



JOINT STATEMENT TO THE SCHOOL TEACHERS' REVIEW BODY

The STRB has received submissions and evidence from each of our organisations on the various matters within the 27th remit from the Secretary of State. We have reviewed this evidence and wish to submit a joint statement providing further points of evidence and feedback that we believe are critical for the STRB to consider and reflect in its final report and recommendations.

The quality of the profession is key

The education system depends on the quality of its teachers. Great teaching makes the difference for the most vulnerable students. All the evidence supports this, and we are clear that it is on this foundation that improved standards of education are achieved. However, the teaching profession is in crisis: we are not recruiting enough teachers and too many are leaving the profession, worn down by relentless overwork, stress and pressure.

The evidence to the STRB's 27th remit on these points was overwhelming, and the evidence relating to the part played by the decline of pay in this regard strongly supports the STRB's own conclusions in the 26th report that *"there is a case for an uplift higher than 1% to the national pay framework, to strengthen the competitive position of the teaching profession at a time of growing demand for graduates."*

The DfE's evidence to the 27th remit has failed to recognise these issues: just as the current Secretary of State for Education and her predecessor have both ignored the STRB's statement quoted above.

The Government should no longer deny the recruitment and retention crisis

It is of particular concern that the DfE has failed to present the evidence from its own recent report, *Schools workforce in England 2010 to 2015: trends and geographical comparisons*. Published in September 2016, this reported that:

- 23% of secondary schools reported a vacancy or temporarily filled post in England in November 2015, up 7% on 2011; and
- the figure was 6.9% for primary schools, up by 2.7% in the last four years.

The same report also showed a rise in the employment of unqualified teachers, and that wastage rates of leavers in the sector, for reasons other than retirement, had increased. This all confirms the growing crisis in attracting and retaining teachers to which we have all referred and which the DfE's evidence has denied.

The National Governors' Association's evidence to the STRB from its survey of 5,000 governors also reported significant recruitment problems:

- since 2015, there has been an increase of 5.2% in schools struggling to recruit to senior posts, with 41.5% of governors reporting this as a problem; and
- an increase of almost 12% in governors reporting that recruiting to teaching posts was a problem, with 49.7% aware that this was a problem for their school.

Representing employers as well as governors, the NGA's evidence is clear about the importance of pay in addressing this issue, and that there must be a cost of living increase for all posts. Similarly, the evidence from the National Employer Body for Schools Teachers (NEOST) makes that case that a cost of living increase to all salaries represents "every teacher being valued for their contribution."

Our individual evidence reported on the concern of school leaders, and even Ofsted, and it would appear that only the Government fails to recognise that allowing teachers' pay to decline is harming education and must be halted

Teachers' pay has declined and must be uplifted

Teachers and school leaders have seen six years of pay freezes and pay caps resulting in a real-terms pay cut of 11.5% between September 2010 and September 2016¹. The profession now faces a further 4 years of 1% pay limits which will, according to the Institute for Fiscal Studies (IFS), reduce wages in the public sector to their lowest level in relation to the private sector since at least the 1990s. The IFS concludes that this could result in difficulties for public sector employers trying to recruit and retain high quality workers: a situation that would further exacerbate the crisis facing the teaching profession.

Last year we made the case that a significant pay increase is needed for teachers at all stages of their careers - whether newly entering the profession or in the early, middle or later years of service, and whether serving as classroom teachers without responsibilities or as middle or senior leaders. A year on, the situation has deteriorated and the evidence is overwhelming that such an increase is an imperative to meet both existing demand for teachers and the growth that will come from the 750,000 new pupils by 2025 identified in the DfE's own national pupil projections.

The Government must make the profession attractive to new graduates, career changers and those who have taken a career break from teaching if we are to meet the increased demand for teachers from the increased pupil population in both England and Wales. Pay is a critical factor for those considering their future career path.

¹ Calculated based on the Retail Prices Index

Teachers' pay awards must reflect increased costs of living

Our associations are totally opposed to the STRB's recent position, urged by the HM Treasury, that teachers' pay awards should be entirely based on performance, with those who perform less well not receiving even a minimum uplift of 1%. This would mean that those teachers' pay would fall even further behind. As the STRB has received evidence highlighting projections that inflation in 2017 could reach 3%, the impact of such an approach could become even more damaging.

We continue to believe strongly, therefore, that the annual pay uplift should be applied to all salaries and allowances in payment. While some of our organisations have differing positions on the principle of performance related pay progression, we all agree that the concept of the cost of living increase in pay should be maintained and should be wholly distinct from pay progression based on performance, experience or other criteria.

School funding is under pressure and pay increases must be fully funded

The National Audit Office published its report into the 'Financial Sustainability of Schools' on 14th December and identified that cumulative cost pressures suggest that schools will have to make savings of £3 billion by 2019/20, representing an 8% real terms reduction in per pupil funding between 2014/15 and 2019/20. It should not be concluded that an uplift in teachers' pay is unaffordable but rather that schools are being subjected to real terms cuts in funding to a degree unknown for at least a generation.

The NAO also identifies that many of these cost pressures on schools have come from Government policy, including increasing employer pension and national insurance contributions and the imposition of the apprenticeship levy. It appears that the Government is prepared to prejudice school budgets for its favoured policy objectives but not to ensure that the nation's children can have continued access to the best teaching professionals.

It is essential that cost pressures on schools and academies do not continue to force them to make cuts in staffing that will make the teaching profession even less attractive: the increases to pay in September 2017 must be fully funded for schools in both England and Wales, and the Government must make the funding available to the Welsh Government to support schools in Wales. The STRB should therefore make this one of their specific recommendations but should also set out clearly what it believes the appropriate pay increase for teachers should be, irrespective of the issue of funding.

Association of School and College Leaders
 Association of Teachers and Lecturers
 National Association of Head Teachers
 National Union of Teachers
 Undeb Cenedlaethol Athrawon Cymru
 Voice

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