



Education &
Early Years

EVIDENCE TO THE SCHOOL TEACHERS' REVIEW BODY

December 2024

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Remit Letter



The Rt Hon Bridget Phillipson MP
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30 September 2024

Dr Mike Aldred
Chair, The School Teachers' Review Body

Dear Mike,

I want to start by thanking the School Teachers' Review Body (STRB) for your vital contribution to the sector, and for your hard work over the past year.

I am pleased that this government was able to accept the STRB's recommendations for the 2024/25 pay round in full, despite the affordability challenges we inherited. We know high quality teaching is the factor that makes the biggest difference to a child's education, giving them the knowledge and skills to stay in the profession and thrive. This award is a key step towards our pledge to deliver an additional 6,500 teachers, and in the longer term, our mission to raise standards and break down the barriers to opportunity for every child at every stage. I also want to thank you for your views on targeted remuneration in your last report, and I acknowledge further consideration and detailed sector engagement is required by my department before any further decisions on that are made.

I write to you now to formally commence the 2025/26 pay round and ask for your recommendations on the pay and conditions for school teachers and leaders for academic year 2025/26. During this pay round, you will receive evidence from my department, HM Treasury and key stakeholders. My department's evidence will, as usual, cover the recruitment and retention context for school teachers and leaders alongside pay and earnings data, and the expected position following the implementation of the 2024/25 pay award. It will also set out the core funding available to schools for financial year 2025-26, which will be finalised through the Spending Review and announced at the Autumn Budget on 30 October.

That comes against the backdrop of the challenging financial position this government has inherited, including a £22 billion pressure against the spending plans set out for departments at a national level, something echoed by our drive to deliver a mission-led approach to ensuring our vital public services are equipped to deliver the high quality on which we rely, whilst providing value for money for taxpayers.

More broadly, I note your observation on the need for more frequent and detailed equality, diversity and inclusion data at a national level, something echoed by our consultees in discussion with my officials. I will therefore commit to publication of pay and progression data by protected characteristics, in parallel with the Department's written evidence, which can support your recommendations this year, and be viewed by the sector.

We know that public sector workers deserve timely pay awards, so, as the Chancellor said in her July Statement, the government's intention is to announce the upcoming pay awards as close to the start of the financial year of 1 April as possible. It is unfortunate that, given the knock-on effects from the previous government's delays to the previous round, it is unlikely that the pay award will be announced before maintained schools should be setting their budgets, but by bringing the pay round forwards this year, we can more fully reset the timeline in 2026/27.

To this end, I would be grateful if you can deliver recommendations to the government on the 2025/26 pay award for school teachers and leaders at the earliest point that allows you to give due consideration to the relevant evidence. To support with this, the government will publish its written evidence as soon as possible after the Spending Review is finalised and financial year 2025-26 budgets are set on 30 October, including budgets relating to pay. I recognise that changing the timeline from recent years will present challenges for the STRB, but I am sure you also share the government's belief in the importance of returning to more timely annual pay processes, so I hope you will understand the necessity of doing so.

Thank you again for the vital work you do. I look forward to engaging with the process over the coming year.

Yours sincerely,

Bridget Phillipson

The Rt Hon Bridget Phillipson MP
Secretary of State for Education

I know this data will be valuable, but I also recognise the calls to go further. I am interested in your views on how the current framework can best support teachers from all backgrounds and with protected characteristics, including by promoting flexible working. I am aware the pro rating of teaching and learning responsibility (TLR) payments are a concern for many in the sector, so I am specifically asking for your recommendation on whether changes should be made to enable greater flexibility.

Alongside the pay round and formal funding processes, we will not hesitate to make further progress on wider issues that affect the teaching profession in order that we raise its status and improve recruitment and retention. We will work with stakeholders through existing and new channels to ensure constant momentum. My department is also exploring new ways of partnership working with unions and employers, and workforce recruitment and retention is expected to play an important role in future discussions. While we are clear this will not change or impact the STRB's role in setting pay recommendations, these discussions may cover elements in the STRB's scope and inform future remits.

