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Jeremy Miles
Minister for Education and Welsh Language
Welsh Parliament
Cardiff Bay
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Email: Jeremy.miles@senedd.wales

Dear Jeremy,

Inflation has increased dramatically since your evidence to the IWPRB, suggesting, as an option, 4% per cent pay rises for all pay ranges of the teaching profession.

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

You will be aware that teacher pay has fallen considerably in real terms since 2010, even before the effects of this latest bout of inflation.

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

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

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

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

The latest teacher training figures are very worrying; applications for both England and Wales have fallen by 24 per cent compared with last year. EWC figures also tell us that the number of new teacher registrants continues to fall year on year contributing to a crisis in recruitment.

Similarly, the EWC inform us that qualified teachers continue to leave the profession during their first few years. These young people will have finished a degree, then completed a post graduate qualification. They are a great loss to the profession, but more importantly to Wales' pupils who rely on their teachers to educate and care for them.

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

Schools across the length and breadth of Wales are reporting profound difficulties in attracting applicants for vacancies. Teacher recruitment targets are missed and it's getting worse, with the number of people applying to be teachers significantly down whilst the number of vacancies being advertised in secondary schools is up.

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

You must respond to the new economic reality of double-digit inflation and the threat this poses to teacher living standards. We call on you to commit to an inflation-plus increase for all teachers rather than the option you outlined in your evidence to the IWPRB.

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

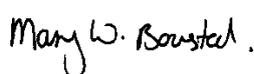
You also need to address urgently the matter of teacher workload. Whilst we have been in discussions on this issue, little impact has been seen in the classrooms.

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

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

And we will be strongly encouraging them to vote yes.

Yours sincerely,



Mary Boustead
Joint General Secretary



Kevin Courtney
Joint General Secretary



David Evans
Wales Secretary