

# Teachers' Mental Health in the UK

Evidence from the NASUWT's Big Question survey 2019



## About the NASUWT's Big Question survey

The Big Question 2019, carried out in February and March 2019, is the ninth annual national survey of teachers and headteachers conducted by the NASUWT.

Over 5,500 teachers responded to the survey.

The Big Question 2019 highlights the views of teachers and school leaders on a range of subjects including **pay, pupil behaviour, empowerment and professionalism, work/life balance, and mental and physical wellbeing.**

## What are the concerns of teachers?

The NASUWT has been tracking the top five concerns of teachers since 2011. Since the first Big Question survey, the biggest concern has been **workload**.

### TOP 5 CONCERNS FOR TEACHERS



For **young teachers**, workload is even more of an issue...

**90%** say workload is an issue.

# What causes workload for teachers?

The top five causes of **excessive workload** are...

Assessment  
and  
marking  
policies

1

Admin  
tasks

2

Class size

3

Meetings  
before and  
after  
school

4

Lesson  
planning

5

## Feelings of disempowerment...

56%



of teachers believe that they are **not managed** in a way that empowers them.

68%



of **disabled teachers** do not feel empowered.

### What causes disempowerment?

1. Culture of change
2. Culture of blame and criticism
3. Lack of respect for teachers' professional judgement
4. Unrealistic expectations
5. Lack of understanding by decision-makers

## Impact of stress...

**77%** of teachers have experienced more **workplace stress in the last 12 months...**

**82%** of **young teachers** and **LGBTI teachers** have experienced more workplace stress...

**47%**

of teachers do not feel that they have any control over their work

**72%**

feel that they are held responsible for things out of their control

**83%**

frequently worry about work problems when not working

## Feeling unsupported...

**38%**

of teachers do not feel respected as professionals...

**45%**

of black and minority ethnic teachers do not feel respected as professionals...

**59%**

believe that their opinions are not valued by school management...

**70%**

of disabled teachers believe that their opinions are not valued by school management...

## Wellbeing is being affected by their jobs...

**65%** of teachers say that their wellbeing is not seen as important by their school...

**83%** feel **too tired** after work to do the things they like to do...

**86%** believe that the job has impacted **negatively** on their wellbeing in the last 12 months...

**70%** believe the job has adversely affected their **mental health** in the last 12 months...

...this rises to **73%** for **LGBTI teachers** and **80%** for **disabled teachers**...

**57%** believe the job has adversely affected their physical health in the last 12 months.



## Health being impacted upon...



85%

of teachers have lost sleep...



75%

have low energy levels...



14%

have increased or are now on  
antidepressants...



3%

have said that they have **self-harmed** as a  
result of their job...

**in the last 12 months.**

## This means that teachers have been visiting health professionals...



**in the last 12 months.**

# Is it any wonder that...

**57%**

say that their job satisfaction has declined...

**74%**

have seriously considered leaving their current job...

**67%**

have seriously considered leaving the profession...

**in the last 12 months?**

## Leading the way on teachers' mental health and wellbeing...nationally

The NASUWT has been campaigning on issues of teachers' mental health and wellbeing for a number of years, using every opportunity possible to highlight these issues with governments and policymakers.

NASUWT members in schools throughout the UK have taken part in industrial action against adverse management practices where appropriate support for teachers has not been given.

The NASUWT has developed a suite of training opportunities for members, including the Mental Health First Aid course, and extended networks of advice for members in need of support.

## ...and internationally

The NASUWT has been working with Education International, unions and organisations since raising the issue of teacher stress with AFT and AEU at the 7th World Congress in Ottawa in 2015, to ensure that stress, mental health and wellbeing are on the global agenda.

As a consequence, the OECD is undertaking a project on these issues that will require national and international responses, and teacher stress and wellbeing has been discussed at the International Summit on the Teaching Profession.

## Further research and surveys

The NASUWT is committed to undertaking a Big Question survey annually. This complements other members' surveys.

NASUWT-commissioned research and survey reports are available for download at [www.nasuwt.org.uk](http://www.nasuwt.org.uk).

The full Big Question report is available at [www.nasuwt.org.uk/bigquestionresults2019/](http://www.nasuwt.org.uk/bigquestionresults2019/).





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