Matters for recommendation

I refer to the STRB the following matters for recommendation:

- An assessment of the adjustments that should be made to the salary and allowance ranges for classroom teachers, unqualified teachers, and school leaders in 2025/26 academic year.
- An assessment of any changes to flexibilities around TLR payments, concerning the existing pro-rata rule.

Considerations to which the STRB should have regard

In considering your recommendations on pay and views on wider structural matters you should have regard to the following:

- a) Potential equalities impacts associated with any changes proposed to the STPCD.
- b) The cost pressures that schools are already facing and may face over the year (and how they affect individual schools).
- c) The need to ensure that any proposals are not too difficult or onerous for schools to implement.
- d) Evidence of the national state of school teacher and leader supply, including rates of recruitment and retention, vacancy rates, and the quality of candidates entering the profession.
- e) Evidence of the wider state of the labour market, including the impact of recommendations on the further education teaching workforce in England.
- f) Forecast changes in the size and shape of the pupil population and consequent changes in the level of demand for teachers.
- g) The flexibilities that exist in the current framework, which allow school leaders and governors to develop pay arrangements suited to the individual circumstances and to determine teachers' pay within the statutory minima and maxima.

Introduction

- i. Community is once again pleased to present our evidence to The Review Body.
- ii. General Secretary Roy Rickhuss CBE said:
"After fourteen years of underfunding and neglect, the education sector needs a re-set. Our members on the frontline in schools feel over-pressured and undervalued, and the recruitment and retention of teachers and support staff has become a mounting challenge."
- iii. *"Our submission to the pay body mirrors the strength of feeling amongst our members in the education workforce of the need to make the sector an attractive place to work once again. This should be reflected not just in a substantive pay uplift, but with improved conditions and action to tackle unsustainable workloads."*
- iv. *"We welcome the Labour government's commitment to a refresh of the relationship between the Department for Education and education unions, and we have already seen significant benefits from this cooperative approach; marking a sea-change from the lack of engagement we received from the previous government. We now want to continue building this partnership on behalf of our members, and this submission is an important opportunity for us to set out their pressing priorities."*
- v. And Helen Osgood, Director of Operations said:
"Community is proud to present a robust, evidence-based response to the School Teachers' Review Body (STRB). We are encouraged by the new government's constructive and meaningful engagement with us to address the challenges faced by our members. Retention remains a critical issue in the education sector, and restoring pay through the STRB is essential to ensuring that educators feel valued and supported. This, in turn, empowers them to do what they do best: teach and inspire the next generation."
- vi. *"Community recognises the positive work that has already been undertaken, by removing performance related pay, and giving an above inflation pay rise - this makes a massive difference, however there is always more that can be achieved and this document outlines some of the positive changes that Community would like to see. Student loan repayments are having a negative impact on our members' salaries, and we would like to see this change, removing interest rates and investing in educators would go some way to making teaching an attractive route for many students."*
- vii. *"Our members play a vital role in delivering structured, high-quality learning in classrooms across the country. This contribution must be fully recognised by the government, the STRB, the media, and the public, giving educators the support and standing in the community that they deserve."*
- viii. *"Inspiring and educating a generation is no small task, and our members are ready to meet this challenge head-on. However, they need the proper support and investment to succeed. We strongly urge the STRB to adopt the measures proposed in this document to ensure that the education sector retains the dedicated professionals who are so essential to its success."*

