



## TEACHERS' PAY AND PROGRESSION FOR SEPTEMBER 2020

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This annual National Education Union survey is the largest survey on teachers' pay increases and pay progression each year. This year's survey sets out the views of a profession which has been working through a pandemic with little in the way of protective measures, delivering education in new and innovative ways, only to be rewarded with the prospect of a pay freeze. Having asked NEU members about pay levels and progression, we can see that behind the immediate concerns over safety and workload, all the pre-existing structural issues around pay remain.

### KEY FINDINGS

#### Teachers' feelings about their pay

Among all respondents:

- nine out of ten teachers (91%) are opposed to the proposed pay freeze, with the vast majority saying they are strongly opposed;
- three out of five teachers (60%) have considered quitting the profession because of low pay or concerns about unfairness in pay progression;
- well over half (56%) of teachers feel that they are underpaid for their job weight, role and responsibilities.

#### Annual pay increases and pay scales

Among all respondents:

- 60% of respondents told us they had received a cost-of-living increase in line with the national increase for September 2020;
- 1% of respondents said they had been told the school would not be paying any cost-of-living increase;
- almost a third (29%) did not know whether they had received an increase and 8% said no decision had been taken.

#### Pay progression

Among those eligible to be considered for pay progression (52% of the total response):

- the large majority who knew the outcome had received progression, but the proportion denied was far higher (16%) on the Upper Pay Range than on the Main Pay Range (5%);
- 17% still did not know the outcome of their pay progression decision when completing the survey in December 2020/January 2021;
- the overall percentage (8%) denied progression was higher than last year after a longer downward trend;

- 13% of those teachers said that they had been explicitly told that the decision was due to funding or budgetary constraints rather than performance;

Among those turned down for progression:

- only 30% said that the impact of the pandemic on performance objectives had been taken into account in their appraisal review.
- 96% had been given no indication during the year that they were failing to meet the required standards;
- 91% felt that the decision was unfair but the vast majority (84%) had chosen not to appeal the decision, often saying that they felt there was little point in doing so.

Among all respondents:

- almost half of respondents (48%) who were able to comment on their school's policy said that the employer had disregarded all objectives due to Covid and awarded progression to all eligible teachers.
- five in six teachers (83%) said that their own appraiser had taken the impact of Covid into account when considering objectives.

## **Methodology and the survey response**

The survey was sent by email to NEU teacher members in state-funded schools and academies on 9 December 2020, with a follow-up reminder in January before the survey closed on 19 January 2021. The questionnaire is included as a separate appendix alongside this document, and asked members about:

- the annual cost-of-living pay increase in September 2020;
- their own pay progression in September 2020 if eligible;
- their views on their own pay and progression and on their school's pay policy, its application in cases of pay progression and its impact on appraisal; and
- their views on how Covid-19 has affected the pay and progression other matters in relation to teachers' pay.

This survey provides the largest dataset on pay increases and pay progression for individual teachers, in the continued absence of a national exercise by the DfE to collect meaningful disaggregated data. Some 26,247 members responded to the survey this year, a significant sample.

## **Notes of caution – timing of survey & Covid-19**

All findings in this year's survey should be seen in the unprecedented context of the Covid-19 pandemic. The questionnaire was sent to members on 9 December 2020, when most schools were fully open but case numbers were rising both in schools and in the wider population. The survey remained open to members until 19 January 2021, by which time schools had closed to the majority of children and teachers were delivering much of their teaching remotely.

Many of our questions are repeated every year and focus on either matters of fact such as whether progression was paid, or on teachers' opinions about structural matters such as the fairness of the PRP system. As such, these are not so heavily influenced by the pandemic to render year-on-year comparisons meaningless. But it is important to bear the context of the pandemic in mind.

The other factor that may have affected the response is the timing of the survey. Last year the survey was conducted in January and February, while this year we reverted to the timetable followed in previous years, with the majority of responses collected before Christmas. This means that the numbers saying decisions had not yet been taken are likely to be slightly higher than last year. It also means that respondents were answering the survey closer to September's pay anniversary, meaning that where decisions have been taken, a greater number of members are likely to recall the details. Where relevant, we have provided an analysis for questions with the "don't know" answers removed, in order to improve year-on-year comparability.

