills (UKCES) (2009). *The Employability Challenge*
2. See, for example, House of Commons Committee (2022): Developing workforce skills for a strong economy; Crowley, L (2023): Skills development in the UK workplace; Department for Education (2021): *Skills for Jobs: Lifelong Learning for Opportunity and Growth*

Perceptions of the teaching profession

- The data reiterates some of the challenges facing education: a perception among teaching professionals that education is failing to prepare learners for positive life outcomes alongside low job satisfaction.
- Only 3% of teaching professionals believe that the current schooling system prepares young people for life 'very well', and only 2% for work. This rises to 34% and 39% for 'quite well'.
- The general public has higher levels of life satisfaction, feeling worthwhile and happiness than that reported by teachers. Average levels of anxiety are lower than that reported by teachers.
- Job satisfaction is 24% lower for teaching professionals than the national average.

Current state of essential skills in schools

- Only 3% of teaching professionals agree strongly that essential skills are currently being taught sufficiently in education. Less than a quarter (24%) agree that essential skills are currently being taught sufficiently in education.
- 96% of teaching professionals in the UK see time in the curriculum as a barrier to effectively teaching essential skills, with 79% viewing lack of time as a significant barrier.
- But teachers also see other enablers for essential skills to be successful in the classroom: the support of school leadership and Ofsted; a shared framework that breaks the skills down; high quality teaching resources; and CPD.

A roadmap for success

Motivation

- The biggest motivations for teachers to be in the profession are preparing students for fulfilling and productive lives, developing learners' skills and characters.

How teachers want to build essential skills in education

- 90% of teaching professionals support building essential skills in education, with the majority (51%) agreeing with this strongly.
- Teaching professionals support several different routes to building essential skills in the classroom: threading essential skills throughout subjects (85%); separate lessons on essential skills (52%); and special projects (74%).
- 86% agree that the national curriculum should include essential skills, with almost half (47%) agreeing strongly.
- They see the potential for assessment to shift to being more holistic to include essential skills (86% support this) as well as multi-modal (92%).
- 81% report they would be likely to pursue CPD on how to teach their young people essential skills. Three quarters (75%) say they would pursue CPD to build their own essential skills.
- 87% support implementation of a universal framework - which breaks down the 8 skills into a sequence of teachable, measurable steps - across all schools to enable the teaching of essential skills. Over three quarters (77%) think the framework would have a positive impact on young people's employment outcomes, and 66% believe the framework would have a positive impact on education outcomes.

A system wide approach

- Teachers have identified that we need a nuanced, system-wide approach to ensure that essential skills are taught effectively in education. The solutions they identify for building essential skills have not only been trialled and piloted, but shown to work at scale.

Policy recommendations

This paper isn't suggesting that policy-makers introduce essential skills into assessment, accountability and the curriculum solely because this is popular with teaching professionals. They should do that because the research shows that higher levels of essential skills unlock higher wages, job satisfaction, life satisfaction and social mobility.[3]

But what is clear from the nationally representative findings in this paper is that teaching professionals want the policy changes from government that will give them the time, resources, training and appropriate accountability so that they can explicitly teach the 8 essential skills to their learners alongside literacy and numeracy. They want these changes because, working with young people every day, they intuitively see what the research has shown: that building essential skills in education will help young people to succeed in education and in life.

Any government looking to resolve the teacher retention crisis will be looking at workload, pay and accountability. But they should also be looking at creating an education system that aligns with teachers' motivations. Giving teachers the tools to build essential skills is likely to be one way to improve job satisfaction.

Fortunately, we are not starting with a blank canvas. At a national level, several countries have already built essential skills into their education systems. For example, in Australia, the Australian Core Skills Framework supports educators to build speaking and listening skills alongside literacy and numeracy. In the Czech Republic, teachers are being trained to use the Skills Builder approach to build the essential skills of their learners alongside the traditional core curriculum. In Kenya, teachers are using the Skills Builder approach to build age-related expectations for essential skills into the curriculum, complemented by assessment methods to track progress designed by the Kenyan National Examinations Council. Meanwhile, the OECD has been developing their widely referenced PISA tests to include essential skills like creativity and critical problem solving.

Across the UK, hundreds of schools are building the essential skills of their learners using the open-source Universal Framework. They are using the same structured approach and language to skills as leading interventions like those delivered by National Citizens Service and UK Youth. There are also a rapidly increasing number of employers across sectors using the very same framework in their recruitment and staff development, from firms like Allen & Overy to LNER.

3. Seymour, W & Craig, R (2023): *Essential Skills Tracker 2023*

Last year alone, Skills Builder Partnership trained over 20,000 teachers, providing them with the pedagogical foundations for building the essential skills of their learners. This foundation consists of six principles of essential skills education that have been shown to work in practice:

Keep it simple. A consistent focus on the same skills helps ensure everyone's shared understanding and makes building these skills as tangible as possible. Using the same language all the time makes a big difference.

Start early, keep going. Mastering these essential skills isn't simple and takes time and sustained effort.

Measure it. Take time to reflect on the skills of individuals – by observing or by self assessment. This gives a balanced understanding of strengths and weaknesses, highlights progress and shows next steps.

Focus tightly. Teaching essential skills should build upon a student's previous learning and skill attainment. It should allow dedicated time just to explicitly build skills.

Keep practising. To accelerate progress in the essential skills, they should be used and reinforced as often as possible – including opportunities for reflection.

Bring it to life. Ensure students see the relevance of these skills by linking them with the real world and by bringing real-life problems and challenges to work on.

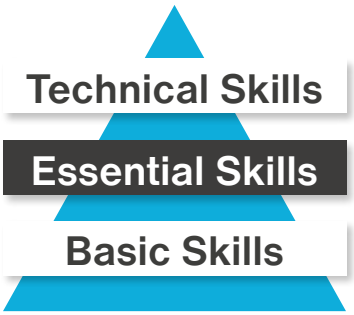
What our country needs, what our workers and our teachers see as so critical to life outcomes, is a cohesive, joined up approach to building essential skills. This means beginning with a complete education that builds the portfolio of skills that lead to productivity and social mobility, and continuing throughout individuals' lives.

0. Context

0. Context

What are essential skills?

Essential skills are those highly transferable skills that everyone needs to do almost any job, which make specific knowledge and technical skills fully productive.[4] [5] These are therefore distinct from basic skills (literacy, numeracy and digital skills) and technical skills (specific to a particular sector or role, sometimes drawing off a particular body of knowledge). In the research literature, they are sometimes referred to as (inter alia) "transversal", "higher order cognitive", "soft" and "life" skills.



The eight essential skills are:

1. LISTENING

receiving, retaining and processing of information or ideas

2. SPEAKING

oral communication of information and ideas

3. PROBLEM SOLVING

the ability to find a solution to a situation or challenge

4. CREATIVITY

use of imagination and generation of new ideas

5. STAYING POSITIVE

ability to use tactics and strategies to overcome setbacks and achieve goals

6. AIMING HIGH

ability to set clear, tangible goals and devise a robust route to achieving them

7. LEADERSHIP

supporting, encouraging and developing others to achieve a shared goal

8. TEAMWORK

working cooperatively with others towards achieving a shared goal

The annual Essential Skills Tracker is unique in that it uses a framework that is used widely in practice across sectors to build skills: the Skills Builder Universal Framework for Essential Skills. The framework provides a shared language with measurable outcomes. Its extremely rapid adoption - with 87% of secondary school students in the UK having a touch point and inclusion in national education systems - since its development in 2020 is a testament to how important they are perceived to be.[6]

4. UK Commission for Employment and Skills (UKCES) (2009): *The Employability Challenge*
5. Ravenscroft, R (2020): *Towards a Universal Framework for Essential Skills*
6. CBI (2018). *Educating for the Modern World: CBI / Pearson Education and Skills Annual Report 2018*. CBI; Institute of Student Employers (ISE) (2018). *ISE 2018 Development Survey: Trends, benchmarks and insights*.

The Framework was launched in 2020 by the Essential Skills Taskforce, chaired by Sir John Holman, which included the CIPD, Careers & Enterprise Company and Gatsby Foundation as well as leading businesses, educators and academics with two-way validation against a full-range of frameworks to ensure it is both relevant and comprehensive. It breaks down the eight essential skills into 16 measurable, teachable, learnable components, from Step 0 to Step 15.

As a result of these significant advances, it has become possible to quantify the levels of these skills across the country, and to learn who has the opportunity to build them and what the results of doing so are.