The Graduate Labour Market

1. Attracting and retaining the best and brightest teachers is a right and proper aim for a government which is determined to raise standards for all pupils in all areas and we have been encouraged by the determination to address the issues in recruitment and retention. However, it is clear from diverse evidence that this remains an issue, that the “crisis” remains and that real steps need to be taken, and soon, to ensure the situation does not worsen.
2. The economy has not been strong in the past few years, mostly as a result of Covid-19 impacts and the changing face of both Conservative and now Labour governments in the UK. This has led to significant pain in the jobs market. Most of the employment pain has been in sectors largely employing non-graduates, such as retail and services¹ and this meant that although the economy slowly got weaker in the last year, the jobs market, particularly for graduates, was a little stronger than the rest of the economy might suggest.²
3. According to *What do Graduates do?* the 2021/22 cohort of graduates has a lower full-time employment rate than 2019/20 graduates (59% versus 59.6%) though 80% are employed, with 72% on permanent contracts. Consequently, it has a slightly higher unemployment rate (5.6% against 5%). These figures still speak of a relatively good labour market and compares favourably with those from 2019/20.³ And the Bank of England reported that there were widespread shortages in health, education, social care, engineering, software development and finance at graduate level. This means that the labour market for graduates into 2025 is likely to be quite similar to the last couple of years.⁴
4. Indeed, employers in thirteen out of fifteen key industries and business sectors predicted they would maintain or increase the number of graduate vacancies at their organisation in 2023. Unfortunately for teachers, the two exceptions were the accounting & professional services firms and the public sector.⁵
5. Together, the country’s leading graduate employers anticipated taking on more than 3,000 additional graduates beyond their original recruitment targets for 2023.⁶ This is a rise of more than 6% year-on-year meaning that there are fewer graduates available to go into teaching. However, due to the fear of recession, graduate recruitment was actually 6.4% lower in 2023 than it had been the previous year, rather than the 6.3% increase predicted in January 2023.⁷
6. And even though this figure, set in September 2023, has been revised down to a 1.5% increase, the speed at which the market changes means that many will have discounted a career in education in favour of better paid employment in another sector.

¹ “What Do Graduates Do?” (2024/25), Jisc/Prospects/AGCAS, Page 11.

<https://luminare.prospects.ac.uk/what-do-graduates-do>

² “What Do Graduates Do?” (2024/25) Page 11.

³ “What Do Graduates Do?” (2024/25) Page 8.

⁴ “What Do Graduates Do?” (2024/25) Page 11.

⁵ High Fliers Research Centre, “The Graduate Labour Market in 2024” (2024) Page 10.

<https://www.highfliers.co.uk/>

⁶ High Fliers 2024, Page 10.

⁷ High Fliers 2024, Page 11.

7. According to *What do Graduates do?*, 7.2% graduates are employed as education professionals 15 months after graduation with primary and secondary teaching professionals occupying positions four and five, in the list of top ten professional jobs held by first degree graduates.⁸ And, whilst teaching in secondary education comes third in the list of top ten professional jobs held by first-degree graduates, for subjects such as Computer Science, which have long standing recruitment shortages, teaching does not feature in the list at all.⁹ And only around 9% to 15% of biology, chemistry, physics, and physical and geographical sciences graduates entered the education/teaching sector.¹⁰
8. Pay is a significant issue for graduates who are leaving university with some of the highest debt ever seen in the UK. Current estimates indicate that students leave university with £45,000 of debt¹¹ to be repaid over an average of 40 years. When coupled with a standard 7.1% interest rate, and the requirement to repay undergraduate and postgraduate loans at the same time on earnings above the threshold, students can find themselves being deducted around 41% of salary, when including Tax, NI and Student Loan Repayments.
9. The median graduate starting salary on offer from the UK's leading employers has risen, to £34,000 for graduates starting work in 2024. This is an increase of £500 compared to the median salary paid to new graduates in 2023 and means that graduate pay has risen by 13.3% since 2021.¹² And whilst the starting salary for teachers has risen considerably since 2021 to its current rate of £31,650, this remains some £2,500 shy of comparable graduate roles especially when considering that more than a quarter of graduate jobs at the country's leading employers now have initial salaries of £40,000 or more¹³
10. It is interesting to note that if the median graduate starting salary of £29,500 paid by the country's top employers a decade ago had kept pace with inflation over the past ten years, it would now be worth approximately £38,800 – almost £5,000 more than this year's median pay for new graduates¹⁴ and some £7,000 more than the starting salary of M1.
11. But it is not just pay, according to *What do students want?* **“Money isn’t everything”**. While presenting clear salary information is important, employers should not just focus on money when they are trying to attract students. Young jobseekers care about money, but they also want to hear about the wider opportunities that organisations will provide them with, the likely work-life balance, and the ethical and environmental positioning of organisations.¹⁵ And flexibilities, such as hybrid working, compressed hours and mentoring support, are all things which new graduates are looking for in their first employment.

⁸ “*What Do Graduates Do?*” (2024/25) Pp 6-7.

