



TEACHERS' PAY AND PROGRESSION FOR SEPTEMBER 2023

This annual National Education Union survey is the largest survey on teachers' pay increases and pay progression each year. Teachers have endured almost a decade and a half of real-terms pay cuts and even the hard-fought increase in September 2023 has not begun to reverse this. The school system school system is creaking under the pressures of funding restrictions, rising living costs and a teacher recruitment and retention crisis. Pupils, school staff and the communities they serve are bearing the impact.

Our survey this year shows a picture of a broken progression system, with cash-strapped schools making unreasonable demands on teachers in order for them to progress through the salary structure. Instead of progression payments rewarding extra experience and ability in the classroom, these are being tied to taking on additional roles and responsibilities that should be paid for in separate allowances. These allowances are often not paid, or paid at levels below the national minimum levels. As such, it is no surprise that over three-quarters of teachers have considered quitting over poor levels of pay, the unfair progression system or both.

KEY FINDINGS

Teachers' view on pay and progression

Among all respondents:

- 78% have considered leaving teaching because of low pay or the unfairness of PRP;
- 80% of teachers feel underpaid given their job role, responsibilities and workload.

Pay progression for September 2023

Among all teachers:

- 45% said they were eligible for pay progression;
- 35% said they were ineligible due to being at their scale maximum;
- 6% said they were ineligible due to being new entrants to teaching;
- 10% said they were ineligible for "other reasons", many of which also amounted to progression denial;
- 6% said they were eligible for progression but did not apply.

Among teachers eligible to be considered for pay progression (45% of the total response):

- 78% received progression;
- 6% were denied progression;
- the remaining 16% still did not know their employer's decision when completing the survey;
- overall, 7% of those who knew the outcome of their pay progression decision were denied.

Teachers were more likely to be denied progression if they were:

- In older age groups
- Working part-time
- Working in primary schools
- On the UPR

Among those turned down for progression:

- 21% were explicitly told that the decision was due to funding or budgetary constraints;
- 96% were given no indication during the year that they were failing to meet the required standards, including 55% who had no mid-year review;
- 92% felt that the decision was unfair but 82% chose not to appeal the decision.

Responsibility expectations on the UPR

Among those on the UPR or at the top of the MPR:

- 62% said their school expects teachers on the UPR to undertake specific additional responsibilities which are not recognised with a TLR payment

Teaching and Learning Responsibility (TLR) payments

Among all respondents:

- 31% currently receive a TLR payment
- 68% do not currently receive a TLR payment

Of those in receipt of a TLR payment:

- 33% said the payment was about what they would expect, given the responsibility
- 66% said the payment was lower than they would expect, given the responsibility

Among part-timers who receive TLR payments:

- 25% perform the full responsibilities of the TLR role, and are paid the TLR in full
- 9% perform part of the responsibilities of the TLR role, and receive a pro-rated TLR amount in line with their part-time salary
- 60% perform the full responsibilities of the TLR role, but are only paid a pro-rated TLR amount, in line with their part-time salary

Of those not currently in receipt of a TLR payment:

- 40% said their current responsibilities should qualify them for a TLR

Teachers were more likely to receive a TLR payment if they were:

- Male
- Working full-time
- Working in London
- Teaching in secondary schools

Among teachers who receive a TLR payment, median levels were often below the minima set out in the STPCD:

Median TLR payments by phase			
	TLR1	TLR2	TLR3
Primary and Nursery	£2,500	£3,017	£1,800
Secondary	£9,272	£5,000	£2,000
Special and PRU	£3,109	£3,213	£2,700

- 57% of teachers who receive a TLR payment were paid below the national minimum level for their TLR band.

Special Educational Needs (SEN) allowances

Among all teachers:

- Only 7% of teachers receive an SEN allowance;
- In special schools and PRUs 87% receive an SEN allowance, but 12% still do not.

Of those in receipt of an SEN allowance:

- 28% said the payment was about what they would expect, given the responsibility;
- 72% said the payment was lower than they would expect, given the responsibility;
- The median SEN allowance level is £2,500, the same across all school phases.

Of those not currently in receipt of an SEN allowance:

- 16% say the responsibilities they currently undertake should qualify them for an SEN allowance

Recruitment and retention payments

- Only 2% of teachers say they currently receive a recruitment and retention payment
- Median recruitment and retention bonuses are as follows:

Median recruitment and retention bonuses paid by phase			
Primary/nursery	Secondary	Special & PRU	Total
£1,416	£2,000	£1,750	£2,000

Pay increases

Among all respondents:

- 78% said they had received a pay increase in line with the national increase
- 1% said they had received a pay increase but that it was less than the national increase
- 0% said they had received a pay increase but that it was more than the national increase
- 1% said their school told them that teachers would not receive any cost of living increase
- 8% said no decision had yet been taken
- The remaining 12% did not know whether or not they had received an increase

Pay structures

Among all respondents:

- 87% say their school retains a six-point scale for the Main Pay Range (MPR) and a three-point scale for the Upper Pay Range (UPR)
- 3% say their school does not use a structure with six points on the MPR and three points on the UPR
- 10% do not know

Among those who say their school retains a six-point MPR and three-point UPR scale:

- 78% say they are in line with STPCD
- 7% say they are lower at some or all points
- 1% say they are higher at some or all points

Progression when taking maternity leave

An analysis of progression outcomes for 785 teachers who took maternity leave in 2022/23 shows these teachers are routinely misinformed about their eligibility for pay progression or discouraged from applying.

Those who had taken maternity leave were:

- more likely to say they were ineligible to progress (19%)
- less likely to apply when eligible (9%)
- more likely to have been denied progression (9% of those who were eligible and knew their progression outcome).

Working time

Among all respondents:

- 77% have kept the same contracted hours as last year
- 6% reduced their hours in the past year due to excessive workload and its impact on life
- 4% increased their contracted hours in the past year due to concerns over rising living costs
- 4% changed their contracted hours in the past year for a different reason

Among part-time teachers:

- 54% kept the same contracted hours as last year
- 22% reduced their hours in the past year due to excessive workload and its impact on life
- 8% increased their contracted hours in the past year due to concerns over rising living costs
- 14% have changed their contracted hours in the past year for a different reason

Pay policy and appraisals

Among all respondents:

- Only 62% say their school made them aware of the school's pay policy and where to find it;
- Less than half (46%) think their school's pay policy is fair;
- 13% think it is unfair;
- 41% do not know what is in their school's pay policy.

Among all respondents:

- 26% say pupil performance is the main driver of appraisal outcomes;
- 39% say pupil performance is one piece of evidence used to determine appraisal outcomes;
- 35% say pupil performance does not form part of appraisal objectives.

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Methodology and the survey response

The NEU sent the survey by email to teacher members in state-funded schools and academies in England on 6 December 2023. The survey closed on 8 January 2023.

The questionnaire is included as a separate appendix alongside this document, and asked members about:

- their eligibility for pay progression in September 2023 and whether this was granted;
- whether their pay scale was uprated in line with the national increase in September 2023;
- their views on their own pay and progression;
- their receipt or otherwise of TLR payments, SEN allowances and recruitment and retention payments and the values of these;
- their views on their school's pay structure and policy; and
- whether they had changed contracted hours due to financial or workload pressures.

We reweighted responses from our sample to reflect the demographic characteristics of teachers in state-funded schools in England. We used data from the DfE's school database and the School Workforce Census 2022 to reweight responses to our survey in line with the teacher workforce by the following characteristics:

- Gender
- Age
- Ethnicity
- Grade (classroom teacher/leadership role)
- Working pattern (full-time/part-time)
- School type (primary/secondary/special or PRU)
- Region

Some 23,702 members responded to the survey this year, almost double last year's response rate. Of these, 16,097 members had a full set of characteristics available for use in the weighted analysis. In some instances it was not possible to weight by all characteristics, but the percentages in this report are weighted unless otherwise specified.

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.

Context, limitations and year-on-year differences

The survey was conducted at around the same time as last year, so should avoid the problems we sometimes encounter around comparability of answers from those who still do not yet know their pay increase or progression outcome.

Possibly the most significant change in the survey this year is the splitting of those who told us they were ineligible for pay progression by reason and asking respondents to supply additional detail. When asking about eligibility for pay progression, earlier iterations of the survey included the answer option "No - I was at my pay scale maximum/I was ineligible for other reasons". This year this answer option was split in two: "No - I was at my pay scale maximum" and "No - I was ineligible for another reason (please give details below)". Along with asking for further details from members who told us they were eligible for progression but chose not to apply, this shows that the proportion of teachers telling us they were denied progression is an underestimate. In practice, many teachers believe or

are told that they are ineligible or should not apply to progress, when in fact this is a de facto rejection of their case by their employer.

This change is unlikely to have significantly impacted the numbers who say they were turned down for progression this year. However, it is possible that the rephrasing of the question led some who previously would have claimed they were refused progression to now redefine themselves as having been “ineligible”, despite in effect having been turned down prior to formal appraisal. It also suggests that in previous years the figures we reported for teachers being turned down for progression were also underestimates.

Our sample covers NEU members rather than the whole teacher workforce, but it has been reweighted to reflect the characteristics of the teacher workforce in English state-funded schools as a whole. There has never been any indication that NEU members are atypical in their experiences of pay and progression within the school system.

Teachers' views on pay and progression

Dissatisfaction with pay rates and pay progression

Four fifths (80%) of teachers say their pay is less or significantly less than they would expect, given their role, responsibilities and workload (Figure 1). This is a little lower than the 85% recorded last year and the 86% the year before, possibly a result of the higher pay award negotiated after the NEU pay campaign and strikes in spring 2023. However it is still vastly higher than the 56% recorded when we asked the same question in 2020/21, reflecting the extent to which pay has fallen further behind the cost of living even in the past three years.

Almost a quarter (24%) of respondents said they were paid “significantly less” than expected, another 56% said they were paid “less” than they might expect. Almost all the remainder said their pay was “about what [they] would expect”, with less than 1% saying they were paid more than they would expect.

Among those on the Main Pay Range (MPR), 84% told us they were underpaid, compared to 79% of those on the Upper Pay Range (UPR). In both pay ranges, primary teachers were four or five percentage points more likely to feel underpaid than counterparts in secondaries. Male and female teachers expressed similar overall dissatisfaction, but men were five percentage points more likely to give the stronger “significantly less” response than women on both classroom pay ranges. School leaders were less likely to feel underpaid than classroom teachers.

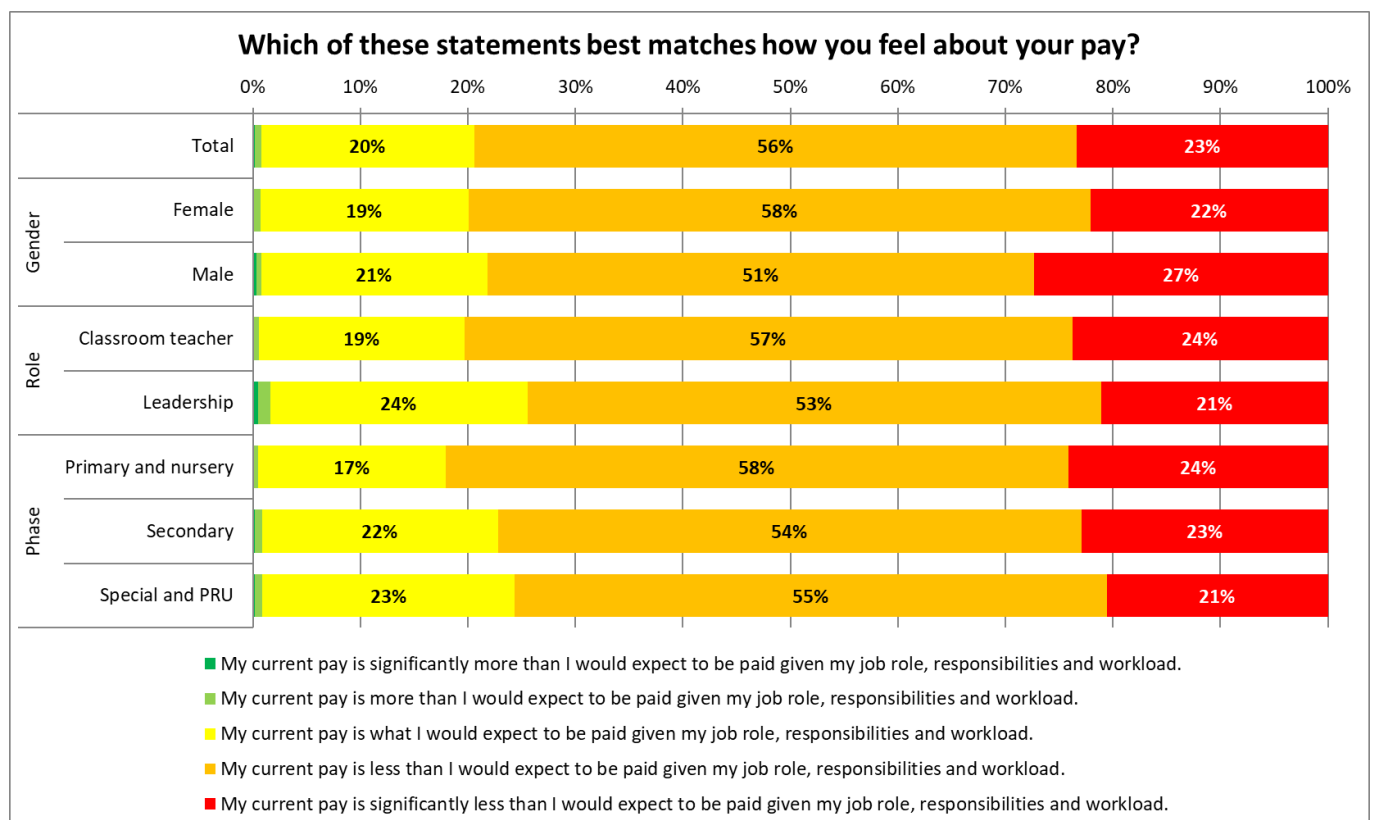


Figure 1: Which of these statements best matches how you feel about your pay?

Over three quarters of teachers (78%) have considered leaving the profession due to pay levels, the unfair progression system or both (Figure 2). This is unchanged from last year, and again significantly higher than when we asked the question in 2020/21 and earlier.

Almost two thirds (63%) of teachers said they have considered quitting specifically over pay, either as a sole factor or as part of a “both of the above” answer. Again, this is in line with responses over the past two years, but significantly higher than before the recent cost of living crisis (the figure was just 38% in 2020/21).

Leaders are less likely to have considered quitting over pay (57%) than classroom teachers (64%), although this still constitutes a clear majority of leadership members who have thought about leaving teaching because of poor pay levels.

Just under half of all respondents (47%) said they had considered leaving teaching over the unfairness of performance related pay (PRP). This figure was unchanged from last year. There were no significant differences between teachers on the MPR and UPR, although leaders were slightly less likely to have thought about quitting over PRP (43%) than classroom teachers (48%).

