

**THE NASUWT SUPPLEMENTARY SUBMISSION
TO THE SCHOOL TEACHERS' REVIEW BODY
20 MARCH 2024**

The NASUWT – The Teachers' Union.

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1. Introduction

- 1.1 The NASUWT is calling for the School Teachers' Review Body to demonstrate its independence by making a pay recommendation, in line with NASUWT's submission in 2024, for a restorative, above-inflation and fully funded pay award. The Review Body's focus must be on what is needed and what is right for the future supply and retention of teachers. Moreover, those arbitrary affordability constraints put forward by HM Treasury and the Department for Education, which have led to pay deterioration and the current poor state of teacher recruitment and retention, should not be a driver for the Review Body's recommendations.
- 1.2 The case for increased pay and sector-wide funding is undeniable from the evidence. Affordability is a political matter for the Government, but not for the Review Body.

2 The cost-of-living crisis and teacher pay

- 2.1 The Autumn Statement and the 2024 Spring Budget mean higher levels of personal taxation due to the freezing of income tax thresholds.
- 2.2 The NASUWT Big Question Survey of almost 20,000 members in late 2023 identified clear evidence of teachers experiencing serious financial difficulties and unable to afford the costs of food, heating and housing.¹
- 2.3 Eighty-seven per cent of respondents to the survey said they do not think teaching is competitive with other professions. The requirement that 'Recommendations should be affordable' is flawed, because teachers also have affordability issues.

¹ <https://www.nasuwt.org.uk/static/847bdd11-256f-4aec-8ee7cc0201f2bf9f/33ff67f1-358b-4ec7-9ec50e1f602dca88/Big-Question-Survey-Report-2023.pdf>

Government's Economic Analysis

- 2.4 The Government's economic assessment was published following the deadline for submission of evidence to the 34th Report. NASUWT maintains that the Government's treatment of the Review Body process demonstrates contempt for the work and independence of the Review Body itself. The Review Body has previously asserted that late submission of evidence will be viewed with concern as part of its deliberations. We now look to see how it intends to act in response to the late submissions from the Government.
- 2.5 The submission from the Treasury relies on forecasts from the Office for Budget Responsibility (OBR) and Bank of England for CPI inflation through the end of 2024 and early 2025. Even at its most optimistic, CPI inflation forecasts remain at almost twice the level of the Government's forecasts on school budgets. The Review Body should also recognise the impact of inflation, interest rates and housing costs on the value of teachers' wages. Whilst headline inflation may fall, prices remain high.
- 2.6 Whilst the Department for Education (DfE) puts no specific recommendation forward, it is clear that the Government expects that any pay award must be paid from existing budgets
- 2.7 The DfE calculation of headroom available (assuming there are no adverse economic headwinds) is 1.2%. The Treasury also argues that there will be no additional funding for pay awards this year:

'Departments were generally funded for pay awards of 3% and 2%, across 2022-23 and 2023-24, whilst actual PRB awards were ~5% in 2022-23 and ~6% in 2023-24. This equates to spending ~£10bn more on pay in 2024-25 than planned at SR21 for PRB workforces alone, even before 2024-25 awards are considered.

'The pressures outlined above mean that departments are already having to reprioritise and find efficiencies to enable funding to be available for pay awards this year.

'Given the reprioritisation towards pay already made to deliver 2022-23 and 2023-24 awards, the scope for further savings within departments' budgets is limited.'

- 2.8 NASUWT urges the Review Body to reject this belated imposition from the Government which is intended to punish it for the recommendations set out in its 33rd report and tie the hands of the Review Body in its 34th report to recommend a below-inflation pay award or a nil pay award for the majority of teachers and headteachers. The role of the Review Body is to consider what adjustments are needed to teachers' pay to ensure that the profession remains competitive and is able to recruit and retain teachers and headteachers successfully. The Review Body should present its recommendations free from any Government straitjacket. The Government should only then, and not before, say whether it intends to accept or reject the Review Body's recommendations.
- 2.9 The Government's attempt to pray-in-aid a spurious analysis of the average remuneration payable to teachers is deeply insulting to our members. The Review Body does not have a remit to consider the pensions of teachers and headteachers. Furthermore, to consider total rewards without reference to the working conditions of teachers – including average working hours regularly in excess of the EU working time regulations – is further evidence of the Government's contempt of teachers. We therefore ask the Review Body to reject the Government's claims.

