

The
MONEY
Charity

*Financial education
in schools:*

*Why we need direct
delivery*

Financial education in schools: why we need direct delivery

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Introduction

In September 2016, The Money Charity released [‘Financial education in schools: how to fix two lost years?’](#) - original research into the state of financial education in English schools two years after its introduction to the Maths and Citizenship curriculums.

The picture drawn by the 126 teachers we surveyed showed that the great leap forward we had hoped for did not happen. In part this was because incentives and funding for schools were still not in place, timetables remained rigid and other subjects competed for space.

Simply adding provisions to the curriculum, it turned out, was not a magic wand that could make financial education happen.

“I had no formal training, it’s a life skill you pick up along the way.”

But we also found that schools just don’t have the capacity to deliver financial education without help. Teachers are people like the rest of us, and many lack the confidence,

knowledge and skills to deliver the financial education that young people need.

As our original report found, two thirds of teachers don’t believe that financial education is even “somewhat effective”. A great part of solving this must be for schools to overcome their current lack of capacity.

In this short report we argue that schools should be supported to build up their own capacity to deliver financial education in house, but also that **schools and policy makers must embrace and pour resources into using outside experts to deliver financial education directly.**

Key findings

Schools and teachers lack the skills and resources to deliver financial education in-house. And 80 percent of schools need some outside help.

The vast majority of teachers believe that students learn about finance better from outside experts than teachers.

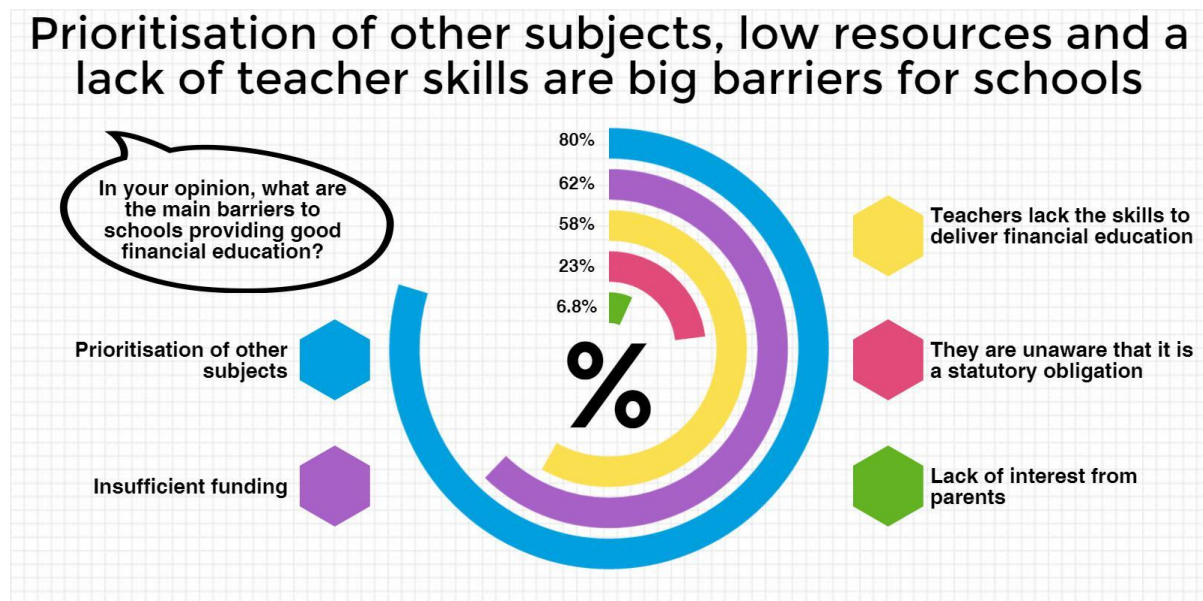
A mixed model where outside expertise and in-house delivery are both used is common in schools today.

There are advantages to using outside experts to deliver financial education in schools that are extremely difficult for schools and colleges to replicate in-house

Why do we need direct delivery today ?

Financial education is a fiercely urgent matter. A third of young people consider themselves over indebted by 24 and each year, so it is not a challenge we can leave for the long term. Here, we argue that the short term challenges to the delivery of financial education can only be met by bringing in experts to deliver it directly.