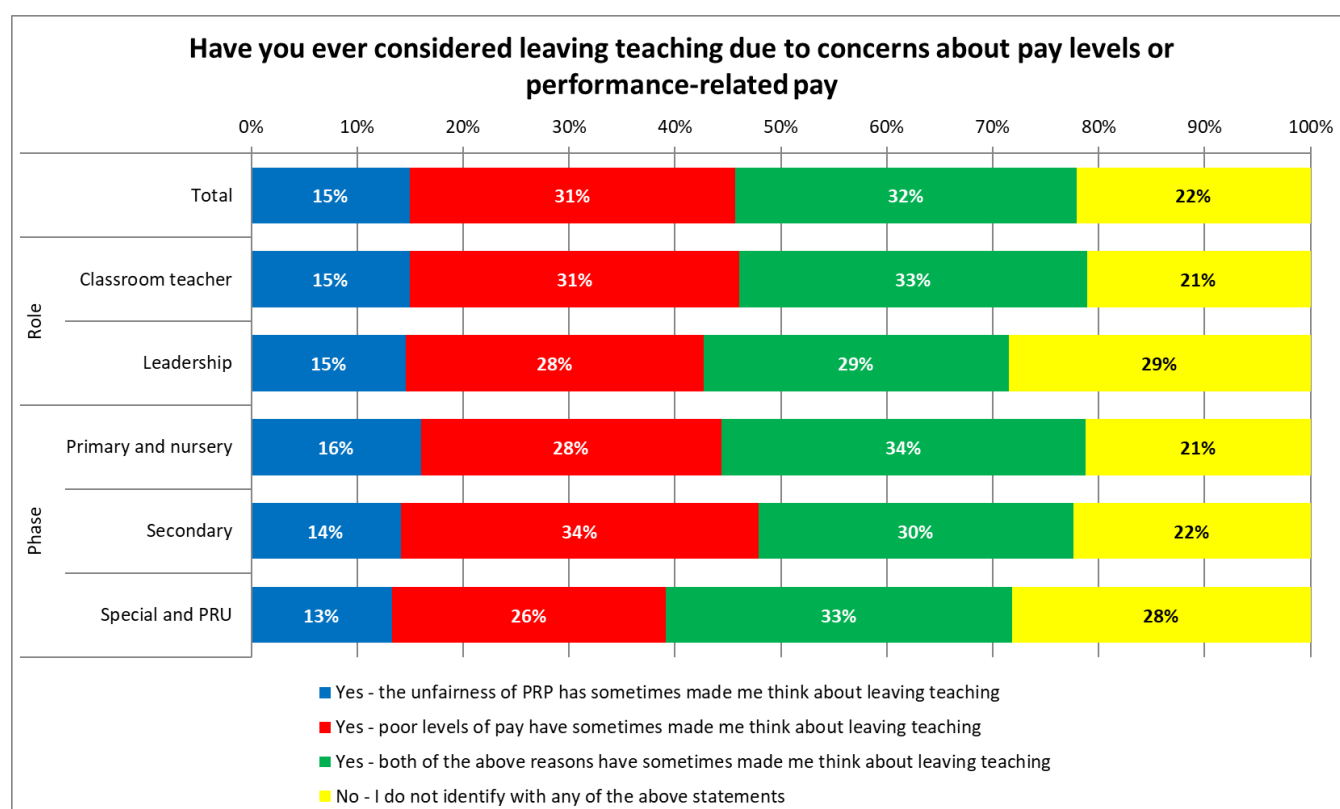


Figure 2: Have you ever considered leaving teaching due to concerns about pay levels or performance-related pay?

Teachers' comments on pay and progression

We asked members for any additional comments they wished to make on pay levels and PRP. Below is a small sample from almost 10,000 responses:

On pay:

“If you were to consider the amount of hours I actually work and the salary I am on as a third year teacher, I would be on less than minimum wage. It’s no wonder so many teachers are leaving the profession.”

"When I started 10 years ago, the salary could be comfortably lived on if one was not extravagant with expenditure. Now I run out of money by the end of each month and I live quite frugally... I'm no longer able to save."

"Expectation is to work as a charity worker. If you take up responsibility they do not increase your pay scale."

"I cannot survive as a single mother on my teaching salary and am overdrawn by the end of the month without spending anything on luxuries. It shouldn't be this way..."

"We work so hard but our pay does not reflect this. We are not just teachers, we are nurses, therapists, data analysts... yet we are still struggling to buy weekly shops and pay our bills."

"Pay levels are not good enough to entice or retain high quality teachers. We are leaking staff and it is impossible to recruit new staff. My workload is astronomical and the pay is not. I could easily earn what I earn doing an easier job - but I am held to ransom because I love what I do."

"Having been at the top of the pay scale for over 15 years I have nowhere to go other than out of the profession to seek a pay increase... All my peers, many with poorer qualifications are far better off after nearly 30 years of doing their jobs."

"The profession is grossly undervalued considering the impact teachers have on young people... at times this job feels inhumane... the pay is quite frankly, insulting compared to the expectations and working conditions and it says an awful lot about how much the government care about children."

"The lack of appropriate pay increases will leave me in pension poverty and mean that I will have to work longer for more hours and years than I intended."

"I do not want to be SLT. I love classroom teaching. But I will be in debt if my pay stays like this for the next 20 years. I have to either get another job altogether or get a second job."

"Considering the huge responsibility, expectations and stress levels of the profession, this should be a career that is MUCH better paid. I can not believe my pay considering the age I am, degrees I hold, hours I work and the comparative pay of my peers in other jobs."

"Schools have been bled dry of funding and staff are expected to take on more roles and responsibilities for less pay and more difficult working conditions. It is becoming our job to 'fix' the problems in society because when families struggle due to deprivation, poor healthcare, special needs and various other issues, there are no other support systems in place."

"The DfE should be singing our praises. They should be lifting us up instead of trying to knock us down, belittle and devalue us. Is it any wonder school staff are leaving in droves. The current conditions are breaking people and destroying their spirit."

On PRP:

"PRP fails to recognise that the children we work with are individual, living, breathing human beings with individual strengths, weaknesses and shortcomings that are beyond our control.... The PRP system treats teachers with contempt and dumbs down the complexities of the job that we are faced with on a daily basis."

"It is... a gross stain on the profession that the responsibilities and the toll of those responsibilities are carried by teachers on main pay scale with zero [additional] remuneration. Why should we be held accountable for lead roles we are not being paid (or given time) to do?"

"Additional requirements are being added to the progression document to block pay progression. The Upper Payscale is a farce and needs to be abolished and just integrated into the Main. The requirements for upper payscale are too open to interpretation by individual schools and trusts."

"PRP is unfair and a barrier to decent pay. Schools use it to cut costs and it is not right to base a teachers performance on pupils' performance as it reduces schools to exam factories and children to numbers on a spreadsheet. It also doesn't factor in all of the external factors that can affect pupil performance that the teacher has no control over."

"[PRP] is a harmful concept left to the whims of potentially malicious managers under strict financial pressure"

"We cannot be held accountable for bigger picture failings. But we are. We can't work miracles with underfunded classrooms – no resources, no paper, no exercise books, no whiteboards, no pens, strict budgets."

"You always have to justify your salary and take on more work and responsibilities on the top of daily teaching workloads."

"This system is unfair for newer teacher as staff who went through the threshold on the old terms (e.g. you just moved through it) are still able to maintain their salary without the additional responsibilities whereas teachers such as myself are having to wait for an "opening" to apply as the job roles that would allow me to apply are already filled."

"I have had to ask for my TLR this year - and this took months to be approved... It is now a 'given' that staff lead subjects, on main pay scale, which wasn't the case 5 years ago."

"Being an experienced teacher doing a great job is not enough... It is like they want you to leave to recruit someone cheaper. Absolutely demoralising. The only profession where experience is viewed negatively. What a career. Would not advise anyone to enter profession now."

"Schools use [PRP] to prevent moving teachers into UPS when teachers are plainly taking on expected responsibilities. As you meet a target, goalposts are often moved."

"No incentive for hard working experienced teachers to stay in the job as there is a ceiling of pay unless you choose to be a deputy or a headteacher which most people don't want to do as it is not worth the money you are paid. Working hours upon hours of extra time with no extra pay for experience or extra responsibilities."

"I've been a teacher for 30+ years; not a single one of my PRP targets in that time has contributed to me ensuring that my students make the best possible progress for them. It's being given the time to care that helps students – not arbitrary targets that can be used to decide whether the school budget can stretch to pay you what you've earned that year. PRP is all about adults, not students."

Pay progression for September 2023

Eligibility for progression

Less than half (45%) of respondents told us that they were eligible for pay progression in September 2023, although a further 6% said they were eligible but did not apply (Figure 3). Just over a third (35%) were at their pay scale maximum, 6% said they were a new entrant to teaching for 2023/24, and another 10% said they were ineligible for another reason. The figures are broadly consistent with those recorded in last year's survey.

Eligibility for progression was around the 45% mark for most sub-groups of teachers, although some differences exist. As might be expected, younger teachers were much more likely to say they were eligible to progress than older teachers, and correspondingly much less likely to say they were ineligible due to being at their scale maximum. Part-time teachers were also much more likely to say they had reached their scale maximum, and correspondingly less likely to be eligible for pay progression. School leaders were also more likely to have reached their scale maximum.

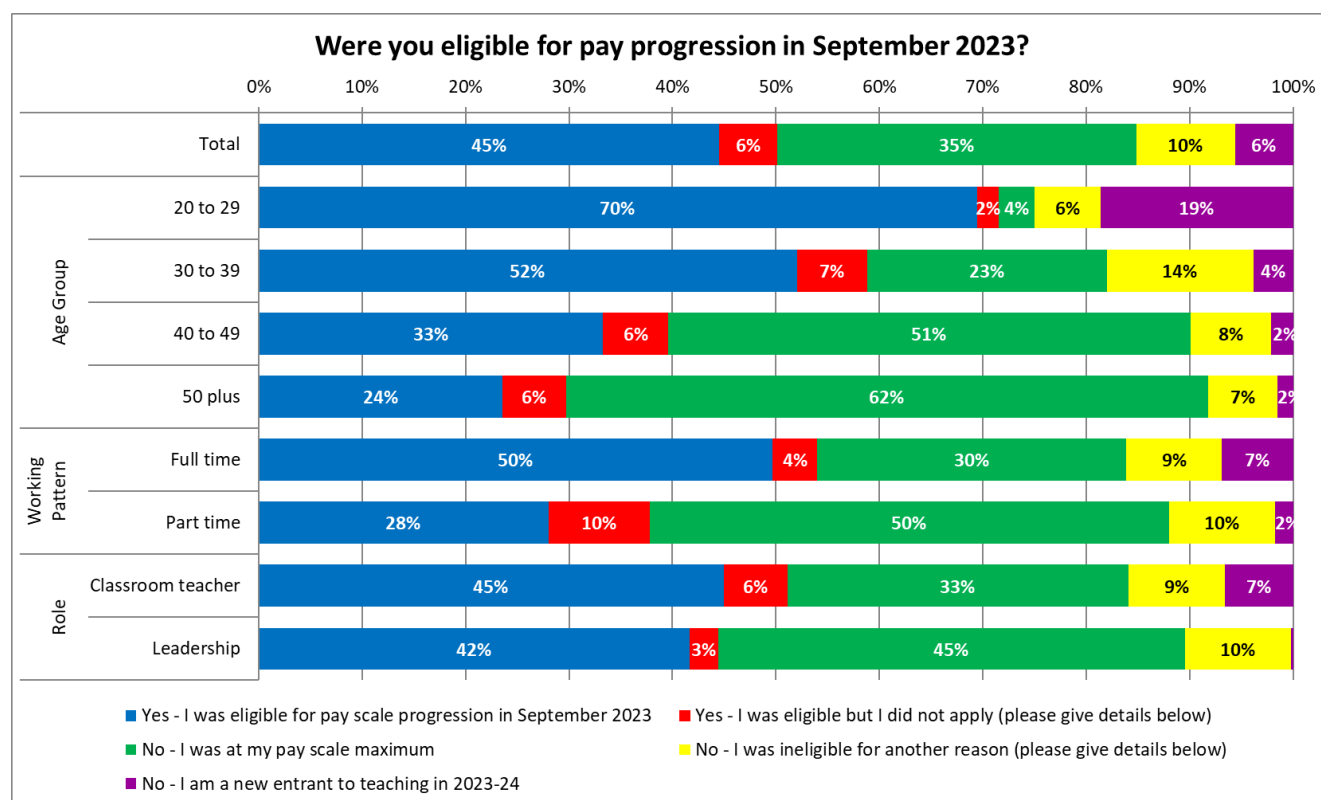


Figure 3: Were you eligible for pay progression in September 2023?

The responses clearly show the block to progression that occurs at the top of the MPR. Only 45% of those who told us they were on point M6 in 2022/23 said they were eligible for progression, compared to around 90% of those who told us they were on points M2-M5. This aligns with common practice that teachers reaching the top of the MPR are regularly held back by an additional year before progressing onto the upper pay range. Self-described eligibility for progression from point U1 was similar, at 44%, although it was slightly higher (49%) at U2.¹

¹ Figures for progression rates by pay scale point are based on unweighted data

This year we separated out those who said they were ineligible for reasons other than being at the scale maximum or new to teaching, and over 1,600 provided comments.

Around half told us that they were not eligible for pay progression due to their school's policy that at their scale point, progression was only possible after two years rather than one. The vast majority of these were on the upper pay range. A much smaller proportion were at the top of the main pay range on point M6, but many of these selected the answer "No – I was at my pay scale maximum" rather than "I was ineligible for another reason". It is not stated anywhere in the STPCD that progression onto or through the UPR should be on a biennial rather than annual basis, but it has become common practice throughout most English state-funded schools.

Aside from this group, many of the reasons cited for members being ineligible were much less coherent, and in some cases spurious or potentially discriminatory.

Around a fifth of those who told us they were not eligible for progression told us that they had moved schools or roles. A typical respondent reported: "I moved schools and therefore could not be assessed as meeting performance managements targets to justify pay progression." Another member told us: "It was my first year in a new school and the head explained [it] is normal protocol to apply only on the second year."

Those who had moved schools often reported having been appointed at a lower level than at their old school, or having to fight to have their prior experience recognised. An overseas teacher new to the English system said: "I have seven years teaching experience and they tried hiring me on M1. I argued and said that was not fair. They then accepted me at M3." Another said: "Only one year on UPS 1 – then moved to a new school who put me back to M6 again! Fourteen years in and fed up of being moved up and down the pay scale according to the school budget, I should be paid for my years of experience and not what the head chooses. I will now stay on M6 as I don't want the responsibility and then for it to be removed in the future if I am to move school."

A worrying proportion told us they were not eligible for progression because they were either on or had recently returned from maternity leave. Responses from these members are analysed in depth in a separate **Progression** when taking maternity section towards the end of this report.

Some members blamed their "ineligibility" on budget constraints, giving comments such as "I should be on U3 but they could only afford U1", "I am not allowed to go to UPS2 or get a TLR because the school cannot afford it" and "No budget for it to even be a possibility!" One member told us: "I believe the school has no money and a lot of TAs have been [made] redundant. It didn't seem fair to ask for progression but I believe it should have happened automatically based on performance. I have not moved up a scale since 2021". Another said: "The new CEO denied all teachers pay progression", while a third said: "They said they couldn't afford to give anyone a pay rise! When challenged they said we are welcome to leave." Even where not cited by members, it is reasonable to assume that budgetary concerns underpin many of the reasons behind teachers not at the top of the UPR being considered "ineligible" to progress.

Another common theme was members being told they could not progress through unwillingness to take on additional responsibilities or workload, or that their performance did not make them eligible. Most of these examples do not in fact reflect ineligibility, but a denial of progression to teachers and discouraging them from thinking about progression before they reach the stage of formal appraisal. Examples from the survey include "I've been told I would not get U2 as I'd need to do more/have more responsibilities"; "[I] should have gone up to U2 but didn't have enough 'evidence' despite two years on it and extra responsibility" and "I was told as I wasn't willing to lead a core subject and

wasn't meeting expectations enough to move to UPS." One member told us about the soft barrier put up to deny them progression: "Although not previously discussed when I requested to move to UPS, I was advised against it and told I would likely end up on capabilities if I moved up."

Demands for teachers to take on extra responsibilities in order to progress are additional, artificial barriers to teachers' progression up the pay ranges. Progression should reward increased experience and greater effectiveness as a teacher in the classroom, but is frequently used to incentivise teachers taking on responsibilities that should in fact be rewarded with a TLR payment. In this way, the PRP system is used by cash-strapped schools to artificially force pay restraint on teachers and to extract extra work from teachers across the wider school without proper compensation.

Applications for progression

In addition to the 10% who told us they were ineligible to progress for reasons other than being at the pay range maximum, another 6% of respondents said they were eligible for progression but chose not to apply (Figure 3).

Significant differences in the rates of those who choosing not to apply for progression were more to do with contracts and workplaces than personal characteristics. Women were slightly more likely to tell us that they were eligible for progression but did not apply (6%) than men (4%), but there were no significant differences by ethnicity this year. On the other hand, the following subsets of respondents said they were eligible for progression but did not apply:

- 10% of part-time teachers, compared to 4% of full-timers;
- 6% of classroom teachers, compared to 3% of those on the leadership team;
- 8% of members in primary/nursery schools, compared to 3% of those in secondaries and 7% of those in special schools.

Members who were eligible for progression but did not apply gave a variety of reasons.