Literature on return to skills: why to build them

There is a well established literature on the positive effects that higher skill levels have on income. Earlier work such as Mincer (see also Schultz and Becker) measured human capital as the amount of schooling individuals had completed. Later work, particularly by Hanushek, recognised that differences in human capital and therefore labour market skills are caused by a number of factors including cognitive and non-cognitive skills.[7]

As noted by Deming in 2017, "A growing body of work in economics documents the labour market return to "noncognitive" skills, including social skills and leadership skills." Several papers established returns to non-cognitive skills in the US; in the words of Kautz "Greater levels of skill foster social inclusion and promote economic and social mobility. They generate economic productivity and create social well-being."

Our recent contributions to the literature show that this effect applies in the UK for essential skills to a similar degree as numeracy and literacy, which historically have been measured more frequently.

	2014	2022
Numeracy	£20.2bn	£28.9bn
Literacy	£6bn	£7.7bn
Essential Skills		£22.2bn

Figure 0.1: the cost of low skill levels in the UK

The research shows that higher levels of essential skills contribute not only to a wage premium (of roughly 9-12%), but also to higher levels of job satisfaction, life satisfaction and social mobility.[8]

There is a relationship between the opportunities that individuals have to build essential skills, and their levels of essential skills. This applies for opportunities in work and in education.

The conclusion from this research was that high-quality opportunities to build essential skills in education could lead to improved productivity, social mobility, job satisfaction and life satisfaction.

7. For a discussion of human capital and the literature on returns to skills, see Seymour, W & Craig, R (2023): *Essential Skills Tracker 2023*
8. Seymour, W & Craig, R (2023): *Essential Skills Tracker 2023*

There are some actionable blueprints for how to do this successfully, and clear indications that there is an appetite from educators to effect this change. However, there remain apparent questions around how educators would prefer to effect this change, support for specific policies, and the likely impact on the teaching workforce.

Beyond the classroom: demand for essential skills from employers

Essential skills are a top priority for employers. For example, research by the CBI has consistently found that essential skills like leadership are a primary focus for employers.[9] Another survey found that 98% of employers see these skills as at least as important as academic grades to future success.[10]

But when employers go to market for essential skills, they tend to find them lacking. In the Institute of Student Employers' 2018 report, they highlight that there is a consistent gap between employers' expectations of graduate skills and those that they experience. For example, a 21 percentage-point gap between expectations of competence in communication and what was perceived by employers.[11] The CBI has also reported a similar gap between the essential skills that employers are prioritising, and the skills that graduates have.[12]

According to a study by McKinsey, "the need to address skill gaps is more urgent than ever." A majority (58%) of businesses said that closing skill gaps in their companies' workforces has become a higher priority since the pandemic began.[13]

Given the gap between supply and demand for essential skills, the 9-12% annual wage premium associated with moving from the lower to upper quartile of skill score is unsurprising. The opportunity for social mobility is big: individuals who have opportunities in education to build essential skills are more likely to enjoy this wage premium. They go into these higher paid, higher skilled roles that in turn provide more opportunities to build essential skills.[14]

So with consistently high demand from employers for essential skills, a demonstrable skills gap and persistent low productivity in the UK, the economic case for building essential skills as part of a complete education is clear.[15] As is the benefit to individuals, with the potential to meaningfully boost social mobility.

Literature on skills in schools

With a well-established literature on the return to skills, there is also significant literature on building essential skills in education. This covers classroom teaching, enrichment, teacher and learner opinions, correlation with and causation of life outcomes.

9. See, for example, *CBI (2022): Education and skills survey 2022*
10. Cullinane, C. & Montacute, R. (2017) *Life Lessons: Improving essential life skills for young people*
11. Institute of Student Employers (ISE) (2018) ISE 2018 *Development Survey: Trends, benchmarks and insights*
12. Ibid
13. McKinsey (2021): *Building workforce skills at scale to thrive during—and after—the COVID-19 crisis*
14. Seymour, W & Craig, R (2023): *Essential Skills Tracker 2023*
15. PWC (2019): *The Productivity Puzzle revisited: why has UK productivity lagged behind other advanced economies?*

A literature review published by the Education Endowment Foundation (EEF) and Cabinet Office in 2013, which categorised essential skills including problem solving and aiming high as 'meta-cognitive strategies' reported:

> **"There is clear evidence that meta-cognitive strategies are malleable and can be taught or otherwise developed in students from primary school to university and across a wide range of academic subjects."[16]**

Work published by the Cabinet Office a few years later in 2015[17], based on the British Cohort Study 1970 (BCS70), found that essential skills predicted:

- life satisfaction and wellbeing,
- labour market success, and
- good health

Also using the BCS70 data, Skills Builder found that higher levels of essential skills predicted: higher levels of literacy and numeracy in primary school; better performance in mathematics O Levels and CSEs; higher academic performance; and higher levels of career aspiration.[18]

Another more recent EEF paper undertook a literature review and assessment of classroom practices for essential skills through the lens of 'Social and Emotional Learning' ('SEL'). While it highlighted some potential solutions to challenges with implementation, it also found:

> **"An increasing number of meta-analytic… and other aggregative-type reviews… have linked improvements in SEL with a range of favourable outcomes. These include (but are not limited to) improvements in self-perception and positive behaviour, reductions in emotional distress and conduct problems, school engagement, and academic attainment. These factors have also been linked to long-term outcomes such as financial stability in adulthood, and reductions in adult antisocial and criminal behaviour."[19]**

Teachers and young people have been found to intuitively recognise the benefits of essential skills as evidenced in the literature. Research by the Sutton Trust[20] found that 88% of young people, 94% of employers and 97% of teachers said essential skills are equally or more important than academic qualifications. The survey found that 72% of teachers believe their school should increase their focus on teaching life skills. However, these teachers "reported that only half of schools had a shared approach or policy on the issue, and just 13% knew where to get information to support the development of those skills in their pupils."

Qualitative research by Skills Builder supported the previous quantitative data: the strongest motive for teaching essential skills was to prepare students for life.[21] However, teachers also reported a range of other motivations, including student work-readiness and aspirations, unlocking learning in the classroom and delivering school priorities.

16. Schoon, Morrison Gutman, (2013). *The impact of non-cognitive skills on outcomes for young people*
17. Goodman Et al 2015: *Social and emotional skills in childhood and their long-term effects on adult life*
18. Kashefpakdel & Ravenscroft (2021). *Essential skills and their impact on education outcomes*
19. Wigelsworth et al (2020): *Identifying effective, evidence-based social and emotional learning strategies for teachers and schools: Evidence review*
20. Cullinane, C. & Montacute, R. (2017): *Life Lessons: Improving essential life skills for young people*
21. Crighton & Ravenscroft (2021): *Essential skills: Teachers' perspectives on opportunities and barriers*

That research also explored perceptions of barriers to building these skills that are clearly so highly valued. Teachers reported four primary barriers:

- time
- training
- consistency in how to build the skills
- value and impetus placed on the skills at a policy level

Sector leaders identified a slightly different set of barriers, namely the curriculum and measures of teacher performance and student attainment.

Current challenges facing teaching

The research cited shows that there is big potential for improving the outcomes of education in England through both what is taught and how it is taught.

However, for these changes to be effective, we need a capable workforce of engaged educators. Those teachers in turn need to be motivated and equipped to build essential skills. This is another reason why resolving the challenges around teacher recruitment and retention, as well as the underlying issues driving these, is so important.

The Department for Education (DfE) statistics show the Full Time Equivalent (FTE) of 468,371 teachers in England in 2022, with 43,997 FTE having left the profession. This is a loss of 9.4% of the workforce capacity.[22]

There is therefore currently a focus from many in the sector on intention to leave the teaching profession. In April 2023 both the DfE and National Education Union (NEU) conducted research into intention to leave.[23] [24]

Intention to leave	DfE	NEU
Next 12 months	25%	
Next two years		16%
Next 5 years		41%

Figure 0.2: findings on intention to leave from select surveys

Although the findings between these two surveys differ considerably, and we don't have UK-education-specific data on the relationship between intention to leave and actually leaving, both studies point towards a potentially large proportion quitting the profession.

22. Department for Education (2023): *School workforce in England 2022*
23. These studies were primarily of teaching professionals in England.
24. NEU: *State of Education 2023*

That in itself wouldn't necessarily lead to capacity issues if teachers were recruited at a sufficient rate. But recruitment challenges are also significant. For example government targets for secondary subject recruitment into Postgraduate Initial Teacher Training (PGITT) were missed by 50% and 43% for the last two years.[25] With only 26,955 new entrants to ITT in total in 2022/23, the profession can expect continued capacity pressures.

Rightly, there is urgency among policy makers and education leaders to understand what the factors are driving these teacher workforce challenges and how they might therefore be resolved.