For nearly three in five teachers, a lack of skills is seen as a key barrier to their school delivering good financial education.



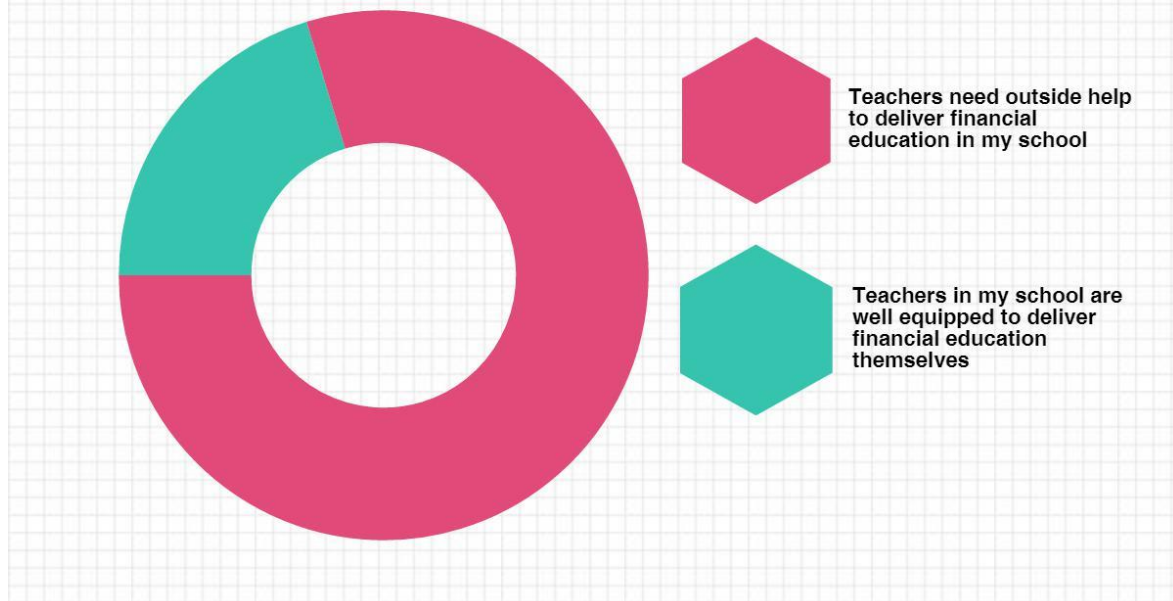
Even if schools can overcome the barriers to offering financial education outlined above, finding the leadership, and space in the timetable they need, they're still left with the challenge of how best to deliver it.

The first thing we know is that simply asking teachers to teach finance in their tutorials, Maths or PSHE classes is not enough. Nearly **seven out of ten teachers** don't believe that their schools are equipped with the skills required to teach financial education.

"I was never taught this stuff. I'm getting a mortgage and have no idea what I'm doing. It would have been so helpful if someone had sat me down and actually talked about how much of my wage is going to disappear to the taxman and how I could apply for a mortgage."

More than 80% believe that teachers need outside help. Teachers are no different from the general population, and to expect them to be experts on financial products, the emotions behind spending money and all the rest is unreasonable.

80% of teachers believe outside help is needed to deliver financial education



There are two possible answers:

- Train teachers and provide resources so that schools can deliver financial education in-house
- Commission outside experts to deliver workshops for students

The common reaction from those who have not worked in the sector is that the first of these would be the best option - under the theory that if you *"give a man a fish, you feed him for a day; teach a man to fish and you feed him for a lifetime"*. Providing schools with the tools and skills they need to provide financial education themselves seems to make sense.

It worth noting that the significant barriers above: skills and the competition of other subjects are direct blocks to delivering financial education in-house without transformative change, but can be circumvented to a degree by bringing in outside experts.