3 Teacher supply

- 3.1 We remain deeply concerned that the Government's submission to the Review Body continues to understate the profound nature of the teacher supply crisis.
- 3.2 The Government highlights data on the overall number of teachers serving in the state education system as evidence that the teacher supply situation is

more positive than a wide range of stakeholder organisations and expert analysts have insisted is the case. As the DfE notes, the extent to which the demand for teacher supply is being met adequately is indicated through changes to the pupil-teacher ratio. The significant increases in this ratio since 2010/11, cited in the DfE's submission, highlight the deep-rooted nature of the problems that the education system faces in this respect.

- 3.3 Official data makes clear the degree to which the DfE has continued to fail to meet its recruitment targets. We note with considerable concern the narrative set out in the DfE's submission that for reasons that are not entirely readily discernible, the Government's longstanding failure to meet most of its targets is not necessarily indicative of teacher supply problems.
- 3.4 As the DfE has made clear to the Review Body previously, the postgraduate recruitment targets set out the most statistically valid predictions of the contribution to the maintenance of adequate teacher supply that these routes to qualified teacher status (QTS) should make. Given that the substantial majority of teachers in training are enrolled on such programmes, the continued failure to meet these targets is a clear indicator of the failures in its teacher supply policy.
- 3.5 Postgraduate recruitment targets, therefore, take account of the fact that teachers with QTS can enter the workforce through other means, such as those who had previously left the profession choosing to return, or through undergraduate routes to QTS. The fact that the number of returners has increased to the relatively low levels seen in 2018/19 does not provide credible assurance that the failure to meet the postgraduate recruitment targets in the vast majority of subjects will be mitigated by these means.
- 3.6 We note the assertion in the DfE's submission that it is undertaking work to encourage more former teachers to return to the profession. However, other than extending those limited services that are available to former primary teachers, the Review Body will have recognised that no significant changes in government activities in this respect are described in its submission. We

acknowledge that seeking to encourage those who are qualified teachers to return to the profession has a role to play. However, it remains of marginal relevance in tackling the teacher supply crisis. Moreover, the factors that have contributed to the substantial increases in teacher wastage recorded since 2010/11 have not been addressed and are likely to have contributed to the exit from teaching of those who left during this period.

- 3.7 The Government cites the changes it has made to streamline and simplify the ways in which those who may be interested in undertaking teacher training may access suitable programmes. While it is a sensible policy aim to remove unnecessary obstacles to exploring and applying for initial teacher training (ITT) programmes, it should be noted that its current policy is substantively longstanding and no evidence has been produced of the extent to which it has contributed to increasing recruitment into ITT programmes.
- 3.8 A report published recently by the National Foundation for Educational Research (NFER) is referenced in the Government's submission to support its continued assertions about the extent to which its bursary and other targeted incentive programmes contribute to the maintenance of teacher supply in those subjects with which these incentives are associated.² Notwithstanding the fact that this evidence remains contested – as the Review Body will note from previous submissions made to it – the research cited emphasises the need for a balanced strategy for recruitment and retention given the impact of teacher supply problems across subjects and phases nationally. The NFER evidence cannot be used to justify the disproportionate emphasis given to bursaries and other targeted financial incentives in the Government's current and previous submissions to the Review Body.
- 3.9 The Government references work it is undertaking to widen the range of routes into ITT, including the development of an undergraduate teaching apprenticeship. While the effectiveness and viability of these programmes has

² McLean, D.; Tang, S.; and Worth, J. (2023). *The impact of training bursaries on teacher recruitment and retention: an evaluation of impact and value for money*. Available at: (https://www.nfer.ac.uk/media/bycg5uzk/the_impact_of_training_bursaries_on_teacher_recruitment_and_retention.pdf#page=17), accessed on 12.03.24.

yet to be established, it is not yet clear that creating new routes will attract individuals into teaching who would not have contemplated doing so otherwise.