In qualitative research published by the DfE in 2018[26], they found a number of factors affecting teacher retention, including:

- "The restrictive curriculum and teaching methods took the 'excitement' and pleasure out of teaching.
- Teachers felt that the Government was placing more importance on data and results, rather than on pupils' needs and learning.
- Schools being forced to push pupils onto courses that would provide the best data, not necessarily those that would suit the pupils' skills.
- Teachers felt that the curriculum was not relevant to young people and their needs, did not reflect what is required in the real world, and lacked the opportunity for creativity or for teachers to teach in an enthusing way."

So while workload and pay are consistently reported as key to solving the teacher workforce crisis, there are other variables at play. Given fiscal constraints, governments may struggle to fix those challenges in full or immediately, and so the other factors contributing to teacher job satisfaction deserve real attention too.

More recently, the department published quantitative research based on teacher survey data.[27] It found that the most common reasons given for intending to leave the profession were workload (92%), government policy changes (76%), inspections (69%) and pay (57%).

The Department also explored intention to leave the profession and undertook modelling to establish the factors that predicted intention to leave. As might be predicted based on the literature summarised in this paper, job satisfaction accounted for almost half (49%) of the variance between those considering leaving compared to those not considering leaving. Their modelling showed that, "considerations of leaving the state sector are primarily driven by teachers' and leaders' attitudes towards their jobs and, more broadly, their lives."

In this paper we look to further explore the implications of the Department's findings. We seek to understand whether teacher job satisfaction could be impacted by changing how and what is taught, with a greater focus on multi-modal assessment and building skills to prepare learners for successful lives. In particular, we look to build off the findings from the literature on essential skills in schools and combine them with questions around teacher motivation and job satisfaction to contribute to policy making in this space.

25. UK Government (2023): *Initial Teacher Training Census 2023/24*
26. Department for Education (2018): *Factors affecting teacher retention: qualitative investigation*
27. Department for Education (2023): *Working lives of teachers and leaders*

Study method

This paper is the first to explore teacher opinions on essential skills based on the widely adopted Universal Framework. It does so based on fieldwork by YouGov of a panel of 1,006 teaching professionals across the UK that enables nationally representative findings.

Our modelling therefore allows us to report statistically significant findings that are representative of teachers across the country. Wherever possible we have adopted measures in previous studies, to which our work owes a huge debt but also to which we hope to contribute. This allows comparability with previous work in the space as well as national statistics.

The survey collected particular characteristics of respondents, enabling analyse responses for different sub-populations, including by role. Throughout the paper we refer to 'teaching professionals' and 'teachers' interchangeably. Where findings relate to specific roles we have specified these, for example 'Classroom teachers'.

For a full discussion of methodology, please refer to the Annexes.

1. Teachers' demand for essential skills

1. Teachers' demand for essential skills

Previous research has shown the high levels of importance attributed to essential skills in the wider population.[28] Of UK working-age adults, 92% believe that essential skills are important for success within their career. That is on par with literacy skills and more than sector specific knowledge (84%), digital skills (84%), numeracy skills (82%) or technical skills (65%).

Parents in the UK also value the provision of essential skills in schools, with 61% (rising to 73% amongst parents who themselves have higher levels of essential skills) viewing a school's provision of skills building opportunities as an important factor when choosing a school for their child.

Teaching professionals value essential skills even more highly than the overwhelming levels of importance attributed by the general population. There is a very clear view that a portfolio of skills is viewed as important for learners' success in education and in securing employment opportunities.

Teaching professionals also seem to recognise findings from other research that this is not a zero-sum game (i.e. controlling for one skill does not reduce the effect of other skills on life outcomes). For securing employment opportunities, teachers almost unanimously see a portfolio of essential skills, literacy and numeracy as being important for employment opportunities, at 98%, 99% and 96% of respondents respectively.

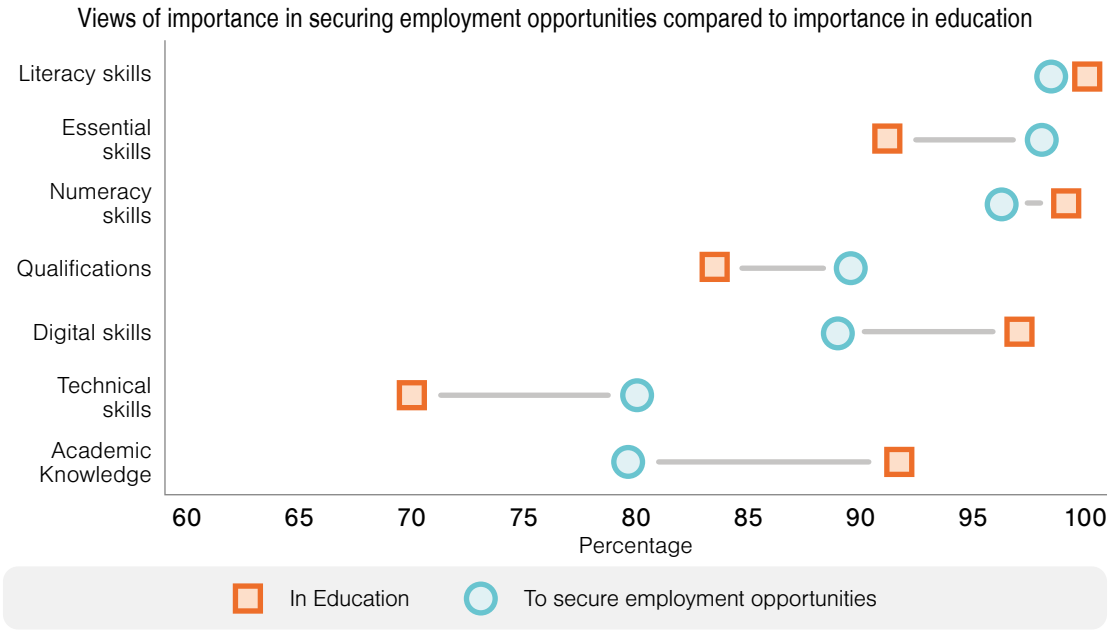


Figure 1.1: teacher perceptions of the relative importance of different learning in education and employment

The current education system in England (where, as a UK representative survey, the majority of respondents work) does not formally recognise essential skills at a policy level. For example, there is no government white paper or policy papers advocating for essential skills across education and lifelong learning; no government department or team responsible for the skills; no explicit recognition through the national curriculum or Ofsted; and no government taxonomy

28. Seymour, W & Craig, R (2023): *Essential Skills Tracker 2023*

(though nascent work is underway through the Unit for Future Skills). Yet these skills are viewed by teachers as being almost as important as literacy and numeracy (which are two of the system's core objectives) for success in education.

There is also a more nuanced point here: while skills like problem solving, teamwork and speaking are sometimes called 'employability skills', teaching professionals see them as being important for success in education itself - distinct from employment opportunities.

There is, however, an implicit gap between what's important for success in employment and in education. In particular, while essential skills are viewed as important for success in education, this is not to quite the same extent as for success in employment. And conversely, academic knowledge is viewed as important for success in education, but less so for success in employment. The implication is that the education system does not balance the priority of - or treat equally - factors that are important for success in later life.

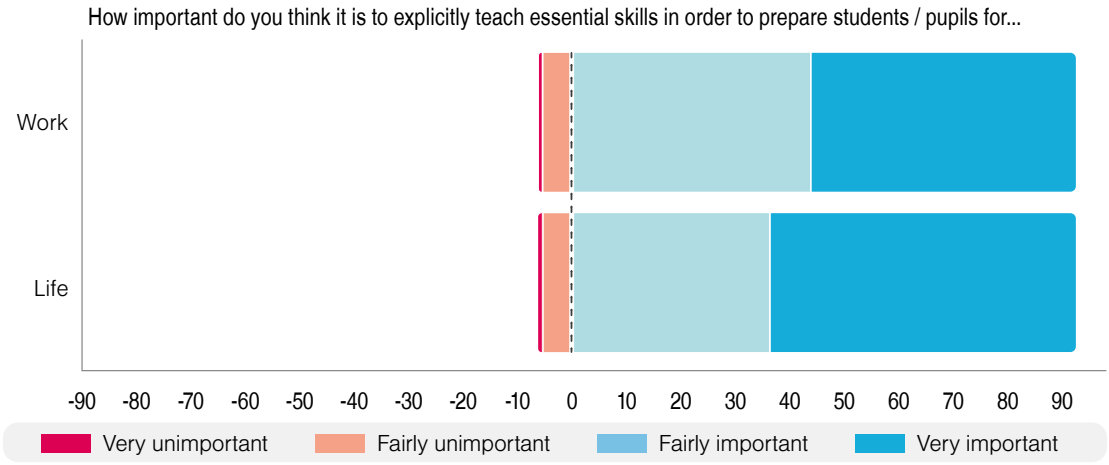


Figure 1.2: teacher perceptions of the importance of essential skills in preparing learners for life and work

Teachers therefore want to build essential skills. This is because most teaching professionals (92%) view explicitly teaching essential skills as important in preparing learners for both life and work, with almost half (47%) believing this to be very important.[29]

Considering both the importance of essential skills for life and work and teaching professionals' motivations of preparing young people for life and work, it follows that they would feature prominently in why they continue to teach. In fact, for a significant majority (67%), being able to prepare young people for successful lives, including through teaching essential skills, is important to their reasoning for remaining in the profession.[30]

What we have seen from the data in this chapter is that teaching professionals - like the general public - see the vital importance of the 8 essential skills for life outcomes. They view a portfolio of skills as important for work: essential skills, literacy and numeracy. Teaching professionals therefore think essential skills should be taught explicitly, and indeed this is often an important variable in their commitment to the profession. In the next section, we'll see to what extent teachers' demand for essential skills is met in the current education system.