In the past three years, we have received a significantly greater number of responses than the preceding years. This has coincided with an increase in progression rates, following several years when around 20% of eligible respondents who knew the outcome of their

progression decision were turned down. We have previously discussed the possibility that those earlier surveys may have given overestimates in terms of respondents denied progression, due to a potentially greater likelihood of such teachers responding to the survey. Over the course of the past three years, however, this risk is much smaller. And there is no indication that respondents turned down for progression are atypical in respect of their characteristics or the reasons given for denial of progression.

### **The annual “cost-of-living” pay increase for September 2020**

The survey collected information on “cost-of-living” pay increases effective from September 2020, excluding any rise in salaries due to pay progression or promotion.

Some 60% of respondents told us they had been paid a cost-of-living pay rise in line with the national increase (a 2.75% rise for most teachers). Last year, only 49% of teachers told us they had received an increase in line with the national award.

This positive shift largely reflects a greater awareness among this year’s respondents of their pay situation. The number of members who did not know whether or not they had received a pay rise fell from 39% last year to 29% in the current survey. This may be partly due to our collecting data in the autumn term this year, when the pay increase was fresher in the memory, but is also likely to reflect the NEU’s increased campaign focus on making members aware of their pay outcomes.

Among teachers who were certain of the details concerning their pay increase, 84% said they had received a rise in line with the national settlement, slightly up from 80% last year. Some 3% of those who knew their pay increase situation had received an amount below the national rise, and a further 2% said their school had told them that teachers would not be paid any cost-of-living increase, despite the national pay settlement in 2020. The remaining 11% said a decision had not yet been taken.

This year there were no significant differences in the proportions receiving the full national increase between primary and secondary members, or between those in maintained schools or academies and free schools. This is a change from last year, when primary members were less likely to have received the full increase.

Teachers in London and the surrounding fringe were less likely to say they had received the national increase in full. Across the three London pay zones, 80% of those who were certain about their pay outcome received the national increase; 4% received a lower amount and 13% said no decision had yet taken place. In the rest of England, 85% received the increase in full; 2% received a lower rise and 10% said the decision had not yet been taken.

Differences in cost-of-living outcomes between teachers with different characteristics were less marked this year, but teachers who were not White British or not permanent were or less likely to say they had received the STRB-recommended increase in full. This was also true to a smaller extent of female teachers. Excluding those who said they did not know if they had received a cost-of-living increase:

- 85% of those reporting as White British received the national pay increase, compared to 77% of those reporting other ethnic origins.
- 84% of those on permanent contracts received the national pay increase, compared to 79% of those on other types of contracts
- 83% of women received the national pay increase, compared to 86% of men;
- 83% of those working part-time or other flexible working arrangements received the national pay increase, compared to 84% of full-time teachers;
- 83% of those who describe themselves as disabled received the national pay increase, compared to 84% of those who do not;
- 84% of those who describe themselves as heterosexual received the national pay increase, compared to 83% describing themselves as lesbian, gay, bisexual or other sexual orientations;

### **The proposed pay freeze**

Nine out of ten teachers (91%) rejected the idea of a pay freeze in 2021. Some 73% of respondents were “strongly opposed” to the proposed freeze, and a further 18% said they were “opposed”. Just 2% of respondents were not opposed at all.

On the main pay range, 75% of teachers were “strongly opposed” to the proposed freeze, compared to 71% of those on the upper pay range and 64% of heads and other senior leaders. However, when we combine answers for both “opposed” and “strongly opposed, a consistent 90% objected to the freeze across all ranges. Some 77% of those in London and the surrounding fringe were strongly opposed to a pay freeze, compared to 72% in the rest of England, but in each region over 90% were in one of the two opposed categories.

### **Dissatisfaction with pay rates and pay progression**

As in previous years, a clear majority of teachers told us that they are unhappy with their current rates of pay, and that low pay and the unfair progression system have caused them to question their future in teaching.

We gave respondents two statements to consider:

- “poor levels of pay have sometimes made me think about leaving teaching”; and
- “the unfairness of PRP has sometimes made me think about leaving teaching”.

Almost two-thirds (60%) of all respondents identified with one or both of these statements. In last year’s survey this figure was only slightly higher, at 63%, suggesting that despite the distractions and demands of the pandemic, unhappiness over pay and progression remains a significant concern for teachers.

