



First cohort, 2003

16,000 alumni\*

2,915 teachers\*\*  
currently in  
classrooms for  
their initial 2-year  
commitment



**London Schools**  
have transformed from among  
the worst to the highest  
performing in the country

**40 alumni**  
have founded and lead social  
enterprises, including those  
that focus on transforming the  
training and development of  
teachers and school leaders

16,000

TEACHERS RECRUITED FOR SCHOOLS IN CITIES AND TOWNS ACROSS ENGLAND AND WALES

60%

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# Teach First (UK)

## Fueling progress in London and beyond

Teach First has recruited more than 16,000 teachers for schools in cities and towns across England and Wales since 2003.

A 2013 study found that secondary schools where Teach First teachers are placed experienced school-wide improvements in student academic learning after two to three years in core subjects tested by the General Certificate of Secondary Education (GCSE) of an average of 0.05 Standard Deviations, equivalent to at least one grade level improvement in a core subject.<sup>1</sup>

More than 60% of Teach First's alumni work as teachers and school leaders, with many more serving in other related fields such as policy, research, and nonprofits. A 2016 independent, quasi-experimental study found that Teach First teachers were seven times more likely to become school leaders compared to teachers from other alternative certification programs in the UK, and Teach First teachers who remain in the classroom after their second year are twice as likely to continue working in low-income communities compared to other alternatively certified teachers.<sup>2</sup>

In London alone, Teach First has recruited over 7,500 teachers, who have served as an impactful leadership force during and beyond their two-year



commitments. For years, London was among the worst-performing areas in England in terms of outcomes for pupils from low-income communities. Today, the city's schools have become the highest performing in the country, and independent research identified Teach First as one of four key factors in this transformation.<sup>3</sup>

Today, one in 14 of all teachers working in schools serving London's low-income communities are Teach First teachers and alumni, with over 1,000 alumni serving in middle or senior leadership positions in London schools. Teach First alumni serve as head teachers at more than 100 schools, having either founded new schools or taken over existing ones.

Beyond the classroom, hundreds of alumni work in non-profit organizations that seek to fill gaps and influence system change. Forty have founded and lead social enterprises, including organizations that focus on transforming the training

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– **Ndidi Okezie**, CEO of UK Youth and Teach First alumna

and development of teachers and school leaders, expanding the focus of schools to ensure students are developing holistically, and providing mentoring and support to facilitate first-generation college students attending selective universities. Two alumni adapted Teach First’s approach to launch Frontline and Unlocked, which recruit and develop outstanding graduates to work as social workers and prison officers respectively, and ultimately lead change in these systems.

About 50 alumni are working at every level of policy, including the policy advisor to the secretary of state for education. Among other things, alumni were instrumental in developing the early careers framework for teacher development, as well as the government’s most recent teacher recruitment and retention strategy. They founded a forum to engage teachers as a voice in influencing and shaping education policy, and have built public awareness of the need for change through authoring regular

columns and best-selling books.

When the pandemic shut schools down and parents and teachers were scrambling to keep students learning, 50 alumni stepped up to launch, develop, and lead an online school, which digitized the entire national curriculum in the form of 10,000 high-quality video lessons that were accessed by millions of students and parents across the country.

Considering the impact Teach First has generated, alumna Ndidi Okezie, who was part of Teach First’s initial cohort and now serves as CEO of UK Youth, shares: “I’ve often reflected on this chicken or egg question: is it the kind of people that Teach First recruited or is it the experience of doing Teach First (or both) that unlocked this undeniable force for change from its ambassadors (alumni)?”

Today, Teach First teachers and alumni are increasingly working together in networks to amplify and accelerate their impact. Given the progress in London, Teach First now places over two-thirds of its teachers outside London, where outcomes for children from low-income communities are significantly lower. ●●●

- 1 Allen and Allnutt (2013), “Matched panel data estimates of the impact of Teach First on school and departmental performance”, Department of Quantitative Social Science Working Paper No. 13-11, Institute of Education, University of London
- 2 Allen et al. (2016), “The careers of Teach First Ambassadors who remain in teaching: job choices, promotion and school quality”, Education Datalab
- 3 Baars et al. (2014), “Lessons from London Schools: Investigating the Success”, Centre for London and CfBT Education Trust