29. Respondents were asked: "How important do you think it is to explicitly teach essential skills in order to prepare students / pupils for...life / work?"
30. Respondents were asked: "In deciding to remain in the teaching profession, which factors are most important to you:...Being able to prepare students / pupils for successful lives, including through teaching Essential skills?"

2. Perceptions of the teaching profession

2. Perceptions of the teaching profession

Despite education being so critical to the future of our society, and despite the central role that teachers play in education, the teaching profession faces challenges on multiple fronts. The education system itself, in the eyes of those teaching professionals who deliver it, is not achieving what many believe is a core purpose.

Teachers' perceptions of the efficacy of the education system in several dimensions are not favourable. A minority believe that the current schooling system prepares young people for life (37%) and work (41%). Strikingly, only a very small number of respondents believe that the system prepares young people for life and work "very well" (3% and 2% respectively).

This lack of confidence in the education system's ability to prepare learners for life and work applies across seniority of roles - not just classroom teachers. Noting this observation with caution due to the subsample size (42 respondents), no headteachers surveyed think that the current system prepares young people for life and work "very well". However, a slightly larger proportion of headteachers than other professionals believe the education system prepares young people for life or work "quite well" (50% and 40%).

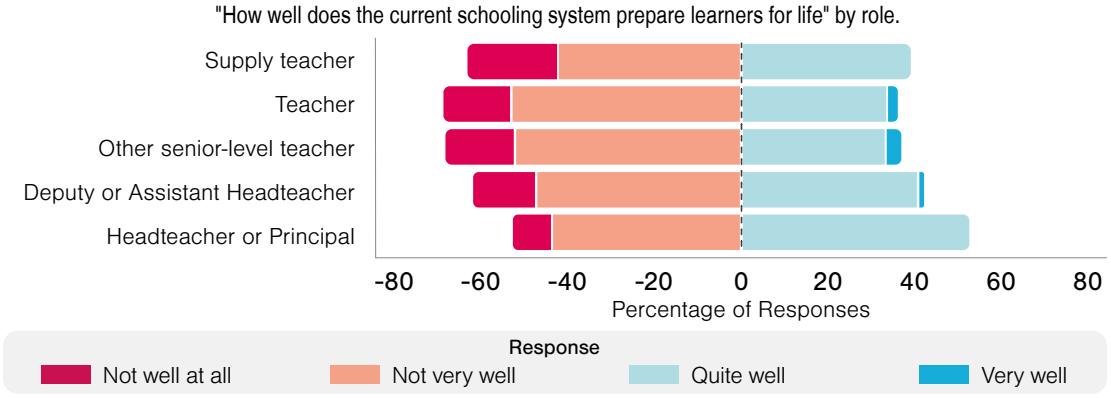


Figure 2.1: teacher perceptions of how well the current education system prepares learners for life, by role

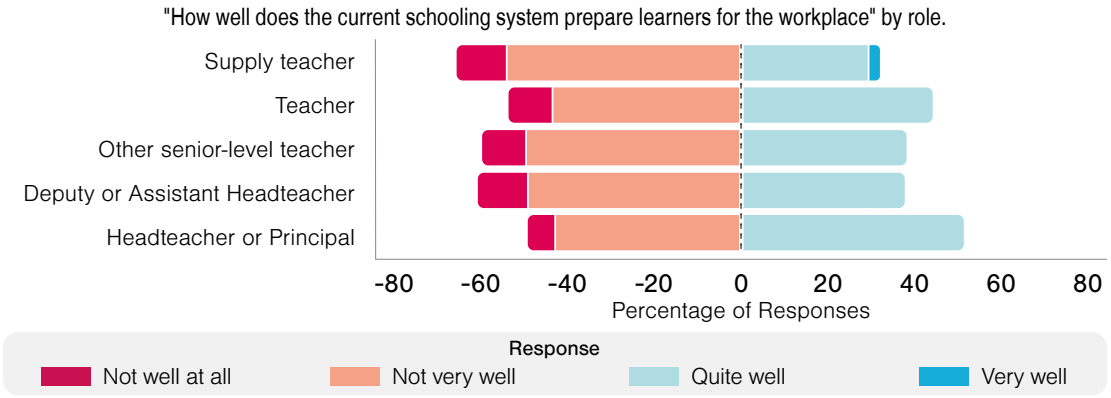


Figure 2.2: teacher perceptions of how well the current education system prepares learners for the workplace, by role

This perception of the education system is reflected in - and perhaps related to - how the quality of teaching is assessed by Ofsted and school leadership. Nearly all teachers (93%) think the quality of their teaching is assessed by their school leadership and Ofsted on grades. But the majority (51%) do not believe that preparing young people for fulfilling and productive lives is something they are assessed on.[31]

It is in the context of the research on 'value consonance' (perceived fit with personal values) and an education system perceived to be at least somewhat divergent from the aims of those delivering it, that we consider those individuals' wellbeing. Self-reported wellbeing of teachers is lower than the general population.[32] Teaching professionals have significantly lower levels of job satisfaction, life satisfaction, feeling worthwhile and happiness than the average person. And conversely, they report higher levels of anxiety than the general public.

Metric	Mean (weighted)	ONS Value	Difference (weighted)	Difference (%)
Life Satisfaction	6.64	7.45	-0.81	-11%
Job Satisfaction	5.62	7.40	-1.78	-24%
Feeling Worthwhile	7.01	7.73	-0.72	-9%
Happiness	6.55	7.39	-0.84	-11%
Anxiety	4.66	3.23	1.43	+44%

Figure 2.3: wellbeing measures of teaching professionals compared to ONS national averages

Of those wellbeing measures, job satisfaction shows the most striking difference: it is 24% lower for teaching professionals than the national average (5.6 compared to 7.4 out of 10).

While we have no causal data to suggest that it is being in the teaching profession that is causing lower levels of wellbeing, the fact that job satisfaction is so much lower than the national average (both in absolute terms and relative to the other measures) does suggest that work could be causing lower levels of life and job satisfaction, feeling worthwhile and happiness, and higher levels of anxiety. This is supported by research from the NEU, which found, "Two-thirds of teachers... worry very often about the impact of workload on their wellbeing; almost all worry about it at least occasionally."[33]

The data we have seen in this chapter reiterate the challenges facing the school system: a perception among the individuals delivering education that it is failing to prepare learners for life and work; and a challenge of making the teaching profession attractive to its current and future workforce. There are undoubtedly a wide range of factors at play here, but in the following chapters we will home in on where essential skills sit amongst them.

31. Respondents were asked: "To what extent do you think that the quality of your teaching is assessed by your leadership team and Ofsted on each of the following..."
32. ONS Personal well-being in the UK: April 2022 to March 2023 https://www.ons.gov.uk/peoplepopulationandcommunity/wellbeing/bulletins/measuringnationalwellbeing/april2022tomarch2023
33. NEU (2023): *State of Education 2023*

3. Current state of essential skills in schools

3. Current state of essential skills in schools

We have seen the high value that teaching professionals place on essential skills and their desire to be enabled to teach them. However, they do not perceive that this is reflected in the education system.

Only a quarter of teaching professionals agree that essential skills are currently being taught sufficiently in education (24%), with a very small number agreeing strongly (3%).

