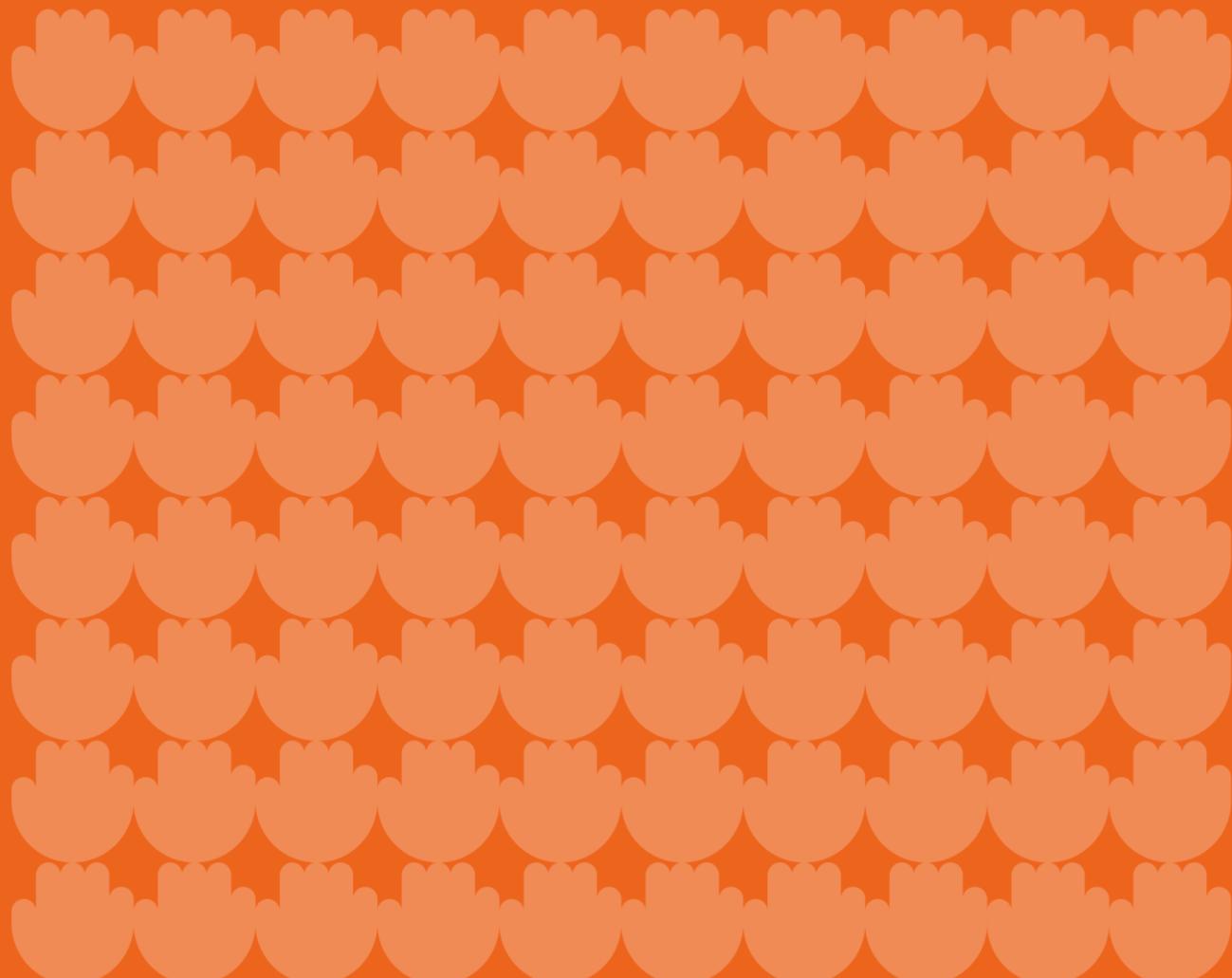




# Industry Labour Market and Skills Intelligence Report

**EDUCATION**

Published January 2022



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# Purpose of Report

This report provides an employer led and current understanding of skills and talent needs required across the Education landscape in Greater Manchester (GM). The intelligence has been gathered from conversations with a large variety of sources including SMEs in the sector, existing employer networks and sector bodies, Local Authorities, GM schools, and education recruitment specialists. GMCA would like to thank everyone involved in the development of this report for their time and insights.

This work is for a range of stakeholders to aid in understanding the skills and talent needs within the GM Education Sector. Recommendations made will not always lead to GMCA led work and skills action. They are to help sum up and support stakeholders to understand where their actions may fill gaps and support talent growth for the sector. Education has been described by the Government as 'the engine of our economy, the foundation of our culture, and an essential preparation for adult life'. This report supports and feeds in to wider GMCA policy and strategy including:

- Greater Manchester Strategy
- Greater Manchester Local Industrial Strategy
- Greater Manchester COVID Recovery
- Greater Manchester Work and Skills Strategy

The report also references and supports many national policies and publications around this sector including:

1. *Statutory framework for the early years foundation stage Setting the standards for learning, development and care for children from birth to five*
2. *The Early Years workforce in England. A comparative analysis using the Labour Force Survey.*
3. *Transforming the Education Workforce: Learning Teams for a Learning Generation*
4. *Analysis of teacher supply, retention and mobility*
5. *Work, education, skills and the 100-year life: How can policymakers ensure the workforce is ready for extreme longevity*

6. *Breaking point: The impact of recruitment and retention challenges on the early years sector in England.*
7. *The COVID19 pandemic and the early years workforce*
8. *Teacher Workforce Dynamics in England Nurturing, supporting and valuing teachers*

GMCA will work on wider sharing and translation of this intelligence for varied audiences in GM. GMCA will also look across devolved powers in the work and skills team to see where the skills system can better align to the needs of the sector. The vision for this work is to be a key resource in a fully aligned labour market response in GM where there is credible, current, employer led and shared insight of the jobs, talent, and skills employers need across our Local Industrial Strategy (LIS) frontier and foundation sectors.

The report sets out an overview of the intelligence available relating to the skills required to meet our Education sector requirements across Greater Manchester. The objectives of this intelligence are as follows:

- Provide a **better understanding** of the progression pathways to roles within the Education sector in GM.
- **Identify** which occupations need to be prioritised.
- Better **inform and implement** existing skills provision for the benefit of GM residents and the education system.
- Identify opportunities for the skills system to **increase the available pathways** for new entrants and upskilled/reskilled workers into priority occupations needed.
- **Understand the future trends** within the education sector – in particular, how these trends will impact the existing workforce and future skills needs.
- Understand the **impacts of COVID19** on the skills-base within the sector including challenges and opportunities.

GM residents need to be able to understand the occupations and progression pathways as well as the technical skills and wider competencies and attributes

required in different areas of the industry and at different levels. There is the need for key stakeholders working with different groups to be able to translate these key skills and labour market messages for the following groups

- Young people
- Influencers from within the sector – teachers, career advisors
- Influences from outside the sector – parents, work coaches
- People looking to switch careers or looking for work
- Skills providers of all types
- Employers
- Individuals wanting to progress in work

This intelligence was gathered during late 2021 – early 2022 and is accurate as of the release date of this report. The report is intended as an initial platform of intelligence and research, which will be built on and updated by GMCA. The **COVID19 crisis pandemic has affected educational systems worldwide**, leading to the near-total closures of schools, early childhood education and care services, universities and colleges. In fact it was estimated that around 88% of the world's total enrolled learners were impacted. This report will also consider the short and longer-term effects of this disruption.

GMCA understands the need to regularly update this intelligence accordingly. Plans are laid out towards the end of the report for further intelligence gathering and research.

## **Executive Summary**

*'Education is the process of facilitating learning, or the acquisition of knowledge, skills, values, morals, beliefs, and habits'*

The Education sector impacts on each of our lives and can often determine future career path and progression. Education is also a huge employer within Greater Manchester employing almost 120,000 people in the region – crucial to GM both as a provider of opportunities to work and as a facilitator for entering other sectors.

This report looks primarily at the skills and labour challenges in education and aims to better inform and guide responses from GMCA, local authorities, employers, training providers and other stakeholders. In this first report we have focused mainly on issues affecting early years and primary education, though many of the findings apply across the sector.

Key findings from this report include:

- Education roles are amongst the most advertised across GM. Teaching remains a position where more staff are needed to fill gaps and to replace those retiring and leaving the profession.
- Specialised roles within the sector – such as careers leads – can be particularly difficult to recruit and these staff are in high demand across the region.
- The COVID19 pandemic has hit the sector hard. Nurseries, Schools, Colleges, and Universities have all had periods of closure and were forced to rapidly develop new ways of learning. Challenges around positive tests and the need for staff and students to isolate continue to affect the sector.
- Employers feel that the impact of the pandemic is now being felt particularly with younger people whose social and academic development is behind what would be expected for their age.
- The relative job security (compared with other harder hit sectors during the pandemic) has meant that demand for jobs and training in the sector from young people and job seekers is growing.

- Employers feel like the sector has a mixed reputation as a career option. Employment is secure and the nature of work is rewarding. However pay is generally low at all levels compared to other sectors. Graduate positions and entry level roles alike are often better paid in other industries.
- Particularly in early years and primary education, the sector is female dominated. There is a struggle to recruit male staff and retention is lower.
- Graduate teaching routes are generally well established. There are several PGCE courses available in GM and bursaries and scholarships are common. Alternative entry routes such as the teaching apprenticeship still require a degree as an entry requirement and are not well utilised by schools.
- Organisations that pay into the apprenticeship levy rarely spend their full allowance. The off-the-job learning requirement can be problematic particularly when staff-to-child ratios must be met. There is concern particularly in early years about apprentices being recruited on the apprentice minimum wage and essentially being used as ‘cheap labour’.
- Many staff feel underpaid and undervalued and that their wellbeing was being affected by pressures of the job.
- Retention across the sector is mixed. Reasons for leaving include burnout/stress, low pay, Ofsted/League Tables and regulations meaning the job isn’t as expected.
- The Education sector will continue to play a key role in the future of GM. Its workforce of today is developing our workforces of tomorrow. There are systemic problems across the sector, but also immediate skill gaps which must be resolved.

## Recommendations

Full and detailed recommendations are given at the end of this report, but a list of the core recommendations can be found below. These recommendations are not likely to be short-term fixes, and several require a long-term system change. They serve to summarise key areas of activity based on the greatest need – activity which will need input from all corners of the sector, including employers, sector bodies, skills providers, and government.

Recommendations from this report include:

1. Commissioning activity should take place to fill **immediate skills gaps in various occupational pathways** including SEND training, careers guidance training (incl. SEND specific), upskilling to support staff around child development delays due to COVID19 pandemic; behaviour management training; emotional coaching and resilience strategies; supply teacher training, and specific Early Years Foundation Stage training for teaching assistants without previous experience in that phase.
2. Careers advice should **position education careers as being secure and socially rewarding** employment. These are important for young people when choosing a career pathway – the sector should use this to encourage them to take up roles in the sector. A more **values-based recruitment** model should be considered. Identifying transferrable skills which may allow people to move from other sectors (particularly into childcare) is also desired within the sector.
3. Employers should ensure that they are working to **improve representation in the sector**. While this is a national issue, the proportion of men working in the sector in Greater Manchester is lower than average. **Male role models should be found** and used to encourage others into the sector, likewise with other underrepresented groups.
4. **Talented and dedicated professionals** should be encouraged into the sector. It should be noted, however, that such a step would only be of any real value if the **systemic challenges facing the sector** – namely, inadequate funding and low pay – are tackled first

5. Employers should be **encouraged to take ownership of the skills problem** themselves, opening up traineeship, apprenticeship, or kickstart positions for young people where possible to gain occupational competence as well as qualifications.
6. Organisations should be encouraged to **join the GM Good Employment Charter** and pay below minimum wage (i.e., Apprenticeship minimum wage) should be strongly discouraged. Terms and conditions must encourage retention.
7. Training providers must make **provision more flexible to meet the needs of both employers and employees**. This may include evening and weekend learning. There should also be an understanding that whilst staffing shortages and financial constraints remain – training staff is often difficult due to backfill costs when keeping to staffing ratios.
8. Careers in the adult education sector need the same parity of esteem as working in schools. Since full teaching qualifications are not needed, there is a huge imbalance in pay.
9. Practitioners in the sector have commented that they have accessed more training online than ever before; **online courses should be accredited** wherever possible.