⁹ “*What Do Graduates Do?*” (2024/25) Pp 51-53.

¹⁰ “*What Do Graduates Do?*” (2024/25), Page 77.

¹¹ Community Trade Union, “*The Hidden Costs of Student Loans*” (2024)

<https://community-tu.org/who-we-are/our-sectors/education-and-early-years/early-career-teachers-ect/university-student-loans-campaign/>

¹² High Fliers 2024, Page 16.

¹³ High Fliers 2024, Page 16.

¹⁴ High Fliers 2024, Page 16.

¹⁵ Institute of Student Employers. & Debut, “*What do students want? Listening to the voices of young jobseekers.*” (2020). Page 20.

https://ise.org.uk/global_engine/download.aspx?fileid=0784B0F6-9ACF-48AA-8793-08E17AF84870

12. And it's not just the employees, only 5% of employers expected their graduate hires to be fully office based and nearly a quarter expect them to work from home for at least three days per week.¹⁶ It is clear things need to change in order to make teaching more attractive to graduates and "the shift to hybrid work remains pivotal."¹⁷ The work of trusts, such as Dixons, in exploring what this might mean in schools will be closely watched by the whole sector to understand the appeal, take up and possible impact across the sector. Yes, it might make timetabling more complicated, but without sufficient high-quality teachers, that would already be impossible.

¹⁶ "*What Do Graduates Do?*" (2023/24) Page 16

¹⁷ "*What Do Graduates Do?*" (2023/24) Page 13

The Teaching Workforce

13. As of June 2024 the reported number of teachers (FTE) in state-funded schools in England is 468,693 of which 97% held qualified teacher status; this is a 0.1% increase from the previous year and an increase of 6% since 2010/11.¹⁸ However, in that time the pupil population has increased by 1 million additional pupils to 10.7 million, with the sharpest rises being felt in secondary schools since 2019.¹⁹ This means that teachers are having to teach more pupils in their classes which increases workload and can lead to behaviour problems and stress.
14. 44,002 (FTE) teachers joined state-funded school sector in the last academic year, this is 3,900 fewer than the previous year with neither year meeting the recruitment targets set. Indeed recruitment targets have been missed for almost every year of the past decade. Last year, *Schools Week* reported a “Record rate of teacher departures as 40,000 quit sector last year” with 7,800 more teachers leaving the profession for reasons other than retirement.²⁰ This year data shows that 43,522 (FTE) teachers left state-funded sector, even more than in 2022/23, meaning that yet again, leavers almost completely cancelled out the impact of any recruitment.²¹
15. As mentioned, the number of new entrants to teaching is largely cancelled out by the number of leavers. This is particularly high amongst Early Career Teachers and those with five years’ service or less, with 11.3% of teachers leaving after just one year in the role, 25.9% leaving after three years, and nearly a third leaving within five years of graduating. The *Daily Mirror* calls this “Their Greatest Crisis” reporting that 26,443 teachers who qualified in the last five years have already left the job due to “high workload, persistently under-inflation pay, and the excessive accountability that clogs up teachers’ daily lives”.²²
16. The latest findings from wave three of *The Working Lives of Teachers and Leaders* shows that 34% of teachers and leaders were considering leaving the sector in the next 12 months for reasons other than retirement which is consistent with 2023 and remains much higher than the 25% seen in 2022.²³
17. Unsurprisingly, high workload and stress and/or poor wellbeing were the two most commonly cited reasons for people leaving (both reported by 90%). And whilst this is a minor decrease in the proportion citing high workload (from 94% in 2023 and 92% in 2022), there is a notable increase in the proportion citing stress and/or poor wellbeing (from 84% in 2023).²⁴ And, of those who indicated in 2023 that they were considering leaving the sector, 15% did so, an increase from 12% in the previous two studies.²⁵

¹⁸ DfE: Schools, pupils and their characteristics (2024)

<https://explore-education-statistics.service.gov.uk/find-statistics/school-pupils-and-their-characteristics>

¹⁹ Statista: Number of pupils attending school in the UK

<https://www.statista.com/statistics/412219/school-students-in-the-uk/#:~:text=There%20were%20over%2010.7%20million,9.65%20million%20in%202010%2F11.>