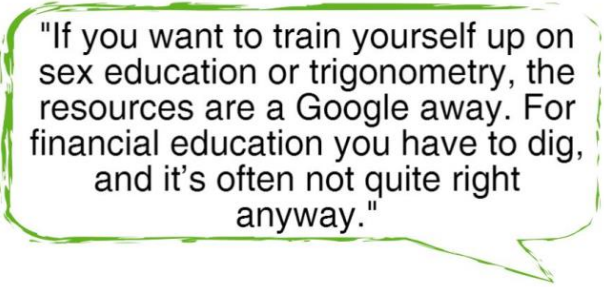
"This year I have moved off PSHE and have tried to give resources to the new PSHE teachers. So it has taken a backseat."

Training teachers is very time and resource intensive, and because financial education is never the primary vocation of any given teacher, they will often move on, depriving the school of skills which it invested in building up.

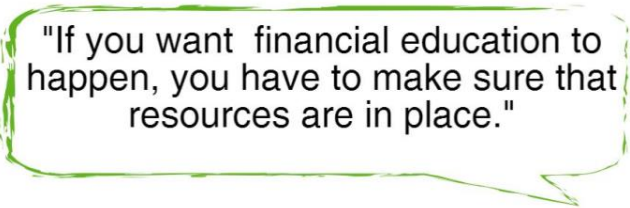
And even with the notable exception of our friends in Young Enterprise, the resources are not there for schools to train teachers in the same way they are for other specialist subjects. Both funding for this and organisations offering help are not

at the scale and prevalence they would need to be for schools to be able to build their own capacity.

In short, for many schools, the practical challenge of building and maintaining the skills and a resource base to deliver financial education in house is extremely difficult. For that reason, many opt to deliver at least a part of their financial education by bringing in outside experts whose purpose it is to have the skills and resources good financial education delivery requires.



"If you want to train yourself up on sex education or trigonometry, the resources are a Google away. For financial education you have to dig, and it's often not quite right anyway."



"If you want financial education to happen, you have to make sure that resources are in place."

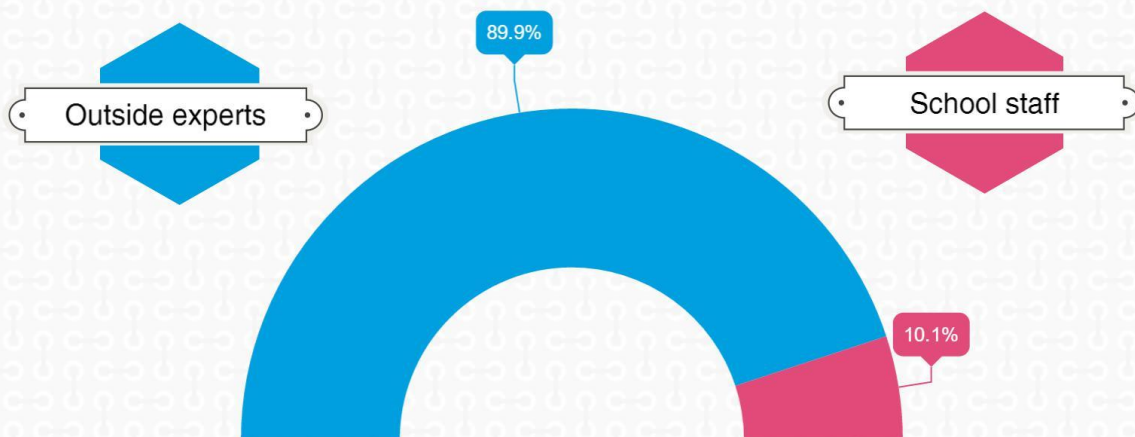
At The Money Charity we would be very happy for teachers to be trained so that schools were in a position to deliver the entirety of a good financial education.

But in the current circumstances, any healthy provision of financial education must involve a mixture of outside expertise and additional work from school staff.

We should promote a mix of in house and direct delivery

Our research showed that these two models are not at odds with one another. Staff can be trained to deliver aspects of financial education, but also believe that students benefit from expert speakers – and in many cases prefer this option. When asked to reflect on the choices that faces them currently, nine out of ten believe that **“pupils learn about personal finance better from speakers with specialist knowledge”**.