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# 1. Introduction

- (1.1) Across the UK there are five stages of education: early years, primary, secondary, Further Education (FE) and Higher Education (HE). Education is compulsory for all children between the ages of 5 (4 in Northern Ireland) and 16). FE includes any study after secondary education that's not part of higher education. The fifth stage, HE, is the continuation of study post the age of 18.
- (1.2) The Education sector is vitally important to the UK for a number of reasons. First, it is a major employer of highly skilled and qualified employees. Secondly, it provides the UK with a large part of its competitive advantage in world markets by providing the education and training to individuals allowing them to provide innovative solutions to a wide range of problems. In particular, the UK's universities are respected worldwide. Thirdly, it can help prevent social exclusion and facilitates upward social mobility by providing individuals with the skills and abilities to gain access and then prosper in the labour market.
- (1.3) In the year ending 2021, the Gross Value Added (GVA) of the education sector amounted to approximately £98.7bn, a reduction of around £18.3bn compared to 2019. This is largely as a result of falls in productivity during the pandemic. However the education sector will continue to play a key part in every resident's life, and is strategically important to the city region. Within GM in recent years, the prevailing narrative for the sector has been that:
- GM's education system is underperforming relative to the national average and that the objective should be to raise educational attainment levels to at least the national average.
  - GM's qualifications profile in the working age population is also low relative to the national average, both in relation to the proportions of people with higher level qualifications (too low) and the proportion with no or low qualifications (too high)
- (1.4) These statements do not tell the whole story and when compared to the rest of the country (excluding London), GM actually does better in all phases of 5-

19 education except early years. However, there are still issues both nationally and locally which impact the sector and are explored in greater depth later in this report.

- (1.5) There are currently 506,400 full-time teachers in the UK. 30.5% of these teachers are male, and 69.5% are female. In GM, an estimated 117,000 work in education sector. Of these 69,000 are listed as teaching or education professionals. Employment is concentrated in Manchester as the most populous borough, but the sector is a major employer in every borough, especially Salford, Stockport and Wigan. A further breakdown is given in Figure 1 below.

Industry	Employees	Full-time employees	Part-time employees
<b>85: Education</b>	<b>117,000</b>	<b>64,000</b>	<b>53,000</b>
851: Pre-primary education	2,500	1,250	1,000
852: Primary education	44,000	19,000	25,000
853: Secondary education	34,000	20,000	14,000
854: Higher education	25,000	16,000	8,000
855: Other education	10,000	6,000	4,500
856: Educational support activities	1,750	1,250	500

**Figure 1 – Breakdown of GM Education employment**

- (1.6) Greater Manchester has approximately 596 nurseries, 707 primary schools and 274 secondary schools. Of these 41 are independent schools. There are 10 Further Education colleges, 11 sixth form colleges and over 50 work-based learning providers in the Greater Manchester Learning Provider Network, providing education and training for over 70,000 young people across Greater Manchester. In total there are around 2,600 different GM employers in the education sector. As well as the schools, colleges, and Universities other large employers in the region include Assessments and Qualifications Alliance, the Royal Northern School of Music and Seashell Trust.
- (1.7) Greater Manchester has one of the largest student populations in Europe. There are around 96,200 people studying at five Higher Education Institutions,

of which 17,500 are international students. While the school, college, and higher education systems are important to the city region, the scope of this first report will mainly focus on Early Years and Primary School Education

## Early Years Importance to GM

*“The foundations for virtually every aspect of human development – physical, intellectual and emotional – are laid in early childhood. What happens during these early years (starting in the womb) has lifelong effects on many aspects of health and well-being – from obesity, heart disease and mental health to educational achievement and economic status”<sup>1</sup>*

- (1.8) Improving early years outcomes and school readiness levels is a priority in the Greater Manchester (GM) Strategy<sup>2</sup>, the GM Children’s Health and Wellbeing Framework, Population Health plan, and the GM Children’s Plan. To realise this ambition to improve early years outcomes, the early years workforce must have the right skills and competencies to help children achieve their potential. The early years workforce across GM is varied and comprises of practitioners, teachers, children’s centre workers, family support workers, health visitors and social workers. Whilst some of these roles form part of the ‘wider’ early years workforce they play an important role in improving outcomes of young children and their families.
- (1.9) It is by now well-established that the first five years of a child’s life play a pivotal role in their long-term learning, development and life chances – and yet, a 2020 report by the Social Mobility Commission<sup>3</sup> found that the average hourly wage across the early years workforce in England – which is 96% female – is just £7.42 per hour, compared to an average pay across the female workforce of £11.37. This is particularly skewed by a high number of

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<sup>1</sup> [Marmot review; strategic review of health inequalities](#)

<sup>2</sup> [GMCA – December 2021](#)

<sup>3</sup> The stability of the early years workforce in England, August 2020

apprentices paid below minimum wage. Low wages feed into the main workforce issues seen in the sector – Recruitment and Retention

## **Recruitment**

- (1.10) Recruiting staff can be difficult across the sector. It can be a particular challenge when hiring staff for SEND education roles; many applicants do not feel they have had enough experience and training to support a special needs class. Research spanning the last ten years suggests that new or trainee teachers are often not confident, or comfortable, to enter the field after completing their training course. Also, some SEND jobs are very physically and emotionally challenging. This can affect the mental health of staff.
- (1.11) The pandemic has made people re-evaluate their career paths and think more clearly about what they want to achieve through their job. The relative security and availability of jobs in education has made them attractive, and also the opportunity for people to make a difference to their communities. Across the sector, schools and childcare providers need to ensure they are hiring staff who have great interpersonal skills, similar to a customer service role. This may be in communicating to parents, or to University students who expect a higher level of service as fees have increased dramatically. Other challenges HR teams face in recruitment, is around data protection and compliance. It is especially difficult to meet compliance when hiring new staff. A lot of pre-employment checks are needed before a candidate can be hired and this places a lot of strain onto the HR team.
- (1.12) Unlike the commercial sector, it can be more difficult for education settings to measure their success. Ofsted reports and league tables go some way to help with this, but that largely measures team performance, rather than individual staff performance. These inspections are also often carried out with very little notice, which can be stressful for staff.

## **Retention**

- (1.13) Another key challenge is staff retention. Long working hours and low pay are cited as two of the major reasons teachers decide to leave the profession.

High staff turnover is not only disruptive it also costs early years settings, schools, colleges and universities a lot of money. The cost of hiring and training new staff can be extremely expensive. It can damage a school's reputation and affect learning.

- (1.14) Pay is also certainly an issue across the sector. For example, roles which are widely (and wrongly) labelled as being 'unskilled', such as that of the support worker or teaching assistant, often come with a rate of pay close to the minimum wage. Along with infrequent and often baseline pay increases, this reduces motivation to stay in work because employees feel undervalued.
- (1.15) A 2019 report found that 14% of those working in the early years sector were living in relative poverty<sup>4</sup> (defined as households earning an income of less than 60% of the UK average (£17,640 a year at the time of the investigation). Similarly, research into the early years workforce published by the Education Policy Institute in 2019 found that, at the time, 45% of those working in the sector claimed state benefits or tax credits.
- (1.16) An October 2021 survey of organisations also revealed some worrying data for the early years sector. Headline findings showed that more than 8 in 10 settings are finding it difficult to recruit staff. Around half have had to limit the number of, or stop taking on, new children at their setting over the six months prior to the survey. Over a third of respondents reported actively considering leaving the sector. One in six believed that staffing shortages are likely to force their setting to close permanently within a year.
- (1.17) Mental health and wellbeing in the sector also remain a concern, particularly in light of the ongoing COVID19 pandemic. An Early Years Alliance survey of early educators carried out in January 2021<sup>5</sup> found that 80% of respondents had felt stressed about work because of an issue relating to the COVID19 pandemic 'somewhat often' or 'very often' over the previous month. In addition, 72% had experienced fatigue/tiredness related to the impact of the

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<sup>4</sup> [Childcare practitioners 'living in poverty'](#) - September 2019

<sup>5</sup> [Early Years Alliance](#) - 2021

pandemic on their early year's role over the previous month, while 70% had experienced anxiety and 59% had experienced insomnia. With growing anecdotal evidence of severe recruitment difficulties and recent studies estimating<sup>6</sup> that turnover rates for the early years workforce are between 11% and 15%, it is clear that the sector is facing real challenges.

## Industry Context

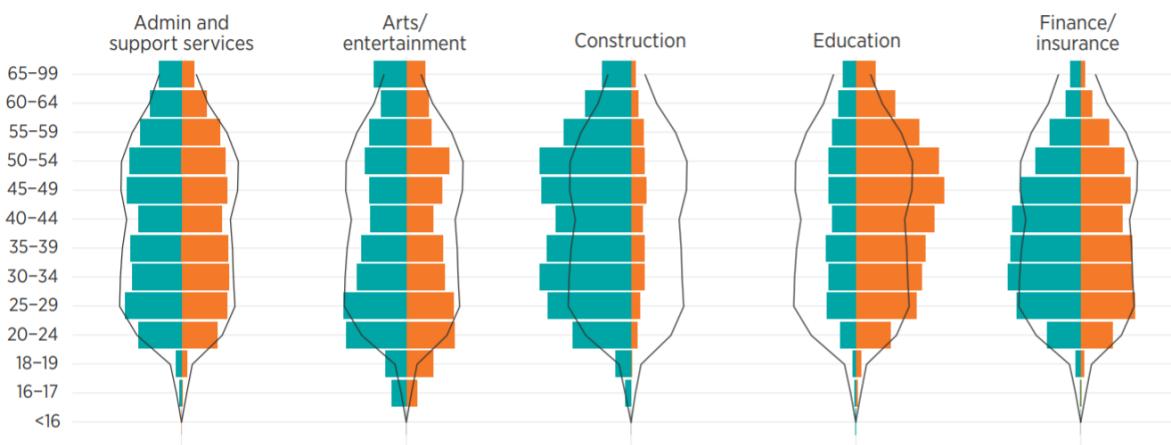
- (1.18) In general, many areas of the Education workforce are highly educated themselves. However, the childcare workforce is less qualified than both the teaching workforce and the general female workforce. Just over a quarter of childcare workers held a degree as their highest qualification level. By contrast, 92.8% of teaching workers hold a degree or equivalent qualification. Meanwhile, over a third per cent of childcare workers' highest qualifications level was to GCSE, A-level or another equivalent Level 3 qualification, versus fewer than 2% of the teaching workforce.
- (1.19) The general trend over the last few years has been towards a slight increase in the percentage of childcare workers holding a Level 3 qualification as their highest qualification, driven by nursery nurses and assistants, but changes are erratic across years. In GM employers reported that work must be done to upskill childminders in particular to this level. In fact there is a fear that qualification levels might be even lower in the future as the workforce is ageing and fewer employees are upskilling
- (1.20) Education in GM – particularly in early years and primary – is a massively female dominated sector. Whilst this is a national issue, percentages of males employed in the sector are lower in the city region than both the North West and national averages. Data from the CIPD<sup>7</sup> below shows how the sectors workforce age and gender breakdown compares to others. What is also apparent is the relatively high average age of the employees in the sector.

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<sup>6</sup> The stability of the early year's workforce in England, August 2020

<sup>7</sup> [CIPD](#) – October 2019

Once the 50+ workforce approaches retirement, there will be fewer experienced employees ready to take up senior positions.



**Figure 2 – Demographics of Education Workforce – (Male workforce shown in teal, Female shown in orange)**

(1.21) Within the Education sector, this demographic split varies. Universities generally have an even proportion of male and female staff. The childcare workforce in particular lacks diversity. Under 10% of childcare workers are male, with the proportion being even lower for nursery nurses and assistants (1.8%), and childminders and those in related occupations (4 per cent). By contrast, nationally around 1 in 4 teachers are male.

(1.22) Employers spoke about their ongoing struggle to recruit but highlighted they were choosing from a reduced talent pool with many receiving no male applicants. In recent years GMCA funded a project<sup>8</sup> to try and encourage men into early years apprenticeships. Learnings were stark:

- A dedicated marketing campaign ran for months to encourage men into the sector – very little interest was generated

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<sup>8</sup> GMCA – September 2020

- Some male apprentices started early on in the campaign, but all have now left – some resigned, others were dismissed, suggesting the pool of candidates was too small to find people who are a good fit
- While still challenging, many nurseries outside of GM haven't had quite so much difficulty recruiting men. It is thought this is because most of those nurseries already have at least one man working there. The GM nurseries are starting from zero in most cases.
- Low pay is a disincentive across early years settings, but maybe even more so for men, who tend to be more motivated by pay.
- Men expressed concerns about being accused of inappropriate behaviour in early years settings, and parents and staff sometimes reflect those attitudes. Some employers reported they had put training in place to try and combat this in their own staff, but it's not one-and-done – they still have issues with existing staff being sceptical of men and are having to do further training

## **2. Background**

### **Policy Landscape**

- (2.1) Education in the UK is a highly regulated sector and a hot political topic. The Department for Education is responsible for children's services and education, including early years, schools, higher and further education policy, apprenticeships and wider skills in England. DfE is one of the largest government departments, supported by 17 agencies and public bodies. The Office for Standards in Education, Children's Services, and Skills (Ofsted) is a non-ministerial department of the UK government, reporting to Parliament. Ofsted is responsible for inspecting a range of educational institutions, including state schools and some independent schools. It also inspects childcare, adoption and fostering agencies and initial teacher training, and regulates a range of early years and children's social care service
- (2.2) With education being high on the political agenda there are continuous debates about how the sector must develop. A 2021 report <sup>9</sup> highlighted key points about issues within the wider UK ecosystem.
- Child poverty must end - at the start of the pandemic 4.3 million children were living in poverty in the UK, which was 31% of children, or nine in every class of 30. An estimated 9% of UK families did not have a laptop, tablet or desktop computer. Two million households did not have access to the internet.
  - Highlighting the importance of good quality early years education, 40% of the education attainment gap was set in stone before children even started school. Lifting households out of poverty similarly boosts a child's chances, but 70% of children growing up in poverty lived in a household where at least one person worked.

