



The Rt Hon Nadhim Zahawi MP
Secretary of State for Education
Department for Education
20 Great Smith Street
London SW1P 3BT

Dear Nadhim Zahawi,

Inflation has increased dramatically since your evidence to the STRB, suggesting 3 per cent pay rises for most of the teaching profession.

The latest figures show CPI inflation at 9.1 per cent and RPI inflation at 11.7 per cent.

We calculate that teacher pay has fallen by a fifth in real terms since 2010, even before the effects of this latest bout of inflation.

Alongside the decline in teacher pay in real terms against inflation, it has also declined in relative terms against earnings. Average teacher salaries are at their lowest level compared to average earnings across the economy in over 40 years.

Teachers and school leaders often tell us that workload is their predominant concern. But right now, our members are telling us pay is a big issue too.

The combination of unsustainable hours, the work intensity during those hours and ever-falling pay levels are damaging our schools and the young people we are educating.

Teachers are looking at their working hours and their pay and calculating hourly rates, which are alarmingly low.

The latest teacher training figures are very worrying; applications have fallen by 24 per cent compared with last year.¹

One in eight newly qualified teachers left the job in their first year of teaching. These young people have often finished a degree, then completed a post graduate qualification. They are a great loss to the profession, but more importantly to the nation's pupils who rely on their teachers to educate and care for them.

This is a waste of potential and the significant investment the Government has made in training them.

¹ Initial Teacher Training applications on 16th May 2022 were 78,539 and on 17th May 2021 were 103,040.

Your failure to act on the issues that matter means that one in four teachers have left by the end of three years, one in three by the end of five.

You cannot afford to turn away from these figures and the reality behind them.

This attrition itself causes even more workload problems for remaining staff – in recruitment, induction, mentoring and training.

Schools up and down the country are reporting profound difficulties in attracting applicants for vacancies. Government is consistently missing its own teacher recruitment targets; and it's getting worse, with the number of people applying to be teachers significantly down whilst the number of vacancies being advertised in secondary schools is up by 14 per cent. Some schools are having to reduce their curriculum offer as a result.

So, we are asking that you take action to address this profound crisis in both teacher recruitment and retention.

You must respond to the new economic reality of double-digit inflation and the threat this poses to teacher living standards. We call on you to commit to an inflation-plus increase for all teachers. It is not good enough to only propose higher increases for beginner teachers (which are themselves likely to be lower than inflation).

A clear and unambiguous signal that educators are valued, with undifferentiated inflation-plus pay increases for all teachers, is urgently needed. And you must fund schools accordingly.

You also need to work with us now to reduce teacher workload.

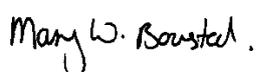
We also urge you to act on support and supply staff pay – they are among the lowest paid staff in the public sector.

The current inaction from the Government on these questions is causing real damage to education and to our members' livelihoods.

We have to tell you that failing sufficient action by you, in the Autumn Term, we will consult our members on their willingness to take industrial action.

And we will be strongly encouraging them to vote yes. We can no longer stand by while you run both education and educators into the ground.

Yours sincerely,



Mary Boustead
Joint General Secretary



Kevin Courtney
Joint General Secretary