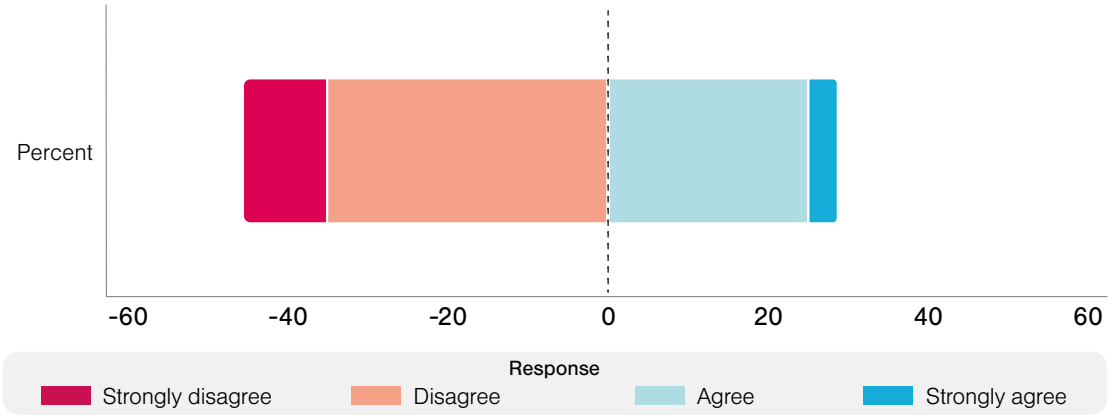


Figure 3.1: extent to which teaching professionals agree that essential skills are currently taught sufficiently in education (excluding neither agree nor disagree)

To understand the potential causes for this large gap between the importance placed on essential skills and the perceived reality of what is being delivered, aside from policy, we can look to the series of barriers to effective teaching of these skills by teaching professionals.

Given workload pressures, it might be expected that sufficient time in the curriculum to teach essential skills would be cited by teachers as the primary barrier to teaching them effectively. And it is. A total of 96% of teaching professionals in the UK see this as a barrier, with a very high proportion (79%) viewing lack of time as a large barrier.

However, to effectively teach a subject or skill requires more than simply time - as important a variable as that is. A large majority of teaching professionals recognise a series of other barriers to teaching essential skills. A number of these are about the infrastructure around the teaching and suggest that most teaching professionals seek:

- The support of school leadership in building essential skills and their value in the accountability framework
- A shared framework that breaks the skills down into a sequence of teachable, measurable steps
- High quality teaching resources
- Training or Continuing Professional Development ('CPD')

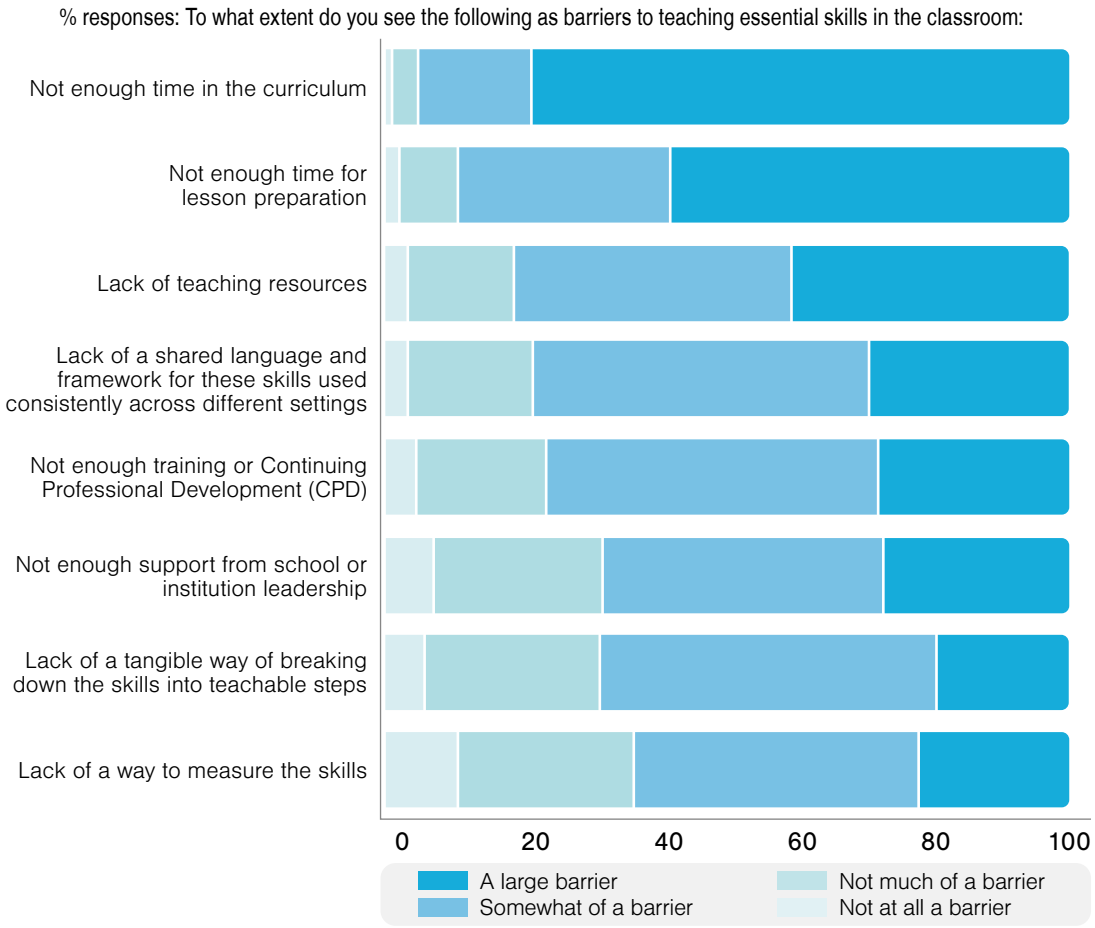


Figure 3.2: relative size of barriers to teaching essential skills in the classroom, as identified by teachers

These findings are consistent with Skills Builder's previous qualitative research into barriers to teaching essential skills. While teachers in that sample reported insufficient value placed on essential skills being a barrier, it also found that: "Time and a lack of training and consistent approaches were pressing barriers felt by teachers. This was largely due to a knowledge-rich curriculum leaving little space to focus on other areas as well as a lack of confidence in their ability to teach the skills."[34]

There is some variance between the views of classroom teachers and Senior Leadership teams ("SLT") on what the barriers are. Some are likely explained by roles and responsibilities. For example, fewer members of SLT view a lack of support from school leadership as being a barrier to building essential skills (although 66% still view this as an issue). The other notable difference is that more school leaders see the need for a shared language and framework for essential skills to be taught effectively.

What we have seen is that teaching professionals don't think there's a quick fix to essential skills being taught effectively in education. Simply providing training, or time in the curriculum on their own would be unlikely to achieve the lasting impact that is required. Instead, a successful approach will need to be nuanced, multi-faceted and system-wide.

34. Crighton, E & Ravenscroft, R (2021): Essential skills: Teachers' perspectives on opportunities and barriers

There are plenty of analogous examples of education policies, whose implementation didn't account for this complexity and nuance. For example, in 2008 the new 16-19 Diploma qualifications were launched with the idea of teaching a range of Personal Learning and Thinking Skills (PLTS).[35] However, these qualifications were somewhat standalone and lacked a system-wide approach, being discontinuous with the skills built in education up to that point. Similarly, the SEAL (Social and Emotional Aspects of Learning) Programme was "delivered in fragmented, one-off sessions", which "is not likely to work".[36] [37] As such, it ceased to receive government backing.

Conversely, much of the character education efforts from 2014 championed developing cross-cutting attributes and behaviours. While building character is included in the Ofsted inspection framework, the initiative does not form a part of the taught curriculum.[38] The DfE's Character Benchmarks, released in 2019, are non-statutory and were developed as a reflective guide for school leaders, rather than a model to follow.[39]

Fortunately, we also have a great deal of good practice to draw on. In the next chapter, we will work through the solutions to the barriers set out above - as identified by teaching professionals.

35. Perry, J (2018): *Teaching thinking skills makes children more intelligent*
36. Education Policy Institute (2021): *Social and emotional learning: An evidence review and synthesis of key issues*
37. Department for Education (2010): *Social And Emotional Aspects Of Learning (SEAL) Programme In Secondary Schools: National Evaluation*
38. Department for Education: *The National Curriculum*
39. Department for Education (2019): *Character Education Framework Guidance*

4. A roadmap to success

4. A roadmap to success

This paper has so far built on previous research demonstrating the very significant importance placed on essential skills by teaching professionals and their recognition of their role in a complete education. At the same time, there are meaningful challenges in the teaching profession, including factors influencing teachers' job satisfaction.

