

Academies speak on status effect

NEARLY HALF of academy leaders in England believe that the independence associated with their school's academy status has either had no effect or a negative impact in the classroom, according to new poll.

The polling of 1,246 teachers and school leaders across England by the National Foundation for Educational Research, on behalf of the Sutton Trust, found that although 42 per cent of 143 academy leaders said autonomy had a positive effect in the classroom, 30 per cent believed it had no effect and 18 per cent said it had a negative effect.

It showed that only 27 per cent of all those who work in academies thought their independence had a positive impact in the classroom, while only eight per cent of staff at non-academy schools saw autonomy as beneficial.

The findings are being published ahead of a Sutton Trust summit in New York today.

Sir Peter Lampl, founder of the trust, said: "Today's polling shows that many academy leaders are sceptical about the benefits of their autonomy. The focus should not be on school structures but on improving the quality of teaching in schools."

Academies have greater control over the curriculum, school budgets, admissions and pay than other state-funded schools