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<sup>9</sup> [Child poverty – State of Child Health](#)

- High-stakes exam-style testing should be replaced with assessments fit for the future. The English education system topped international league tables for the number of tests pupils take. Children entering education in 2021 would be young adults in 2033, and for schools to prepare them for jobs that had not yet been created, as well as technologies that had not yet been invented, the curriculum and assessment system must enable children to make and do as well as reading and writing.
- (2.3) Within Early Years the EYFS framework sets the standards that all early year's providers must meet to ensure that children learn and develop well; ensures children are kept healthy and safe; ensures that children have the knowledge and skills they need to start school. This statutory framework is for: school leaders, school staff, childcare providers, childminders, out of school providers. From 1 September 2021, all early year's providers must follow the new early years foundation stage (EYFS) framework<sup>10</sup>.
- (2.4) Our People, Our Place<sup>11</sup> sets a clear objective to make Greater Manchester one of the best places in the world to grow up, get on in life and grow old – where there is a good start in life for everyone, with children starting school ready to learn. All of these objectives have been damaged by the COVID19 pandemic. As a response, GMCA partnered with the Greater Manchester Learning Partnership to develop a Recovery Strategy<sup>12</sup> to help educational bodies with the return to full time operation.
- (2.5) Pulse surveys of early years providers across GM have been undertaken and demonstrate concerns around the short- and long-term impact of loss of income to early years providers as a result of lockdown. Information is being used to support discussions on funding options within GM and with central Government to secure future viability and sustainability of the sector.

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<sup>10</sup> [EYFS statutory framework](#)

<sup>11</sup> [Greater Manchester Strategy](#)

<sup>12</sup> [GMLP](#)

## **Key Trends & Market Forces**

- (2.6) It has been the pandemic which has caused most disruption within the sector and this is discussed in great detail in the next section. Other global trends – including automation and the move towards a greener economy – have had relatively low impacts across education. It's likely that they may influence learning though as new jobs in these sectors emerge, and careers advice must remain current and credible.
- (2.7) As a direct public service, education is impacted by population. The number of pupils surged in recent years due to higher-than-average birth-rates between 2002 and 2012, although growth has now levelled off. This influx of new pupils caused additional strain on the education system as childcare providers and schools had to increase class-sizes to accommodate more students.
- (2.8) One of the more recent trends in education is the emergence of 'all-through' education establishments run by multi-academy trusts. Children can stay with the same provider from the moment they enter nursery to when they leave as an 18-year-old adult. This shift can see the traditional transitions through stages of education eliminated, for example moving from a primary to a secondary school. While this minimises disruption, it could potentially impact a child's ability to adapt to different environments. It has also posed challenges for educators in terms of planning the student journey, ensuring staff are trained with the skills required for the smooth running of a new organisational structure. Academies are more popular in some GM localities than others.
- (2.9) The Government issued a long-term plan<sup>13</sup> to 'boost the productivity and earning power of people throughout the UK' includes an emphasis on education. In particular strengthening vocational education, as a viable and valuable alternative to the existing academic provision. It also launched various initiatives to encourage more female students into science, technology, engineering and mathematics (STEM) subjects. Those working in

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<sup>13</sup> [Pioneering reforms to boost skills and jobs](#)

education are expected to help nurture and encourage young women in these areas to address the current gender gap in the uptake of STEM courses.

- (2.10) Incorporating technology into our everyday lives is the norm – schools and education bodies are no different in this regard. Online learning has increased massively in recent years and new systems were used extensively during the pandemic. Advances in neuroscience have led to a greater understanding of how the brain works, with implications for the ways that adults and children learn best. For example, evidence shows that early childhood development deficiencies impact cognitive development and learning performance from the beginning of a child's life.
- (2.11) Given the importance of technology in education, particularly over the course of the pandemic, ensuring that every student has access to the platforms used is critical. Launched in April 2020 as part of GM's pandemic response, the GM Tech Fund<sup>14</sup> was started to support learners with the technology and connectivity they needed to work and learn from home. Within the first year, 3,527 devices were donated from companies across GM, which were restored and provided to 127 schools and colleges for use by their students. The scheme has now transitioned into a longer-term programme to address digital exclusion among young people across GM.

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<sup>14</sup> [GMCA – April 2020](#)

### **3. COVID19: Impact on Education**

- (3.1) The 2020 COVID19 pandemic has had profound impacts on society, the economy and on the entire education sector. Teachers' workload, well-being, recruitment, and retention have been impacted by the national crisis. Education had the lowest proportion of furloughed workforce, with just 3% of the workforce accessing furlough. Similarly, as a sector it had a high proportion of organisations which continued operations throughout, with only 13% of schools and education bodies closing at some point during the first lockdown. Many others shifted learning online, delivering courses through live delivery platforms instead.

#### **Young people**

- (3.2) Pupils' wellbeing and mental health was an immediate, pressing concern. Employers have spoken about a deterioration in wellbeing, especially increased anxiety. A large minority noted an increase in severe mental health issues in pupils of all ages, including concerning increases in self-harm. Schools and organisations have found it difficult to secure specialist external support. Pupils were less emotionally and academically ready for transition than usual, especially those moving between early years, reception and Year 1, and those moving from Year 6 to Year 7.
- (3.3) Employers reported there is need for properly funded services and a multi-agency approach, to mitigate further mental health deterioration. As part of the recovery from COVID19, school leaders identified the following key support needs: properly funded professional support for pupil wellbeing (most urgent), flexible holistic recovery funding for schools, for leaders to deploy according to individual setting/pupil needs; and ongoing (medium/long-term) support for academic recovery

#### **Teachers and Staff**

- (3.4) As well as amongst young people, the pandemic led to an increase in stress, a rise in anxiety, and lower levels of happiness and life satisfaction among teachers. This lower level of well-being among teachers was also experienced

by similar individuals in other professions suggesting it was related to the circumstances more than the profession. In Education, nationally of an estimated 154,000 work-related ill health cases (new or long standing) 54% were stress, depression or anxiety<sup>15</sup>.

- (3.5) Understanding around teachers' wellbeing is likely to have been skewed to some degree by relatively high job security. This initially led to a surge in applications to initial teacher training (ITT) during the pandemic as other sectors saw more turbulence, but has since calmed down. Organisations in GM warned against relying on those numbers as it appears to be a direct response to the challenges of the pandemic, which could indicate too many people getting into teaching for the wrong reasons – seeing it as a safe and secure “pandemic-proof” role rather than the vocation it is. On the other hand, COVID19 has led to a reduction in capacity for school-based training placements, just as more trainees are entering ITT. Teachers' working hours dropped to a more manageable level during 2020 but returned to the pre-2020 level in the autumn term of 2021.
- (3.6) Employers also reported that central Government need to increase funding and further invest in the recovery of the education sector. In the UK the amount pledged by the Government to compensate for lost learning post pandemic amounted to just £310 per pupil, while other countries had been spending far more, £1,830 per young person in the US and £2,090 in the Netherlands<sup>16</sup>. Also, GM employers felt that recent teacher pay freezes are unlikely to be sustainable in the medium term as the wider labour market recovers and other occupations start to see wage increases. Additional funding towards teacher recruitment and retention is crucial for the sector to fully recover from COVID19.

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<sup>15</sup> LFS, estimated annual average 2018/19-2020/21

<sup>16</sup> NEU Value Education

## **Greater Manchester**

- (3.7) The COVID19 pandemic has hit education worldwide, and different approaches to dealing with this have been taken across the globe. Greater Manchester has developed an educational recovery strategy<sup>17</sup> to support efforts as students return to full time education. The Education & Employment Board, which reports to the Children's Board, is responsible for the coordination of the strategy. The strategy seeks to ensure support for all children and young people, paying particular attention to those who are vulnerable to underachievement, marginalisation, and exclusion.
- (3.8) It is designed in relation to three intended outcomes: Presence: ensuring that all pupils return to school and attend regularly. Participation: creating a climate within schools where all pupils feel welcome and valued. And Progress: developing policies and practices that maximise the achievement of all pupils.
- (3.9) With these outcomes as the focus, the strategy involves the development of 'pathways to success'. These should help to move knowledge around, crossing borders between local authorities, and involving maintained and voluntary aided schools, academies and free schools. This looks to build on and strengthen the many partnerships that already exist across Greater Manchester.

## **National – Early Years Recovery Strategy**

- (3.10) When considering COVID19 impact on the sector and ways in which GMCA can support our people, it's important not to duplicate the ongoing national efforts. The UK Government have said that they will commit £153 million to build a stronger, more expert workforce in the early years sector. Many of their key messages<sup>18</sup> are relevant and consistent with what employers reported about the sector in GM:

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<sup>17</sup> Greater Manchester educational recovery strategy

<sup>18</sup> [Government early years recovery briefing](#)

- The COVID19 pandemic has exacerbated the outcomes gap and set back children's learning and development - particularly in language and maths - and hit those from disadvantaged backgrounds hardest.
- Improving training for early years practitioners is one of the key levers for driving up quality in early education settings.

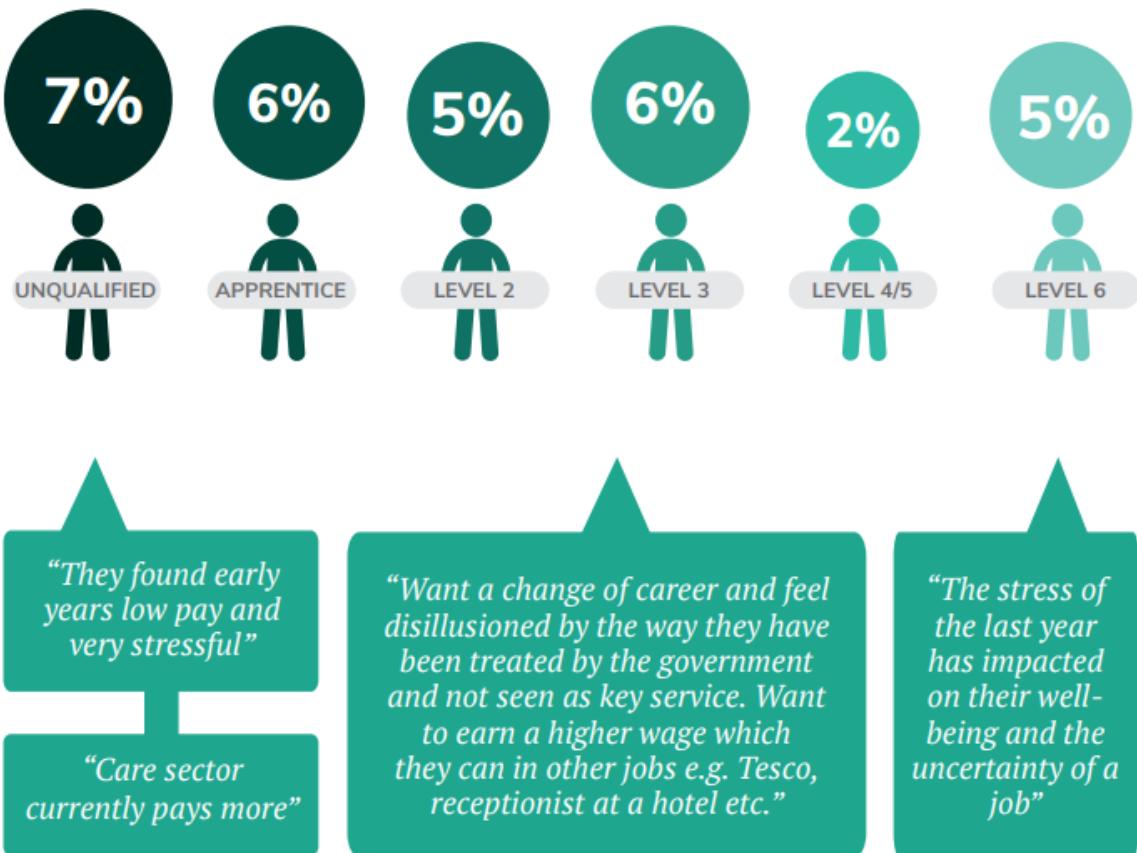
(3.11) The Early Years Education Recovery Programme aims to:

- Deliver a universal training offer, together with targeted support to leaders and practitioners, to create a more sustainable, self-supporting system;
- Strengthen specialist expertise and leadership in the sector by boosting skills to develop children's early language and maths, as well as their personal and social development;
- Improve the capacity of the early years workforce to support children with special educational needs; and train practitioners to support parents with home learning,

(3.12) During the pandemic, there was a number of staff in early years settings who voluntarily terminated their contract and left employment. Employers in GM told us that this was for a variety of reasons and the national picture was the same. Research from the Education Policy Institute shows the split of workers leaving by qualification level<sup>19</sup>. The unqualified members of the workforce were most likely to leave their post as the Figure 3 below shows.