What we seek to do in this chapter is to go beyond the regularly cited challenges facing teaching and education. We will show the structural changes required to effectively build essential skills in education and their very broad base of support. We show how policy changes that enable high-quality teaching of essential skills would better align the realities of teaching with teachers' motivations as well as how this could positively impact teacher job satisfaction.

Motivation and accountability

We can close the gap between what motivates individuals to join the teaching profession and how school leadership and Ofsted assess their teaching. From the perspective of what motivates teachers, skills and knowledge are complementary: teachers overwhelmingly believe both to be important. Developing character and achieving social mobility are also viewed as important, though the number who are motivated (and indeed very motivated) by helping learners pass exams is lower.

	Very important	Fairly important	Fairly unimportant	Very unimportant
To prepare learners for fulfilling and productive lives	71%	26%	2%	0%
To develop learners characters	63%	34%	2%	1%
To develop learners skills	60%	38%	1%	1%
To develop learners knowledge	55%	43%	2%	0%
To prepare learners for the world of work	44%	46%	9%	2%
To improve social mobility	41%	45%	12%	3%
To help learners pass exams	20%	49%	23%	8%

Figure 4.1: Responses to the question, "How important, or unimportant, are the following to you when considering your motivation for being a teacher?"

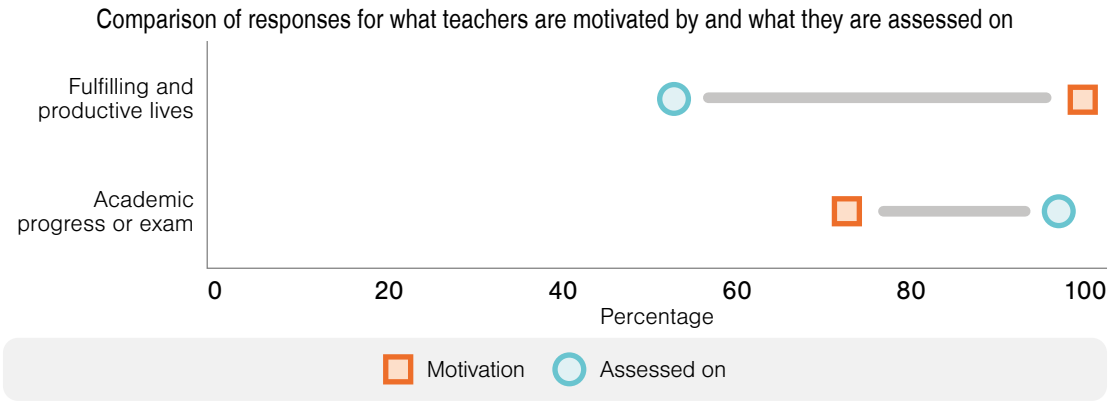


Figure 4.2: teacher perceptions of what they are assessed on compared to what motivates them to be teachers

We looked at the difference between what teachers said they were motivated by and what they said they felt they were assessed on by school leadership and Ofsted. Specifically, we calculated the difference between the extent that preparing learners for fulfilling and productive lives was a motivation, and the extent to which teachers feel they are assessed on this. We used this difference in modelling to predict job satisfaction. Our analysis showed that the bigger the difference between what teachers said they were motivated by and what they are assessed on, the lower their job satisfaction. Moving from the upper to lower quartile of difference between motivation and assessment was associated with a 14% increase in job satisfaction. In line with the literature on 'value consonance', the implication is that if teachers were assessed on preparing young people for productive and fulfilling lives (and felt that this was the case), alongside other factors, they may have higher levels of job satisfaction.

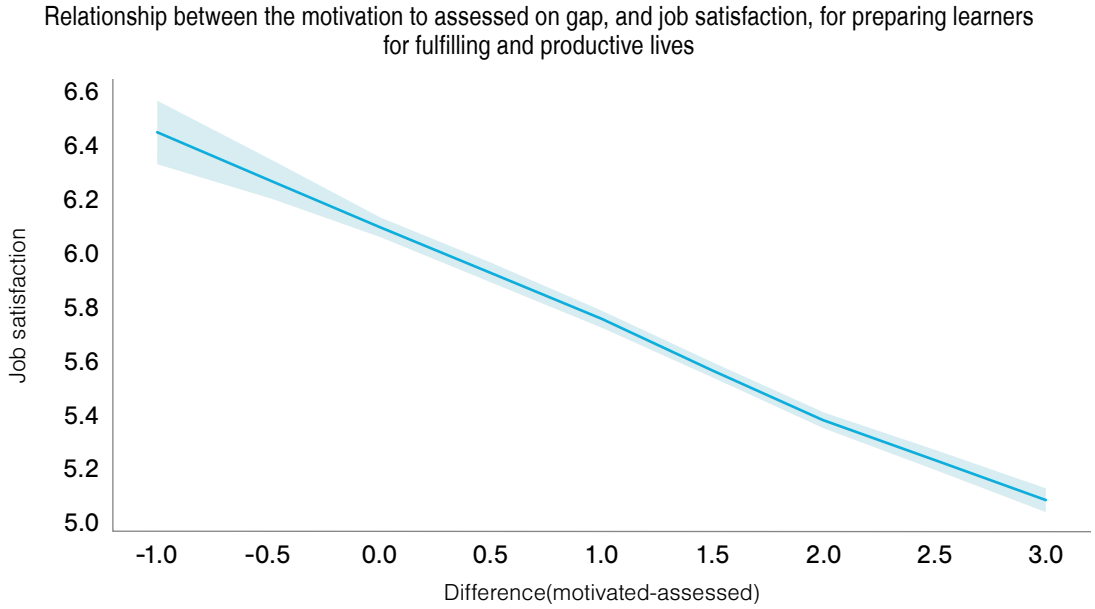


Figure 4.3: modelling the relationship between job satisfaction and the difference between the extent to which teachers are motivated by preparing students for fulfilling and productive lives, and the extent to which they feel they are assessed on that

How teachers want to build essential skills in education

Teaching essential skills in education is an incredibly popular policy with teaching professionals. A total of 94% support this approach, with the majority (52%) "strongly" supporting building essential skills in education.[40]

That's at a top level, but does this support continue into teachers' own classrooms? It does. A very high proportion (85%) see threading essential skills throughout subjects as being important to them being taught successfully. Over half (52%) think separate lessons on essential skills are important and 74% see the potential for special projects (e.g. cross-curricular projects). Although beyond the scope of this paper, the compatibility of these approaches with different modes of teaching like project based learning are clear.

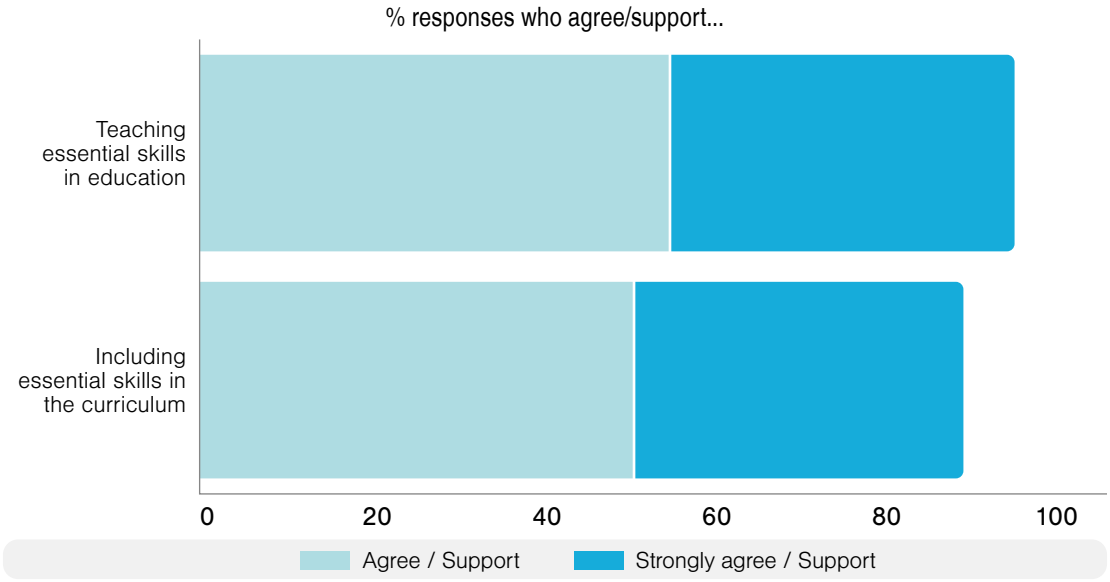


Figure 4.4: teacher support for essential skills in education and the curriculum

One policy lever for getting essential skills into classrooms is the national curriculum. 86% of teaching professionals agree that the national curriculum should include essential skills, with almost half (47%) agreeing strongly.

