



JOINT STATEMENT TO THE SCHOOL TEACHERS' REVIEW BODY

The STRB has received submissions and evidence from each of our organisations on the various matters within its remit from the Secretary of State.

This joint statement is being submitted to the STRB in order to emphasise the consensus which exists within the teaching profession on many of these matters; and to set out, briefly and clearly, the jointly held views of our organisations on those matters, which we urge the STRB to accept and reflect in its recommendations.

Teacher supply is facing a crisis

Each of our organisations has expressed great concern about growing problems in teacher supply, with regard to recruitment (whether to teacher training or to vacant teaching posts) and retention alike. As pay and prospects improve in comparable occupations elsewhere in the economy, further pressure will be placed on recruitment and retention. We also remain concerned about workload at all stages of the profession, in terms of its impact on motivation and morale as well as recruitment and retention.

We urge the STRB to accept that we are facing a national crisis, not “a challenge”, in teacher supply. We are concerned that the DfE evidence continues to underplay the scale of the crisis. The STRB's recommendations will be hugely important in determining whether or not the crisis can begin to be addressed.

Our schools need a funding increase

Each of our organisations has commented on this area in our main or supplementary submissions to the STRB. All of us are concerned that the school funding settlements proposed by Government for the remainder of this Parliament will place insurmountable pressure on schools in terms of their ability to maintain current spending, let alone afford matters such as pay increases or other forecast increases in costs. We all believe that there needs to be an overall funding increase for schools, not just smaller real terms cuts for some schools and larger real terms cuts for others via the redistribution mechanism of a national funding formula.

We believe that any pay increase must also be fully funded by Government. Otherwise, the risk is that STRB recommendations will not translate fully into pay increases for individual teachers. We do not, however, wish to see the STRB restrict its recommendations on the basis of our concerns or its own concerns about affordability. We ask the STRB to make the recommendations which it believes necessary; and to accompany those recommendations with a further recommendation that the Government should ensure that resulting pay increases are fully funded both in England and Wales (so that the extra funding required is passed on to fund the increase in Wales).

Teachers need a pay rise

All of our organisations are opposed to the Government's wish to extend the 1% limit on teachers' pay increases for a further four years. We urge the STRB not to regard itself as constrained by this limit when making its recommendations.

We all believe that the public sector pay policy of the past five years has depressed teachers' real earnings to the extent that recruitment and retention are being seriously harmed and teachers are not being rewarded fairly for the jobs that they do.

While our separate submissions set out differing proposals for the immediate steps to be taken by the STRB, we are all agreed that a significant pay increase is needed for teachers at all stages of their careers - whether newly entering the profession or in the early, middle or later years of service, and whether serving as classroom teachers without responsibilities or as middle or senior leaders.

Distribution of any 1 per cent increase

All of our organisations are, therefore, opposed to recommendations which would lead only to a 1 per cent average increase for teachers. Should the STRB choose to comply with this limit in making its recommendations, however, we all believe (as we have said in our separate submissions) that such an increase should be applied uniformly, without differential increases for particular teachers or at particular parts of the pay structure.

We also all believe that this increase should be applied to all salaries and allowances in payment. We say this because we all believe that a distinction should be maintained between the annual revalorisation of pay scales for cost of living purposes (and revalorisation of individual salaries in payment, which we believe should happen in all cases at the same time as revalorisation of pay scales) and pay progression on the basis of performance. While some of our organisations have differing positions on the principle of performance related pay progression, we all agree that the concept of the cost of living increase in pay should be maintained and should be wholly distinct from pay progression whether based on performance, experience or other criteria.

We also therefore urge the STRB to avoid recommendations such as those made last year relating to the maximum of the Main Range and the maxima of head teacher groups, which have created considerable confusion and have sought to deny schools' right to determine and maintain their own pay structures within the statutory constraints and permit progression to all teachers meeting the criteria set for progression.

STPCD pay provisions and monitoring of pay decisions

Our separate submissions have set out a range of comments on the impact of the STRB's recommendations in its recent reports, as translated into law and practice by the Government. We wish to set out here our views on two specific points on which we are all agreed. We urge the STRB to reflect these points in its recommendations.

Firstly, very few schools in England, whether local authority maintained or academies, have moved away from the previous structure of a 6 point Main Pay Scale and 3 point Upper Pay Scale, while in Wales local authorities and schools have agreed a consistent approach to teachers' pay which mirrors the previous structure. In response to our members' wishes, all of our organisations have published advice on recommended pay scales for 2015-16 uplifted in accordance with the uplifts in pay ranges. We are all agreed that the STPCD itself should, as a minimum, continue to contain such advice setting out a single set of advisory pay points (although some of us wish to go further and see mandatory pay scales restored to the STPCD).

Secondly, in order to promote clarity, transparency and equality, we wish to see the DfE take urgent action to gather information on the pay decisions taken by governing bodies in England and Wales and discuss that information with us at a national level, in addition to the monitoring to which we are all committed at individual school level.

Stepping down from the Upper Pay Range to the Main Pay Range

None of our unions endorse this proposal, for reasons set out in detail in our various separate submissions. The DfE's case for this is that this is a "consistent message that we receive from schools, Local Authorities and head teacher unions" yet no unions representing head teachers, nor NEOST in its submission, were supportive of this proposal. We therefore urge the STRB not to proceed with any such proposal.

Non-consolidated payments

Most of our unions have rejected this proposal outright in our separate submissions; and all of us are opposed to the introduction of provision for non-consolidated payments which could be made in place of consolidated payments payable under the existing structure. We therefore urge the STRB to take note of that in its review of the area.

EWC fee in Wales

Registration with the EWC is a compulsory condition of employment in maintained schools in Wales. It is our joint position that the fee should be paid in full by the employer and the increase fully funded by Government.

Association of School and College Leaders
 Association of Teachers and Lecturers
 National Association of Head Teachers
 National Union of Teachers
 Undeb Cenedlaethol Athrawon Cymru
 Voice

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