Members on the classroom pay ranges were much more likely to have considered quitting over low pay and unfair progression than those on the leadership scales. And across each pay range, the numbers identifying with either or both statements fell compared to last year. On the MPR they fell from 67% to 62%; on the UPR from 73% to 60%; and among leaders from 50% to 46%. This change should be seen in the context of the pandemic, when

alternative careers are precarious, and we might expect the increased stress of the job to drown out concerns over pay and progression. It is also possible that some of the unhappy respondents from previous surveys have followed through on their threat to leave teaching. Given this context, it is damning that 60% of teachers still told us they have considered leaving the profession over pay and progression. One member told us “I work 85 hours a week most weeks for £27,000 a year so am thinking of leaving teaching”, while another said: “I’m leaving the UK to a better paid, more respected teaching job and better life abroad.”

<b>Teachers considering leaving the profession due to poor pay levels or unfair performance pay progression, by pay range</b>				
Statement	Main pay range	Upper pay range	Leadership pay range	All respondents
Poor levels of pay have sometimes made me think about switching to a different career	23%	21%	22%	16%
The unfairness of performance pay progression has sometimes made me think about leaving the profession	17%	16%	11%	22%
Both of the above reasons have led me to consider alternative professions	22%	23%	13%	22%
I do not identify with any of the above statements	38%	40%	54%	40%

A clear majority of teachers feel they are underpaid given their job weight, role and responsibilities. Over half (56%) felt they were paid either less or significantly less than they would expect. Almost all the rest felt their pay was about what they would expect, with less than 2% feeling they were paid more than they might expect. All these figures are very close to the figures recorded in last year’s survey.

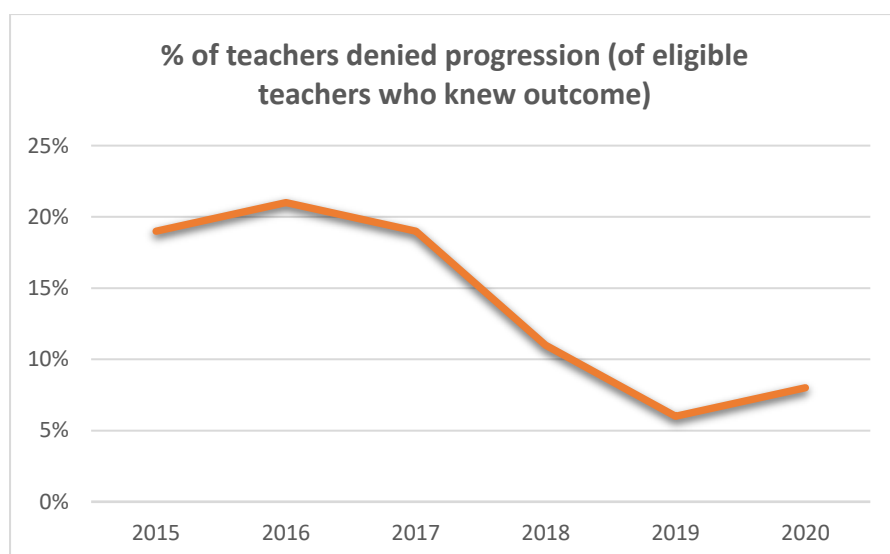
<b>How teachers feel about pay levels given their job weight, role and responsibilities, by pay range</b>				
Statement	Main pay range	Upper pay range	Leadership pay range	All respondents
My current pay is significantly less than I would expect to be paid given my job weight, role and responsibilities.	12%	9%	10%	11%
My current pay is less than I would expect to be paid given my job weight, role and responsibilities.	48%	43%	37%	45%
My current pay is what I would expect to be paid given my job weight, duties and responsibilities.	39%	46%	50%	42%
My current pay is more than I would expect to be paid given my job weight, role and responsibilities.	1%	2%	3%	2%
My current pay is significantly more than I would expect to be paid given my job weight, role and responsibilities.	0%	0%	1%	0%

### **Pay progression for September 2020: Rates of progression**

Just over half (52%) of respondents told us they had been eligible for pay progression in September 2020, a small increase on last year's figure of 49%. Of the rest, 34% were ineligible because they were already at their scale maximum; 8% were new entrants to teaching; and a further 6% were eligible but chose not to apply.

One in six (17%) of those eligible for progression told us that they did not know their outcome. This was a marked increase on the 10% rate recorded in last year's survey. This is likely to be partly the result of this year's survey being conducted in December/January as opposed to January/February last time around, meaning decisions may not have been taken yet. The impact of Covid may also have delayed decision-making, while teachers' focus on other aspects of their job means some may have paid less attention to career progression.