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<sup>19</sup> NDER-EPI – May 2021



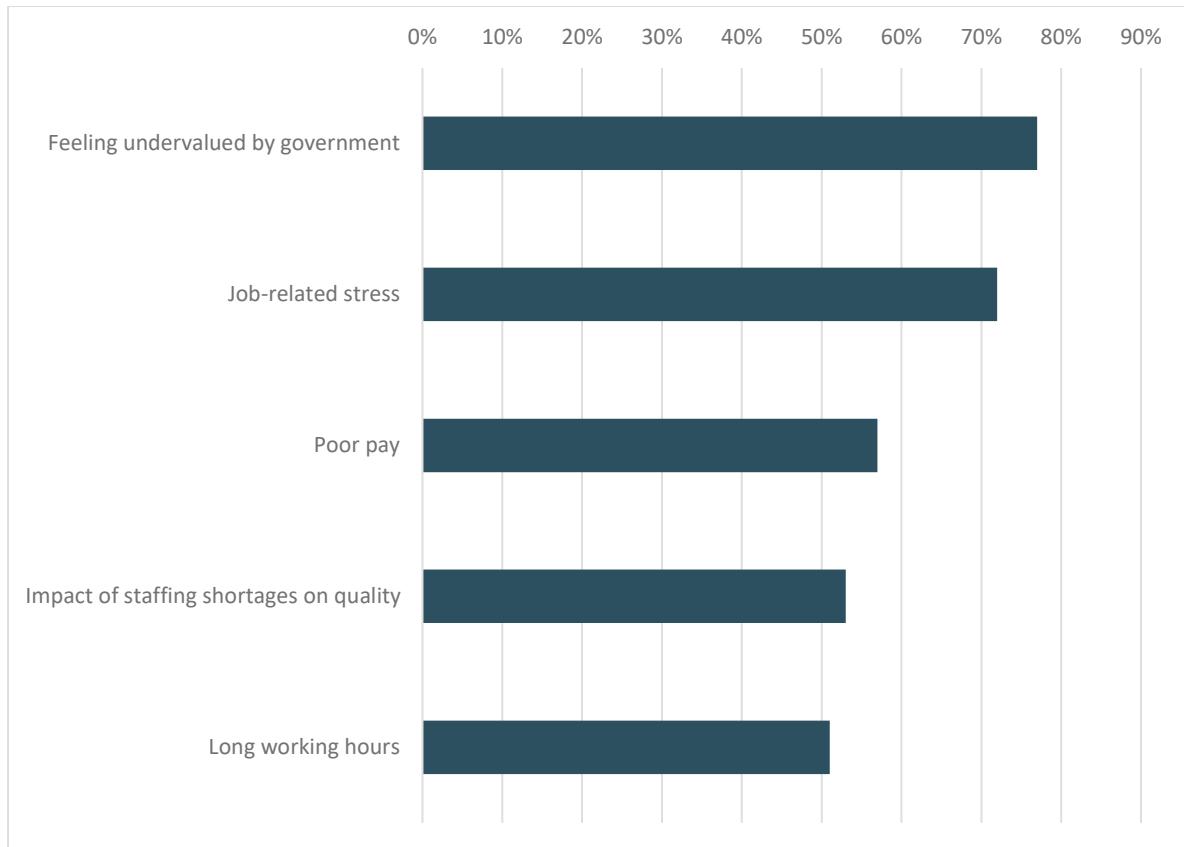
**Figure 3 – % of Early Years staff who left the sector during pandemic by level**

(3.13) Among those settings where staff had voluntarily terminated their contract, the most common reasons that respondents to a National Survey say were given by staff for terminating their contract were personal reasons unrelated to COVID19 (41%), personal or family health concerns related to COVID19 (14%), and unknown (14% of settings reported this, indicating a gap in exit interviews or understanding of why workers left). Employers had also reduced the contracted hours of 5% of staff on average.

(3.14) A number of stakeholders criticised the government's failure to take the steps needed to support the early years workforce to feel as safe as possible during the height of the pandemic. For example, settings were given no support with the purchasing of personal protective equipment (PPE), and early years providers only received access to lateral flow home testing kits in March 2021 – with childminders forced to wait a week later than nurseries and pre-schools – only a few weeks before twice-weekly home testing became available to the

general public. Some also criticised the decision not to give those working in the early years sector priority access to Covid vaccinations, access which, in contrast, was given to those working in health and social care.

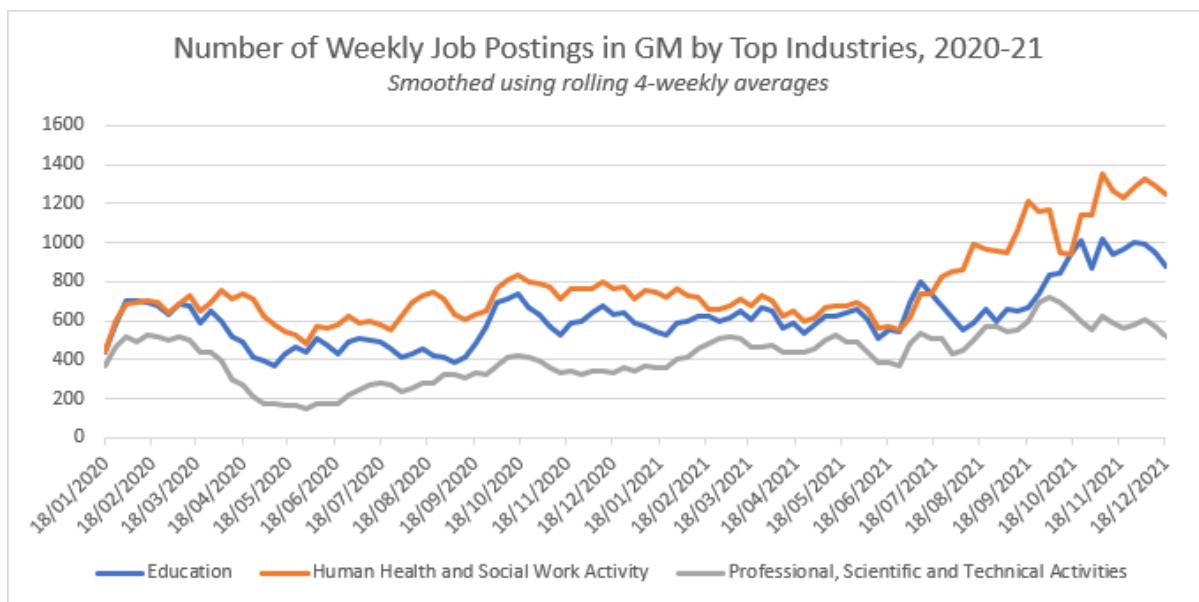
- (3.15) This contributed to a large number of people who hadn't left their role but indicated they would like to. The reasons given for this dissatisfaction are given below:



**Figure 4 – Reasons for reported dissatisfaction among teaching staff**

## 4. Labour Market Information

- (4.1) The sector has continued to recruit extensively over the past year. There were 30,353 job postings across GM in 2021. The most common vacancies were Teaching Assistant (8,737), Tutor (4,159), Primary School Teacher (3,415), and University Lecturer (1,924). This shows the level of need in the sector – Education was in the top two recruiting in 9 of GM's 10 local authority districts. Manchester was the exception (head office roles in the city centre often outnumber education) but still had almost 14,566 vacancies (mostly made up on university positions at the University of Manchester and Manchester Metropolitan. Number of education postings have remained consistently high throughout the year as the chart below show.

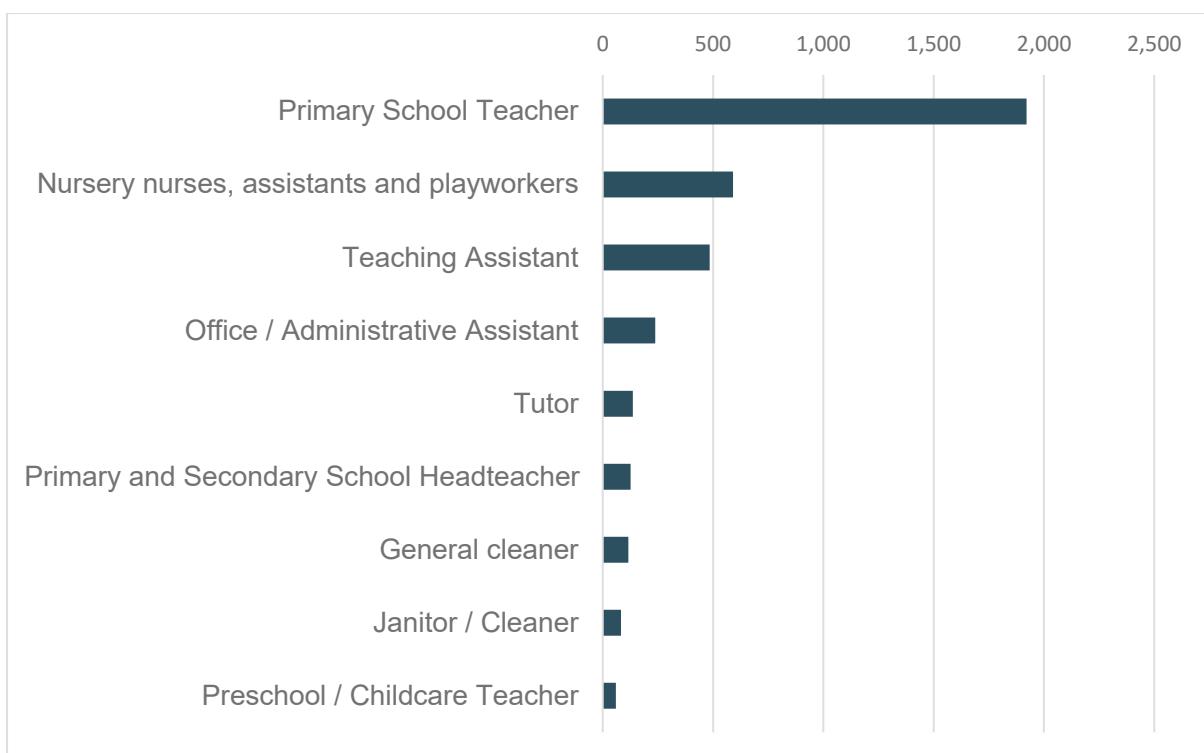


**Figure 5 – Number of Weekly Job Postings in GM by Top Industries**

- (4.2) While many of the jobs advertised are teaching, tutor, or teaching assistant positions; there is significant variety in education jobs. Jobs in education begin at the Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS). Roles include Nursery worker, Nursery Manager, Early Years Teacher, and Early Years Ofsted inspector. jobs in primary education include primary school teacher, SEND Teacher, Headteacher and teaching assistant. There are a vast number of education jobs available at this stage, from teachers and psychologists to librarians and support officers. Further education careers are typically carried out in sixth

form, further education (FE) and community colleges working with pupils aged between 16 and 18 to help prepare them for the world of work or to help them progress on to higher education. Roles include FE Teacher, admission assistant, and careers advisor. In higher education colleges and universities, education jobs include lecturing, support services and careers advice and generally deal with students aged 18 and over