One of the most commonly recurring, and most worrying for the leadership pipeline, was the feeling that expectations or demands at the next scale point were too high, and not worth the additional money. One member told us: "I would have been given more responsibility out of the classroom for not enough money. Life work life balance would be worse". Another said: "I didn't think the pay rise was worth the extra responsibilities that would inevitably be put on me. I struggle to maintain life at home without more responsibilities." A third told us they were "already overwhelmed with workload and don't fancy taking on more work for such a small financial gain."

A recurring theme throughout this report is schools trying to save money by making certain responsibilities a precondition for pay scale progression, rather than rewarding them with an appropriate TLR. Respondents referred directly to this in comments. "Our school expects TLR level input to progress into the upper pay scale", one said. Another told us: "My school already expects subject and other leadership responsibility and work rate but will not pay a TLR for this. Therefore I refuse to apply for next pay level. Nine years ago I was on UPS3 and deputy head pay scale. I have had to take a step back for my own wellbeing."

NEU research shows a squeeze in differentials: in 2010, the top of the UPR outside London was 70% higher than the bottom of the MPR; in 2023 this difference was only 55%. Taking into account changes to taxes and pension contribution rates since 2010, the take-home differential between the top and bottom of the classroom pay scale has closed even further, from 62% to 42%.

The combination of devalued pay and underfunded schools demanding ever more workload and responsibility for teachers further up the classroom pay scales is a dangerous one. For a small but significant proportion of teachers, it means they do not push for the pay scale progression they are entitled to, because the risk of unreasonable demands and burnout outweighs the small increase in pay.

This trend will also have implications for the pipeline of teachers who hope one day to become school leaders. A TeacherTapp survey showed a multi-year decline in teachers who would like to one day take a headship role.² The decline in real-terms pay, coupled with the workload and stress associated with the job, mean that there is a crisis in the school leadership pipeline over and above the wider crisis in teacher recruitment and retention.

Many teachers said they did not apply for progression because of a lack of information. Some said that they were not informed that their school required them to apply in order to progress, others were not made aware of internal deadlines for applications, or the evidence they would need to provide in order to apply. In some cases, members missed the application deadline because of absence due to sickness, bereavement or maternity (see Progression when taking maternity section below).

One such member told us: "School didn't let me know how to do this and left it to late for me to gather evidence, despite me actively doing a UPS role." Another said "My line manager was supposed to look into arrangements for applying for UPS for me but he didn't and I missed the deadline", while a third said: "I was very ill and we were given a week's notice of the deadline. We're told we'd be given guidance about how to apply, but weren't."

As with questions over eligibility, it is clear that in many cases members who do not apply to progress are in effect being turned down for progression before the formal appraisal stage, in many cases due to school policy rather than their own performance. These include those who were told they would be unlikely to be granted progression, and those who were told that (or feel that) the school cannot afford progression or does not generally award progression at their grade. This last response was particularly common among those on the UPR.

Typical comments from members for whom obstacles to progression had been raised included: "I didn't feel that I had sufficient evidence that I should move to UPS 2", "The school makes it impossible to move up", "The process in my school is extensive and normally rejected without explanation", and "[I was] not encouraged to increase up the pay scale. School cannot afford it. People are being made redundant this summer." Another teacher reported: "I was advised that because the GCSE results were not great that I would be unsuccessful in applying for UP2." One simply said: "It never gets granted".

One member told us: "I was told by my HT that because I wasn't leading a subject/having whole school impact, I wouldn't pass their criteria to move to U2. I've been on U1 for more than 5 years. I have... small children and cannot possibly take on more responsibilities at the moment. Moving pay scales should reward experience and also a successful performance management (which I have had)."

Another said: "I had spoken to the Headteacher about moving to U1. However, as a consequence of the pay award and lack of new funds to cover the whole cost [this would not be possible]. Many

² <https://teachertapp.co.uk/app/uploads/2021/10/2021-10-21-TeacherRecruitment-TeacherTappSchoolDash-FINAL.pdf>

members of our support staff did not have their contracts renewed. I didn't have the heart to ask for more money while others were losing their livelihoods.”

As with responses on eligibility, a regular theme was the fact that members who moved schools had been forced to take a pay cut and move down the scales to find their new position, and did not feel they would be supported in progressing back up. One such comment was: “I am a U3 teacher. Had to leave my permanent post due to a toxic bullying head teacher. Since 2019, I can not get employment as U3 teacher as too expensive so accepted M6 as needed the job.” Others included: “I was upper pay scale but moved house and took an m6 role to be more desirable” and “[I] didn't see the point [in applying for progression]. I was on UPS3 in my old school but moved school and they only specified M1-M6. I know if you are UPS3 and apply for jobs it goes against you.” One member told us simply: “I am worried about being too expensive so I chose not to apply.”

In a recruitment and retention crisis, it is shocking that teachers towards the upper end of the classroom pay scale are discouraged from applying for progression which they have earned through experience and good practice. Obstacles are raised, unreasonable expectations and workload is attached to positions further up the pay range, and those on higher salaries are pressured to accept lower salaries at other schools if they move. It is no wonder the most recent workforce showed teachers leaving the English state school system for reasons other than retirement at the highest rate on recent record. The solution must be a significant pay correction, fully funded for schools to remove the incentive to block teachers' pay progression.

Progression rates

Among those who told us they were eligible for progression and applied for it (where necessary), some 78% were successful. This is almost identical to the 79% in last year's survey. This year 6% were denied progression and the remaining 16% still did not know the outcome when completing the survey. This compares to figures of 8% and 13% respectively last year.

If we exclude the “don't know” answer options and look only at those who knew their progression outcome, 93% were successful while 7% were denied. This rejection rate is lower than figures of 10% and 12% in the last two years, and more in line with the figures in the two previous years (Figure 4).

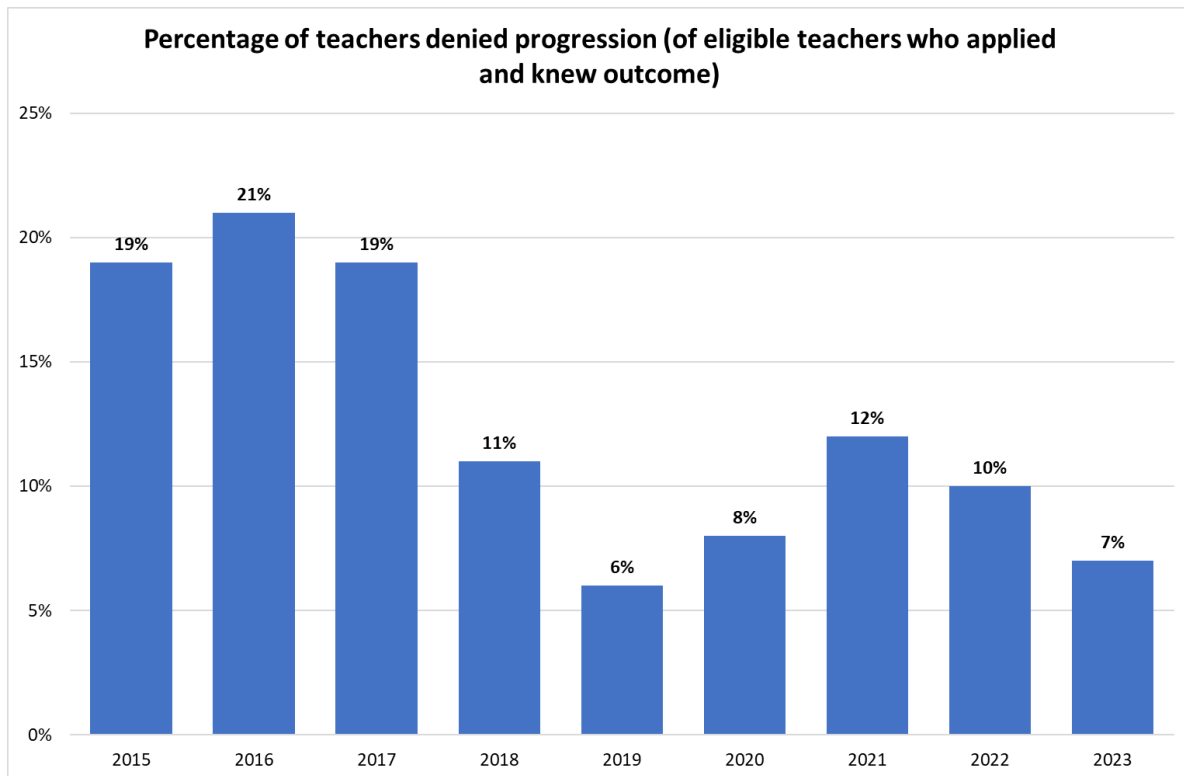


Figure 4: Percentage of teachers denied progression, 2015-2023

It is unclear what has driven this fall in rejections, but given responses elsewhere in the survey, it is possible that schools are effective at blocking progression at an earlier stage. The numbers who were “ineligible” to progress rose slightly, and this year we split out those who were ineligible through being at their scale maximum from those citing other reasons. As the member comments in the previous sections attest, often those who believe they are ineligible or who choose not to apply are in fact being blocked in a different way.

The fall in progression denials may also be related to the retention crisis among teachers – that schools are more reluctant to reject progression applications once actually submitted, for fear of losing staff. It may also be that the slightly higher rate of “don’t know” answers this year will translate into higher numbers of rejections when decisions are known.

Among those who knew their progression outcome (Figure 5), progression was more likely to be denied to teachers who:

- Are on the UPR (16% denied compared to just 4% on the MPR);
- Are older (15% of those aged 50 plus were denied, compared to 2% of those aged 20 to 29);
- Work part-time (11% denied, compared to 6% of full-time teachers);
- Work in primary/nursery (9% denied, compared to 5% of secondary teachers and 6% of those in special schools and PRUs).

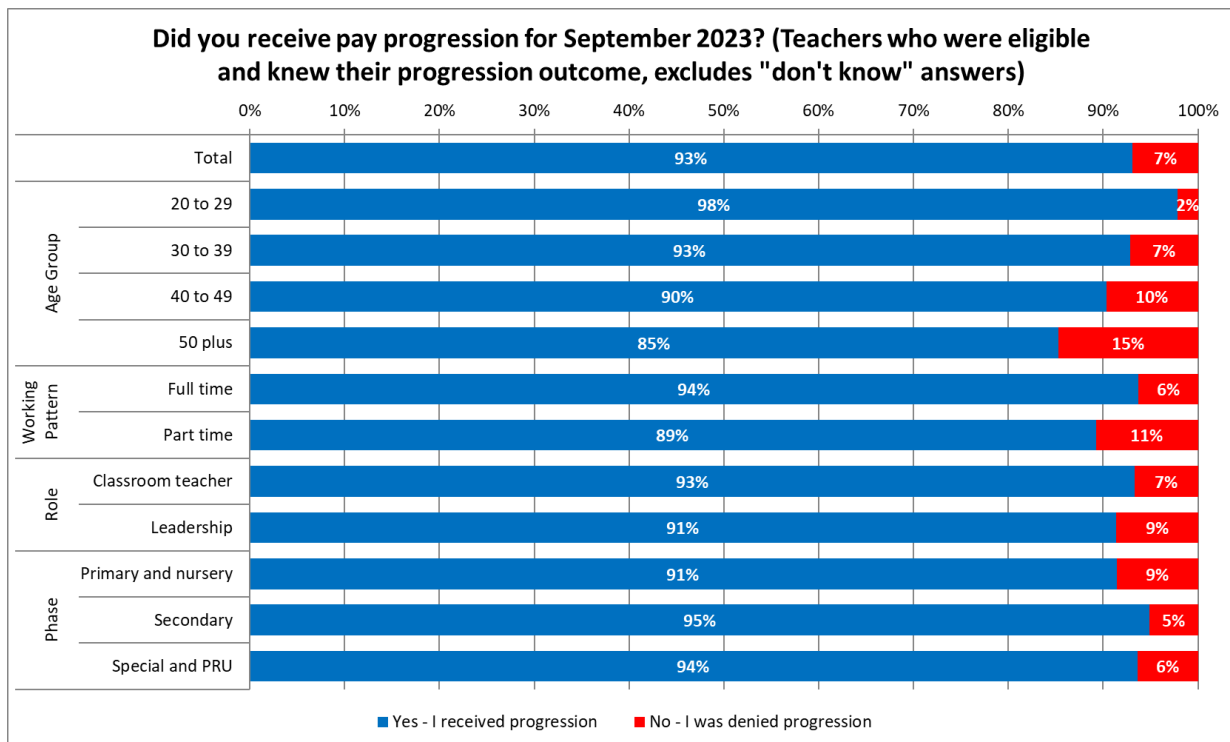


Figure 5: Did you receive pay progression for September 2023? (Excludes "don't know" answers)

Progression was four times more likely to be denied on the UPR than the MPR, and progression through the threshold from point M6 was around six times as likely to be denied as progression through the rest of the MPR. This despite the fact that only around half as many teachers on points M6, U1 and U2 say they were eligible to progress (see Eligibility section **above**), and those on U3 are already at the top of the pay range. As such, much of the tendency for two-year progression and schools' discouragement towards teachers seeking progression at these grades is already accounted for. The much higher rate of progression denial on M6 and the UPR reflects further obstacles an unreasonable expectations put on teachers wishing to progress at these grades.

The trend for older teachers to be denied progression is partly linked to seniority and the fact that progression onto and through the UPR is so much more difficult. Even within the individual ranges, however, older teachers are more likely to be turned down. On the UPR, 24% of those aged 50 and above who knew their progression outcome were rejected, compared to 19% of teachers in their 40s and 12% of those in their 30s. The MPR showed a similar pattern, with 12% of those aged 50 plus who knew their outcome turned down for progression, compared to 5% or less at other age groups. Even at individual pay scale points, the unweighted data shows significantly higher rates of progression for younger teachers than for older members.

As in previous years, working part-time and working in primary schools were once again associated with a greater likelihood of pay progression being refused. Despite the fact that teachers in these groups were disproportionately likely to be female, there was no significant difference in denial of progression by gender this year, unlike in some previous years. However, women were more likely to say that they did not yet know their progression outcome, meaning fewer could say for certain that their progression had been approved.

Progression rates by race showed a similar pattern to those by gender. This year (unlike some previous years) there was no evidence that teachers from Black, Asian or Mixed ethnic groups were more likely to be denied progression than those from White groups. However, those from Black and Asian ethnic groups were significantly more likely to say they did not yet know their progression outcome than White counterparts, meaning that Black and Asian teachers were less likely to be able to say that their progression had definitely been granted.

Unlike in many previous years, there was no significant evidence that teachers with disabilities were more likely to be turned down for progression than those without. However, teachers who had taken maternity leave the previous year were more likely to be rejected (see Progression when taking maternity section).

Reasons for progression denial

Teachers who were refused progression this year were typically not given any warning or any support to improve performance, were not told about their right to appeal and did not feel they had been fairly treated. This finding has been consistent since this survey began.

Almost all teachers (96%) who were refused progression in September 2023 were given no indication during the year that they were failing to meet the required standards. This included over half (55%) of all teachers who were denied progression who did not even have a mid-year review, and a further 41% who had a mid-year review but were given no indication that they might not meet progression standards (Figure 6).

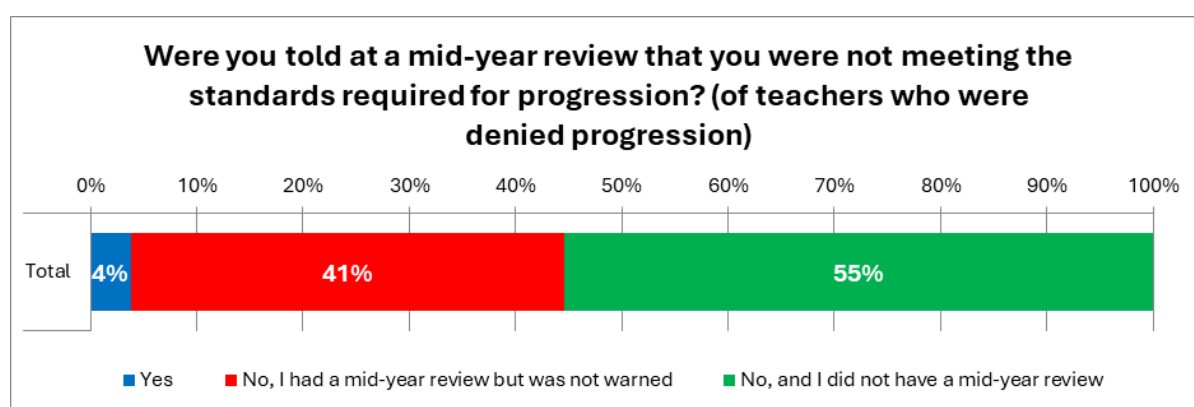


Figure 6: Were you told at a mid-year review that you were not meeting the standards required for progression?