Excluding those who did not yet know the outcome of their application, 8% of respondents reported that they had been denied progression. This is up from 6% last year but below the longer-term trend, when 10-20% of eligible members were denied progression. The surveys in 2015-17 had lower response numbers than we now have, and may have been skewed by higher participation rates among those who had received a negative outcome.



### **Pay progression for September 2020: Denial of progression**

Almost all (96%) of those who were denied progression were not given any indication during the year that they were failing to meet the required standards. DfE guidance is that there should be "no surprises" in progression outcomes and that any concerns over performance should be raised and addressed during the appraisal cycle. However, despite the NEU and its predecessor unions continually highlighting this guidance, respondents denied progression tell us it has been followed in less than 10% of cases in every year we have conducted this survey.

In the few cases where teachers were given advance warning that they were not meeting required standards, they were still not given sufficient support to address any issues. The

sample size for this group is small (17 members), but almost half received no support despite being told they were not meeting standards, while most of the rest either said support came too late or was of limited value. Almost no respondents who received a warning that they were not meeting standards then received support they were satisfied with.

Where respondents provided details of reasons given for their failure to progress, 11% of teachers said they were told they had failed to meet objectives for pupil progress. This is half the level recorded last year, and makes sense in the context of pupil progress and assessment having been so disrupted by the pandemic.

Among other reasons given, 16% were told they had not shown sufficient wider contribution to the school, and 11% were told they had failed to meet other objectives. Both figures were similar to those recorded last year.

Some 13% of teachers who were denied progression and provided details said that they were explicitly told that the decision was due to funding or budgetary constraints. This is broadly in line with previous years. Given both the immediate effect of the pandemic on unexpected costs, and the longer-term impact of many years of a national funding squeeze, it is likely that in many other cases cost was a factor in the decision to deny progression but not specifically mentioned. Pay progression decisions are often based not on actual performance standards but on affordability, which makes a mockery of a so-called 'performance-related' system.

Despite the impact of the pandemic, Covid was mentioned as an explicit reason for denying progression in only a handful of cases. Some 2% of teachers who were denied progression and provided details said they were told absence due to Covid was a factor, and another 2% said they were told their shielding due to being Clinically Extremely Vulnerable was a factor. Although the numbers are small, no teachers should be denied progression because of illness or if shielding in line with Government advice not to attend the workplace.

Only 30% of teachers who were denied progression said that their appraisal review had taken the impact of Covid into consideration. Excluding those who said they did not know, that figure rose to 39%.

Around nine in ten (91%) teachers who were denied progression felt the decision was unfair. This was a small increase from last year's figure of 88%, and the number has stayed broadly consistent around the 90% mark for many years without showing any improvement.

The numbers appealing against a denial of progression have risen from 11% to 16%. This is still lower than we might expect given the wide perception of unfairness, and is based on a relatively small subsection of members, but may reflect a slightly increased awareness that appeal is an option. If so, it is not due to any improvement in employer practice, as 76% of those turned down for progression said they were not informed of their right to appeal, a near-identical figure to last year.

Alongside the large number of members who told us they were unaware of the right to appeal, members also told us that they felt there was no point in appealing, and that they did not trust any outcome to be either fairer or any different. Some members reported fearing repercussions or negative consequences if they challenged the decision, while others



mentioned the added stress and workload of the pandemic as a reason not to pursue an appeal. Several members told us that instead of appealing the decision, they had chosen to leave their school entirely.

Of those who did appeal against a denial of progression, 76% did not yet know the outcome, 10% told us their appeal had been successful and 14% had seen their appeal rejected. However, this is from a relatively small sample of just 91 respondents who had been denied progression and subsequently lodged an appeal, so the margin for error is significant.

### **Pay progression for September 2020: Progression by pay range and role**

Teachers on the upper pay range were again around three times more likely to miss out on progression than those on the main range. Of those on the upper pay range who were eligible and who knew the outcome of their pay progression decision, 16% were turned down for progression, up from 12% last year. This compares to 5% of teachers on the main pay range and 9% of leaders.

<b>Teachers who received pay progression effective 1 September 2020 (eligible &amp; knew outcome)</b>				
	Main pay range	Upper pay range	Leadership pay range	Overall
Denied progression	5%	16%	9%	8%
Received progression	95%	84%	91%	92%

### **Pay progression for September 2020: Progression by school sector and phase**

Some 8% of respondents in primary schools reported denial of pay progression, compared to 6% of those in secondary schools in this year's survey. This small but noticeable difference may be related to primary schools facing greater funding difficulties than secondaries from the impact of Covid. Some 15% of primary members who were refused progression were explicitly told this was due to financial constraints, compared to 4% of their secondary counterparts. The NEU is clear that denying progression to teachers due to external circumstances beyond their control is unacceptable and demonstrates the unfairness of the PRP system.