²⁰ Amy Walker in *Schools Week*, “Record rate of teacher departures” (2023)

<https://schoolsweek.co.uk/record-rate-of-teacher-departures-as-40000-leave-sector-last-year/>

²¹ <https://explore-education-statistics.service.gov.uk/find-statistics/school-pupils-and-their-characteristics>

²² Lucy Thornton & Matt Davies in *The Daily Mirror*, “One in three teachers quit after just five years as schools face ‘greatest crisis’” (2023)

<https://www.mirror.co.uk/news/uk-news/one-three-teachers-quit-after-28867577>

²³ Working lives of teachers and leaders: Wave 3 Summary report November 2024 (2024) Page 20.

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/working-lives-of-teachers-and-leaders-wave-3>

²⁴ Working lives of teachers and leaders: Wave 3 (2024) Page 20.

²⁵ Working lives of teachers and leaders: Wave 3 (2024) Page 22.

18. The single biggest group leaving teaching is women in their 30s.²⁶ Numerically, women aged 30-39 have been the biggest group of teachers leaving the profession each year since 2017 and although many report that they did not want to leave, they felt they had no choice due to workload, striking a balance between teaching and family, and inadequate maternity provision. Some academy trusts²⁷ are exploring how they can make teaching more appealing to mothers and parents, and Community recommend that The Review Body investigate these experiments to see what recommendations can be implemented nationally.
19. Therefore, despite The Department putting a brave face on it, there can be no doubt that the current recruitment and retention strategy has failed. The fact that the number of full-time teachers has increased is no reason to celebrate if that increase is insufficient to fill the vacancies. And when data shows that there are now 1,018,390 pupils taught in classes with more than 30 pupils²⁸ (one in seven at secondary level and one in eight in primary schools) – large classes to use The Department's own definition, it is clear there is a problem at classroom level. In GCSE classes, around 13% of teaching hours in EBacc subjects are delivered by non-specialists, rising to 17% in Chemistry, 28% in Physics and an astonishing 46% in Computing.

²⁶ "Missing Mothers" *The New Britain Project* (2024) Page 6.

²⁷ <https://www.newbritain.org.uk/missing-mothers>

²⁸ Dixons Academies Trust has said it wants to offer a nine-day fortnight for teachers in its 17 schools across the north of England.

²⁸ Pete Henshaw in *SecEd*, "Backlash over DfE spin as record 40,000 teachers quit the chalkface" (2023)

<https://www.sec-ed.co.uk/content/news/backlash-over-dfe-spin-as-record-40-000-teachers-quit-the-chalkface/>

Matters for Recommendation

Demand for Teachers

20. One of the key aims for The Department is attracting and retaining the best and brightest teachers in order to improve life chances and raise standards for all pupils in all areas. As stated by the Labour Party in their Opportunity Mission:
- Labour will transform our education system so that young people get the opportunities they deserve. We will expand our childcare and early-years system, drive up standards, modernise the school curriculum, reform assessment, and create higher-quality training and employment paths by empowering local communities to develop the skills people need.*²⁹
21. We currently have a system which is at breaking point and urgently needs transformation, therefore, we were emphatic in our support of the proposals for 6,500 new teachers.³⁰ However, even if these targets are met, that would only mean that roughly one in four of our 24,059 schools would benefit from a single new staff member.³¹ This additional 6,500 teachers must be seen as part of a greater drive to recruit more teachers because on its own 6,500 is just not enough when over 40,000 teachers leave the profession each year for reasons other than retirement. We need 6,500 new teachers *and* we need increased recruitment of teachers and support staff too because a key part of the problem is that ongoing issues go far deeper than simply adding numbers to workforces.³²
22. Recent years have seen a demographic ‘bulge’ in secondary school pupil numbers. Projections suggest that secondary pupil demand has now peaked at 3,230,000 (a 3.3% increase on 2022) and will start to slowly decrease over the next few years. Primary pupil numbers are already declining and are projected to fall a further 5.3% between 2022 and 2025.
23. The overall picture suggests a 9.4% reduction in pupil numbers between 2022 and 2030. If managed sensitively, this reduction in demand could serve to alleviate some of the pressures on classroom teacher numbers seen in recent years.³³
24. These projections are useful to allow us to understand the short to medium-term impact of the changing pupil population but to measure the demand for teachers we need to have an even longer-term view. It is vital that provision is protected and enhanced during times when pupil numbers dip, to ensure that there is ample sufficiency for when additional capacity is needed.
25. NFER agree that there needs to be a long-term strategy and have set out their proposed solutions to the teacher supply issue including through a meaningful pay uplift to attract new workers to the sector.³⁴ This is particularly pressing in the case of subjects like maths and science where the shortage of teachers is most acute.