Among those whose progression application was declined, almost all (92%) felt that the decision was unfair. However, four-fifths (82%) had chosen not to appeal the decision. Some 13% said they were appealing but did not yet know the outcome; 3% said their appeal had been rejected and just 1% said they had already successfully appealed against the original decision. Only 18% of all those who were denied progression say that their school informed them about their right to appeal.

Almost a third of teachers (29%) whose progression bid was rejected told us that they were not given any reason by their school (Figure 7). This was the single largest group in the sample. Another fifth (21%) were expressly told that their progression was being denied due to budgetary constraints in the school, showing the inherent weakness of a progression system that relies on the discretion of schools in the midst of a funding crisis.

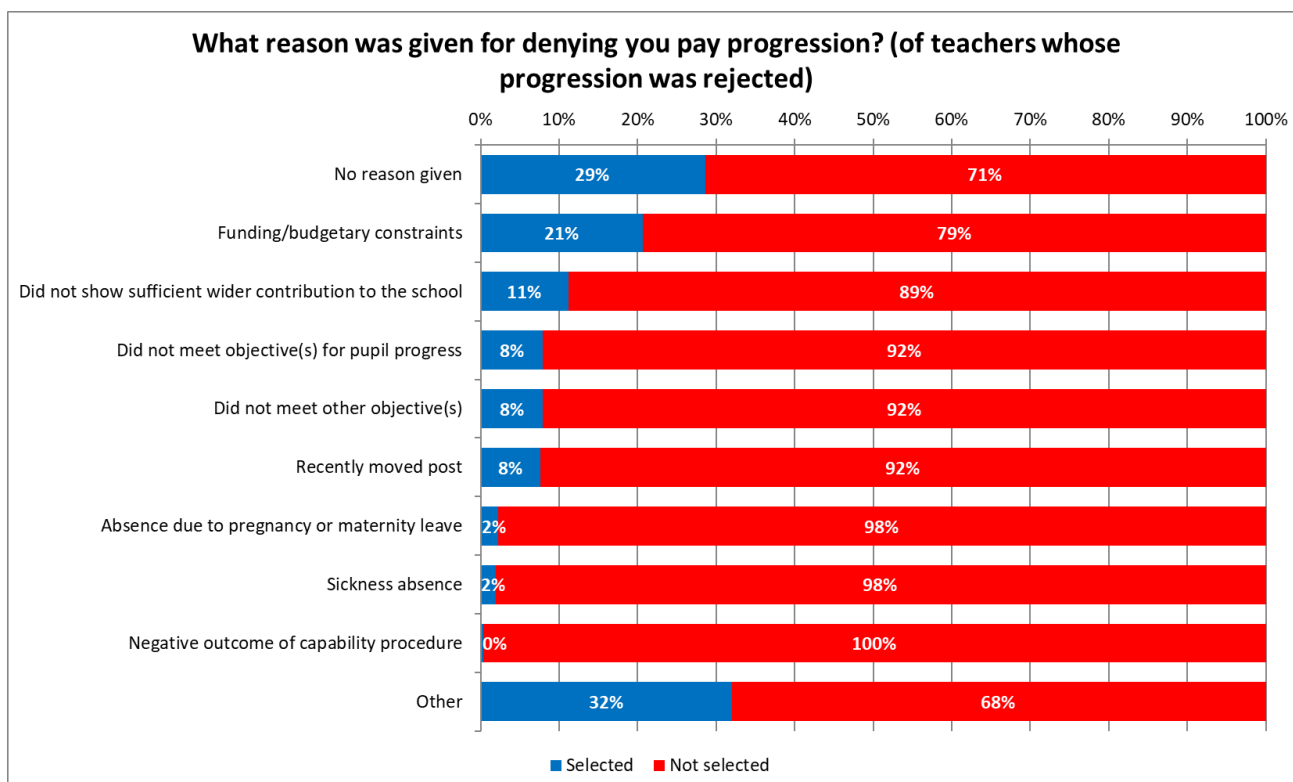


Figure 7: What reason was given for denying you progression?

The list of “other” reasons listed above largely replicates the responses from members who either were told they were ineligible to progress or who chose not to apply. In some cases the process was opaque, leading to missed deadlines, in others schools demanded unmanageable levels of evidence or teachers felt there were too many hoops to jump through. In several cases a change of headteacher led to progression being cancelled midway through the process.

Members reported unrealistic expectations either of pupil progress, wider contributions or responsibilities being taken on in return for pay progression. One classroom teacher said: “I’m supposed to [be on] U3 but was put on M6 as told I had to take on extra SLT roles. Previous schools paid me at U3 for my 32 years’ experience”.

It is instructive how similar the comments are between teachers who believed they were ineligible to progress, those who chose not to apply and those who said their progression was turned down. As we have argued, it strongly suggests that schools are operating a soft block on progression and discouraging teachers from applying to move up the pay scales, particularly at the upper end of the classroom range. The number of teachers who applied for progression but were turned down is far from the whole story.

Responsibility expectations on the UPR

It is clear from responses throughout our survey that progression onto and through the UPR (at least) is not just being used to reflect growing experience and ability in the classroom. Instead, progression is frequently used or withheld in order to incentivise teachers to take on extra roles and responsibilities, many of which are not part of the core job of teaching and which should instead be rewarded with a TLR.

We asked members who are currently on the UPR or at the top of the MPR whether their school expects teachers on the upper range to undertake specific additional responsibilities which are not recognised with a TLR payment (Figure 8). Almost two thirds of respondents (62%) said that they did. Teachers in secondary schools were much less likely to report this expectation (54%) than those in primaries and nurseries (69%) or special schools and PRUs (66%). Female teachers were more likely to report this pressure than men, and although some of this was accounted for by the higher proportions of women in primary schools, a gender split on this question persisted even within each separate school phase.

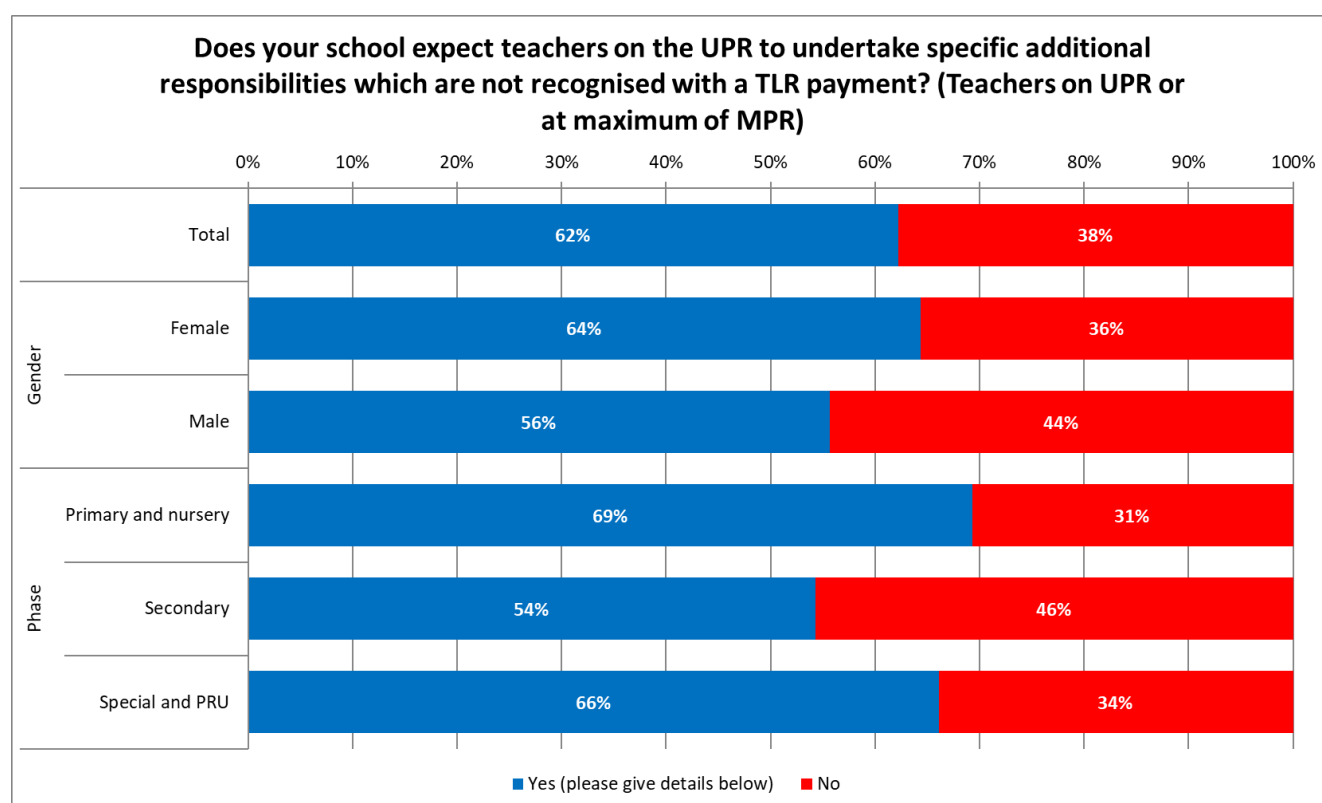


Figure 8: Does your school expect teachers on the UPR to undertake specific additional responsibilities which are not recognised with a TLR payment?

Asked for further details, over 5,000 members shared their stories of the extra expectations and responsibilities put on them as the price for receiving a salary on the UPR.

In a number of cases, respondents told us that TLRs had been discontinued altogether and replaced with unreasonable expectations placed on teachers on the upper pay range. “No TLRs are given”, one member told us. “We are told all extra work is expected as part of being on UPS.” Another said: “No TLRs are given in my school for any additional responsibility. No time is given either.” A third told us: “The only two teachers [on UPR] are key stage leaders. We are not given the opportunity to progress onto the UPR despite it being a norm if you are on M6 for ten years and have additional

responsibilities. No TLRs are given at our school. The head has the wrong idea of what the UPR is for.”

Many teachers, particularly those in primary schools told us that acting as a subject lead was expected on the UPR, and often on the MPR as well, without attracting a TLR even for core subjects. In a number of cases members told us that leading on one subject is expected at any level, even sometimes for Early Career Teachers, but that to progress to the UPR teachers need to lead multiple subjects, including core ones, without a TLR payment.

The expectations placed on teachers on UPR can be astonishing. One department head in a secondary school reported that in addition to classroom teaching they produce productions throughout the year, run weekly rehearsals and after school clubs, mentor a trainee and work part-time in order to fit in the additional demands of the job into their days off. They were still told that they would need to prove they were implementing extra policies and prove they had impacted CPD across the whole school if they wanted to stay on the upper pay range.

A phrase that members continually mentioned was “whole school impact”. This varies widely but examples in the survey included managing staff CPD; running the library (even in some secondary schools); organising extracurricular clubs and trips; or running student councils. One member told us: “Responsibilities vary wildly so [it seems] incredibly unfair. [From] supporting other leaders/display board coordination, through to running link projects with all feeder schools or leading on whole school character development.”

Elsewhere, teachers report being told they would have to line manage colleagues, become heads of department or heads of year if they want to be paid on the UPR, but that this would not merit a TLR payment. Several members even say they were told that their role as head of year would not entitle them to progress to the UPR, as this did not impact the whole school.

Other examples of responsibilities expected for UPR progression include undertaking break or lunch duties; overseeing detentions; putting on productions, science fairs and similar large projects. Mentoring, particularly of ECTs was widely mentioned. As with many of the tasks and responsibilities mentioned, the issue for many teachers was not only being expected to undertake this work without extra remuneration, but also the lack of any additional time being made available to do so. One member described a whole school mentoring job that had previously been part of SLT responsibility. Some years ago responsibility for this was moved to a classroom teacher’s role with a TLR attached. In the last year the TLR was removed, and a teacher on UPR is now expected to do the role with no additional time or money.

Where schools explicitly tie significant additional workload to pay progression onto or through the UPR, this gives teachers a difficult choice to make. They can take on the extra work without time being made available, meaning extra stress and a deterioration of work-life balance in the hope of extra pay, but knowing that progression can still often be denied at the whim of a head or CEO. Or they can decide, as many in our survey have done, that the meagre amount of extra salary is not worth the added strain on their workload. This means accepting that despite deepening their skills and abilities as a teacher, their pay will stall and they will see no further real-terms increase after just five years in the profession.

This approach both creates resentment among staff and fuels the retention crisis. If teachers do not see any way to advance without taking on unmanageable additional workloads outside the core job of teaching, they will consider whether they want to stay in the role, a point made to us by many members in this year’s survey.

Other comments from angry members included:

“Newer staff have to jump through so many hoops to get onto UPS. It is not a natural progression, but instead much greater workload.”

“My U1 payment comes with a HUGE expectation of additional responsibility. The phrase ‘that’s what the UPR payment is for’ is well used at my school!”

“The head specifically mentions this regularly – that we are expected to ‘pull our weight’ and ‘it needs getting done.’ This is despite most of us formerly having been of the sort that willingly did extra tasks, clubs, and roles voluntarily and used our own money to help him out with the budget, until we realised he was simply taking advantage and had no intention of ever reciprocating this loyalty.”

“They were expecting teachers to take on leadership roles unpaid and threatening to deduct wages/pay scale points until teachers called NEU in. Threatened to fire and rehire all teachers on new contracts if they refused to do this. School forced to back down once NEU became involved.”

“I was not told that I had the option to refuse to take on a subject lead responsibility. Core subject areas such as maths are expected to be taken on without any additional payment. Some teachers have TLRs but new roles are not being offered any payment. It’s all expected to be done through goodwill. If you refuse to take on an area then you are targeted with extra workload and pressure.”

Teaching and Learning Responsibility (TLR) payments

Awards of TLRs

Teaching and learning responsibility (TLR) payments are awarded to classroom teachers “for undertaking a sustained additional responsibility, for the purpose of ensuring the continued delivery of high-quality teaching and learning and for which the teacher is made accountable.”³ The STPCD sets specific upper and lower limits for the different TLR payments. In practice, however, our survey shows these are inconsistently awarded and paid at levels that vary wildly from those set out in the document.

Just under a third of teachers (31%) told us that they currently receive a TLR payment, down from 36% in last year’s survey. As with last year’s findings, this overall figure varied widely among different teacher groups. The chart below (Figure 9) shows teachers are significantly more likely to receive a TLR if they are:

- Male
- Working full-time
- Working in secondary schools

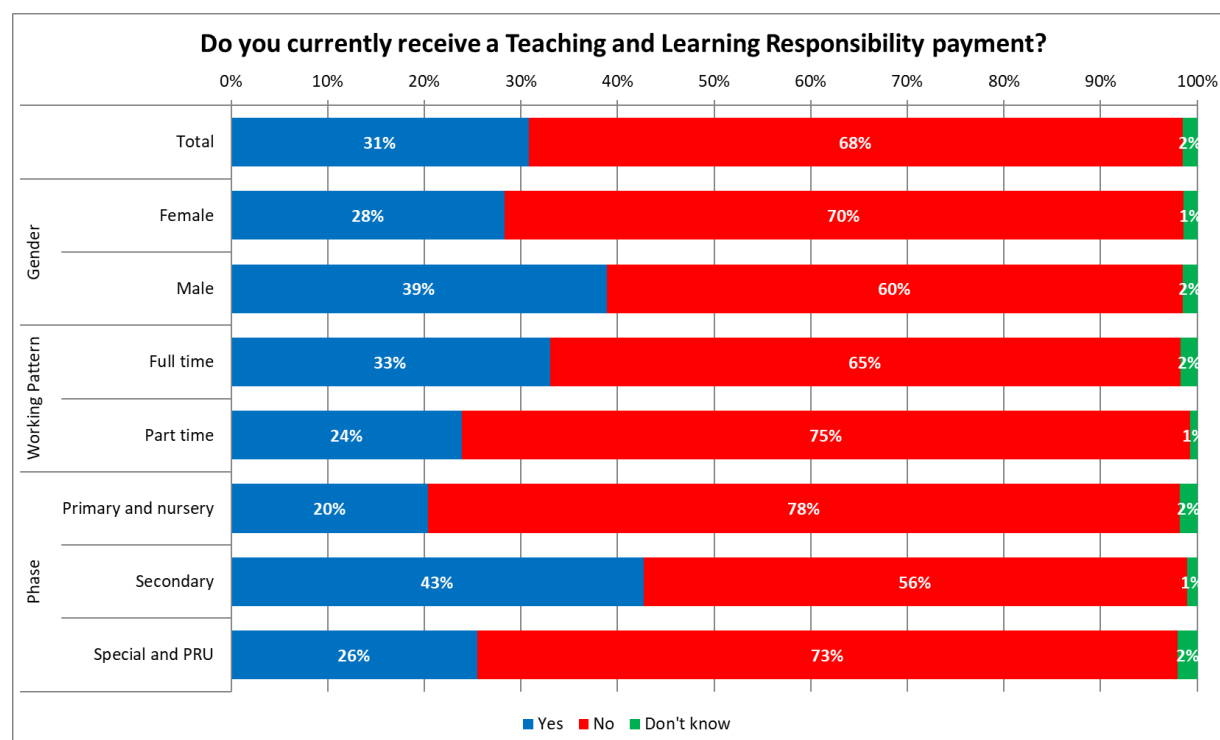


Figure 9: Do you currently receive a Teaching and Learning Responsibility payment?