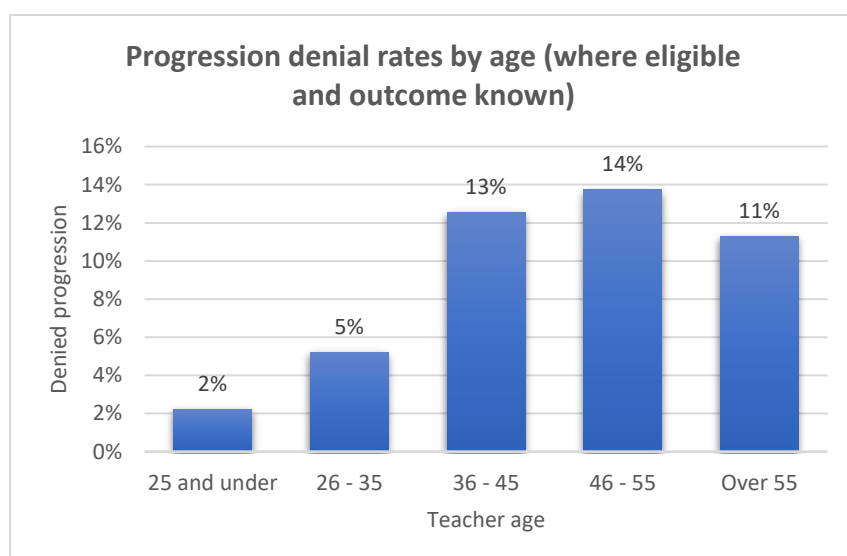
Older teachers are significantly more likely to be denied progression across the profession than their younger counterparts (see next section), but were much more likely to see progression withheld in primary schools.

<b>Pay progression denial rates by age and school phase, effective 1 September 2020 (teachers who were eligible &amp; knew outcome)</b>		
Age	Primary	Secondary
45 and under	7%	6%
46 and over	16%	9%
<b>Total</b>	<b>8%</b>	<b>6%</b>

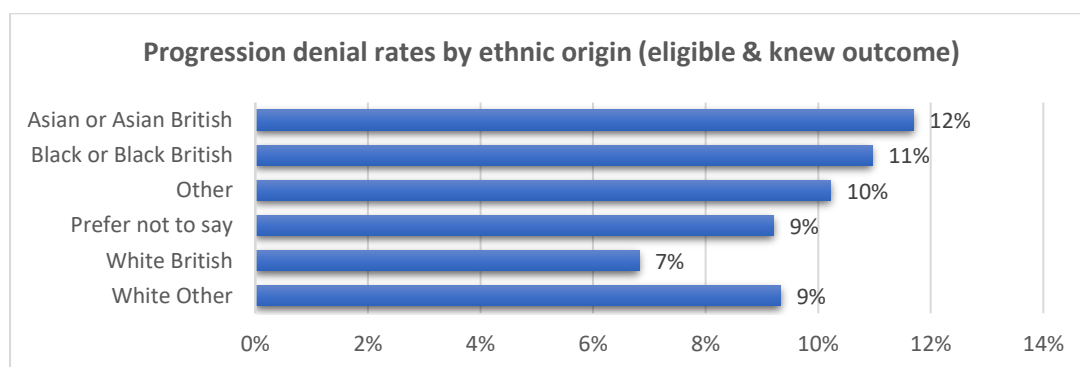
As in last year's survey, there was no significant difference in progression rates between maintained schools and free schools/academies. Prior to last year, teachers in academies were generally more likely to have been denied progression. As we said last year, this could reflect the ongoing debate in the academies sector on discontinuing PRP, potentially making progression less likely to be denied in that sector than in previous years.

### **Pay progression for September 2020: Progression by teacher characteristics**

As in previous surveys, older teachers were much more likely to have been denied progression than younger counterparts. One in eight teachers (13%) over the age of 35 who were eligible to progress and knew the outcome of their decision were denied pay progression, compared to one in twenty (5%) of those aged 35 and under. Although some of this is linked to older teachers being more likely to be on the upper pay range, similar patterns of progression denial by age are visible within each of the main, upper and leadership scales when analysed separately.