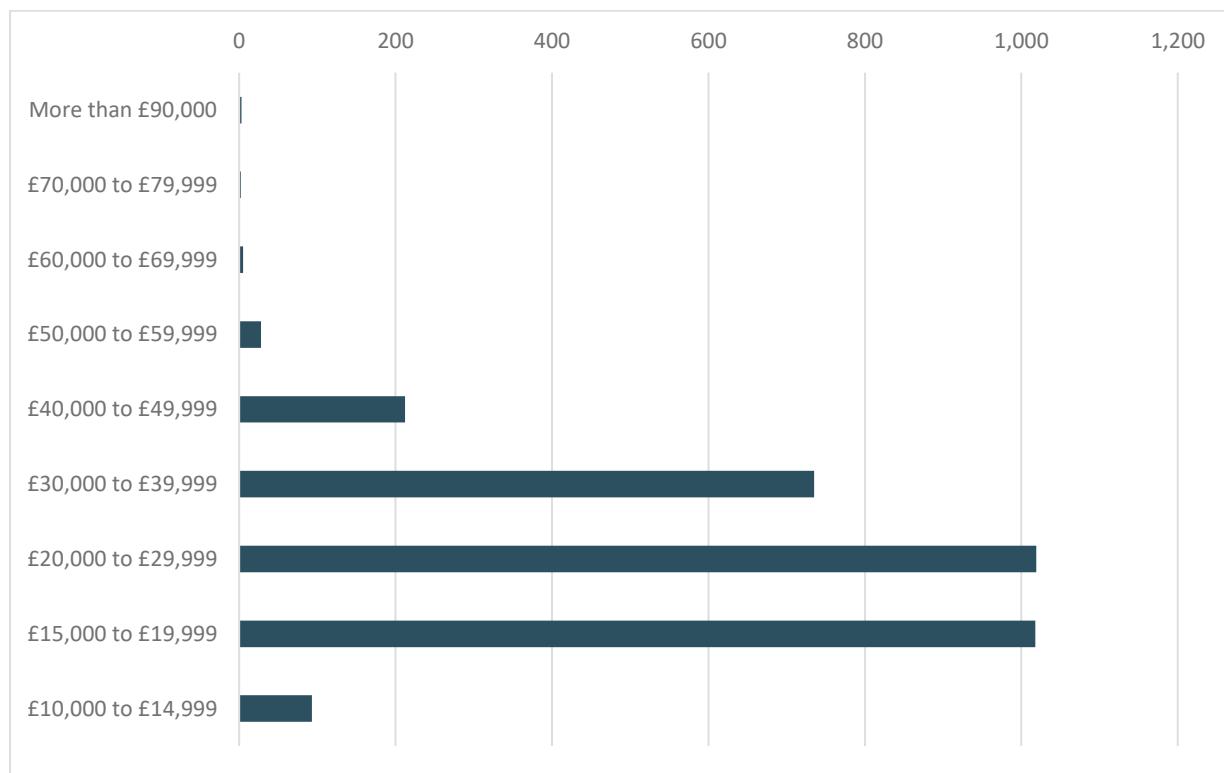
- (4.3) Adult and community education also offers a range of jobs including careers in teaching, sports coaching, activities management, and training and development and are available in a variety of settings. Looking at positions within early years and primary the following occupations were in highest demand:



**Figure 6 – GM Job Postings in Early Years and Primary Education by Occupations – 2021**

- (4.4) Vacancy data also reveals the salaries attached to many of the roles. Supporting what employers reported from the sector, the roles in Early Years and Primary Education are overwhelmingly at the lower end. The median

salary in the sector for a full-time position was £22,900. The jobs advertised in GM over the last 12 months were spread across the following salary ranges:



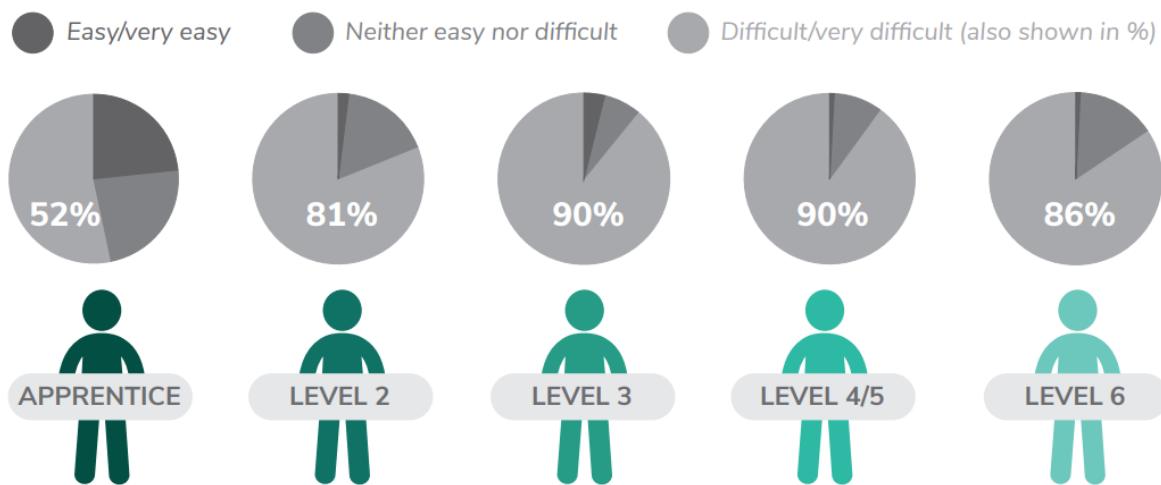
**Figure 7 – GM Job Postings in Early Years and Primary Education by Salary - 2021**

- (4.5) Even before the pandemic the sector struggled with recruitment and retention, but these challenges have been exacerbated by COVID19. Mixed levels of government support and the accompanying sense of lack of recognition for the hard work of early years settings and professionals during the pandemic have left the sector even more strained. But the high turnover rates that plague the sector and the slow recovery from the pandemic mean that providers are still trying to recruit. A survey<sup>20</sup> run by the National Day Nursery's Association looked at employer's recruitment difficulties during the pandemic. It found apprentices were actually easiest to recruit, although still more than half said it was difficult. Difficulty rose with qualification level.

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<sup>20</sup> NDNA Workforce Survey and Report

### Difficulties recruiting by qualification level



**Figure 8 – Early Years recruitment difficulties recruiting by qualification level**

- (4.6) Teacher supply in the primary school system has increased to meet rising demand over the last decade. The DfE forecasts that primary schools will need to maintain teacher numbers over the next decade, by ensuring the numbers entering keep up with those leaving. However, the leaving rate among these teachers had risen pre-pandemic and the number of vacancies has increased, suggesting a risk of future supply challenges.
- (4.7) Retention rates of early-career teachers (between two and five years into their careers) have dropped significantly over the last 10 years. These are the critical years – in GM employers reported that if a teacher stayed beyond this time, then they would have a long career in the sector. Policies like the Early Career Framework<sup>21</sup> are key for supporting new teachers for their first couple of years and providing specialised development opportunities. This is important as otherwise fresh teachers can leave the profession in droves, disillusioned by the lack of support and unsure about whether it is the correct career for them.

<sup>21</sup> DfE – March 2021

- (4.8) Teachers work longer hours in a typical working week than similar people in other professional occupations. While their working hours averaged over the whole year are similar to those in other professions, working intensively over fewer weeks of the year leads to a poorer work-life balance and higher stress levels among teachers. Surveys have suggested that two out of five teachers (41%) are dissatisfied with their amount of leisure time, compared to 32% of similar professionals. One in five teachers (20%) feel tense about their job most or all of the time, compared to 13% of similar professionals. Improving conditions, perhaps by reducing teachers' unnecessary workload presents the biggest potential area for improving retention.
- (4.9) Unmanageable workload is consistently the most cited reason teachers give for why they leave the profession. The emphasis on supporting the health and well-being of staff has increased over time in the nursing and policing sectors as a result of the perceived increase in workload in those sectors. Effectively promoting teacher well-being may improve their ability to manage high workloads. The importance of line management support for improving retention, including managers having the skills to give support, is emphasised by stakeholders in nursing and policing. Given that leaving rates are highest among early-career teachers, support for this group is particularly important.
- (4.10) Teachers' mean pay in real terms is lower than similar individuals in other professional occupations, but median pay is similar between the two groups. In other words, the pay of a typical teacher is similar to that of a typical professional but pay compression within teaching and more higher earners in other professions means that the mean pay of teachers is lower. Ensuring that teacher pay is competitive with other professionals should be a key objective to support recruitment and retention (of early career teachers in particular).
- (4.11) There is more unmet demand for part-time working among full-time teachers than there is for similar professionals. Around a quarter of full-time teachers (23 per cent) would like to reduce their working hours even if it means less pay, compared to 17 per cent of similar professionals. Part of this pattern may reflect teachers' unmanageable workload. Schools (particularly secondaries)

improving the part-time and flexible working opportunities available to their staff is likely to help retain teachers who would otherwise leave and encourage more returners back to the state sector.

- (4.12) Teaching's traditional 'recession-proof' advantage over other professions has eroded over time due to a relatively strong graduate labour market. The proportion of teachers reporting low job security has remained very low (around five per cent) and stable, compared to the level of insecurity among similar professionals which increased during the pandemic. The job security of alternative careers is likely to influence those who are deciding whether or not to enter teaching.
- (4.15) The number of primary teachers grew between 2010 and 2017, in line with rising pupil numbers, but have plateaued since then. The number of teachers leaving the profession before retirement has also increased over the last 10 years, which has made it more difficult to maintain supply at the desired level. GM schools reported more and more cases where school leaders are contemplating early retirement.
- (4.16) Reversing this trend would make it easier for primary recruitment targets to be met, and retain the expertise of experienced teachers in the classroom, rather than relying more heavily on newly qualified teachers. Teachers returning to the sector (primary and secondary) represent a potential source of teachers to fill supply gaps due to under-recruitment to teacher training. However, the number of returners has increased only slightly in recent years, despite policy interventions offering support.
- (4.17) Over the same period, the proportion of teachers moving school has risen more rapidly, from 5.3 per cent to 8.5 per cent for primary teachers and from 4.2 per cent to 8.3 per cent for secondary teachers.<sup>22</sup> This increase in teachers moving around the system is likely to have had a more pronounced impact on specific types of school. Some schools seen as low performing may

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<sup>22</sup> NFER teacher recruitment and retention

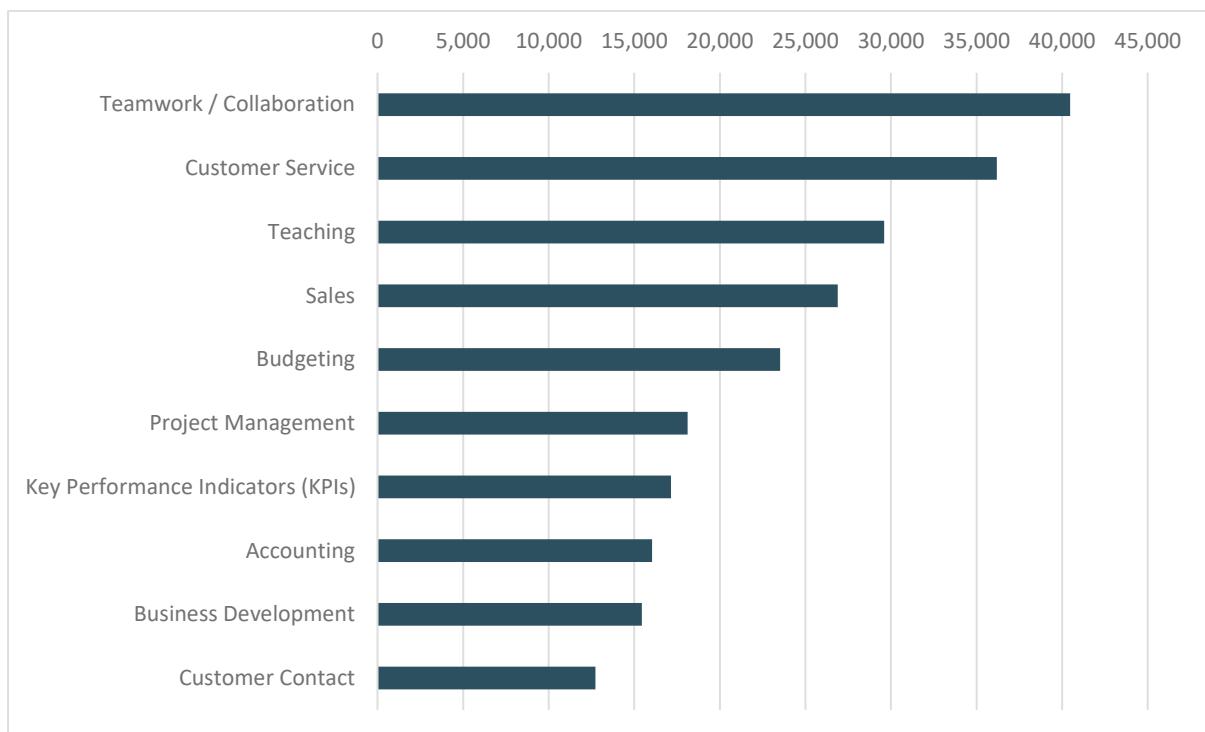
find it more difficult to attract and keep staff. This leaving rate matters at a system-level as it affects the overall supply of teachers. More teachers leaving the profession and moving school means that school leaders have had more vacancies to fill each year, more staffing uncertainty to deal with and higher costs of recruiting replacements

- (4.18) Teaching has sometimes suffered in comparison to other graduate careers which had visible support structures in place, as well as clear pathways for advancement. New teachers can be unsure of how they could advance in their careers, with moving into senior leadership seemingly the only option for an ambitious and hard-working teacher. The increase in competition for top performing graduates has led to improved pay and conditions from private sector graduate employers, leaving schools unable to compete.