There is some crossover between the main categories above. Women are more likely to work in primary schools and more likely to work part-time. Looking at a weighted samples of each phase in isolation shows that the gender gap on TLRs is smaller within phase, but that male teachers are still more likely to receive TLR payments by a statistically significant margin in both primary/nursery and secondary schools (Table 1). The sample size in special schools and PRUs is too small to give a

³ https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/media/652950f96b66bf0014b7564d/2023_STPCD.pdf

significant analysis by gender. The small sample size of men working part-time also makes gender analysis by working pattern insufficiently robust to include.

Percentage of teachers receiving TLRs by gender and phase		
	Primary	Secondary
Female	20%	41%
Male	26%	46%

Table 1: Percentage of teachers receiving TLRs by gender and phase

Teachers under 30 are less likely to receive TLRs, as expected given the correlation between age and experience. There is an indication that Asian teachers are slightly less likely to receive TLRs than white teachers (27% compared to 31%), but for other ethnic groups in the sample the numbers are too small to make a meaningful comparison.

There is some evidence that TLR awards are sometimes used as a proxy for recruitment and retention payments. In Inner and Outer London, and the parts of South East England that are in the London Fringe pay region, 35-36% of teachers receive TLR payments (Figure 10). In all other English regions (including the Fringe area of Eastern England), the proportion of teachers receiving TLRs is in the region of 27-32%.

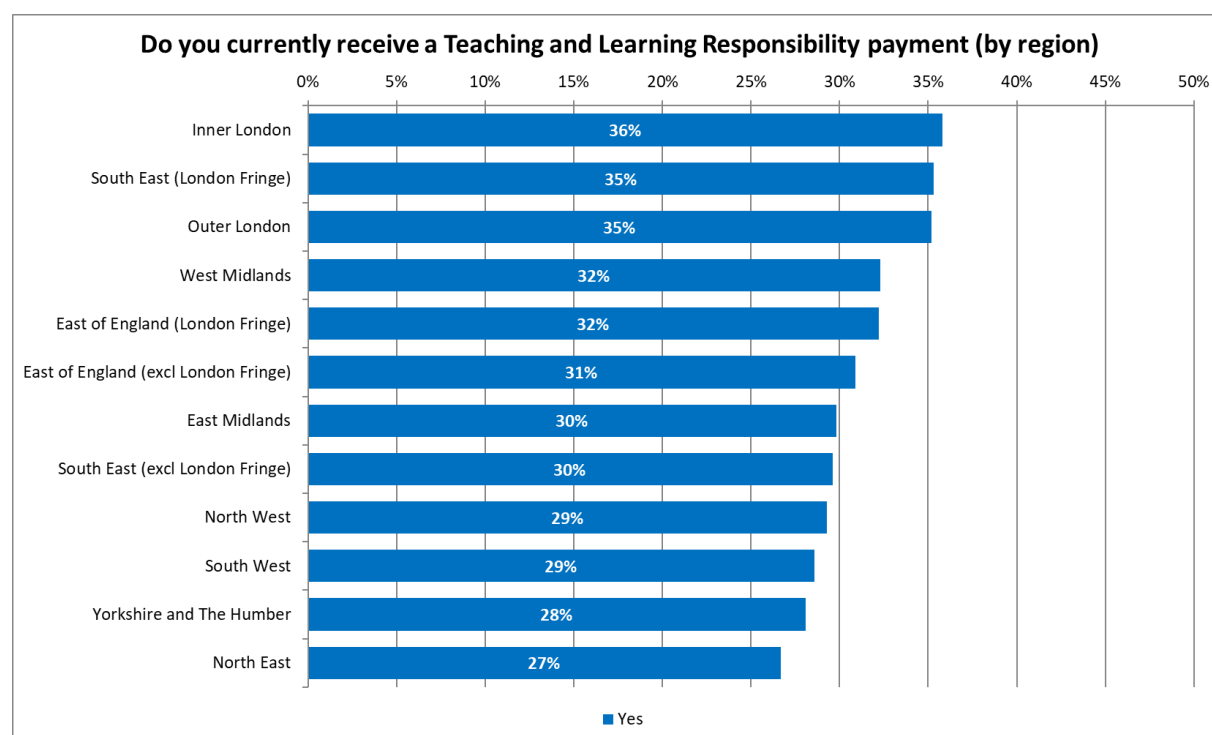


Figure 10: Do you currently receive a Teaching and Learning Responsibility payment (by region)

As set out in the sections above on progression, schools frequently attempt to save money by insisting that teachers take on responsibilities that should be recognised with a TLR and instead making these responsibilities a criteria for progression onto or through the UPR. In some cases, members also reported the reverse, saying that they had been blocked from progression on the grounds that they were *already* in receipt of a TLR.

Among teachers not currently in receipt of a TLR, some 40% said their current responsibilities *should* qualify them for a TLR payment. This is particularly noticeable among primary and nursery teachers,

among whom almost half (49%) say they should qualify for a TLR given what is expected of them. This compares to 25% of those in secondaries who do not already receive a responsibility payment.

Among all those who currently receive a TLR, 18% currently receive a TLR1, the highest-paying award. 60% receive a TLR2, 10% receive a TLR3 and the remaining 12% did not know.

If we amalgamate answers to the questions on whether members receive a TLR and what type they receive, patterns emerge showing which teachers benefit most from the TLR system (Figure 11). Men are more likely to receive a TLR than women, and also twice as likely as female teachers to receive a higher-paying TLR1 when looking at the whole sample. Some of this discrepancy is related to phase, where secondary teachers are far more likely than primary or special school teachers to receive either a TLR at all, or a higher-level TLR1. Full-timers similarly do better than those on part-time contracts. Age is a more mixed picture: teachers under 30 are less likely to be awarded a TLR and rarely receive a TLR1, but although the receipt of TLRs overall drops off slightly from 40 onwards, the proportion receiving TLRs is broadly constant.

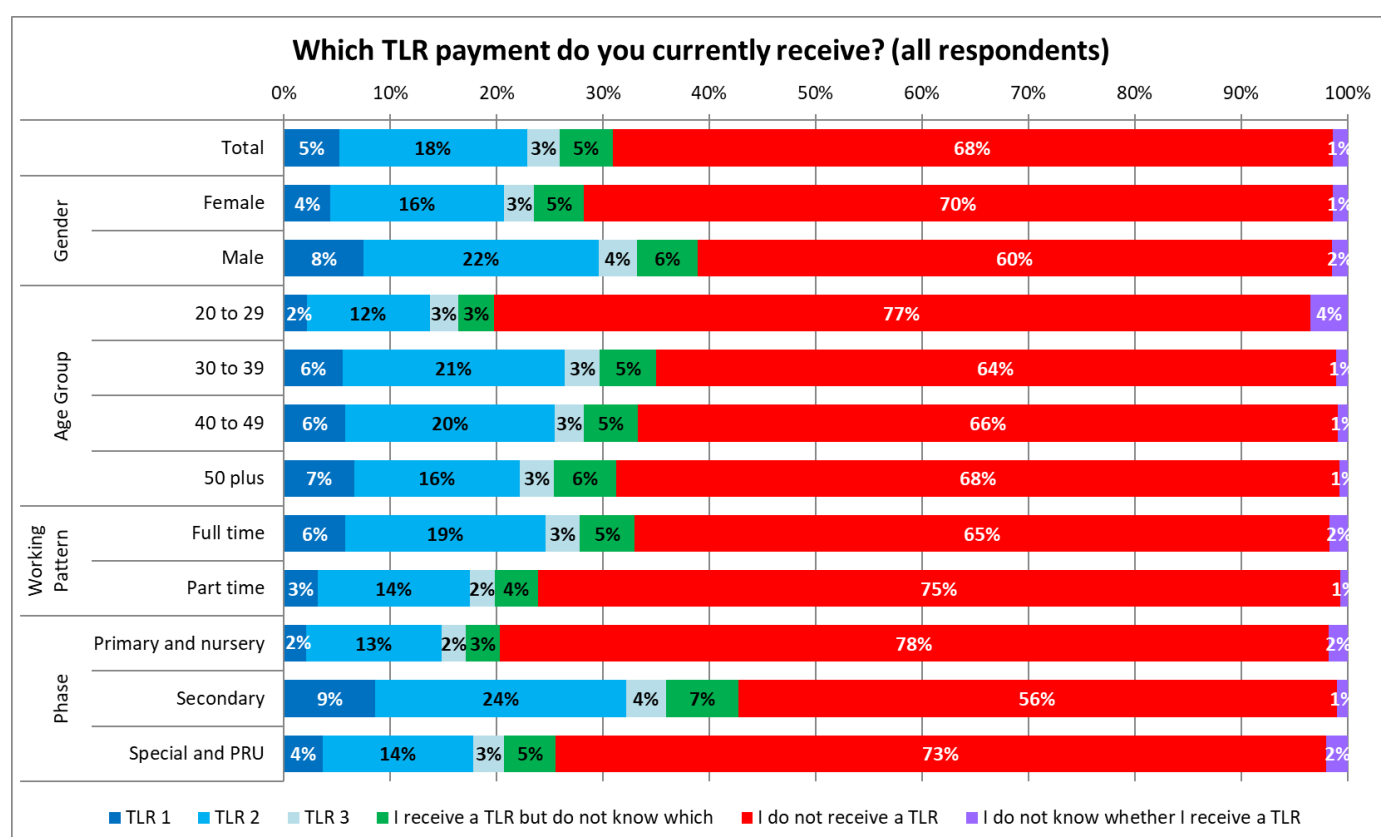


Figure 11: Which TLR payment do you currently receive?

As with the prevalence of TLRs overall, payment at the highest TLR1 level has a geographic element which suggests these are used partly for retention, or are less common where schools feel less worried about losing staff. In London, the South East, Eastern England and the South West, between 19% and 21% of those with TLRs receive a TLR1. In the rest of England, the figure is 14-15%.

Amalgamating answers to the questions on TLR receipt and band as in Figure 11 above shows that receipt of both TLRs in general and the top level of TLR1s is most common in London and the London Fringe pay area (Figure 12). This supports the idea that TLRs are often awarded to reflect school needs around staffing rather than purely on a teacher's responsibilities.

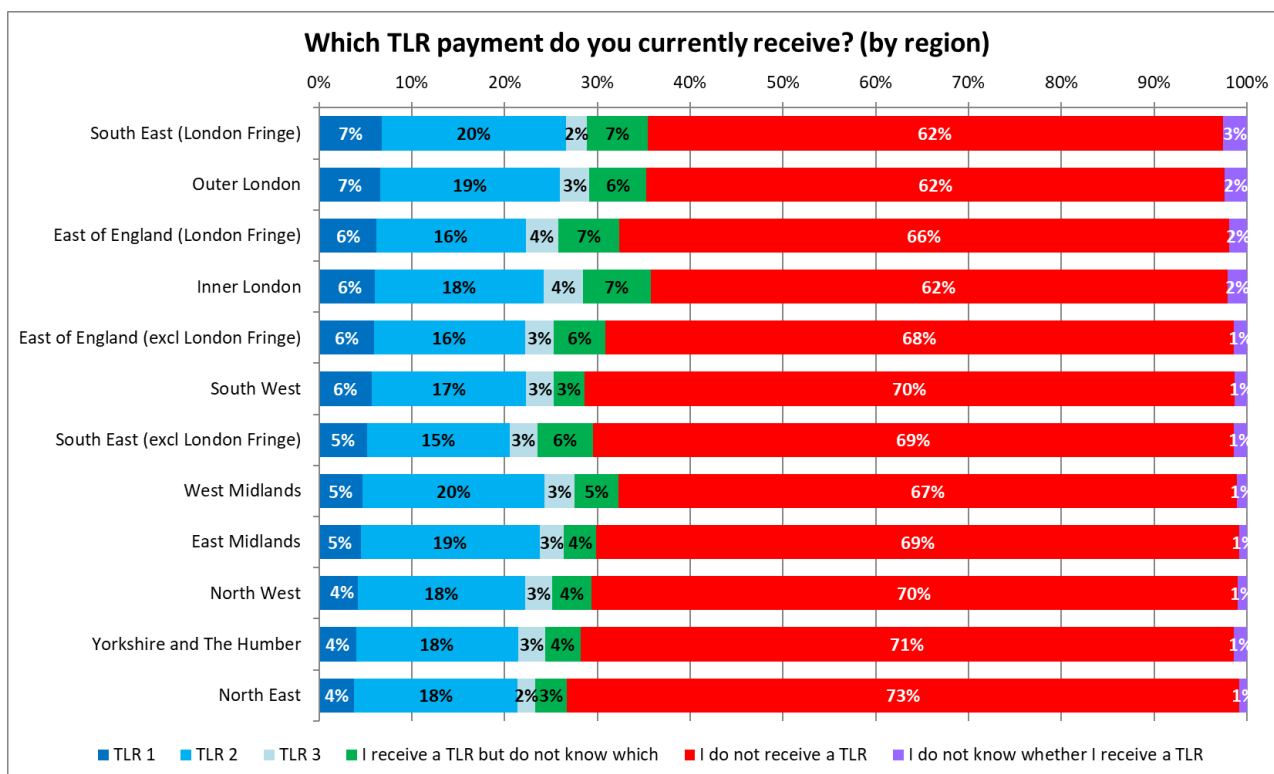


Figure 12: Which TLR payment do you currently receive (by region)

The comments from members who believe their responsibilities should warrant a TLR payment are similar to those in the section above on schools' requirements for UPR progression. Respondents say they lead on multiple subjects in primary schools, including core subjects, without a TLR and in some cases without having even reached the top of the MPR. Others mentioned rewriting the curriculum for their subject, leading on CPD and managing extensive extracurricular programmes.

A significant number of respondents told us they are heads of department in secondary schools without receiving a TLR in subjects including English, chemistry, physics, biology and PE. Still more members were acting as head of department without any TLR, and in some cases had been in this temporary role for multiple years.

One member said they run an additional GCSE outside of directed time. Several others said they manage forest school provision at primary schools. A number told us that they line manage staff, including teams of teaching assistants without any extra pay. Others lead ITT mentoring or whole school CPD initiatives.

Several respondents said that TLRs they had previously held were removed – in one case a secondary teacher who was careers lead said that a new MAT took over the school and redesignated the job as part of standard work for a UPR teacher. In another, a head of department found their team shrunk until they were the only subject teacher left in the whole department, so their line management TLR was removed. Secondary teachers who are the only member of their department appear regularly in the comments, arguing that they not only have to teach the entire timetable but also do all the administrative tasks associated with the subject as a head of department would.

TLR payment levels

The STPCD sets statutory national minima and maxima for each grade of TLR payment that all local authority-maintained schools are obliged to follow under the STPCD. The majority of academies are also committed to following the national pay structure, and as such should be aligning TLR payments with the bands set out below (Table 2).