White British teachers were less likely to be denied progression (7%) than teachers reporting other ethnic origins (11%). This represents an unwelcome return to differential progression outcomes by ethnicity, after an unusually even set of outcomes in last year's survey.



Among this year's respondents, the group most likely to have been denied progression were Asian and Asian British teachers (12%), followed by Black and Black British teachers (11%).

Within more narrowly defined ethnic origin bands, particularly high rates of progression denial were recorded this year by teachers describing themselves as of Indian (15%) or African (14%) origin.

Men and women were equally likely to progress overall. Within this headline figure, men were more likely to be denied progression than women on the upper range (19% compared to 14%), but female leaders were more likely to be turned down than male leaders (8% compared to 3%). In this year's survey, LGB+ teachers were less likely to be denied progression (5%) than heterosexual teachers (8%).

Teachers on maternity leave were turned down for progression more often than their colleagues, albeit by a smaller margin than in some previous surveys. Eligible members who said they had been absent on maternity leave during the previous year were denied progression in 10% of cases where the outcome was known, compared to 8% of members not on maternity leave. In a third of the 35 cases where a member on maternity leave was denied progression, their absence due to pregnancy or maternity was specifically mentioned as a reason for denial of progression, in contravention of DfE guidance.

Teachers who identified themselves as disabled were once again more likely to be denied pay progression than respondents who did not. Disabled teachers were turned down for progression in 11% of cases where the outcome was known, compared to 7% of teachers without a disability. This is slightly less of a differential than in last year's survey, but the continued trend for disabled teachers to suffer worse progression outcomes is a continued concern.

Teachers on part-time contracts, working in a job share or with other flexible arrangements were twice as likely to be denied pay progression than those working full-time. Some 7% of full-time teachers who were eligible and knew the outcome of their progression decision were turned down, compared to 15% of those on part-time or other flexible arrangements. Similarly, respondents who were on fixed or other non-permanent contracts were denied progression in 10% of cases, compared to 7% of those on permanent contracts.

Teachers in London were more likely to be turned down progression, with 9% of those in inner London and 10% in outer London being denied progression where eligible and aware of their outcome. By contrast, just 7% of those on the London fringes and in the rest of England were refused.

Those who told us they had been absent during the previous year with either a confirmed or suspected case of Covid-19 were no more likely to be denied progression than those who had not been absent due to Covid. Similarly, there was no difference in progression rates among those who had been forced to self-isolate due to Covid exposure.

Those absent during the year due to long-term ill health were denied progression on 14% of occasions where the outcome was known. A fifth (20%) of teachers who said they had been absent due to menopause during the year said they were denied progression where the outcome was known, but the sample size for this group was only 15 members. 13% of those who reported having been absent due to domestic abuse and knew their progression outcome said they had been turned down, but again the sample size was only 16.

## **Pay progression for September 2020: Appraisal, objectives and the impact of Covid-19**

Five in six teachers (83%) said that their appraiser took the impact of Covid into account when considering objectives. This comprised 29% of respondents who said objectives were disregarded altogether and they were given progression, and a further 54% of teachers who said their appraiser took the pandemic into account. The remaining 17% said their appraiser did not consider the impact of Covid. Objectives were most likely to be disregarded altogether for those on the main scale (33% compared to 29% overall), but Covid was most likely to have been taken into account for leaders (89% compared to 83% overall).

Among those who were turned down for pay progression, only 47% said the impact of Covid was considered during their own appraisal. But among those who had missed part of the year due to Covid infection, symptoms or isolation, there was no significant difference in the numbers saying the pandemic's impact was or was not taken into account at appraisal.

Almost half of respondents (48%) who felt able to comment on their school's policy said that their employer had disregarded all objectives due to the impact of Covid and awarded progression to all eligible teachers. Most other respondents told us that appraisers had taken the pandemic into account, with a roughly even split between those who felt rates of progression had increased and those who felt progression had not been affected.

Classroom teachers were three times more likely than leaders to say they did not know their school's policy on taking Covid into account during appraisal. This suggests schools are not properly communicating this beyond the leadership group, adding to confusion over PRP in an already uncertain time.