Both threading essential skills through existing subjects, and explicitly teaching and reflecting on steps of specific skills are approaches that tens of thousands of teachers have already successfully implemented in the UK.[41] By drawing on individual steps as Learning Outcomes, teachers can make more explicit and effective skills development that might have been implicit without requiring additional time. For example, spending a few minutes to introduce mind mapping before a creative task, to set success criteria for effectively working together before a group activity, or making planning techniques and goal-setting explicit.

40. Respondents were asked: "To what extent do you support or oppose the teaching of essential skills in education?"
41. Skills Builder (2023): *Impact Report*

Without central government mandate or any incentives, hundreds of schools have realised the value of building essential skills and adopted strategies to realise their ambitions. For example, Sophie Gavalda, Head Teacher of Outstanding rated school William Tyndale comments that the impact of teaching essential skills "on the children was immediate, with high levels of engagement... as a school we thought, actually, this should become part of our curriculum."

It has therefore been shown essential skills can be built without significant changes to curriculum time, alongside investing some school time required to implement these varied strategies effectively. Both qualitative data from Skills Builder and academic research from EEF suggest the potential for accelerated learning and achievement, which would create some space for these.[42] The case for system-wide change, introducing other measures popular with teachers - for example fewer high-stakes assessments - is particularly compelling due to the combined potential for creating more space to prepare learners for fulfilling and productive lives.

Teaching professionals also see the potential for assessment to shift to being more holistic to include essential skills (86% support this) as well as multi-modal (92%).[43] Shifting to multi-modal assessment that gives young people the opportunity to demonstrate their skills and knowledge through different types of assessment would be particularly well-suited to allowing learners to demonstrate skills like speaking, listening and teamwork.

Teaching skills not currently included in the curriculum, and shifting to new forms of assessment would require teachers to build new capabilities. Indeed, we saw in the previous chapter that over three quarters of teaching professionals see a lack of continuing professional development ('CPD') as a barrier to effective teaching of essential skills. Despite this potential barrier, appetite for this CPD is high: 81% report they would be likely to pursue CPD on how to teach their young people essential skills.

But there is a secondary opportunity here too. What if, as well as building their learners' essential skills, teachers could also improve their own speaking, leadership and staying positive? Employers across other sectors see such training opportunities for their staff as vital, and there is no reason why teachers shouldn't also benefit.[44] There is big appetite for this amongst teaching professionals themselves: three quarters (75%) say they would be likely to pursue CPD to build their own essential skills.

Finally, there is an opportunity to build off the success in changes to careers education in a way that enjoys the support of teaching professionals. Dedicated class time to focus on essential skills is seen by teaching professionals to be similarly important (86%) for giving young people the skills and knowledge about the workplace as well-established modes like work experience (88%). Critically, linking back to proposals for curriculum reform, nearly all teaching professionals (93%) think curriculum links connecting essential skills to subject learning are important for careers education, with nearly half (45%) believing this to be very important.

42. Ibid
43. Respondents were asked: "Do you think that assessment in schools should or should not...Be multimodal (i.e. giving students / pupils the opportunity to demonstrate their skills and knowledge through different forms of assessment)...Be more holistic (i.e. measure knowledge, basic skills and Essential skills of teamwork, leadership, problem solving, creativity, speaking, listening, aiming high and staying positive)"
44. See for example: CIPD (2018): Reforming technical education: Employers' views of T Levels; CBI (2019): Getting young people 'work ready'

So our roadmap to teaching essential skills, which would likely contribute to improved job satisfaction, includes the different modes of teaching essential skills that have broad support among UK teachers. But recalling one of the barriers identified by teachers: we need a shared framework that breaks the skills down into a sequence of teachable, measurable steps. The Skills Builder Universal Framework for essential skills does just this. And it has the backing of a large majority of teaching professionals. 87% support implementation across all schools of a framework that breaks the 8 skills down into teachable, measurable steps, to enable the teaching of essential skills.

Teaching professionals see the potential that adopting the Universal Framework across all schools could have. While over three quarters (77%) think the framework would have a positive impact on young people's future employment outcomes, a significant majority (66%) believe the framework would have a positive impact on education outcomes even sooner.

A system-wide approach

As we saw in Chapter 3, we require a nuanced, system-wide approach to ensure that essential skills are taught effectively in education. All of the above solutions for building essential skills have not only been trialled and piloted, but shown to work at scale. They align with the Skills Builder principles for building essential skills that are used widely in schools across the country as well as the globe. Those six principles are

Keep it simple. A consistent focus on the same skills helps ensure everyone's shared understanding and makes building these skills as tangible as possible. Using the same language all the time makes a big difference.

Start early, keep going. Mastering these essential skills isn't simple and takes time and sustained effort.

Measure it. Take time to reflect on the skills of individuals – by observing or by self assessment. This gives a balanced understanding of strengths and weaknesses, highlights progress and shows next steps.

Focus tightly. Teaching essential skills should build upon a student's previous learning and skill attainment. It should allow dedicated time just to explicitly build skills.

Keep practising. To accelerate progress in the essential skills, they should be used and reinforced as often as possible – including opportunities for reflection.

Bring it to life. Ensure students see the relevance of these skills by linking them with the real world and by bringing real-life problems and challenges to work on.

And what we have seen in this chapter is that there are a series of policy changes required that would address the huge demand for teaching essential skills and the challenges to building them effectively. Essential skills should be recognised in accountability, they should be assessed, taught explicitly - whether threaded through other subjects or as standalone lessons - and teachers should receive training on how to build them in the classroom. Critically, these structural changes enjoy very broad support from teaching professionals.

Appendices

APPENDIX 1: METHODOLOGY

Data

Data was collected through an online survey conducted by YouGov Plc. The total sample size was 1,006 teachers and the fieldwork was undertaken between 27th October - 6th November 2023. YouGov weighted responses based on school phase, type of school, and region.

As with all online surveys, we acknowledge that results are subject to the bias and statistical errors normally associated with sample-based information.

Initial data cleaning was conducted to remove responses of those who had not taken due consideration when answering the survey. For some questions, respondents were given the option to respond 'don't know'. In line with standard practice, where percentages have been calculated, these do not include those who responded 'don't know'.

Sample population

This research analyses 1,006 responses from UK teachers aged 18+. Respondents were from local authority maintained schools, free schools, grammar schools, independent schools, special schools and PRUs. Respondents were from a range of roles and specific role categorisation has been used, as well as grouping into senior leadership and teacher roles.

Role	Role Group	Number of Respondents
Headteacher / Principal	Senior leadership	46
Deputy or Assistant headteacher	Senior leadership	85
Other senior-level teacher (e.g. Key Stage Leader)	Senior leadership	287
Teacher	Teacher	553
Supply teacher	Teacher	35

In most cases where roles have been reported we have used the grouped roles. However, where a specific role has been reported on, it is important to note that in cases where the number of respondents is less than 50, this may not be representative of the target population.

Wellbeing

Respondents were asked a series of wellbeing questions which followed the 11-point system used by the ONS to establish workforce wellbeing across the UK.[45] The wellbeing thresholds as outlined by ONS for the wellbeing questions, excluding anxiety, are:

- Very High - 9 to 10
- High - 7 to 8
- Medium - 5 to 6
- Low - 0 to 4

45. ONS: *Personal well-being in the UK: April 2021 to March 2022*

Due to its negative impact on overall wellbeing, ONS categorises the thresholds for anxiety as:

- High - 6 to 10
- Medium - 4 to 5
- Low - 2 to 3
- Very low - 0 to 1

Metric	ONS average threshold	Our average threshold (weighted)	Our average threshold (unweighted)
Life Satisfaction	High	Medium	Medium
Job Satisfaction	High	Medium	Medium
Feeling Worthwhile	High	High	Medium
Happiness	High	Medium	Medium
Anxiety	Low	Medium	Medium

The thresholds highlight that teachers' average well being scores recategorises them almost entirely into lower thresholds in comparison to the ONS national averages.

Modelling motivations and impact on job satisfaction

Looking at the factors that motivated teachers, and comparing this to what they considered themselves to be assessed on by leadership and Ofsted, we found that 97% of respondents stated that they were motivated by preparing learners for fulfilling and productive lives. Contrasting this, 48% of respondents stated they felt as though they were assessed by leadership and Ofsted on preparing learners for fulfilling and productive lives.