- 3.10 As the Review Body will be aware from previous submissions made to it, the reaccreditation of ITT providers following the market review has, to date, resulted in a decline in the overall number of providers. It is by no means clear that the mitigations being put in place by the DfE will address these shortfalls. The withdrawal of established providers from the ITT market, therefore, remains a significant risk to sustaining and increasing recruitment into the profession.
- 3.11 The Review Body will be aware of the impact that the Early Career Framework (ECF) has had on the workload of new teachers and their mentors. While it is entirely right for the Government to have sought to improve the quality and consistency of the induction experience for Early Career Teachers (ECTs), it is not credible to assert that its recent reforms to the ECF will address those aspects of it that may have contributed to high levels early exit from the profession. It is not possible to identify which reforms to the framework the Government believes will have a positive impact in this respect.
- 3.12 It is not clear how the reforms to the suite of National Professional Qualifications (NPQs) cited in the Government's submission will improve retention, particularly for those post-induction teachers at early stages of their careers for whom these qualifications are not designed specifically. The absence of a contractual right to professional development and training, a core element of the terms and conditions of other professions in the public and private sectors, continues to serve to hinder the degree to which NPQs can support higher retention rates among more experienced teachers and leaders.
- 3.13 The considerable extent to which excessive and unnecessary workload demands contribute to attrition from the teaching workforce is well-

established. The worsening workload experienced by teachers and leaders was confirmed in the summary report of the Wave 2 outcomes of the DfE's *Working Lives of Teachers and Leaders* study.³ This data confirms that the average weekly working hours of leaders on full-time contracts increased from 57.5 hours in 2022 to 58.2 hours in 2022. Average weekly working hours for teachers on full-time contracts increased from 51.9 to 52.4 over the same period.

- 3.14 The Trade Union Congress (TUC) reported that teachers work the largest amount of unpaid overtime in 2023, an average of £15,000 per teacher.⁴
- 3.15 The Review Body will be aware from previous submissions that the measures taken by the Government to arrest and reduce overall workload burdens for teachers and leaders have not proved adequate to the task. That this remains the case is confirmed by the recent increases cited above.
- 3.16 As the Government notes, the Workload Reduction Taskforce has made some initial recommendations on measures that should be taken to reduce workload burdens. However, the Taskforce has yet to set out its final recommendations. Therefore, it is not possible to assess the full extent of the contribution any further recommendations might make to meeting the Government's target of reducing average working time for teachers and leaders by five hours within three years to 2026, or whether ministers will accept any recommendations that are submitted to them.

Targeted remuneration

- 3.17 NASUWT notes that the Government's submission addresses the invitation issued to it by the Review Body in its 33rd report to examine the case for

³ Department for Education (2024). *Working lives of teachers and leaders: wave 2 summary report*. Available at: (<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/working-lives-of-teachers-and-leaders-wave-2/working-lives-of-teachers-and-leaders-wave-2-summary-report>), accessed on 12.03.24.

⁴ <https://www.tuc.org.uk/news/uk-workers-put-26-billion-worth-unpaid-overtime-during-last-year-tuc-analysis>

targeted remuneration to address ‘particular workforce challenges’. The Government’s interpretation of these challenges focuses principally on the recruitment and retention of STEM teachers.

- 3.18 We remain clear that the case for differentiated pay on this basis is entirely unconvincing and is not reflective of the teacher supply situation in the education system. As noted elsewhere, while it is possible to identify differences in recruitment and retention rates between different subjects and phases, the current teacher supply crisis is national in nature and reaches far beyond the limited range of subjects identified in the Government’s submission. The implication underpinning the Government’s submission – that supply ‘challenges’ can only be identified in respect of some STEM subjects in the secondary sector – does not withstand serious scrutiny.
- 3.19 There is no evidence that such targeting would be effective. That this is the case is illustrated by experience gained in the academies sector. As the Review Body will be aware, a core aim of the academies programme since May 2010 has been to give state-funded schools the discretion to depart from the provisions of the School Teachers’ Pay and Conditions Document (STPCD) in any way that they regard as fit for their circumstances. The relatively permissive requirements on the use of pay flexibilities in the STPCD can be discarded or relaxed further in respect of the clear majority of educational settings in which secondary teachers are employed.
- 3.20 It is, therefore, instructive to note that the last significant independent research conducted for the Office for Manpower Economics (OME) noted that notwithstanding these permissions to target pay by subject, the use of this strategy in the academies sector was extremely limited, even in circumstances where the Government has continued to claim that supply problems were limited principally to STEM and other similar subjects.⁵