<b>What approach was taken by your school regarding the impact of COVID-19 on appraisal objectives this year? (Excluding "don't knows")</b>	
Objectives were disregarded and all eligible teachers were given pay progression	48%
Appraisers were asked to take COVID-19 into account and rates of progression appear to have increased as a result	20%
Appraisers were asked to take COVID-19 into account but rates of progression do not appear to have been affected as a result	24%
Appraisers were not asked to take COVID-19 into account	9%

Two-thirds of teachers (66%) told us that at least some of their appraisal objectives were linked to pupil performance outcomes. This was a significant fall from a figure of 75% recorded last year. It is perhaps surprising that the figure remained as high as this, given the difficulty in either measuring pupil performance outcomes this year or in attempting to link them in any meaningful way to teacher performance. As in previous years, primary teachers were more likely (70%) than secondary teachers (64%) to say objectives were linked to pupil outcomes. Those on the upper pay range were also more likely (71%) to say objectives were linked to pupil outcomes than either leaders or teachers on the main range.

Some 58% of respondents said they had to produce evidence for their appraisal in order to show that they had met their objectives. This represents a significant fall from last year's figure of 71%, but means around three in five teachers was still asked to provide evidence for their appraisal despite the impact of the pandemic. As in previous surveys, this

requirement was more common in secondary schools (61%) than in primaries (54%). Those on the upper pay range were more likely to be asked for evidence (61%) than leaders or teachers on the main pay range.

Among the types of evidence most frequently required were pupil attainment and progress data; results; observations; schemes of work; books and emails; and even evidence from management software such as Bluesky or Bluewave. Some members reported an exhaustive list of evidence being required of support any progression despite the increased workload and stress of teaching through the pandemic. However, others reported that the process had been streamlined in response to the current situation.

Teachers showed increased dissatisfaction with appraisal as a means of development compared to previous years.<sup>1</sup> Excluding those who offered no opinion, 37% said the PRP system had negatively affected the usefulness of their appraisal for professional development purposes, up from 27% last year. Some 43% said it had made no change to the usefulness of appraisal and just 20% said it had a positive impact. It is worth reiterating that as time passes, fewer and fewer teachers remember an appraisal system before performance-related pay formed part of it.

### **Other issues: Pay structures and policies**

Just over half (52%) of respondents told us that their school had a written pay progression policy, up from 49% in last year's survey. Some 7% said they had no written policy, but 41% of teachers did not know.

When asked whether their school's progression policy was fair, 49% of respondents said they believed it was, up from 44% last year, while the proportion saying the policy was unfair fell from 15% to 10%. Once again, the presence of a written policy made a huge difference to perceptions of fairness. Among respondents whose school had a written progression policy, over two-thirds (71%) thought the policy was fair. By contrast, where the policy was not in a written form, just 15% of respondents thought it was fair.

Among the reasons members gave for describing the progression policy as unfair, many cited the inflexibility of objectives, where expectations over pupil progress take no account of role, cohort, department or other factors beyond the control of the individual teacher. A large number of respondents told us they were expected to take on extra responsibilities such as becoming subject leads, without any TLR or additional pay, in order to even be considered for progression.

Teachers felt that shifting goalposts and a lack of transparency meant a reason could always be found from "one of the many caveats" to deny progression. Many felt that there was no obvious reason why some colleagues received progression and others did not, apart from managerial whim. And a number of teachers reported that their school had introduced

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<sup>1</sup> We altered the wording on this question slightly this year, from "Has this system affected the usefulness of your appraisal for professional development purposes?" to "Do you believe that the link between appraisal and pay progression affects the usefulness of your appraisal for professional development purposes?"

longer delays between reaching the top of the main scale and progression to the upper scale, delaying career advancement to save money.

Four-fifths (78%) of teachers said their school used the traditional structure of a six-point main pay range and a three-point upper pay range, almost identical to the figures recorded over the last five years. Just 3% of respondents said that their school had moved away from this approach, reflecting schools' rejection of the 'flexibility' to adopt their own separate pay structures. Despite the STPCD's return to recommending progression points within the main pay range in 2020, the numbers who said they did not know about their school's approach grew in this year's survey from 16% to 19%.

Of those who said their school uses a six-point main scale, 71% said it was in line with the advisory pay scale points set out in the STPCD and national joint union advice. Some 5% of respondents said the points used were lower than STPCD levels, 1% said they were higher, and the remaining 23% were not sure.