For each respondent we calculated the difference in their response to how motivated they are by preparing learners for fulfilling and productive lives, and the extent to which they are assessed on this. Differences were on a scale of 3 to -3, where 3 represents individuals who were highly motivated by preparing learners for fulfilling and productive lives but who feel as though they are not at all assessed on this, and -3 indicates those who are not at all motivated by this but are highly assessed on this. 73% of respondents had a difference above 0, indicating that they are more motivated by preparing learners for fulfilling and productive lives, than their perception of the extent to which they are assessed on it.

We used multiple linear regression to model the relationship between the difference in motivation and assessment on preparing students for fulfilling and productive lives, and job satisfaction. The model controlled for whether the individual is a teacher or SLT, whether they teach in a state school, their gender, and age. As age tends to be a non-linear relationship, the square of age was also included within the model parameter.

We found a statistically significant (p-value of 0.000) relationship between the difference in motivation and assessment, and job satisfaction. The relationship highlighted that those with a larger difference are less satisfied with their job.

Model parameters

Variables	Model 1	Model 2	Model 2
Difference between motivation and assessment	-0.3677*	-0.3416*	-0.3281*
State school		-0.7544**	-0.7515**
Teacher role		-0.0211	-0.0544
Age			-0.0982
Age_2			0.0010

APPENDIX 2: THE UNIVERSAL FRAMEWORK FOR ESSENTIAL SKILLS

Skill: Listening
The receiving, retaining and processing of information or ideas

Step	Statement
0	I listen to others without interrupting
1	I listen to others and can remember short instructions
2	I listen to others and can ask questions if I don't understand
3	I listen to others and can tell someone else what it was about
4	I listen to others and can tell why they are communicating with me
5	I listen to others and record important information as I do
6	I show I am listening by how I use eye contact and body language
7	I show I am listening by using open questions to deepen my understanding
8	I show I am listening by summarising or rephrasing what I have heard
9	I am aware of how a speaker is influencing me through their tone
10	I am aware of how a speaker is influencing me through their language
11	I listen critically and compare different perspectives
12	I listen critically and think about where differences in perspectives come from
13	I listen critically and identify potential bias in different perspectives
14	I listen critically and use questioning to evaluate different perspectives
15	I listen critically and look beyond the way speakers speak or act to objectively evaluate different perspectives

Skill: Speaking
The oral transmission of information or ideas

Step	Statement
0	I speak clearly to someone I know
1	I speak clearly to small groups of people I know
2	I speak clearly to individuals and small groups I do not know
3	I speak effectively by making points in a logical order
4	I speak effectively by thinking about what my listeners already know
5	I speak effectively by using appropriate language
6	I speak effectively by using appropriate tone, expression and gesture
7	I speak engagingly by using facts and examples to support my points
8	I speak engagingly by using visual aids to support my points
9	I speak engagingly by using tone, expression and gesture to engage listeners
10	I speak adaptively by changing my language, tone and expression depending on the response of listeners
11	I speak adaptively by planning for different possible responses of listeners
12	I speak adaptively by changing my content depending on the response of listeners
13	I speak influentially by changing the structure of my points to best persuade the listeners
14	I speak influentially by changing the examples and facts I use to best persuade the listeners
15	I speak influentially by articulating a compelling vision that persuades the listeners

Skill: Problem Solving
The ability to find a solution to a situation or challenge

Step	Statement
0	I complete tasks by following instructions
1	I complete tasks by finding someone to help if I need them
2	I complete tasks by explaining problems to someone for advice if I need
3	I complete tasks by finding information I need myself
4	I explore problems by creating different possible solutions
5	I explore problems by thinking about the pros and cons of possible solutions
6	I explore complex problems by identifying when there are no simple technical solutions
7	I explore complex problems by building my understanding through research
8	I explore complex problems by analysing the causes and effects
9	I create solutions for complex problems by generating a range of options
10	I create solutions for complex problems by evaluating the positive and negative effects of a range of options
11	I analyse complex problems by using logical reasoning
12	I analyse complex problems by creating and testing hypotheses
13	I implement strategic plans to solve complex problems
14	I implement strategic plans to solve complex problems and assess their success
15	I implement strategic plans to solve complex problems and draw out learning to refine those plans over time

Skill: Creativity
The use of imagination and the generation of new ideas

Step	Statement
0	I imagine different situations
1	I imagine different situations and can say what I imagine
2	I imagine different situations and can bring them to life in different ways
3	I generate ideas when I've been given a clear brief
4	I generate ideas to improve something
5	I generate ideas by combining different concepts
6	I use creativity in the context of work
7	I use creativity in the context of my wider life
8	I develop ideas by using mind mapping
9	I develop ideas by asking myself questions
10	I develop ideas by considering different perspectives
11	I innovate effectively when working in a group
12	I innovate effectively by seeking out varied experiences and stimuli
13	I support others to innovate by sharing a range of tools
14	I support others to innovate by evaluating the right creative tools for different situations
15	I support others to innovate by coaching them to be more creative

Skill: Staying Positive
The ability to use tactics and strategies to overcome setbacks and achieve goals

Step	Statement
0	I can tell when I feel positive or negative
1	I can tell when others feel positive or negative
2	I keep trying when something goes wrong
3	I keep trying and stay calm when something goes wrong
4	I keep trying when something goes wrong, and think about what happened
5	I keep trying when something goes wrong and help cheer others up
6	I keep trying when something goes wrong and encourage others to keep trying too
7	I look for opportunities in difficult situations
8	I look for opportunities in difficult situations, and share these with others
9	I look for opportunities in difficult situations, and adapt plans to use these opportunities
10	I look for opportunities in difficult situations, and create new plans to use these opportunities
11	I identify risks and gains in opportunities
12	I identify risks and gains in opportunities, and make plans to manage them
13	I support others to stay positive, by managing my own responses
14	I support others to stay positive, by helping others to see opportunities
15	I support others to stay positive, by helping others to see opportunities and creating plans to achieve them

Skill: Aiming High
The ability to set clear, tangible goals and devise a robust route to achieving them

Step	Statement
0	I know when I am finding something too difficult
1	I know what doing well looks like for me
2	I work with care and attention to detail
3	I work with pride when I am being successful
4	I work with a positive approach to new challenges
5	I set goals for myself
6	I set goals informed by an understanding of what is needed
7	I set goals, ordering and prioritise tasks to achieve them
8	I set goals and secure the right resources to achieve them
9	I set goals and plan to involve others in the best way
10	I create plans that are informed by my skill set and that of others
11	I create plans that include clear targets to make progress tangible
12	I create plans that are informed by external views, including constructive criticism
13	I develop long-term strategies taking into account strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and threats
14	I develop long-term strategies that use regular milestones to keep everything on track
15	I develop long-term strategies that include feedback loops to support flexibility and adaptability

Skill: Leadership
Supporting, encouraging and developing others to achieve a shared goal

Step	Statement
0	I know how I am feeling about something
1	I know how to explain my feelings about something to my team
2	I know how to recognise others' feelings about something
3	I manage dividing up tasks between others in a fair way
4	I manage time and share resources to support completing tasks
5	I manage group discussions to reach shared decisions
6	I manage disagreements to reach shared solutions
7	I recognise my own strengths and weaknesses as a leader
8	I recognise the strengths and weaknesses of others in my team
9	I recognise the strengths and weaknesses of others in my team, and use this to allocate roles accordingly
10	I support others through mentorship
11	I support others through coaching
12	I support others through motivating them
13	I reflect on my own leadership style and its effect on others
14	I reflect on my own leadership style, and build on my strengths and mitigate my weaknesses
15	I reflect on my own leadership style, and adapt my approach according to the situation

Skill: Teamwork
Working cooperatively with others towards achieving a shared goal

Step	Statement
0	I work with others in a positive way
1	I work well with others by behaving appropriately
2	I work well with others by being on time and reliable
3	I work well with others by taking responsibility for completing my tasks
4	I work well with others by supporting them if I can do so
5	I work well with others by understanding and respecting diversity of others' cultures, beliefs and backgrounds
6	I contribute to group decision making
7	I contribute to group decision making, whilst recognising the value of others' ideas
8	I contribute to group decision making, encouraging others to contribute
9	I improve the team by not creating unhelpful conflicts
10	I improve the team by resolving unhelpful conflicts
11	I improve the team by building relationships beyond my immediate team
12	I influence the team by reflecting on progress and suggesting improvements
13	I influence the team by evaluating successes and failures and sharing lessons
14	I support the team by evaluating others' strengths and weaknesses, and supporting them accordingly
15	I support the team by bringing in external expertise and relationships

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With special thanks to:

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