Nine out of ten teachers think students learn about finance better from outside experts than school staff



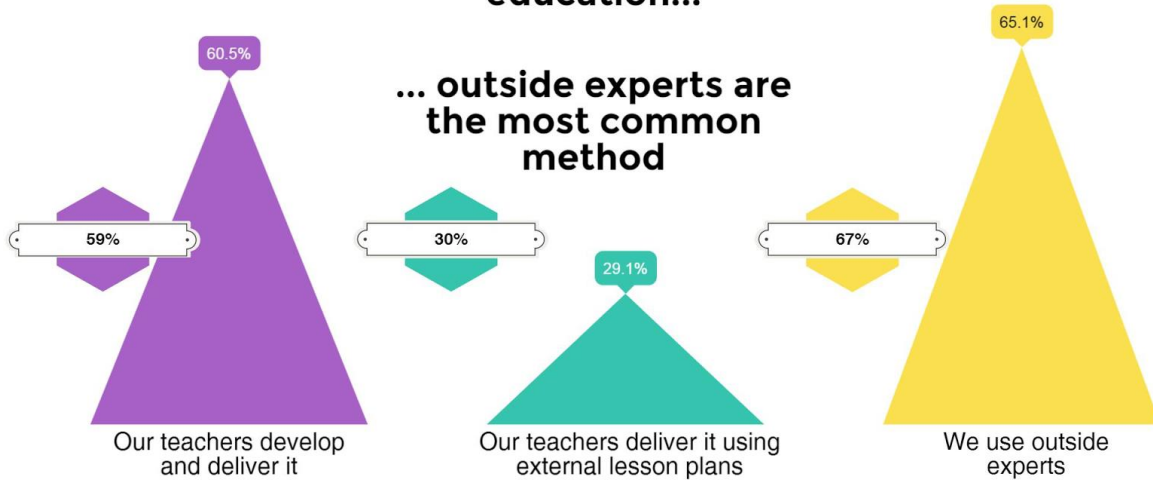
"A mixture of both direct delivery and teacher led classes is best"

Schools are already delivering using a mixture of methods, with the majority of schools both delivering their own lesson plans **and** bringing in experts.

Today, the practice in schools of using a mixture of methods, with teachers building on the expert delivery of experts makes sense. Direct delivery can bring specialist resources and expertise which can be supplemented by the ongoing work of teachers who have more time to work with students.

Recently, The Money Charity has embraced this by producing follow up resources for our direct delivery which teachers can use to embed what our consultants provide.

Schools are already using a mixed model for financial education...

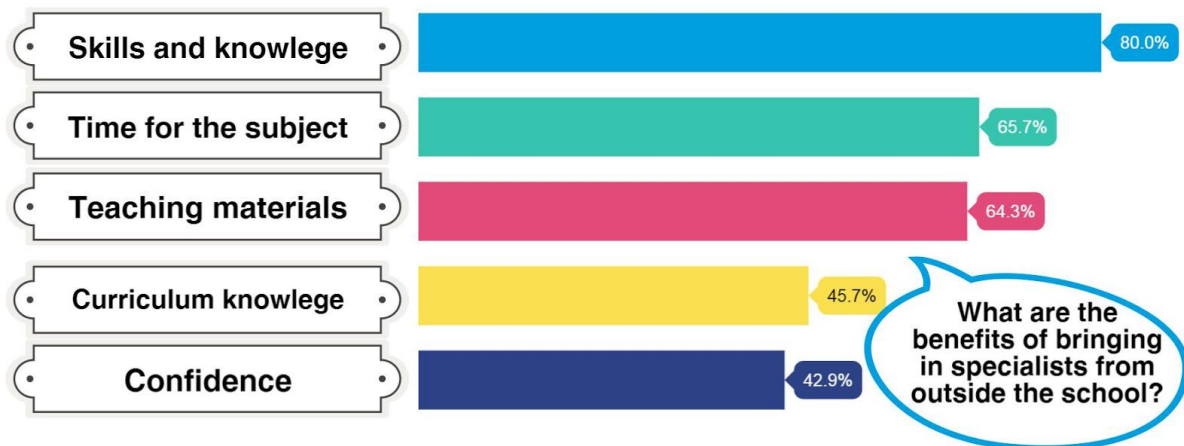


There is probably a long term need for direct delivery

The case we make goes beyond using direct delivery as a stop-gap method while schools build up their own capacity to deliver financial education. Even if funding, training and lesson plans were available to teachers, there is still significant appetite for direct delivery.