TLR bands minima and maxima in STPCD			
	TLR 1	TLR 2	TLR 3
Minimum	£9,272	£3,214	£639
Maximum	£15,690	£7,847	£3,169

Table 2: TLR bands minima and maxima in STPCD

In practice, our survey suggests that not only are TLRs routinely not awarded for responsibilities that should merit the payments (see sections above), but the levels of TLRs paid vary wildly and often fall a long way below the levels stipulated by the STPCD.

Table 3 below shows the median payments by phase and TLR type, and shows that the median payments for both TLR1 and TLR2 in primary schools are below the national minimum, the TLR1 figure shockingly so. The median payment for TLR1 in the primary/nursery phase is just £2,500, barely a quarter the minimum level it should be. The median figures only show part of the story, however.

Median TLR payments by phase			
	TLR1	TLR2	TLR3
Primary and Nursery	£2,500	£3,017	£1,800
Secondary	£9,272	£5,000	£2,000
Special and PRU	£3,109	£3,213	£2,700

Table 3: Median TLR payments by phase

The chart below (Figure 13) shows the distribution of TLR payments by phase and TLR level, and demonstrates how far these fall below the levels set out in the STPCD. The grey shaded areas represent the minimum and maximum for each TLR and the black line across the middle of each box represents the median payment for that TLR in that phase of school in our survey. The top and bottom of each coloured box shows the upper and lower quartile for payments in each phase. This means that, for example, 50% of all TLR1 payments in primary schools fall inside the red box in the left-hand column. The long lines represent the boundaries inside which all payments except for outliers are found. The single dots are outliers.

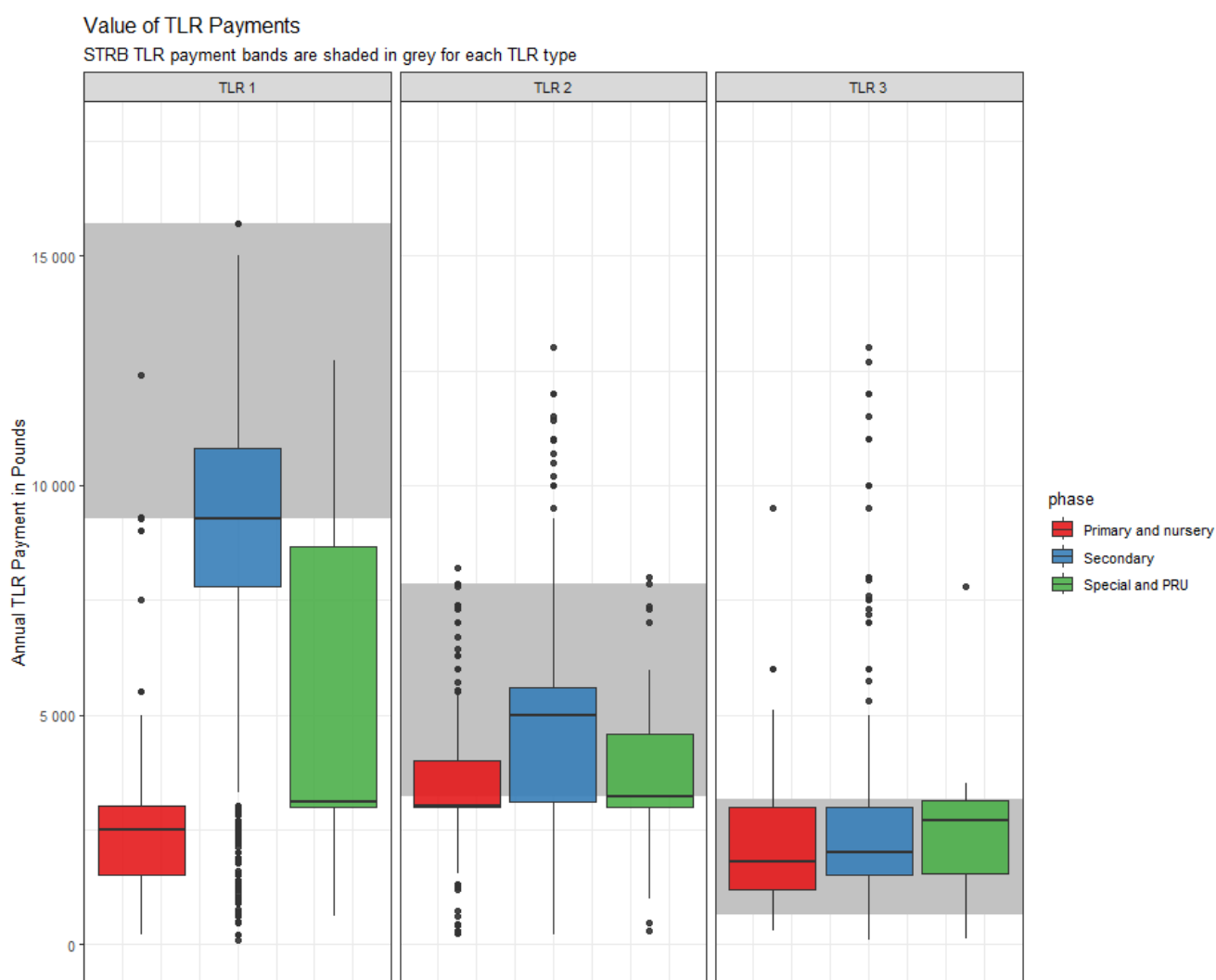


Figure 13: TLR payments by phase and TLR band

The chart shows clearly that many TLR1 payments in particular are nowhere near the levels stipulated by the STPCD. In primary schools, barely a single TLR1 payment reaches the minimum threshold for the grade. Teachers in special schools and PRUs are also paid significantly below the grade, although the sample size here is very small. Even in secondaries, the median payment is £9,272, equal to the minimum point on the TLR1 scale, but almost half of TLR1 payments (47%) are below this level.

It is possible that in some cases respondents may have miscategorised their TLR payment as a TLR1 when it is in fact a TLR2, although we did include a “Don’t know” option for those unsure of their TLR type. Even if this were the case, three quarters of TLR payments in primary schools do not even meet the minimum payment threshold for TLR2. Some of the lower payments will also be pro-rated payments for part-time teachers. However, these only represent less than a quarter of the total sample, they are less likely to receive TLRs than full-timers, and we show elsewhere that the majority take on all the full responsibilities of the TLR role despite only receiving part of the payment.

At TLR2, the picture is less extreme than at TLR1, but still more than a quarter of teachers in receipt of TLR in every phase of schooling are paid less than the national minimum level. In primaries and nurseries more than half are paid below the nationally-set minimum level, with the median of £3,017

equivalent to the 2022/23 minimum rather than that of the current year. Across the whole of the primary phase, it appears that last year's minimum level is being used as a benchmark figure for all TLRs.

Only for TLR3s are the majority of teachers paid within the current year's minima and maxima, and this TLR is both the least commonly awarded and the lowest paying allowance.

Overall, over half of teachers in our survey (57%) receive payments below the national minimum level for their TLR grade, and only a third (32%) receive payments at or above the supposed minimum (Figure 14). In primary schools this is even worse, with just a fifth (20%) receiving a TLR payment at or above the supposed minimum.

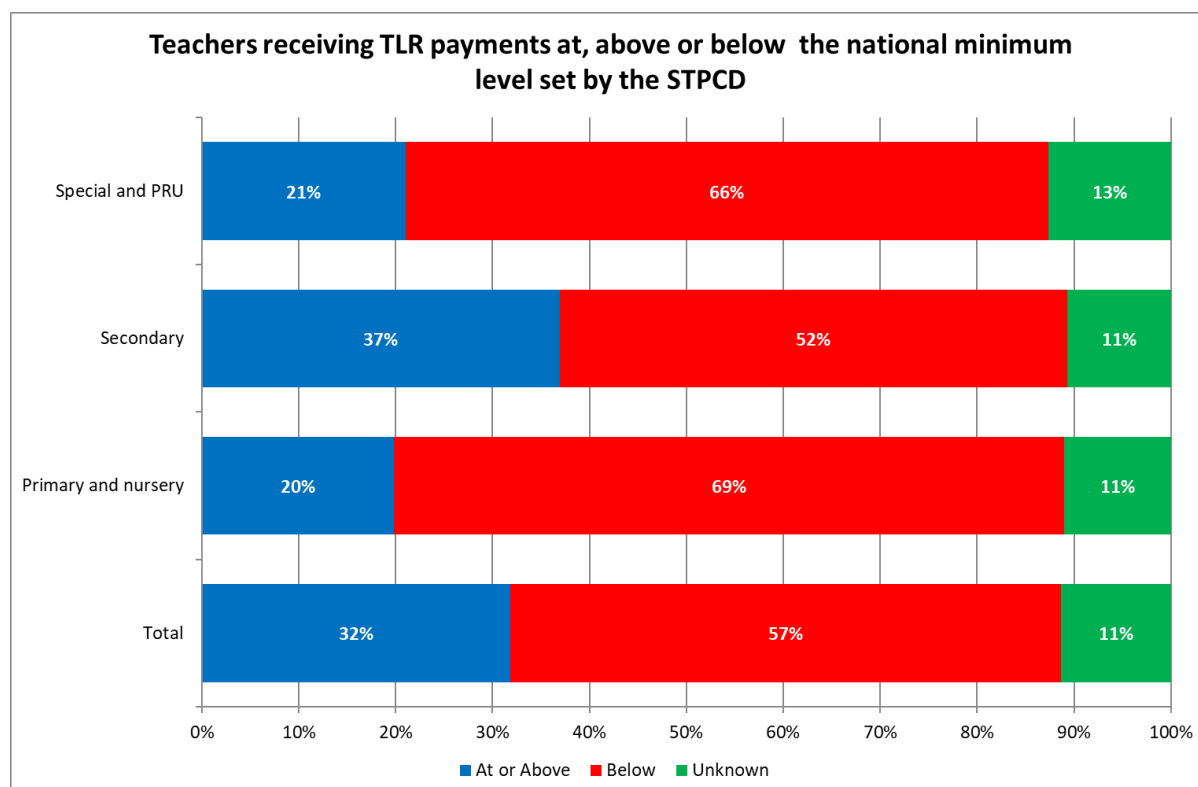


Figure 14: Teachers receiving TLR payments at, above or below the national minimum level set by the STPCD

This underpayment of TLRs has not gone unnoticed by teachers. Among those in receipt of a TLR payment, only a third (33%) felt the payment was about what they would expect, given the responsibility. This figure almost exactly matches the figure above for those paid at or above the national minimum for their TLR. Almost everyone else (66%) in receipt of a TLR told us that the payment was lower than they would expect, given the responsibility.

Teachers in primary schools who receive TLRs are also seemingly aware of their underpayment. Almost three quarters (73%) primary and nursery TLR recipients say the payment is lower than they would expect, compared to 62% of secondary school counterparts.

A small gender gap exists for each TLR within both primary/nursery and secondary phases (Table 4). Most are only a few percentage points and within the margin for error given the sample size, but all are in favour of male teachers. It is also worth recalling also that women are less likely than men to receive TLR payments in the first place. Larger gender pay gaps are found in primary/nursery TLR1s and secondary TLR3s, though the sample size for TLR1s in primary is relatively small, for male teachers in particular.

Median TLR payments by gender and phase				
		Male	Female	Pay gap
Primary and Nursery	TLR1	£2,700	£2,300	15%
	TLR2	£3,120	£3,017	3%
	TLR3	£1,800	£1,789	1%
Secondary	TLR1	£9,300	£9,200	1%
	TLR2	£5,000	£4,900	2%
	TLR3	£2,200	£2,000	9%

Table 4: Median TLR payments by gender and phase

Payment of TLRs on part-time contracts

There is a long-running issue around the payment of TLRs to teachers who work part time. In this year's survey we asked all part-time teachers who told us they receive TLR's about the amount of work this entails (whether they undertake the full responsibility for which the TLR is paid) compared to the pro-rated payment level.

Some 60% of part-time teachers who receive TLRs say that they are expected to perform the full responsibilities of the TLR role, but that they are only paid a pro-rated amount of the TLR payment, in line with their part-time salary (Figure 15). This is clearly unfair, and likely to be unlawful. The failure to pay the full value of a TLR to part time teachers who undertake the full TLR responsibility predominantly disadvantages female teachers and is likely to be in breach of the Part-time Workers (Prevention of Less Favourable Treatment) Regulations 2000 and the Equality Act 2010.

Only a third (34%) of respondents told us that a fair adjustment has been made: 25% who said that they perform the role in full and are paid the TLR at the full-time level; and a further 9% who perform part of the responsibilities of the TLR role, and receive a pro-rated TLR amount in line with their part-time salary.

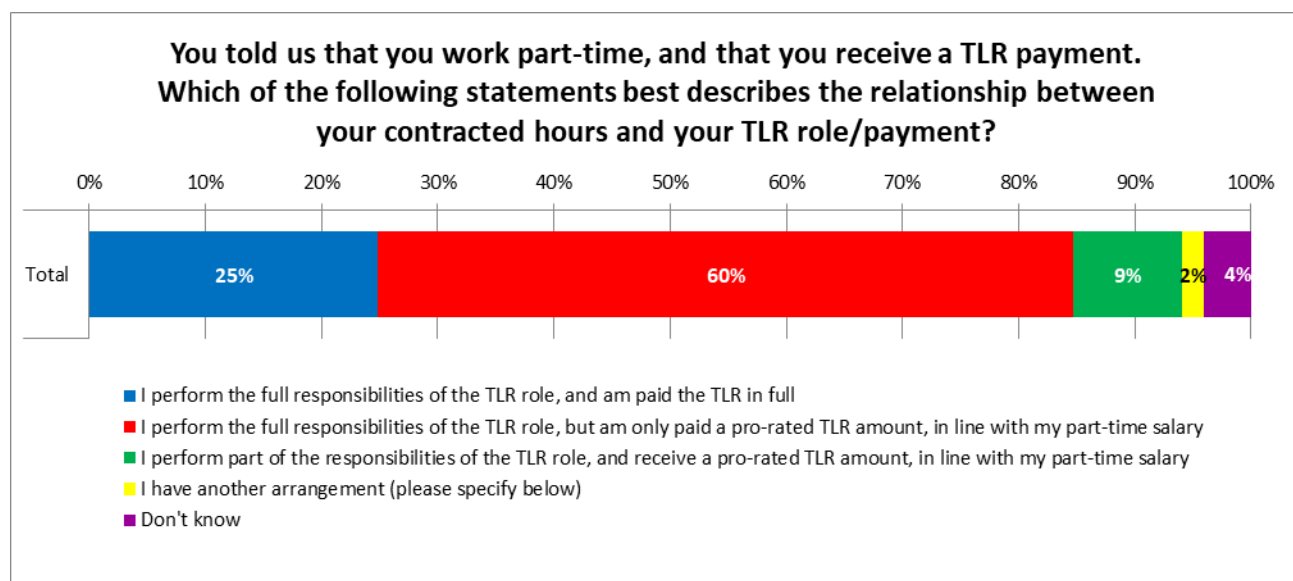


Figure 15: Part-time teachers' relationship between contracted hours and TLR role/payment

Where members provided comments, there was a regular theme that in order to receive a fair TLR for the responsibility level, they or their colleagues had first been forced to challenge management.

Some comments showed good practice around pro-rated TLRs or role-sharing was being followed, but others addressed some of the practical problems and messy solutions applied around the issue. One member told us: “The school argued I should not do 100 per cent on TLR but in practice this is what happens as no-one has the other 20 per cent.” Another said: “I am paid the TLR pro-rata. I receive a teacher retention allowance to make up the shortfall.” A third said “I work part-time and TLR is pro-rated but the head moved me up an increment to the top level of my pay to compensate.”

NEU advice states: “Where a part-time teacher undertakes the full additional responsibilities of a promoted post, it would be unfair, unethical and potentially unlawful, if they did not receive the full value of the TLR payment for those responsibilities simply because they are employed on a part-time contract.”⁴

⁴ <https://neu.org.uk/advice/your-rights-work/pay/teachers-pay-and-allowances/tlr-payments-and-other-allowances>

Special Educational Needs (SEN) allowances

Awards of SEN allowances

SEN allowances are significantly less common than TLR payments. The STPCD sets out the teachers who should receive these payments, including any teacher in a post that requires a mandatory SEN qualification, and all teachers in special schools.