## 5. Skills Demand

- (5.1) Before considering skills demand in further detail, it is important to understand the difference between a skills gap and a labour gap. While they are interlinked and there are elements of education which exhibit signs of a skills gap, it appears labour gaps are the real problem. Skills gaps (“proportion of the workforce that were considered to be lacking in full proficiency”) manifest as an under-qualified workforce, with outdated or inappropriate skillsets, resulting in a hard-to-fill vacancies in skilled positions and low productivity. It can be caused by a lack of provision, lack of incentive to upskill or retrain, or an unclear qualification picture. In short – a mismatch between existing skills and required skills.
- (5.2) Labour gaps often manifest as poor application rates for even entry level positions as a result of a lack of interest in the sector among jobseekers. It can be caused by a poor image of an occupation or sector, low wages/poor conditions, or a long or complex training cycle which can't meet employer demand. In short – not enough people to do the job. Employers from across GM have reported a low number of applicants in this sector.
- (5.3) Many of the issues within the education sector are national and even international concerns. The need for more teachers, the desire to improve retention, and poor pay, terms and conditions for some employees are widespread problems seen across the UK. However, the socio-economic makeup of GM contributes to unique problems within the region. Disadvantage in education is usually measured by eligibility for Free School Meals (FSM). Pupils are eligible for Free School Meals if their families are on low incomes and not in full-time work. Greater Manchester has a higher proportion of children on FSM than England or the North West. In all authorities in Greater Manchester (as in England), higher proportions of the Early Years cohort (aged under 5) are on FSM than the Key Stage 2 (KS2) cohort (the end of primary school, or the Key Stage 4 (KS4) cohort).
- (5.4) Across the UK, schools are seeing an acute shortage of qualified teachers. With a decreasing amount of full-time teaching applicants, schools are

increasingly relying on supply teachers to fill the gap. Supply teachers provide an essential, cost-effective solution across a tightly funded sector; however, it is vital that teaching quality remains high and that the absence of permanent teachers at a primary school level does not impact the learning taking place. Vacancy data supports the high levels of demand for teaching staff – after Teamwork and Customer Service, Teaching was featured in the 3<sup>rd</sup> highest number of job adverts in GM in 2021.



**Figure 9 – 2021 GM Job Postings – Top requested skills**

- (5.5) While full-time teachers benefit from five inset days of Continuing Professional Development (CPD) per academic year, supply teachers are often only provided with mandatory training as a standard through their agencies. This means there is potential for them to miss crucial information such as new teaching methodologies and curriculum developments. This requirement for up-to-date training has been highlighted more than ever due to COVID19.
- (5.6) With five children in a classroom of 30 likely to have a mental health problem, and one in 10 primary school children having been diagnosed with a mental

health disorder<sup>23</sup>, it is integral that any teacher entering a classroom is trained sufficiently in dealing with mental health issues and identifying those who are suffering. This is particularly relevant since we know that the pandemic disproportionately affected young people. After the first 12 months of COVID19, average losses for disadvantaged pupils were around 3.3 months in primary maths. Pupils in parts of the north of England and the Midlands have seen learning losses that are greater than those in other regions. Prior to the pandemic, disadvantaged pupils were already 18 months of learning behind their more affluent peers by the time they took their GCSEs.

## **Early Years Skills Demand**

- (5.7) More than half of all early year's settings say there is a "skills gap" in their staff team, according to a recent survey in 2021<sup>24</sup>. Early years staff reported skills gaps relating to knowledge of stages of development (26%), methods of supporting children's learning (27%), observation, assessment and planning (26%) and understanding and managing children's behaviour (22%). Other common missing skills were related to identifying and supporting children with SEND (19%) and establishing good relationships with parents (17%), and shortages identified also included more general tasks such as problem-solving (31%), self-confidence (25%) and team work (21%).
- (5.8) The reasons managers gave for these gaps included qualifications that hadn't fully prepared staff for their job roles (55%) and recruitment difficulties (38%). Cost was cited as the biggest barrier to further training and development, with increased workload the second next most common barrier. Recruitment appears to be a consistent problem for the sector, with 77% of respondents reporting that vacancies are hard to fill. To fix the problem, half of the survey respondents said they were hiring candidates without experience and 35% said they were hiring candidates without qualifications.

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<sup>23</sup> Children's Mental Health Statistics

<sup>24</sup> Early years alliance

- (5.9) GM employers reported a similar story to the national picture. Organisations spoke of their ongoing recruitment challenges of more experienced staff in childcare/early education. They thought this may again link to the poor pay for these roles in comparison to other sectors. They mentioned gaps in understanding of child development and in-depth knowledge of EYFS (early years foundation stage). There was a feeling of a lack of leadership and management ability particularly within the Private, Voluntary, and Independent (PVI) sector. It was noted though that the leadership NPQ is to be made available to PVIs from next year through ECT hub suggesting this is on the agenda. Many staff spoke about how early years staff in school are dealing with children with increased development delays due to pandemic – they are less ‘school ready’. Level 2 SEND Training was also raised as a gap – many schools employ specialists in their SEND teams, but an understanding of SEND for the rest of the workforce would be very beneficial.
- (5.10) There was a feeling that communication training to support practitioners with building relationships with parents and children is lacking. Many stakeholders spoke about people not being work ready when they started their role. Another issue fairly unique to the sector is an abundance of organisations paying the apprenticeship minimum wage as a cost-saving strategy. For example, there were 18 ‘early years’ apprentice vacancies being advertised within 15 miles of Manchester City Centre in December 2021. Every one of these vacancies was paying below the national minimum wage (£8.91/hr) most instead were paying the apprentice minimum wage (£4.30/hr). Employers also reported a desire for childminders/unqualified/non-level 3 practitioners to have the opportunity to gain a Level 3 qualification with more flexible training options. At present, GM Apprenticeship training providers do not offer Level 3 EYs or play work training, although this may be due to demand not being obvious.

## **Primary Education Skills Demand**

- (5.11) Employers reported that some schools have a skills gap around sport. Often the sports teams become the responsibility of whichever teacher has an

interest in that field. Where there isn't an obvious candidate, it may be somebody without the skills to develop young people. Sports activities can be a valuable and critical part of children's development – but given the current funding gaps (for certain activities) and skills gaps in staff in primary education, this opportunity is not being met.

- (5.12) Employers also mentioned that social media training for staff may be beneficial as schools begin to communicate more widely using different platforms. Lack of skills around identifying SEND pupils and/or supporting them through their educational journey was mentioned repeatedly. Also common was a feeling of a skill gap around behaviour management – particularly for older children attending out of school provision. Some employers reported that that education establishments with solid leadership structures are more resilient – so leadership training may be an important tool in boosting performance in primary education.

## **Secondary Education Skills Demand**

- (5.13) The Education Act, 2011 established the statutory duty to ensure that young people – under 19 – in England have “access to careers guidance” support. The Act, therefore, requires secondary schools to be commissioners of careers guidance, not necessarily providers of it. Their statutory duty is to secure external careers guidance in addition to whatever a school provides internally. Both types of guidance have on occasion been problematic in GM. There is a struggle to recruit people with careers expertise and employers highlighted as a skills gap. In addition, some employers suggested that there is a need to develop people with the skills to deliver careers guidance to SEN pupils. They are statistically more likely to become NEET and so some bespoke careers guidance is needed for these learners. Also, advice and guidance training are a really good transferable skillset for lots of employment areas that are growing.

## **Digital Transformation**

- (5.14) With multiple lockdowns on top of existing pressures, teachers of all ages and experience levels have had to tackle the switch to digital learning. However,

some in the sector have struggled with their digital capabilities, which has presented an important learning opportunity within the sector as a whole. The potential of digital technology in teaching is huge and, with the right training in place, teachers will be able to deliver over digital platforms. Upskilling staff will not only build confidence in teaching via remote learning platforms but will also have a positive impact in the classroom.

(5.15) Teachers and early years educators must be able to nurture tech skills in their pupils, leading to better online learning outcomes. There is a growing body of evidence to support claims that digital learning can make an important contribution to pre-school children's cognitive, social and emotive development. It's crucial to get this learning right: where access and connectivity go largely unsupervised, conflicting evidence also shows that risks such as child obesity, impaired language development, and behavioural and socio-emotional issues can be very real. It has also been suggested that, for some children, the over-extravagant use of animations may even impede their understanding<sup>25</sup>. Challenges in meeting this need include:

- the rapid pace of technological change can result in high equipment costs and generate a need for frequent staff training,
- while some technologies may offer 'plug and play' operation, others require significant set-up time if they are to be used effectively,
- it is not always easy to translate the progress made via digital apps into any meaningful, real-word assessment.

(5.16) Nevertheless, when digital initiatives are carefully matched to the needs of the learner and deployed within appropriate models of early years practice, these tools have a rich potential to enhance contemporary teaching and learning for the benefit of all. In GM, there is a strong appetite in the sector to ensure that

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<sup>25</sup> [Digital Technology and Early Years Education](#)

we remain at the forefront of digital developments and so staff must be equipped with the right knowledge.

## Future Skills Gaps

(5.17) As with many sectors, automation will have an effect on Education. As online education platforms allow one tutor to deliver to a much larger audience, it may be that overall employment numbers decrease in some professions like lecturers in higher education. In addition, some automation allows the administration team and faculty staff to focus on their main role as the growth of students and the organisation. Areas where it can be deployed include:

- Course Registration and Pre-admission; automation makes it easy to shortlist eligible and interested candidates and it then becomes very easy for institutions to register the courses and also to complete the admission process thoroughly.
- Student Grading and Assessment; when it comes to grading the students, automation can help organisations do this task simply and efficiently, marking the grades quickly and accurately. This process can help young people get faster feedback. The main challenge in e-learning is that it is difficult for the trainer to identify whether the session is interesting or boring to the individual student. To identify the actual response of the students while giving online lectures, cognitive learning technologies can be used and are beginning to be utilised in the UK. Cognitive integrated applications capture expressions and emotions from the student's face. Applications run numerous patterns built into it and provide instructions to the trainer. It can give an insight into which learning method works best for the targeted students. Thus, online learning sessions become more personalised, thereby increasing the effectiveness of learning for the student<sup>26</sup>.

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<sup>26</sup>[Automation in education](#)

- Attendance Record and administrative tasks; attendance can be recorded digitally, and records/reports and school information provided to parents and pupils electronically.

(5.18) Many organisations have adopted digital technology already and use computerised attendance systems, or methods such as social media to communicate messages quickly to parents. It is important though that staff have the digital skills to use these methods confidently. Within GM employees gave mixed responses to their confidence in using new technology. Improving this confidence will be critical to ensure it's effective.

(5.19) Other global trends such as the shift to Net Zero are unlikely to affect jobs in the sector but will influence ways of working. To address future and current skills gaps, the skills, knowledge, and behaviours required for people to move into green jobs should be embedded into the curricula of relevant subjects at all stages in the learning cycle. Developing curricula to reinforce both specialist and transferable skills, aligning existing training systems and capacities, and training people in green skills will all take time, and there will be a lag in the skills pipeline from the time the investment is made<sup>27</sup>.

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<sup>27</sup>[Green Jobs Taskforce \(publishing.service.gov.uk\)](https://publishing.service.gov.uk)

## 6. Skills Provision

- (6.1) It's often said that the greatest inspiration to a career in education is a good teacher. Education is unique within careers inspiration in that young people have direct experience of the role and duties of a teacher. This highlights a unique case in careers inspiration – that the capability of the current workforce directly influences its attractiveness to young people as the future workforce.
- (6.2) Government policy is that facilitating access to a range of inspirational role models can instil resilience, goal setting, hard work and social confidence in pupils, encouraging them to overcome barriers to success. This approach can particularly benefit pupils from disadvantaged backgrounds who may get less support from family and social networks<sup>28</sup>. This highlights the importance of creating a more diverse workforce or else employers will continue to recruit from the same (small) pool. Having visible men in early years careers for example can help to broaden horizons, challenging stereotypical thinking about the kind of careers to which individuals might aspire.

