



**NEW DEAL
FOR TEACHERS**

POLITICAL BRIEFING

**DELIVERING PAY RESTORATION
FOR TEACHERS**

Introduction

It has often been said that “no one forgets a good teacher!” They just forgot to pay them well.

Teachers have seen their workload soar, whilst their pay has been in decline. The next Government will face serious challenges on an unprecedented scale - not least, the challenge of restoring the confidence that teaching is a career that is worth doing.

More than a decade ago, teaching was the profession of first choice for graduates. Today, teaching is struggling to compete against other graduate professions, with recruitment targets missed year on year, as more graduates vote with their feet.

We believe that resolving the teacher supply crisis must go hand in hand with an effective workforce plan – a coherent programme to retain, develop and incentivise teaching.

Hitting Rock Bottom

Teachers are significantly poorer in real terms than they were in 2010, due to the cumulative impact of below-inflation pay awards and pay freezes.

When measured against headline inflation, teachers’ pay rose by 28.7% since 2010, lower than the increase in headline RPI (+69.4%) and CPI (+48.2%) over the same period. The value of classroom teachers’ pay today is between 21% and 33% lower than it would have been had it kept pace with RPI inflation since 2010. In terms of Leadership Pay, the gap is a 35% real terms shortfall.

The delayed introduction in September 2023 of the £30,000 minimum starting salary offers little reason for cheer. Had teachers’ starting salaries simply increased in line with RPI inflation over the period since 2010, today’s starting salaries outside London would be £36,287, without any form of Government intervention. Real terms pay cuts have also left teachers’ starting pay £3,500 lower than median starting salaries offered by the UK’s leading graduate employers, according to High Fliers Research.

England’s teachers are the poor relations, too. Overall, classroom teachers in England have lower salary prospects than their counterparts in Scotland or Wales. For supply teachers, the situation is even more severe, with many teachers now saying it is no longer financially viable for them to undertake supply teaching work.

Halting the Decline

The next Government will need to give priority to addressing the serious erosion of teachers’ pay as a basis for restoring good industrial relations.

It will also have to recognise that the existing pay bargaining machinery isn’t working. The School Teachers’ Review Body (STRB) should be the independent body that operates to consider teachers’ pay and conditions matters. However, there is growing evidence of the need for reform as concerns grow in intensity over how the STRB process operates, the composition of the Review Body’s membership, its independence from the Government, and the failure of the STRB to halt the deterioration in teacher pay and teacher supply.

Teachers are not asking for quick fixes. They want lasting solutions – underpinned by a national workforce plan to raise the status of teachers.

A National Commission on Teachers' Pay

A National Commission on Teachers' Pay would contribute to delivering a New Deal for Teachers, and help make teaching the profession of first choice once again.

That National Commission should be tasked with looking at examining the pay landscape for teachers and other post-graduate occupations, and publishing recommendations. It should be charged with reporting to the Government, unions and employers, as well as brokering agreement on a programme to:

- end the years of pay stagnation;
- secure the long-term recovery and competitiveness of teachers' pay;
- restore the independence of the pay review machinery; and
- secure a new national framework of pay and conditions across all state-funded schools.

The work of the National Commission will need to be funded in full, and the Government should commit from the outset to acting on the Commission's findings and recommendations.

The National Commission on Teachers' Pay should be tasked with concluding its deliberations within a period of 12 months. During the Commission's deliberations, the pay award for teachers would remain subject to the outcomes of the STRB process.

Delivering the Promise

Establishing such a Commission would signal a genuine commitment from the Government to raising the status of the teaching profession, restoring competitiveness and halting the real terms decline in teachers' pay.

We want parties ahead of the General Election to commit to working with the profession to agree the terms and establish a National Commission on Teachers' Pay within the first 100 days of a new Government.

The National Commission on Teachers' Pay would help the next Government secure an ambitious and sustainable programme that could command the support of the teaching profession.

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