Over two thirds to teachers cited the skills, materials and amount of attention specialists could offer, and it is very difficult to see these relative benefits disappearing without the a huge transformation in the ways that schools and colleges operate.

There is a lot that outside specialists can bring to financial education that schools can't offer in house



Within the constraints that schools face, they cannot replicate the benefits of direct delivery by training up their own staff. The *"teach a man to fish"* theory is great on paper, but they would need to be able to build the skills and confidence, find the time and have the materials that outside experts are able to offer right now.

This might be possible in the long term if a huge and concerted effort is made to treat financial education with parity to other subjects. But we and the teachers we

"It's hard to imagine teachers being trained to deliver financial skills as well as they are for Maths or History"

surveyed recognise that in reality this is an insurmountable challenge - at least for the foreseeable future. Our trainers have skills and specialism that teachers who have to focus on their own specialisms will never fully be able to meet.

Unless the way that schools are structured changes completely, **any healthy provision of financial education must involve a mixture of outside expertise and work from school staff.** The Money Charity calls on policymakers and school leaders to recognise this mixed method as the optimal model for delivery.

Our recommendation for policymakers

Whether in house or by direct delivery, financial education takes attention, time and money from schools. This must be recognised in the curriculum and given appropriate funding.

Our recommendation for schools

Good financial education requires a coherent strategy and an effort to overcome the shortfalls in staff expertise. If staff are not confident that they can deliver financial education well and sustainably, direct delivery is the best way to overcome this shortfall.

** About the survey: The Money Charity bases this piece on a survey of 126 teachers and in depth interviews with a further six.*

Note: Where quotations are marked "XYZ", they are taken from interviews. Where they are marked 'XYZ' they are copied and pasted from responses to open ended questions in the survey.

About the survey

The Money Charity bases this piece on a mixed methodology:

- A survey of 126 teachers
- Six in depth teacher interviews

Teachers were contacted using both The Money Charity's database of 554 secondary schools (98 responses) and a list of over 5,700 secondary schools procured from Kaltz (28 responses). Six teachers also took part in interviews of around one hour.

As mentioned in the report, this does not constitute a completely representative sample of teachers. Schools on our database will nearly all have taken some interest in financial education, and those from other schools who responded are likely to have been motivated to do so out of a similar interest. For this reason we do not make claims that the numbers we have here are definitive or representative of teachers as a whole.

Because of the interest of participating teachers, the numbers will probably show a rosier picture of financial education than is actually the case. But even with this inherent bias in the data, the themes that arose are ones supported by our experience and by the interviews we have conducted. So we are confident that our data highlights real issues and is, taken with other evidence, a firm basis for financial education policy.

The interviews and survey were taken with promises of anonymity, so we cannot share individual teacher data. But if you have any questions about the data, please contact us on hello@themoneycharity.org.uk and we will try to get back to you.

Note: Where quotations are marked "XYZ", they are taken from interviews, where they are marked 'XYZ' they are copied and pasted from responses to open ended questions in the survey.

About the survey respondents:

Jobs titles

Senior Management Team	5%	7
Head of department	41%	51
Teacher	23%	28
Other (Tutors/Mentors/Support Staff)	31%	39
answered question		126

In which part of the UK is your school?

The South East, excluding London	15%	19
The South West	5%	7
London	13%	16
The East of England	2%	3
The West Midlands	8%	9
The East Midlands	5%	7
Wales	8%	9
Yorkshire & the Humber	12%	15
The North West	20%	26
The North East	4%	5
Scotland	0%	0
Northern Ireland	8%	9
I don't work in the UK	0%	0
answered question		126

School types

An Academy	40%	50
Local Authority School	29%	37
Free school	1%	1
Sixth form or 16+ FE college	18%	23
Other (studio school, University Technical College etc...)	9%	11
Independent School	3%	4
answered question		126

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