### Apprenticeships

- (6.3) There are numerous training providers offering apprenticeships as a route into Education. The number of apprentices in the early years sector who either live or work in Greater Manchester are shown in the table below:

Apprenticeship Name	2017/18	18/19	19/20	20/21 (first 6 months)	TOTAL
L5 Children, Young People and Families Manager Standard	1	61	100	45	207
L4 Children, Young People and Families Practitioner Standard		56	188	117	361

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<sup>28</sup> Employability Benefits

L2 Children's Care Learning and Development Framework	1,967	1,868	1048	64	4947
L3 Early Years Educator Standard		42	333	309	684
L2 Early Years Practitioner Standard			12	251	263
L5 Health Play Specialist Standard				1	1
TOTAL	1968	2027	1681	787	6463

**Figure 10 – Early Years Education apprenticeship start volumes**

- (6.4) 93 different training providers have delivered the Level 2 Children's Care Learning and Development apprenticeship to GM apprentices. This was a framework and so is no longer being offered. 49 different providers have delivered the Level 3 Early Years Educator apprenticeship to GM apprentices and 32 providers have delivered the Level 2 Early Years Practitioner. 28 providers have delivered the Level 5 Children, Young People and Families Manager apprenticeship, and 25 providers delivered the Level 4 Children, Young People and Families Practitioner apprenticeship. Below shows the Education and Childcare Pathways as listed on the Institute for Apprenticeship website. Apprenticeships in italics are not currently available for delivery.





**Figure 11 – Apprenticeship Pathways in Early Years and Education**

- (6.5) During their training, early years apprentices can be included in the unqualified part of the staff to child ratios in an early year setting, if their employer is happy that they are competent and responsible. Because an early year's apprenticeship includes a full and relevant level 2 or 3 qualification - no matter when it was achieved - all those who have achieved an early year's apprenticeship can be counted in the staff ratios at level 2 (if they have achieved a level 2 apprenticeship) or 3 (if they have achieved a level 3 apprenticeship). Those who have achieved a level 3 early years apprenticeship will need to have obtained suitable English and maths qualifications in order to count in the level 3 child-staff ratios.

## Higher Education

- (6.6) The 5 HE institutions of Greater Manchester offer hundreds of different degree programmes. The courses tend to be popular, and the universities are highly regarded by domestic and international students. Many students remain within the city region after graduating, taking graduate or entry level jobs to start their career.
- (6.7) The wider Education sector relies on graduate labour for teaching positions where Bachelors/Masters level education is a preferred entry criteria. The Postgraduate Certificate in Education (PGCE/PGCertEd) is a one- or two-year

higher education course which provides training to allow graduates to become teachers within maintained schools. In England, there are two routes available to gaining a PGCE – either on a traditional university-led teacher training course or school-led teacher training. Both of these are on offer in GM. In addition to gaining the PGCE qualification itself, those who have successfully completed the course are recommended for qualified teacher status (QTS) - the requirement to teach in state-maintained schools in England and Wales.

- (6.8) Students can take a three or four-year undergraduate degree course that includes QTS. This enables a candidate to gain their QTS while they study for their degree, with teaching practice being undertaken over the course of the whole programme. These are usually Bachelor of Education (BEd) degrees, though some are Bachelor of Arts (BA) and Bachelor of Science (BSc) degrees. Again this provision is available within Greater Manchester and is so popular that courses are usually oversubscribed.

## **Adult Education**

- (6.9) Greater Manchester's devolution deal includes control over the Adult Education Budget. GM's AEB provision has supported much learning in the education sector. There are 772 learners who have been on these courses and almost £400k AEB funding spent in the sector over the last two years. The table shows that the vast majority of these have been at level 2.

<b>Course Name</b>	<b>Level 2</b>	<b>Level 3</b>
Access to HE Diploma	-	5
Certificate in Supporting Teaching and Learning	512	52
Certificate in Supporting Teaching and Learning in schools	51	8
Certificate in Supporting Teaching and Learning in schools (RCF)	-	23
Diploma in supported teaching and learning	-	41

**Figure 12 – AEB-funded Education programmes**

## **Commercial Provision**

- (6.10) There are multiple routes into job roles within Early Years Education. All early years providers working with children from birth to 5 years old must follow the regulations on early years foundation stage (EYFS) staff-child ratios. This is the number of qualified staff, at different qualification levels<sup>29</sup>, an early years setting needs to have in order to meet the needs of all children and ensure their safety. These regulations are set out in the statutory framework for the early years foundation stage (EYFS).
- (6.11) Providers must make sure staff have the appropriate qualifications to count in the ratios, including the need to have at least one staff member trained in paediatric first aid. As with other types of first aid training, this CPD is largely delivered through commercial provision, with a good range of courses for employers in GM.

## **T Levels**

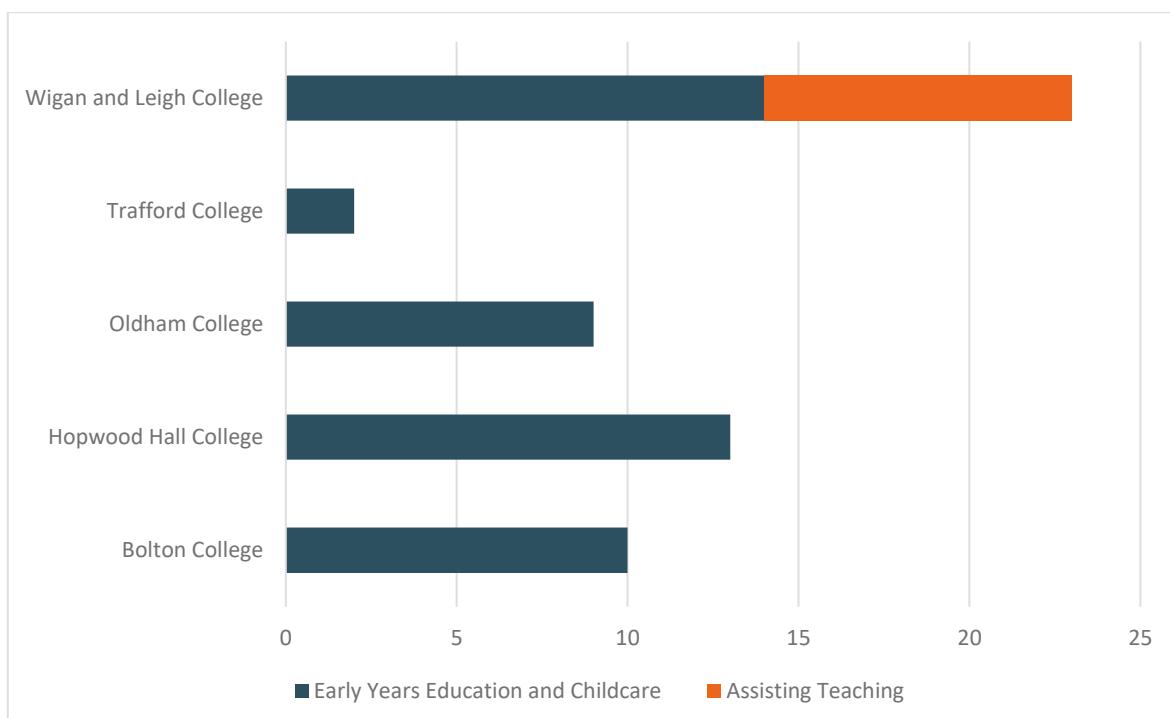
- (6.12) From September 2020 the first T Level in early years education and childcare were taught at selected schools, colleges and other providers across England. T Levels are aimed at young people who want to study a subject to prepare them for a specialist job. An early education and childcare T Level will meet the Early Years Educator criteria. The T Level qualification, once completed, counts towards the child-staff ratios as a Level 3.
- (6.13) The core element of a T Level in education and childcare develops knowledge and understanding in a broad range of topics such as child development, safeguarding and special educational needs, as well as learning about the role of families and support agencies. Students are then able to choose a specialism, which is designed to support their interests and ambitions to progress in a specific area:
- Early years educator

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<sup>29</sup> DfE – October 2021

- Assisting teaching
- Supporting and mentoring students in educational settings

(6.14) Within GM, there were six colleges who expected to offer the Education T levels: Bolton College, Bury College, Hopwood Hall College, Oldham College, Trafford College, and Wigan & Leigh College. Figure 7 below shows the T Level starts for 2021. Although many colleges have not seen the demand they expected, there has been some encouraging feedback after a challenging start. The T levels require 750 hours of work placements which is far higher than other sectors (usually 315 hour minimum) and the pandemic has made this difficult.



**Figure 13 – GM Education T Level Delivery – 2021 starts**

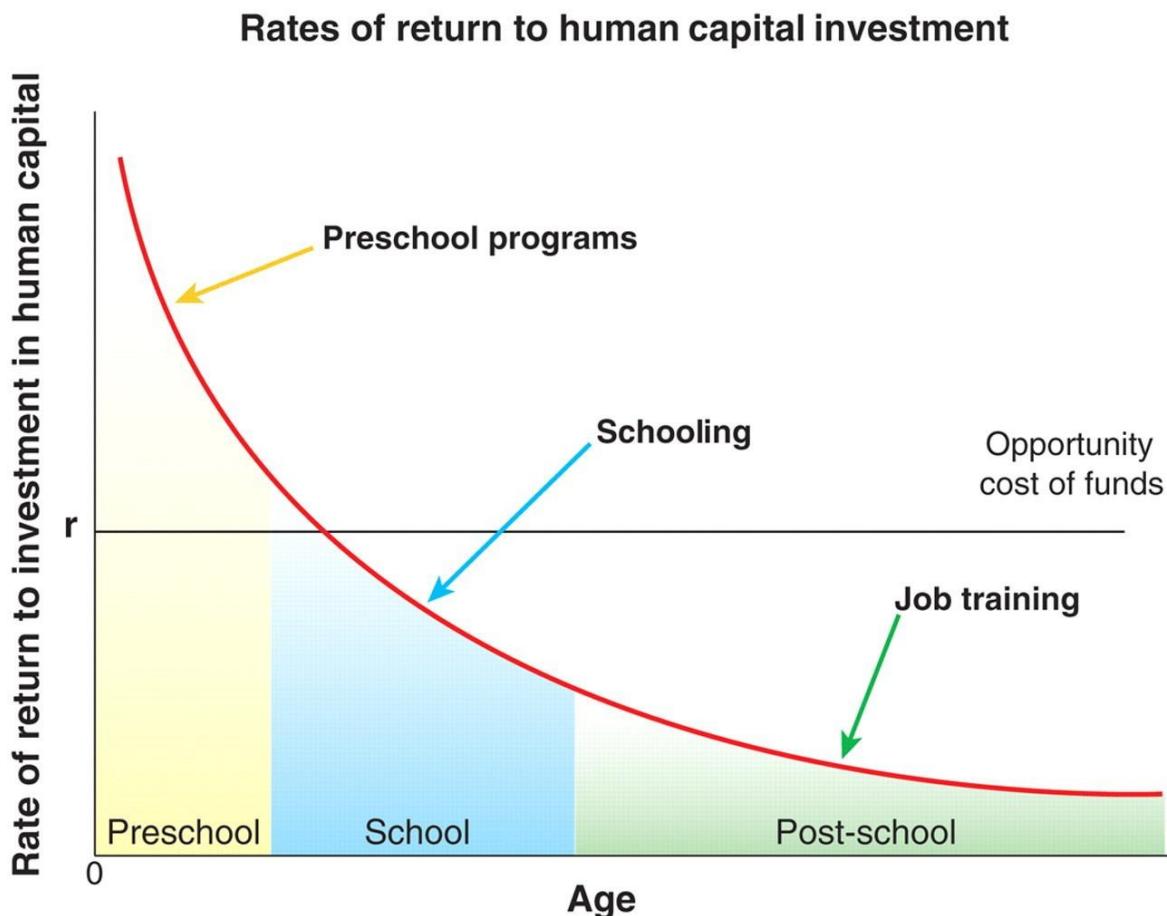
## 7. Summary

- (7.1) This section aims to collate the learning and recommendations from the intelligence gathering process, giving key recommendations for sector employers, training providers, and sector stakeholders. A number of recommendations are given at the start of this report, some of which will feed into GMCA action-planning and commissioning during 2022.
- (7.2) GM has a rich history of education and is home to some of the country's leading academic institutions. The region's innovations have contributed hugely to the development of education for the wider world. It is important that GM continues to develop its young people. Ensuring that the workforce have the right skills to teach these young people is vital.
- (7.3) It is much more difficult and costly to repair the damage done by child maltreatment in later life than to prevent it during the Early Years.<sup>30</sup> Some estimates reveal that 40% of public funds are currently being spent on problems that could have been prevented but were not. Those who suffer multiple adverse childhood events achieve less educationally, earn less over their lifetime, and are less healthy, making it more likely that the generational cycle of harm is repeated. Early years investment is proven to be the best route to overcoming intergenerational inequalities. The chart<sup>31</sup> below illustrates the rates of return to education and training over a person's working life. The earlier the investment is made, the higher the return on this investment.