In this year's survey, only 7% of teachers receive an SEN allowance (Figure 18). In special schools and PRUs, 87% of teachers receive an SEN allowance, but 12% still do not, despite this being mandatory for all teachers in special schools under the STPCD and payable for many PRU teachers under specific circumstances. Only 4% of primary and nursery teachers receive an SEN allowance, along with just 1% of secondary teachers. Using the unweighted figures we can look at all members who reported working as SENCOs. Shockingly, just 35% of SENCOs in our sample told us they receive an SEN allowance.

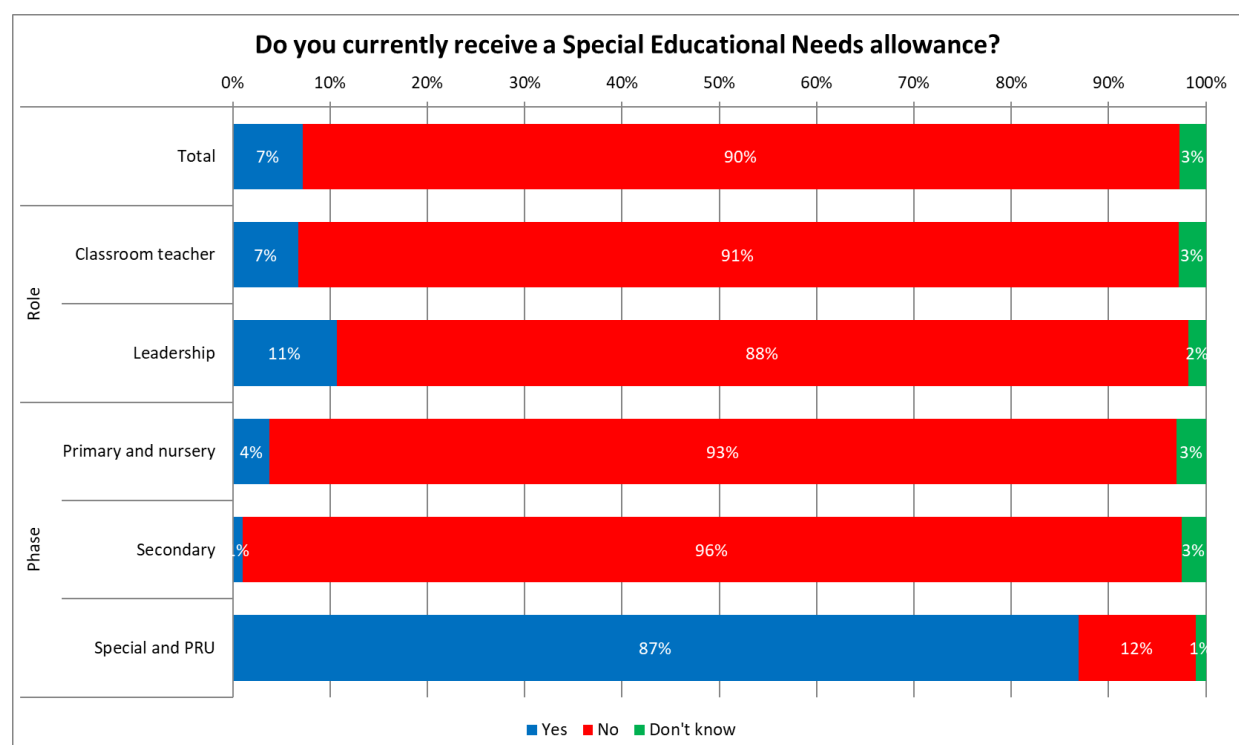


Figure 16: Do you currently receive a Special Educational Needs allowance?

Of those currently in receipt of an SEN allowance, only just over quarter (28%) said the payment was about what they would expect, given the responsibility involved. The remaining 72% said the payment was lower than they would expect, with just 0.3% saying it is higher than expected. Responses varied significantly by phase: 85% of members in primary schools and nurseries said the payment was lower than they would expect, compared to 69% of those in special schools and PRUs, and 51% of those in secondaries.

Of those not currently in receipt of an SEN allowance, 16% say the responsibilities they currently undertake *should* qualify them for a payment. Understandably, four fifths (80%) of those in special schools and PRUs who do not currently receive an SEN allowance feel they should be entitled to one. There was also a correlation with deprivation: 20% of those in the most disadvantaged quintile of schools felt they should be entitled to an SEN allowance, compared to just 12% of those in the least disadvantaged quintile.

Some of those who feel they should be entitled to an SEN allowance left comments explaining their circumstances. Many simply explained that they work as a SENCO. Some teach specific SEN-designated classes with bespoke requirements: SEN allowances for these teachers should also be automatic.

Many respondents teach lessons where a large part, or even a majority of the pupils have additional needs. These teachers often made specific reference to the lack of classroom support or availability of one-to-one support for those who need it, and some also mentioned the number of pupils who would previously have been recommended for special schools but are now in mainstream schooling without the necessary support.

Members talked about the extra workload burden they face when teaching classes with large numbers of students with SEND. They frequently referenced hours spent each week adapting or creating additional resources and adapting lesson plans, often in different ways for pupils with differing needs in the same lesson.

One teacher in early career who does not receive an SEN allowance detailed just some of the adaptations needed just on the planning, teaching and marking aspects of taking classes with high numbers of pupils with SEND: “Huge amount of extra admin, photocopying on different colour paper, sending work to other pupils who are not in the lesson... Often having to come up with work for them to do mid lesson or sending them work via Teams. Pupils working on laptops that require me to print and stick in their work after each lesson. Pupils that need the notes from the lesson printed using large font... We are also required to prioritise SEND (and PP) and mark their work first. Pupils [with hearing difficulties], me wearing a transmitter and not being able to do standard classroom practices during the lesson, so must do them in advance in case the noises disturb the pupil... all takes extra time [and needs] special planning e.g can't play videos in class to help with learning.”

They also mentioned the workload demands outside the lesson when taking classes with large numbers of pupils with SEND. These include writing assessments, profiles and referrals, meeting and emailing parents, liaising with other professionals both inside and outside the school, writing individual support or learning plans, adjusting timetables, risk assessments and additional training.

One member who does not receive an SEN allowance told us: “Children who years ago were in specialised schools are now in my classroom. The level of adaptation needed is massive but there are no support staff nor is there additional time to plan for them.”

SEN allowance levels

The STPCD states that SEN allowances should be “no less than £2,539 and no more than £5,009 per annum”. In fact, members who receive the allowances report a much lower rate than this. This is both the case in maintained schools, where the STPCD has statutory status, as well as in academies.

The median SEN allowance in the survey is £2,500, and is the same in primary/nursery, in secondary and in special schools and PRUs. Although this is lower than the minimum of £2,539, it is possible that respondents used the rounded figure as an approximation. Even granting this, however, 43% of members reported SEN allowances below this lower figure of £2,500. Some 18% of members said their allowance was £2,000 or less.

Some teachers on part-time contracts will receive a pro-rated amount, but as with TLRs it is questionable whether they are in fact fulfilling all the responsibilities but only being paid part, in line

with their part-time contract. Even allowing for this, it is clear that a significant proportion of schools are failing to pay SEN allowances for roles which should automatically warrant one under nationally-set terms and conditions, and where paid, a significant proportion are failing to pay at even the minimum of the range.

The chart below (Figure 17) shows the distribution of SEN allowances by phase and gender (see p.29 for how to interpret this chart). It shows the median SEN allowance payments for both men and women to be at or just below the band minimum in each school phase, and significant proportions paid below the minimum of the band. It also shows that although the median payments for male and female teachers are broadly similar in each school phase, larger proportions of men receive the higher-level SEN allowances further into the payment range. Although the “going rate” is the same by gender, it seems there is still bias towards male teachers for the higher-level payments.

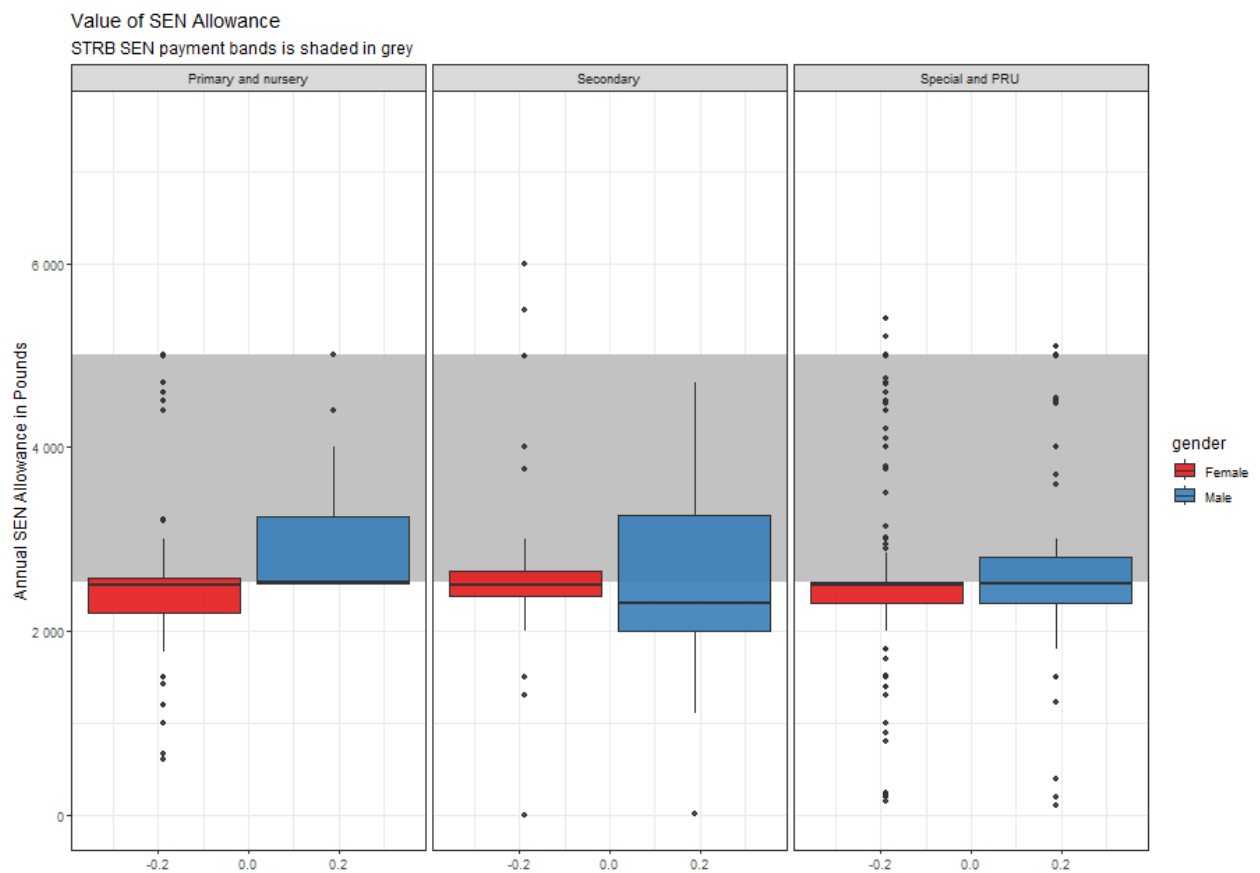


Figure 17: SEN allowances by gender and phase

Recruitment and retention payments

The STPCD allows schools to make “such payments... as it considers necessary” to any teachers, other than leadership teachers, for recruitment and retention purposes, either as a one-off payment or for a fixed period. There are no prescribed values for such payments.

Responses to our survey suggest that only 2% of teachers currently receive a recruitment and retention payment. Some 89% say they do not receive a payment, while 9% say they do not know. Some 4% of secondary teachers receive these allowances, compared to 1% of those in primaries and nurseries and just 0.3% of teachers in special schools and PRUs.

Although the overall numbers were still very low, men were twice as likely as women to receive a recruitment and retention payment, at 4% compared to 2%. There were indications that these payments are more common in London, the South East and Eastern England than elsewhere in the country, but these regional differences do not meet the statistical confidence level to say for sure. We have suggested above, however, that the granting of TLR and SEN allowances may sometimes also be used as a proxy for recruitment and retention payments.

Where recruitment and retention bonuses are paid, the median levels are set out in Table 5 below:

Median recruitment and retention bonuses paid by phase			
Primary/nursery	Secondary	Special & PRU	Total
£1,416	£2,000	£1,750	£2,000

Table 5: Median recruitment and retention bonuses paid by phase

The chart below (Figure 18) shows the distribution of recruitment and retention payments by phase and gender. The sample size for special schools and PRUs is too small for meaningful analysis and the sample for those in primary and nursery is also fairly small, particularly for male teachers. The secondary chart has a significantly larger sample, however, and shows a similar picture to SEN allowances, where the median payment is the same by gender, but that men are disproportionately more likely to receive payments at the higher levels.

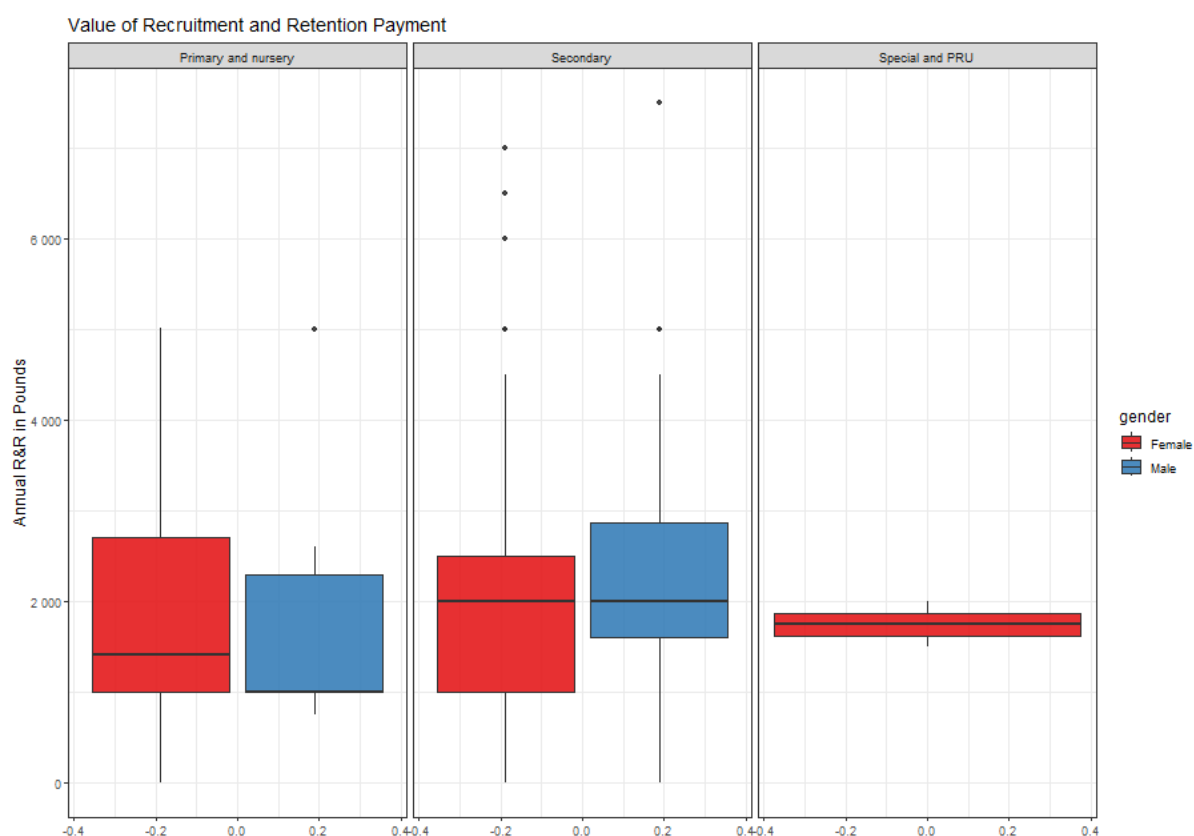


Figure 18: Recruitment and retention payments by gender and phase

Where respondents gave reasons for having been offered a recruitment and retention payment, the most common response was that they had intended to leave and the payment was offered as a way of keeping them.