⁵ Milsome, S. and Withers, L. (2017). *Academies’ approaches to teachers’ pay*. Available at: (https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/media/5a81f6c0ed915d74e62350e6/Academies_approaches_to_teachers_pay_IDR_October_2017_V3.pdf), accessed on 12.03.24.

- 3.21 The real-world judgements of those with responsibility for planning staffing in the academies sector serve to confirm that, even where the scope to differentiate pay in the way explored by the Government in its submission is made available, it is regarded as an unrealistic and non-serious option. It is difficult to understand in the light of this experience the case for extending this flexibility, or imposing differential remuneration on schools in the maintained sector.
- 3.22 The evidence cited by the DfE in support of targeted remuneration is drawn largely from small-scale studies in the US. These studies fail to take into account the extent to which different drivers of recruitment and retention levels in the US, such as the operation of tenure and the linking of pay progression and job security to a narrow range of pupil performance indicators – soon to be discontinued in maintained settings in England – have impacted on their findings. The validity and reliability of these studies in respect of their applicability to circumstances in England is, therefore, entirely unclear.

4 Teachers' Pension Scheme (TPS)

- 4.1 The HM Treasury (HMT) Economic Evidence to Public Sector Review Bodies 2024 asserts that a teacher with typical earnings and a 40-year career will retire with a pension worth £43,800 per annum.⁶
- 4.2 The reality is that the average pension in payment in 2022-23 was £14,561 per member. (Value of benefits in payment (£10.943 billion) divided by the number of beneficiaries (751,516) = average pension of £14,561. This figure includes child and adult dependants' benefits.)⁷
- 4.3 The HMT value placed on how much a pension is worth is significantly over-inflated.

⁶ <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/economic-evidence-to-the-pay-review-bodies-february-2024>

⁷ Source- Teachers' Pension Scheme (England and Wales) Annual Report and Accounts 2022-2023

4.4 In a survey of over 1,000 NASUWT retired members in autumn 2023, it was reported that:

- 48% do not receive a full state pension;
- 17% have had to find a part-time job to support their finances; and
- 20% have found it difficult to cover the cost of energy bills.⁸

5 Supply teachers

5.1 Supply teachers are integral to the education system. Without supply teachers, many pupils would be denied the opportunity to be taught by qualified and dedicated teachers who ensure that schools can continue to provide the education to which children and young people are entitled. Supply teachers make a vital contribution to securing high educational standards for all children and young people.

5.2 The well-documented move away from permanent employees to a more complex and flexible labour market has resulted in the increased use of recruitment agencies and umbrella companies.

5.3 Supply agencies have come to dominate the market place, up from 63% in 2014 to 82% in 2023. At the same time, the number of local authorities providing pooled supply arrangements dropped from 17% to just 2% respectively.

5.4 Research suggests that schools spent £974 million on supply teachers from agencies in 2021-22, which is an increase of 18% on the £825 million spent back in 2016-17.⁹

5.5 For supply teachers, the impact of pay freezes and real terms pay cuts, together with the lack of effective regulation of agencies, has resulted in even

⁸ <https://www.nasuwt.org.uk/static/3a0d8e9c-060e-456e-85f85e82b22e5fd8/FRMA-Questionnaire-on-the-Cost-of-Living-and-Communications-pdf.pdf>

⁹ <https://schoolsweek.co.uk/supply-teacher-deregulation-graduate-teaching-recruitment/>

more acute cost-of-living pressures and the exodus of many supply teachers from the profession, including to non-professional occupations, such as retailing, where pay levels are rising.