²⁹ The Labour Party Manifesto

<https://labour.org.uk/change/break-down-barriers-to-opportunity/>

³⁰ Community Trade Union, “Community welcomes new report on addressing teacher recruitment and retention crisis” (2024)

<https://community-tu.org/community-welcomes-new-report-on-addressing-teacher-recruitment-and-retention-crisis/#7d8a4a2e>

³¹ Baljinder Kuller in *Schools Week*, “Government must square up to unscrupulous teaching agencies” (2024)

<https://schoolsweek.co.uk/government-must-square-up-to-unscrupulous-teaching-agencies/>

³² “Government must square up to unscrupulous teaching agencies” (2024)

³³ DfE, Government Evidence to the STRB (21 February 2023) paragraph 28, Page 15

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/evidence-to-the-strb-2023-pay-award-for-teachers-and-leaders>

³⁴ Jack Worth & Sarah Tang, “Next government needs long-term pay strategy that will help teacher supply challenge” (2024)

https://www.nfer.ac.uk/media/stdn1mw/next_government_needs_long_term_pay_strategy_that_will_help_teacher_supply_challenge_embargoed.pdf

26. It is our view that teacher capacity has not been considered with a sufficiently long-term view over the past decade which has led to us seeing a steady reduction in the number of teachers and inadequate levels of recruitment leading the sector to the brink.
27. According to recent TUC polling, two-fifths of education workers have already taken steps to leave their profession to get a job in another field or are actively considering it.³⁵ This is particularly acute among newly-qualified teachers; one-third of this group leave during the first five years of their career.
28. 34% of teachers and leaders indicated that they were considering leaving the sector in the next 12 months for reasons other than retirement. This is consistent with 2023 and much higher than the 25% seen in 2022.³⁶

Recruitment and Retention

29. It is agreed that we need sufficient teachers and yet vacancy rates across England's schools are six times higher than in 2010. We know we need sufficient leaders and yet almost one in three (31%) school leaders appointed aged under 50 leave their post within five years of appointment, more than half (53%) of whom quit teaching in state-funded schools entirely.
30. The previous government focussed much of its efforts in improving recruitment through raising the starting salary of teachers to £30,000 but this has not addressed the supply issue, and we continue to fail to retain experience. The latest School Workforce Survey³⁷ shows that the number of those entering initial teacher training in 2023-24 was down by 24% compared with the pre-pandemic period. Recruitment for English secondary teacher trainees missed by over a quarter (26%), with just 2,254 recruited of the 3,035 it aimed to attract into the profession.³⁸ Primary recruitment was the lowest since 2010, with the target missed for the ninth year in the last fourteen and secondary recruitment targets were missed by 50%, with targets missed across the secondary curriculum.
31. Compounding this, as The Department outlined in previous reports to the Review Body, the graduate age population, from which a significant proportion of new teachers are recruited, is forecast to shrink over coming years making recruitment even more challenging.
32. As the EEF notes: The best available evidence indicates that great teaching is the most important lever schools have to improve pupil attainment,³⁹ so what can be done to recruit and retain the brightest and best?
33. There are many things that affect the attractiveness of teaching as a career – some of these are huge, major obstacles that The Department will need to grapple with over the term of this parliament. But there are other things, well-within the scope of The Review Body, and even within our schools that can make a small, but cumulative difference.

