



**NEW DEAL
FOR TEACHERS**

POLITICAL BRIEFING

Equalities in Education

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**MAKE CHANGE
HAPPEN**

Introduction

The strength of our education system lies in its diversity, and the richness of our society is reflected in our classrooms. Building a diverse and inclusive teaching workforce for the future requires an education system free from discrimination, bias and inequality. It also requires a government that will address systemic and structural inequalities within society at large.

NASUWT is committed to promoting equity, inclusion and diversity throughout the education sector. We believe that every child, regardless of their background or characteristic, has the right to inclusive and equitable educational outcomes.

The last 14 years have been characterised by widening inequality and increased levels of child poverty, blighting the lives of children and young people, and impacting adversely on the provision of education.

Inclusive Curriculum Entitlements

The curriculum, along with school policies, procedures and practices, has a critical role to play in tackling and preventing discrimination and segregation, advancing equality and fostering good relations between learners and staff with different protected characteristics.

The next government must take steps to secure a broad and balanced educational entitlement for pupils. An inclusive curriculum also requires comprehensive education on historical and contemporary issues related to race, gender, disability and sexuality. We want to see an inspection and accountability system that supports the efforts of all school and college providers in advancing equity and inclusion.

We want to see the end to the hate-fuelled culture war narratives that have occupied the political discourse in recent years and created a hostile environment that has been damaging to pupils and to the work of our teachers. Access to online hate speech will require the next government to take concerted action to protect children and young people. We want to see measures that will tackle all forms of prejudice-related violence and hatred, including racism, anti-Semitism, Islamophobia, homophobia, transphobia, disablism, gender-based violence, sexism, and misogyny in our schools and colleges.

We want to see greater support for teachers when discussing controversial issues with pupils. The classroom should never be a 'no-go' area for debate, reflection and critical thinking.

We want to see better support for pupils at risk of exclusion, including those disproportionately from Black and working-class backgrounds. Too many children are denied access to the early intervention and support they need. We believe it is because of an indictment of the failure of the current system that many pupils are denied effective and timely access to Education Health and Care Plans, speech and language support, educational psychology, mental health and counselling support. This must change.

A Diverse and Inclusive Workforce

Evidence from Black, disabled, LGBTI and women teachers show that ableism, sexism, racism, homophobia and transphobia have grown significantly over the past 14 years. The dismantling of national statutory and contractual frameworks has further undermined progress on the rights of women, Black and disabled teachers at work. The lack of regulation to prevent the use of fire and rehire is disproportionately impacting women teachers and teachers from under-represented groups.

Evidence confirms that the gender pay gap is affecting the teaching profession, with poor access to flexible working and job share opportunities, especially in more senior roles. Black and disabled teachers also experience pay inequality and discrimination in access to pay and career progression, and are more likely to be subject to disciplinary and capability procedures or barred from the profession. Many disabled teachers report that they are denied reasonable adjustments at work – preventing them from remaining in teaching.

Supply teachers – the backbone of our schools – are paid less favourably than other teachers, are denied access to the Teachers’ Pension Scheme, and are employed on precarious zero-hours contracts. Disproportionately, these teachers are women, Black and disabled.

We are calling on the next government to:

- in conjunction with unions and employers, develop a national workforce plan that will put equality, diversity and inclusion at the heart of a national programme to end the teacher recruitment and retention crisis and raise the status of the profession;
- introduce mandatory ethnicity and disability pay gap reporting requirements;
- introduce mandatory race pay audits as part of a wide scale programme of action on anti-racism;
- remove the demoralising and discriminatory requirement for performance-related pay in schools;
- establish national pay scales and pay portability rights for teachers;
- secure a contractual right to time off for CPD for teachers throughout their careers;
- secure equal rights for supply teachers and ban the use of zero-hours contracts;
- ban the use of fire and rehire by school and college employers;
- review the professional regulatory system and the Teaching Regulation Agency; and
- strengthen legislation to prevent all forms of discrimination in schools and colleges, including measures to tackle socio-economic disparities.

Conclusion

Evidence from around the world confirms that equity is key to unlocking excellence for all. The next government must commit to delivering a New Deal for all teachers and for all children.

About Us

NASUWT is The Teachers’ Union and is the voice of the teaching profession. Our aim is to improve and protect the status, morale and working conditions of the teaching profession so that teachers and headteachers can provide the best education and support to children and young people.

We are committed to ensuring that teachers and headteachers are recognised and rewarded as highly skilled professionals with working conditions that enable them to focus on their core role of leading teaching and learning.

Further Information

For further information, please email campaigns@mail.nasuwt.org.uk.

NASUWT
The Teachers' Union

nasuwt.org.uk