

# DCU CREATE Teacher Occupational Wellbeing Research Findings Summary

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“Not everything  
that is faced can be  
changed, but  
nothing can be  
changed until it is  
faced”







“It’s non-stop...My first time  
visiting the toilet all day was at  
3:50.

I don’t drink water on the days  
I have yard as I can’t go to the  
toilet during class time”



“In term time it is very difficult to dissociate being a teacher from all other parts of life.

I feel as if I'm a teacher first rather than wife, mother, daughter, sister, friend, etc”



“I have been hit, kicked and punched. I have been cursed at and called terrible names.

I had to leave school on one occasion as I was punched and was left in tears”



“My temporary status means  
I’m putting my hand up for  
everything so I’ll get a job next  
year...it’s exhausting

...and I feel as though  
management are taking  
advantage of this”



“I work in a DEIS context - I have emotional fatigue, I feel disillusioned with the lack of supports for these young people.

I’m frustrated and overwhelmed but I have to put a positive face on’



“Poor management has led to  
unsupported staff -  
discontentment has festered  
and spread within staff, it  
negatively erodes away at you”



“I’m not able to switch off  
because I need to use my time to  
catch up with the endless  
changes and initiatives”



“I feel like I’m giving and  
giving and giving and caring  
and caring and constantly  
doing my best but it’s not  
enough anymore -

.....there’s no let up” .



“I want to quit but I’m tied to the position because I need the money and I have compassion for the children”

## Mixed Methods Study

Sample: Primary and Post-Primary Teachers in the Republic of Ireland ( $n=1254$ )

- Is burnout an issue for Irish teachers?
- What are the primary stressors contributing to teacher burnout and poor mental health?
- What protective factors contribute to teacher well-being and flourishing in the profession?

Copenhagen Burnout Inventory (CBI) + Researcher Designed Questionnaire (RDQ) ( $N=1254$ )

Semi-structured interviews ( $N=15$ )

The CBI assesses fatigue and exhaustion - 3 sub-dimensions, 19 Items, rated on a 5-point scale from 0 (never) to 100 (always), with high scores indicating high levels of burnout.

Scoring 0-49=Mild, 50 - 74 = Moderate, 75+ = High [If an overall BO score is required, use the PB score, Kristensen et al., 2007).

	Personal Burnout	Work-Related Burnout	Student-Related Burnout
Mean(SD)	64.6 (16)	65.4 (17)	42.7 (21.5)

## Prevalence

PRB: 86% (N=825/955) reporting moderate/high burnout

WRB: 85% (N=810/953) reporting moderate/high burnout

SRB: 58% (N=550/948) reporting low burnout



Teacher burnout is not  
driven by demographic  
factors

# Reported Symptoms







“The biggest bunch of entitled  
moaners in Ireland”



“Teachers are such a bunch of whingers, they have no idea what the real world is like as they have never been outside of a school environment. It’s unreal!”



“Oh the humanity! Teachers  
having to work until 4pm AND  
mark books?”

Someone call Amnesty”



“Sun-burnt out from 3 months  
summer hols”



“If they can’t hack it, maybe they should try being a nurse or a binman and see what hard work actually looks like”



“Poor Darlings”



“This is media spin”



“The so-called ‘experts’ .....

they only surveyed the

complainers”

42% indicated they  
were 'unlikely' to  
remain in the  
profession longterm





85% report work  
overload contributes  
to their experience of  
burnout



49% report  
unrealistic parental  
expectations  
contributes to their  
experience of  
burnout



46% report the  
challenges of working  
with pupils with Special  
Education Needs (SEN)  
contributes to their  
experience of burnout





## SELF-REPORT OF MENTAL HEALTH



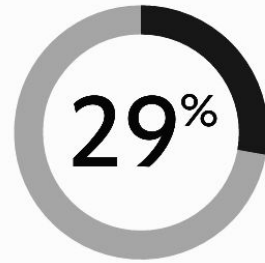
Very Poor



Poor



Average



Good



Excellent

## IMPACT ON TEACHING AND LEARNING



of teachers who reported poor/very poor mental health also feel that this has negatively influenced their ability to engage in teaching and learning with pupils

One  
Good  
Adult





## Positive Emotions

“I walk at lunchtime,  
getting fresh air is an  
energiser, and it is a  
positive habit I  
continue”



## Engagement

“Working with students and seeing the impact on helping them in their education”



## Relationships

“Positive relationship with my pupils, I’m genuinely interested in my pupils well being and progress”



## Meaning

“Getting the small wins  
with students”



## Accomplishment

“Being prepared for work,  
engaging in professional  
conversations and sharing  
resources and lesson idea”

“There is very little support in school.  
Nonsense such as chocolate bars on mental  
health well-being days instead of concrete  
dignity in workplace policy”




42%



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*We would like to extend our sincere thanks so all the teachers who took time to contribute to this research.*

***Helplines:***

*Samaritans: 116 123*

*Spectrum Life: 1800 411 057*

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