³⁵ "Tories have missed their own teacher recruitment targets for NINE out of TEN years" (2024)

<https://www.thecanary.co.uk/analysis/2024/04/20/teacher-recruitment-crisis/>

³⁶ Working lives of teachers and leaders: Wave 3 (2024) Page 20.

³⁷ DfE: The School Workforce in England

[School workforce in England. Reporting year 2023 - Explore education statistics - GOV.UK](https://www.gov.uk/government/statistics/school-workforce-in-england-reporting-year-2023-exploring-education-statistics)

³⁸ Cerys Turner in TES "English teacher trainee bursaries halved" (2024)

<https://www.tes.com/magazine/news/general/english-teacher-trainee-bursaries-halved>

³⁹ Harry Quilter-Pinner et al., "Out of Kilter – How to rebalance our school system to work for people, economy and society" (September 2023). Institute for Public Policy Research, Page 29.

<https://www.ippr.org/research/publications/out-of-kilter>

34. Because everybody went to school, everybody thinks they know what it is that teachers do. Everybody knows that teachers only work 9 to 3.30 and everybody knows they have really long holidays.⁴⁰ Despite the fact that none of that is true, they are commonly held views that are repeated and promulgated through the media and by some politicians. This, and other political provocation, often after exam results or in relation to “Raising standards” is thrown around by just about every education minister, but it’s laden with assumption that standards aren’t what they ought to be which evidence shows is just not the case.⁴¹
35. We need a reset. We need teachers and support staff to be treated as the education professionals they are. Taking care with the language used to describe education is a must – otherwise, damaging and misleading tropes take hold.⁴² That does not mean that schools cannot and should not be held to account for their actions or inactions. But constantly being critical of educators and harking back to an imagined time when ‘Britain’s education system was the envy of the world’ will not support a new generation of Early Career Teachers.

Continuing Professional Development

36. We have mentioned in previous responses the need for a personal entitlement to continuing professional development. Comparing the situation in England with other high-performing nations demonstrates the thinness of The Department’s commitment to its teacher development. “In Singapore, teachers have a right to 100 hours a year of professional development (Parliament 2014), yet England is failing to even meet the 35 hours a year commitment that has been recommended by multiple institutions. This must change if we want a genuinely world-class schooling system.”⁴³
37. According to *TES*, schools spend around £3,000 per teacher per year on CPD, but too much CPD is poor quality, poorly delivered and not suitable for all staff.⁴⁴ Feedback from the *Working Lives of Teachers and Leaders* report agrees, with 16% stating that the CPD they had undertaken had little or no impact.⁴⁵
38. Community feel that it is within the remit of The Review body to mandate professional development through teachers’ pay and conditions. This could be achieved through a system that provides individualised and meaningful development opportunities, as well as the necessary institutional training, such as safeguarding.
39. According to EPI,⁴⁶ a formal entitlement for teachers in England to 35 hours of high quality CPD a year would boost pupil attainment by an extra two-thirds of a GCSE grade – which in turn translates to extra lifetime earnings of over £6,000 per pupil.
40. Furthermore, a policy of CPD entitlement could also significantly improve retention, leading to up to an estimated 12,000 extra teachers remaining in the profession a year.

⁴⁰ The Guardian *Secret Teacher* (2013)

<https://www.theguardian.com/teacher-network/teacher-blog/2013/jul/27/teachers-deserve-long-summer-holidays>

⁴¹ Gareth Evans in *TES* “Why we should change pessimistic narratives around teaching” (2024)

<https://www.tes.com/magazine/analysis/general/why-we-should-change-pessimistic-narratives-teaching>

⁴² “Why we should change pessimistic narratives around teaching” (2024)

⁴³ “Out of Kilter – How to rebalance our school system to work for people, economy and society”, Page 30.

⁴⁴ Matilda Martin in *TES*, “Just 4 in 10 teachers found their last Inset day useful” (2024)

<https://www.tes.com/magazine/news/general/just-4-10-teachers-found-last-inset-day-useful-cpd>

⁴⁵ Working Lives of Teachers and Leaders – Wave 1 Core Report (2023) Page 22.