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<sup>30</sup> WHO - Child maltreatment

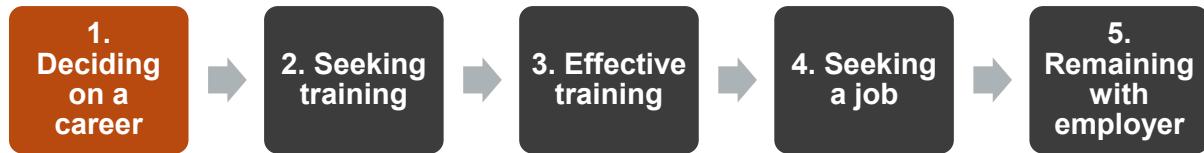
<sup>31</sup> Rates of return to human capital investment in disadvantaged children | UNAWE



**Figure 14 – Rates of return on human capital investment by education level**

- (7.4) Recommendations made in this report will not all be progressed or lead to future work from GMCA. Their aim is to support stakeholders across employers, business networks and membership organisations, skills providers, schools, and sector bodies, with a deep and detailed understanding of the current state of the skills challenge for the education sector. Given the scale and nature of the challenges in the sector, and its susceptibility to both political and socio-economic influences, no individual organisation can provide a comprehensive solution. Some recommendations will address existing challenges within GMCA's remit, while others will work towards future talent/skills development with partners and other stakeholders.

## Deciding on careers in Education



### Challenges

(7.5) It's important to consider the main challenges for individuals and employers at the early stage of the talent pipeline. The main issues facing the sector at this level are:

- The **reputation of the sector** among young people, parents, and teachers is mixed. Education plays a massive part in every life and its importance is universally understood – but it's often not deemed a 'financially' attractive career. The stresses of the roles are not reflected in the pay. Early years roles are often considered 'temporary' or more demanding than other positions across the foundation economy. Graduate positions are seen as being lower paid than in other sectors.
- There is a feeling within the sector that the **high availability of jobs** can make people not suited to the sector 'drift' into teaching. For example, a graduate unsure of their career path decides to train to become a teacher as they perceive it to be a job that would be relatively easy for them to get.
- The **recruitment pool is reduced** for many roles with a stark lack of male applicants – particularly in early years and primary education. Even when men join, they often leave quickly because of a lack of other male staff.
- There are **many entry level roles** but often a lack of flexibility in working hours.

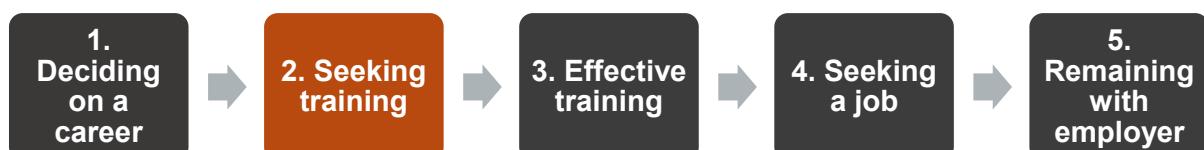
- As almost everyone has been through the school system, their **own experience (good or bad) influences their perception** of careers in the sector which can be hard to shift.
- For somebody not wishing to go into leadership, there is a **lack of progression opportunities**.

## Recommendations

(7.6) Based on findings from this report, GMCA would make the following recommendations to support jobseekers, young people, schools, FE and HE institutions:

- There should be **better careers engagement activity** from employers in the sector to promote careers across the sector as being rewarding both emotionally and financially.
- In particular, the sector would benefit from more **representative role models** – men and people from ethnic minority backgrounds should be encouraged to work with young people. In addition, they should be supported once in the workplace to improve retention.
- The sector would benefit from **better pay across the sector** but particularly in entry level positions. The extra stress and responsibilities of these roles should be reflected in higher pay than in equivalent entry level roles in retail for example.

## Seeking Training



## **Challenges**

(7.7) The education provision market generally meets the needs of employers, though there are concerns about the quality of Level 3 apprenticeship training. Graduates are highly employable and there are national initiatives to attract people into teaching. Whilst the pathway into teaching is straightforward, there are multiple routes into early years with T levels, apprenticeships, college and University courses all available in GM.

- Across GM, there is a **good number of starts** on apprenticeships within Early Years. Numbers were relatively stable at around 2,000 starts p.a. prior to the pandemic. There is a high number of apprenticeships drop offs, and some of this may be related to poor pay.
- There is desire to **increase the proportion of the early year's workforce with L3 or higher qualifications**.
- There is a **lack of opportunity for childminders/unqualified/non-level 3 practitioners to gain a Level 3 qualification** with training on weekends/evenings. GM apprenticeship training providers do not offer Level 3 EYs or playwork training.
- Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) mandates staff-child ratios to be maintained in early education and childcare settings. Without **additional backfill funding**, settings have stated they are unable to release staff to attend training due to the impact on ratios.
- Practitioners have commented that they have accessed more training online than ever before. However, **much of this is non-accredited**.

## **Recommendations**

(7.8) Given the challenges for individuals seeking training for both new and existing staff, GMCA would recommend the following:

- Colleges and training providers should be encouraged to **standardise the quality of information** available to prospective students. They

should also look to make candidates more work ready by considering the gaps in the syllabus in relation to the early year's framework.

- Employers should be **encouraged to pay the GM living wage**, and not rely on employing staff at the apprenticeship minimum wage.
- Training should be offered at **more flexible times** including evenings and weekends. It should be accredited wherever possible.
- Feedback during locality workshops was the **lack of knowledge a lot of the workforce have around child development**. FE EYs teaching staff should be connected with academics and industry experts to improve understanding of their impact and opportunities.

## Effective training



## Challenges

(7.9) Provision for the sector is mixed. University provision is generally an effective way of training teachers and delivery in GM is well regarded. There is an abundance of providers and available technical and vocational qualifications. However some organisations in the sector have reported that they often feel candidates in early years are not 'work ready'. There are some challenges in provision:

- Each set of young people present **unique challenges and characteristics**, and it is impossible for training to cover all eventualities.
- Education is subject to **frequent political change**, and the pandemic has meant new challenges including supporting key workers children; home learning, and "Covid bubbles".

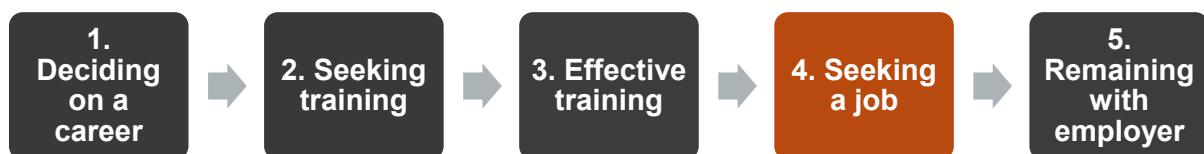
- While employers recognise the value of formal skills training, **soft skills such as being able to communicate** with parents, children, and staff alike are equally valued.
- The sector is changing, with **far greater digitalisation** throughout, meaning staff at all levels need increased digital skills.

## Recommendations

(7.10) Based on findings from this report to improve the effectiveness of education provision, GMCA recommendations include:

- Training should also include work around **soft skills essential** to succeed in the sector.
- There should be **opportunities to learn more flexibly** which will help not only students but organisations mindful of staff-child ratios.
- T Levels and apprenticeships should be **promoted as attractive ways of entering** the sector and the range of different routes should be made clearer.
- Employers would appreciate a **more flexible approach to apprenticeship** modules – acknowledging that some modules won't be relevant to all apprentices.

## Seeking a job



## Challenges

(7.11) The Education job market is generally healthy from a candidate perspective – there are a good number of opportunities, and this has not been damaged by

the pandemic. There is a shortage of teachers, so candidates with the right qualifications don't struggle to find work. There are a few challenges:

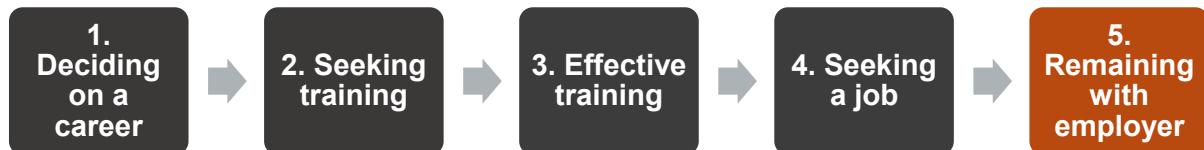
- Teaching roles **generally require a degree**. This often makes it difficult for others within the sector to make the 'jump' into teaching.
- There is a feeling that some of the qualifications on offer **don't adequately prepare candidates for work**. This is sometimes the case with graduates working with SEND pupils, or early years apprentices starting employment.
- Entry-level roles within **early years are often low paid**. Likewise, graduates may receive less than their counterparts in other sectors.
- The fact that this is a **female dominated sector** can be off putting for males thinking of joining the sector. In GM many primary schools and early years organisations do not have a single male staff member and those that do join are often quick to leave.
- The need for **Maths and English qualifications** can be a barrier for some people to access apprenticeships and join the sector,
- With **less access to the European labour market** after both immigration changes after Brexit and COVID19 travel restrictions, employers may have more trouble finding the right sort of skills.
- Adult education can be a **complicated career pathway**. Colleges and training providers struggle to find industry-experienced professionals who can also teach. Demand for these roles is only increasing as the system shifts to be more employer-led. Many departments struggle as they are not able to compete with sector salaries. In addition, a lot is expected of adult educators, especially apprenticeship tutors who are expected to teach Maths and English too.

## **Recommendations**

(7.12) Based on findings from this report, to improve the job market for education in Greater Manchester, GMCA would make the following recommendations:

- Employers should be encouraged to **use the apprenticeship levy where relevant** but should not be advertising positions at the apprenticeship minimum wage.
- Government incentives provided to employers and potential employees should be reviewed to **attract the right people** to the sector.
- Recruitment strategies should focus on **attracting people with the right values** and motivations into the sector. Employers should make an active effort to attract and support men into the sector.

## Remaining with employer



## Challenges

(7.13) Retention is an issue across the sector. This includes both people leaving an employer but remaining in the sector, and those that leave education completely. Across GM, the feeling is that people in the sector enjoy working with young people but leave their employer for other reasons. Generally opportunities for mandatory training and inset days are used, but organisations struggle to provide further CPD opportunities and upskilling for their staff, often due to staff shortages and backfill problems. There are challenges for the existing workforce:

- **Stability and job security is generally good but pay can be low** particularly in early years. Staff can feel undervalued.
- There is a feeling that some **people drift into education** due to the availability of jobs – if they join for the ‘wrong’ reasons they are far less likely to stay in the sector

- **Progression is limited** for those that don't want to go into management.
- **Job can be stressful, and health and wellbeing can suffer.** It can be physically, and emotionally demanding
- **Labour shortages and child-staff ratio can make it difficult to release people** for training that would help them progress
- **Increasing amounts of reporting/paperwork** can be a deterrent to some people, especially when they feel that their experience of work does not match their expectations.

## **Recommendations**

(7.14) Based on findings from this report and to improve conditions, upskilling and progression opportunities for workers in the education sector, GMCA would recommend the following:

- Some **training should be commissioned around upskilling programmes** which will better equip staff to do their role during (and after) the pandemic.
- Employers should be encouraged to make **occupational pathways and progression opportunities within the sector clearer** and particularly alternative jobs in the sector (i.e. not just teaching)
- Employers should **promote role models** – particularly men – that may make other people more likely to stay in the sector since they don't feel different.
- Employers should be **encouraged to adhere to the GM Good Employment Charter** and pay a Real Living Wage, improving conditions for new starters, and the attractiveness of the sector.

## 8. Next Report

- (8.1) Intelligence gathering will be an ongoing activity for GMCA and partner stakeholders. The data and intelligence gathered as part of this report will be enhanced and updated and a revised version of the report released. Areas which may require deeper research and intelligence gathering include:
- **Sub-sector differences** – This report has mainly focused on Early Years and Primary Education. Whilst there are many of the same issues felt across all age groups there are others unique to a particular time of learning. Further research is needed to look more deeply into secondary, further, and higher education.
  - **Further COVID19 response** – In unprecedeted times, it's difficult to predict how the pandemic and missed learning time will impact the development of young people. The continued effects should be monitored – including the evolving skill needs of the workforce
  - **Government Policy** – Education remains high on the political agenda. Education policy in the UK has had more changes than any other country in Europe. Future changes in policy must be assessed with regards to the impact on Greater Manchester.