



## **Joint Supplementary Evidence to the School Teachers' Review Body**

### **Association of School & College Leaders National Association of Head Teachers National Education Union Voice**

- 1 In November, our joint statement to the School Teachers' Review Body (STRB) called for the reversal of the real terms cuts in teacher pay since 2010 and for significantly improved pay levels for all teachers and school leaders. We argued that higher pay must be accompanied by commensurate uplifts to all teacher pay points.
- 2 There is again significant consensus amongst consultees excluding the DfE on the key issues within the STRB's remit. This includes NEOST and the NGA as well as our organisations. These issues include the need for: a significant pay increase applied to all teachers and undifferentiated; full funding of such an increase by the Government; the reinstatement into the STPCD of a national pay structure as a minimum national benchmark which applies to all state-funded schools; and reform to the pay structure including the removal of mandatory Performance Related Pay (PRP).
- 3 Alongside the need for a strong whole-market signal on teacher pay, there is wide agreement amongst consultees of the severity and extent of the recruitment and retention crisis.
- 4 We urge the STRB to engage with this consensus. In recent years, the STRB has made clear that it shares the serious concerns our organisations have expressed on teacher pay and teacher recruitment and retention. The latest information confirms that those serious problems remain, as set out in detail in our organisations' separate sets of evidence to the STRB. Positive engagement with our organisations, which represent the majority of teachers and school leaders in England, would improve the confidence of the profession in the STRB process.

- 5 We find it unacceptable that the Government has attempted to constrain the independent work of the STRB, by effectively setting out three options for teachers' and school leaders' pay, from which the STRB is invited to select one, while its accompanying press and media narrative presented decisions on teachers' school leaders' pay as being largely settled. These unwarranted actions undermine the STRB process.
- 6 The Government evidence to the STRB states that recruitment and retention "has been a challenge, particularly in the context of an improving economy and a strengthening graduate labour market" (Government evidence, paragraph 10).
- 7 The Government fails to acknowledge the widespread consensus that the real-terms cuts to teacher pay and the changes to the teacher pay structure including the imposition of PRP have contributed significantly to the recruitment and retention problems.
- 8 In its discussion of the recruitment and retention problems, the Government states that the problems are "more" or "particularly" challenging for some career stages, some subjects and some schools (ibid, paragraphs 13-16). Obviously, there are differences in the data. The key point, however, is that the recruitment and retention problem is evident across the teaching profession and this point is central when considering the Government's focus on pay in early career. The supply pipeline for teachers and leaders is broken at all career stages.
- 9 We are particularly concerned at the statement in the Government evidence that it "will need the STRB to return to" issues of differentiation by area, subject and phase (ibid, paragraph 14). This is wholly inappropriate given the evidence of widespread recruitment and retention problems, as well as the need for a national and transparent teacher pay structure characterised by competitive pay levels and prospects.
- 10 The Government states that "there is extensive evidence that significant uplifts to starting and early career teacher pay are needed" (ibid, paragraph 4). We agree; but we also believe that the widespread evidence of recruitment and retention problems shows that there is also a need for a significant pay uplift for all teachers and school leaders. The Government's proposals would further erode pay differentials for experienced teachers and school leaders, undermining retention. We agree with the STRB's view that this "focus on pay for early career teachers, at the expense of those on the upper or leadership pay ranges, risks being ineffective even in its own terms" (STRB 29<sup>th</sup> Report, page xi).

- 11 The Government argues that a 3 per cent increase in the total pay bill is “appropriate.” Yet its proposals would generate a pay uplift of just 2.5 per cent for some two-thirds of classroom teachers and for all of those on the leadership pay range. The Government states that such an increase would be “above inflation” (ibid, paragraph 5) – yet the latest Treasury average of forecasts has RPI at 2.5 per cent in the fourth quarter of 2020.
- 12 Not only would the overwhelming majority of classroom teachers get significantly lower pay increases than those on M1-M5, they would also see no significant restoration of the real-terms cuts to their pay since 2010.
- 13 Similarly, the proposals will effectively lock in a decade of real terms cuts to school leaders’ pay. Instead, they will further undermine the pay differentials, making a leadership route even less attractive and exacerbating the already parlous state of leadership supply.
- 14 The STRB is aware of the severe discontent felt by experienced teachers and school leaders due to the Government’s unevidenced, unexplained and unacceptable decision to impose a differentiated pay increase in 2018, departing from the STRB’s recommendations. At a time when there is clear evidence of significant and worsening retention problems amongst senior teachers, our organisations view any proposal for another differentiated pay increase as wholly wrong.
- 15 To focus on recruitment problems and ignore retention problems is not a solution to the recruitment and retention problem – it would create new problems, due to the dismay felt by experienced teachers at another differentiated award.
- 16 The need for an urgent and significant improvement in the ability of teaching to compete effectively with other graduate employers is widely recognised, including by the STRB. This key objective will not be achieved unless retention problems as well as recruitment issues are effectively tackled.
- 17 Alongside the consensus on teacher pay levels, there is significant agreement amongst consultees on teacher pay structure issues.
- 18 Our organisations share the view that the national pay structure, with mandatory cost of living increases for all teachers, needs to be restored urgently to the STPCD. We believe that such a national structure is essential to support teacher recruitment and retention, as well as providing a foundation for fairness and transparency in teacher pay. We attach for the STRB’s consideration our organisations’ joint advice on school teacher pay for 2019-20, which has been adopted by a significant number of local authorities and MATs as well as by many individual schools and academies.

- 19 Our organisations believe that PRP in teaching has failed. This view is shared by a growing number of MATs. The imposition of PRP, without any equality impact assessment or credible evidence that it is appropriate for teaching, has created significant equalities concerns. Its impact on pay progression and the denial or reduction of cost of living awards has worsened the recruitment and retention problems. It creates needless additional workload and bureaucracy and reduces the scope for positive and open appraisal discussions. On any objective assessment of the evidence, it has been a failure and must be removed as a matter of urgency.
- 20 The Government's proposed funding envelope is not an adequate response to the extent and severity of the recruitment and retention problems. It is an inappropriate attempt to constrain the STRB and the STRB should reject any such constraint so that it can focus on evidence-based solutions to the recruitment and retention problem.
- 21 We jointly call on the STRB to acknowledge the widespread consensus on the key issues and to recommend accordingly.

**February 2020**