Other common responses included these payments being offered to match pay in a nearby area, for example to a teacher in an Outer London school to make their salary up to equal the Inner London levels. Another reason was to match a previous salary, where a teacher had moved schools and dropped down the pay scale.

In many cases the recruitment and retention payments were clearly offered as a means of adding to the overall offer but with some money coming from a different pot. Members reported their school telling them that they could not afford to pay a TLR in full for their role, but that they would make up the difference with a retention payment.

Pay increases and structures

Cost-of-living-pay increases

We asked respondents whether or not they had received the 6.5% cost-of-living increase set out in the STPCD following last year's pay campaign and strike action by NEU members.

Among all respondents, 78% said they had received a pay increase in line with the national increase, up slightly from 75% last year. Just 1% said they had received a pay increase but that it was less than the national increase and another 1% said their school had told them that teachers would not be paid any cost of living increase. Some 8% said no decision had yet been taken and the remaining 12% did not know whether or not they had received an increase. The fact that so few reported any confirmed variation from the 6.5% settlement suggests it was almost universally applied at state schools in England.

Pay structures

The vast majority of members who know how their pay scales are structured say that their school retains a six-point scale for the MPR and a three-point scale for the UPR. Just 3% say their school has abandoned the traditional structure while 87% say their school continues to use a six-point/three-point structure, almost exactly the same as last year. The remaining 10% say they do not know how the scale is structured.

Among respondents who say their school retains a six-point MPR and three-point UPR scale, over three quarters (78%) say these points are in line with those set out in the STPCD, unchanged from last year. Some 7% say their school's scale is lower at some or all points than the national pay scale points, a small increase on 4% in last year's survey. Just 1% say their school's scale is higher at some or all points than the national range, while the remaining 14% did not know.

The areas around London and its fringe were once again the places most likely to diverge from the nationally-set ranges, either in terms of structure or the level of pay scale points. Even here, however, the vast majority of teachers say their school follows the scales in the STPCD.

Progression when taking maternity leave

Once again, our survey highlighted a severe problem with the way progression is applied to those who are on or have recently returned from maternity leave. Teachers who had taken maternity leave in the previous academic year were more likely to say that they believed they were ineligible to progress, less likely to apply when eligible and less likely to have been actually been awarded progression than counterparts across the wider teacher population (Figure 19).

Pregnancy and maternity are protected characteristics under the Equality Act 2010, and the DfE has stated: “When a teacher returns to work from maternity leave, the school must give her any pay increase that she would have received, following appraisal, had she not been on maternity leave.” Women under 50 make up almost two thirds of the teaching workforce, meaning that most schools have constant experience managing maternity leave, and have no excuse for not applying the rules fairly or lawfully.

This year, 785 teachers told us that they had been absent for at least 10 days in the previous school year due to maternity leave. Of these, 28% said that they were ineligible for progression due to being at their scale maximum, significantly lower than the 35% across the whole sample, likely reflecting the age profile of teachers most likely to be pregnant.

More worryingly, 19% of those who had been on maternity leave said that they believed that they were “ineligible for another reason”, double the rate across the whole weighted sample (9%). Over a third of this group specifically mentioned maternity as a reason they were not eligible for progression, showing that at best employers are failing to correct misapprehensions around maternity rights, and at worst misleading their employees.

Many of these respondents simply wrote “maternity” as a reason for their perceived ineligibility, suggesting a blanket policy in some schools to bar those on maternity from progression despite legal obligations. A few respondents expanded their comments and said that their maternity leave prevented them from fulfilling the eligibility criteria at their school. These included “conducting extra responsibilities”, “providing evidence” of performance or “meeting targets”. Eligibility criteria were clearly not being adjusted to take account of planned absences.

Some 9% of those who had been on maternity leave in the previous academic year said they were eligible for progression but did not apply. This compares to 6% across the whole weighted sample of teachers. Among those who had been on maternity and chose not to apply for progression, half specifically referenced their maternity among the reasons not to apply.

Digging deeper into the reasons given by members there was some crossover with the responses for ineligibility, many members simply wrote “maternity” as the reason. One told us they “didn’t know if I could”. Many referenced the impracticality of fulfilling the application process for being awarded pay progression. Typical comments included “I was on maternity leave and did not receive the email about applying for upper pay from the head”; “[I] didn’t have the time to complete the paperwork”; “I was on maternity leave and missed the target deadlines”; “I did not apply for UPS as you have to give a presentation to governors... I had only just come back from maternity leave and did not feel ready” and “progress reviews were scheduled for after [the date I went on maternity leave]”.

Other members said that the criteria for pay progression effectively barred them from progression. Among a number of similar comments, members said: “I have been on maternity leave so don’t have the evidence to back up a claim”; “I do not have two years evidence of additional responsibilities as I was on maternity leave”; “[I] was on maternity leave for a large part of last academic year so

performance management was not completed for me” and “I didn't want to apply as I wouldn't have had enough evidence to provide.” Taking maternity leave can even expose teachers to multi-year discrimination – one member told us that they had taken maternity leave the year *before last*, but that they were still unable to progress up the scale due to two full years of performance appraisal being required.

Members on or returning from maternity felt discouraged in other ways from applying for progression. One told us she “felt cheeky asking to go up the scale”, another told us that the “added stress of interview and documentation for moving up a pay scale was more than I wanted to take on. The pay off for extra work didn't feel like it was worth it, especially after tax.” Members said their school was “not following pay and conditions policy”, while another did not apply due to “not thinking I would be given the progression anyway”. One teacher simply told us: “I’ve been so unsupported”.

Among those who were eligible for progression, 73% of those who had been on maternity said that they received progression, compared to 78% of eligible teachers across the whole sample. Another 20% said they do not yet know, compared to 16% across all teachers. Some 7% of those who had been on maternity were denied, compared to 6% across the wider sample. If we exclude the “don’t know” answers, 9% of teachers who took maternity and knew the outcome of their progression application were turned down, compared to 7% among all teachers.

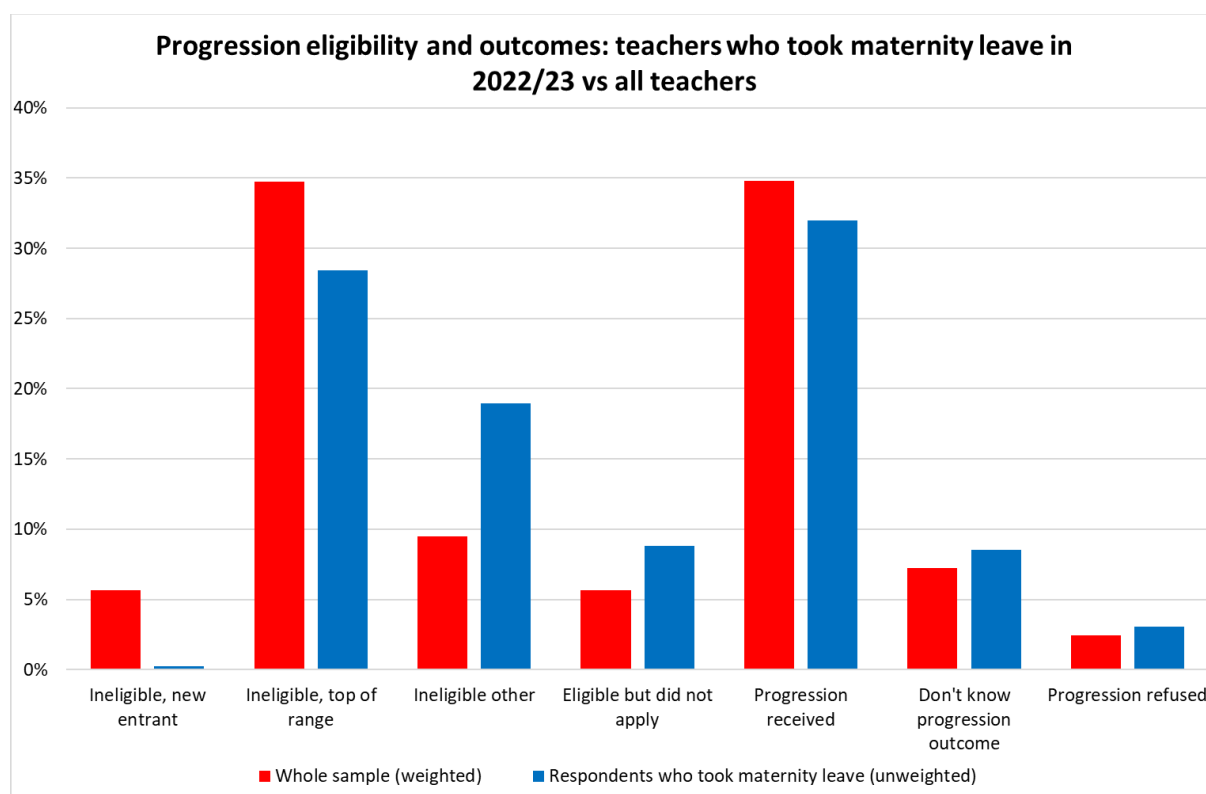


Figure 19: Progression eligibility and outcomes: teachers who took maternity leave in 2022/23 vs all teachers

Where teachers who had taken maternity leave were turned down, almost half (42%) said that their maternity had been specifically referenced as a reason. This is similar to previous years and shows that schools are still ignoring both equality law and DfE guidance.

In general comments around the fairness of pay and PRP, members reflected further on their recent or past experiences of maternity and pregnancy. Examples included not just those whose progression

was blocked, but whose cost-of-living pay increase was not applied while they were on maternity leave; some who were forced to drop down the pay range to a lower point on their return to work; as well as widespread anger at the low levels of maternity pay, particularly compared to other sectors or to teachers in other countries.

Put together, these responses paint a clear picture of a profession that discriminates against women teachers who exercise their rights to take maternity leave. They are likely to wrongly believe they are ineligible or be discouraged from seeking progression, and even when they do apply they are slightly more likely to be rejected. The demands that many schools place on teachers to present a full year's, or even two years' evidence of their fitness for progression is clearly discriminatory against those on maternity leave who are unable to comply fully. Refusal to award progression women who take maternity leave has a knock-on, cumulative effect throughout their careers, and contributes both to the gender pay gap and to gender imbalance in senior roles.

Working time

We asked members whether they had made any changes to their contracted hours in the past year. Just over three quarters (77%) have kept the same contracted hours as last year, down slightly from the 82% recorded last year when we first asked the question.

Elsewhere, responses were broadly the same, with teachers on part-time contracts naturally more likely to make changes to their working time (Table 6). Reducing hours due to excessive workload is still much more common than increasing hours due to rising costs, but the gap has narrowed somewhat among part-time teachers. Some 22% reduced their contracted hours due to workload last year, down from 25% last year, while 8% increased their hours to earn more, up from 6%. Only just over half (54%) of teachers on part-time contracts maintained the same hours over the past years, again reflecting the countervailing pressures of excessive workload and the cost-of-living crisis.

Have you changed your full-time/part-time contracted hours in the past year?			
	Teachers on full-time contracts	Teachers on part-time or flexible contracts	Total
Yes, I have reduced my contracted hours due to excessive workload and its impact on my life	1%	22%	6%
Yes, I have increased my contracted hours due to concerns over rising living costs	3%	8%	4%
Yes, I have changed my contracted hours for a different reason	1%	14%	4%
No, my contracted hours have remained the same	85%	54%	77%

Table 6: Teachers who changed their full-time/part-time contracted hours in the past year

Pay policy and appraisals

Two thirds of teachers in the survey (65%) told us that pupil performance is used as at least part of their appraisal objectives. Just over a quarter (26%) say pupil performance is the main driver of their appraisal outcomes, while a further 39% say pupil performance is one of the pieces of evidence used to determine appraisal outcomes. The remaining 35% say pupil performance does not form part of appraisal objectives.

Including pupil performance in setting objectives is more common in primary schools, where 70% of teachers report this being at least part of the criteria and 29% saying it is the main driver. In secondary schools, 61% of teachers say pupil performance forms at least part of their appraisal objectives, while in special schools and PRUs the figure is less than half (47%).

According to this year's survey, only 62% of teachers say their school made them aware of their pay policy and where it can be found. Less than half of respondents (46%) think their school's pay policy is fair (Figure 20). One in eight (13%) think it is unfair and the remaining 41% do not know what is in their school's pay policy.

Perhaps unsurprisingly, school leaders were much more likely than classroom teachers to say their school's pay policy is fair. Slightly more surprisingly, leaders were only very slightly less likely than classroom teachers to describe their school's policy as actively unfair.

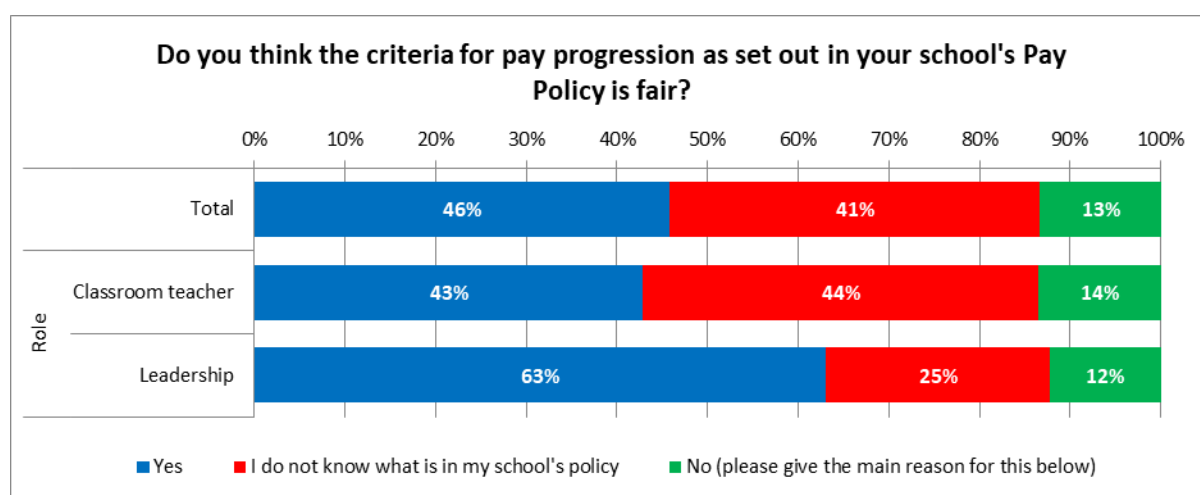


Figure 20: Do you think the criteria for pay progression as set out in your school's pay policy is fair?

The reasons members thought their pay progression criteria were unfair neatly summarise many of the issues raised throughout the entirety of this report:

"The expectation on UPS teachers nationally is too high. Too many additional responsibilities are expected without TLR payments. In any other career, you wouldn't be taking on such enormous additional responsibilities unpaid."

"We have no ability for pay progression. No TLR's are awarded. Academies have no real rules about this. Feel there is unfair pay awards depending on if you challenge SMT or if you are favoured"

"We complete our jobs and more daily and the thanks is normally an email rather than pay progression yearly."

"TLR are not even the minimum by law"

“SEN allowance is not paid to SEN Teachers”

“I had to produce a huge file of evidence to show I was UPS material. It took an incredible amount of hours to get together only to be told I would not be put forward... as ‘my grades were not there for year 11”

“Too many responsibilities to meet on upper pay scale that I might as well become a senior leader and get paid for the responsibilities”

“The amount of paperwork and evidence in itself is around 6 pages long, like a job application, it is intentionally made difficult to complete.”

“For movement up to UPS and within extra work is expected, but no time given extra to complete said work.”

“Teachers are not paid TLR for extra responsibilities”

“I don't want to go into leadership but can not progress on my pay scale”

“I am 23 years qualified with U1 paid yet I'm paid M4... the only way to move schools was to accept a lower point.”

“Expectations of Upper Pay scale in line with having a responsibility point. And the pay awarded is much lower than the responsibility point”

“In a small school it is restricted by the budget - ironically, we all end up doing more and shouldering more”

“I believe I was disadvantaged from receiving a pay rise when I was on maternity leave as I didn't have evidence to support applying”

“[The offer of] UPS is dangled to get people to do more well over [their] contracted hours”

“In order to progress on UPS you have to evidence you have already been meeting the criteria for the [next] UPS point for two years for free!”

“Extra responsibility for no extra money”

“Unrealistic expectations and changing of goalposts”