### **Teachers' comments**

Below are just a few of the thousands of teachers' comments we received on pay and progression:

#### ***Concerns about the failure of the PRP system***

*I did not get to progress because Covid "prevented me being able to contribute to the wider school".*

*I met all the standards and was given a good performance review, but was told progress of the students could not be measured properly due to students not being in school because of Covid-19.*

*Was told after the academic year had ended that due to there being no year 6 SATS, I had no 'hard data' to demonstrate my impact.*

*It seems unfair to be denied progression as a result of catching Covid at school.*

*No one could have foreseen a pandemic but with all the sudden changes, it would have been a gesture to allow pay progression. We adapted so fast for the benefit of our pupils*

*Teachers deserve a basic quality of life which the current pay doesn't allow for, adding a performance element can push a struggling teacher under and will make people leave the profession.*

*Historically poor performing schools from poorer backgrounds struggle to find the best teachers due to PRP.*

#### ***Continuing concerns about pay levels***

*I struggle to think of another profession which pays so poorly and asks for such a high level of qualification.*

*[Pay levels] are not reflective of the additional workload, level of responsibilities, and current risks that teachers are now having to face. The expectation of level of professionalism and responsibility is now unprecedented but not acknowledged in any discussion related to pay and conditions.*

*What with inflation, teachers will in effect be taking a pay cut. How is this fair after having been putting our lives on the line constantly during the (second, worse wave of the) pandemic, to free up other workers? Obviously we care about the education of our pupils, and that's why we're still doing what we do. However, a little thanks wouldn't go amiss.*

*Insulting pay freeze, and blatant disregard for teachers who have put themselves at risk every day they enter the school building in current pandemic.*

*The pay freeze in particular is a kick in the teeth when we are at an all-time low.*

*I currently take home little more than I did over ten years ago.*

*A disgrace. My salary means I look after other people's children while never being able to afford having any of my own. Once student loans and taxes are deducted, you just have your bills covered.*

*Living in the South West, house prices are very high. I cannot afford to get a mortgage as a single person on a teacher's wage. I think for the amount of work/hours we do, we are still grossly underpaid and the pay freeze is just another nail in the coffin.*

*For the amount of work we do and the hours it takes, the pay is, quite frankly, pathetic. This year, we have had such a huge workload coping with online teaching, which, in my school's case, has been very successful - and much appreciated by students and parents alike. However, with that extra workload on top of putting ourselves in danger on a daily basis in classes of 29 students, we are all frazzled and exhausted. It is just all too much with no light at the end of the tunnel, no flexibility from government and, in comparison to other industries with similar levels of responsibility, absolutely pathetic remuneration.*

*We had yet to catch up, despite what guff the chancellor says about public sector pay, with the reduction in salary from the 07/08 financial crash and now we are expected to pay again for the bail out of the private sector. I am totally disillusioned by how we are treated and will definitely be leaving teaching in the next 18 months possibly sooner as I don't wish to continue to support in any way the current government and ongoing education system overseen by 2 complete halfwits.*

### **Concerns about workload**

*The contracted hours for teachers are crazy. I work 50 to 60 hours per week plus several days in the holidays. It's a nonsense.*

*Teachers are overworked and underpaid. Since the coronavirus, workload has increased. I have seen so many teachers leave the profession. Our mental health is affected. We have to juggle too many things. It's never ending. It's taking the fun out of teaching.*

*So poorly underpaid for the hours that we put in. Already handed my notice in, and actively looking for another job - out of education. Never felt so undervalued in my life – by the school and the Government.*

*[Pay levels] should be higher for the amount of work we do, especially during Covid-19. The amount of extra work to keep hygiene at the highest level at all times whilst still providing an enriching and fulfilling curriculum for students and meeting exam/coursework deadlines has been gruelling and at some times, unachievable and unmanageable. We sacrifice a lot for little reward, and COVID -19 has just highlighted these discrepancies even more.*

*We are getting paid the bare minimum and we are asked to work 24/7 to be able to be good at what we do! Seriously thinking of changing a career even though I love teaching.*

*It's a good job that I love what I do as my prospect of earning any more over the next 10 years looks bleak and my real terms prosperity is on a downwards spiral.*

*I love my job but the fact I can't even afford to buy a house in the area I live being a fully qualified teacher isn't right.*

*As a profession we have suffered... for too long. We are about to be hit again because we are an easy target. Teachers consistently soldier on because at the end of the day the children are who we care about. This makes us very easy targets. Teachers have shown bravery beyond the normal, turning up for work every day. It is just heart breaking that as we stand up for the future of our children and our country, the message from government says you have no value, you are not worth it.*

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