- 5.6 The average daily pay rate for a classroom teacher employed by a school is £217 (equivalent to a salary of £42,358).¹⁰ However, the majority of supply teachers report that they are paid between £100 and £149 per day. The majority of supply teachers have not seen their remuneration increase substantially since 2014.

'The agency I worked for said they couldn't pay me more than £125 a day. I had worked with them for nearly ten years (I started on £110) and was told I was on the maximum they would pay.'

'For 11, years my daily rate was £120 – I had to fight to get it up to £130!'

- 5.7 We maintain that it is now time for the entitlement to national pay scales to be returned to teachers, including those undertaking supply, in England. This would ensure that schools in England have a competitive salary structure, something that is evidenced by the fact that 16% of supply teachers were able to secure more money when working through a local authority or directly with a school in comparison to supply work through an agency.
- 5.8 The situation for supply teachers as agency workers in England is compounded by the fact that employment by or through agencies is currently not pensionable under the Teachers' Pension Scheme (TPS), leaving many supply teachers no alternative other than to make less favourable pension plans, including reliance on inferior auto-enrolment pension arrangements. There is a strong argument that supply teachers, working alongside other employed teachers, should be afforded the right to access the TPS.

¹⁰ <https://schoolsweek.co.uk/supply-teacher-deregulation-graduate-teaching-recruitment/>

- 5.9 We maintain that the Review Body must address the exploitation faced by supply teachers by recommending that all supply teachers, including agency teachers, fall within the remit of the Review Body and that their pay and conditions are set by the Review Body and are consistent with pay and conditions for all teachers across state-funded schools in England.
- 5.10 In Northern Ireland, supply teaching, or substitute teaching as it is known, is overseen by the Northern Ireland Substitute Teacher Register (NISTR) which is operated by the Department of Education (DE).
- 5.11 Payment for all approved periods of substitute teaching is made on a monthly basis, at a daily rate of 1/195 of the annual salary of a comparable teacher on a substantive contract, through the payroll system which is run by the DE.
- 5.12 This system benefits both schools and teachers in dealing with the practical issues involved in arranging qualified teaching cover.
- 5.13 The NISTR is supported and endorsed by the DE, employing authorities, the General Teaching Council Northern Ireland (GTCNI), the Northern Ireland Teachers' Council (NITC) and the teaching unions. The NISTR is the only mechanism for engaging substitute teachers in all schools in Northern Ireland.

6. The NEOST submission

- 6.1 Noting that the pay bill is one of the highest demands on overall school budgets and noting that not all schools are in the same financial position, the National Employers' Organisation for School Teachers (NEOST) continues to argue that adequate and sustainable funding is needed to ensure that any proposed pay award can be fully implemented by all schools.¹¹
- 6.2 The NEOST survey evidence also highlights employer awareness about workload pressure and wellbeing concerns for staff. The NEOST is concerned

¹¹ <https://www.local.gov.uk/sites/default/files/documents/workforce%20-%20NEOST%20evidence%20to%20the%20STRB%20-%204%20march.pdf>

that the financial settlement in schools must be a factor to assist in improving recruitment and retention without exacerbating existing cost challenges.¹²

- 6.3 NEOST notes that the vast majority (83%) of our stakeholders indicated that a pay award applied to all ranges equally would best support recruitment and retention in schools. They support equal increases across the ranges, based on a combination of teachers' views on the perceived unfairness of any targeted pay awards and the potential negative impact on morale if what is often seen as a cost-of-living award is targeted in some way.
- 6.4 NASUWT asks the Review Body to reject the NEOST's request to ask the Secretary of State to include the worsening of salary safeguarding provisions, and the introduction of provisions whereby teachers can be moved from the Upper Pay Range (UPR) to the Main Pay Range (MPR), in a future remit. These matters have been considered by the Review Body very recently and the Review Body has advised against their introduction. The introduction of such provisions would deteriorate teachers' national terms and conditions and have a devastating impact on teacher morale, motivation and retention, when this has already been damaged severely by the workload impact of the coronavirus pandemic and the teachers' pay freeze.

¹² Ibid.