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/working-lives-of-teachers-and-leaders-wave-1>

⁴⁶ Jens Van Den Brande, “The effects of high-quality professional development on teachers and students: A cost-benefit analysis”

<https://epi.org.uk/publications-and-research/the-effects-of-high-quality-professional-development-on-teachers-and-students/>

Funding

41. Schools are places of education, but they are also places of trust, places of help and support where food is provided, where laundry can be cleaned, and where people feel safe. The level of need in our communities and from the pupil population has skyrocketed with a total of 1,673,205 children (18.4%) in England having some kind of special educational need, an increase of over 100,000 from 2023. There has also been a significant increase (7.1%) in the number of children on SEN Support who have no noted type of assessed need⁴⁷ costing schools money for which they receive no additional income support.
42. “Although shocking, this is unsurprising to those working in schools. We remain on the front lines, always accessible to parents and carers who struggle the most to educate and support their children. Q3 Academy Tipton in the Black Country is no different to the many schools providing free and subsidised uniform, lunches for those not quite meeting the threshold for free school meals, school equipment, bus fares, and now Christmas food hampers and presents for children likely to go without.”⁴⁸
43. Put simply, the level of funding going into schools is inadequate for the mission with which they have been charged let alone the expanded mission with which they find themselves.
44. According to the Institute for Fiscal Studies, “in 2022–23, total public spending on education in the UK stood at £116 billion (including the cost of issuing student loans and in 2023–24 prices). In real terms, this represents an 8% or £10 billion fall since 2010–11. Education spending has also fallen as a share of national income, from about 5.6% of national income in 2010–11 down to about 4.4% in 2022–23.”⁴⁹
45. And although “per-pupil funding provided to schools rose by around 4% in real terms between 2009–10 and 2019–20. In contrast, local authority spending on services fell by 57% over the same period.”⁵⁰
46. The vital services that all schools rely on – safeguarding, specialist pupil support and alternative provision, are becoming more and more impossible to access due to “cuts to local authority services, many of which schools will have had to fund from their existing budgets,”⁵¹
47. “As a result, over the decade between 2009–10 and 2019–20 ... [there was an] effective real-terms freeze on spending per pupil,”⁵² leaving schools in the worst financial state since 2010.
48. The IFS go on to estimate that in 2024–25 “schools’ costs will grow by 4%, which is just about matched by 4% growth in total funding. After accounting for growth in schools’ costs, we estimate that the purchasing power of school budgets in 2024 will still be about 4% lower than in 2010.”⁵³

⁴⁷ New data shows increase in SEND to 18.4% (2024)

<https://nasen.org.uk/news/sen-data-january-2024>

⁴⁸ Keziah Featherstone, “2023 in review: How much more of a kicking can we take?” (2023), Schools Week

<https://schoolsweek.co.uk/2023-in-review-how-much-more-of-a-kicking-can-we-take/>

⁴⁹ 2023 in review: How much more of a kicking can we take?” (2023)

⁵⁰ Elaine Drayton et al., “Annual Report on Education Spending in England: 2023” (December 2023) Institute for Fiscal Studies, Page 43.

<https://ifs.org.uk/publications/annual-report-education-spending-england-2023>

⁵¹ Annual Report on Education Spending in England: 2023. Page 43.

⁵² Annual Report on Education Spending in England: 2023. Page 47.

⁵³ Annual Report on Education Spending in England: 2023. Page 47.

49. Without adequate funding for these and other wider services, the workload burden cannot begin to be addressed so it is vital that whatever recommendation is made by The Review Body, that the government commit to fully funding it, and improving the level of funding going into schools to enable them to meet the needs of the pupils.

Workload and Wellbeing

50. As stated earlier, schools should be places of education and learning, but they are also places of trust, places of help and support where food is provided, laundry cleaned, and where people feel safe. The withdrawal of vital social support services and provision has pushed additional duties onto schools, teachers and support staff, increasing their workload and having a damaging impact on their wellbeing.
51. The latest data from *The Working Lives of Teachers and Leaders* report revealed that 89% of teachers and leaders reported experiencing stress in their work, with just 4% disagreeing. 70% report not having enough time for a family life and 62% note that their work life has a negative impact on their mental health.⁵⁴
52. The Department commissioned survey, which included over 10,000 respondents, also highlighted significant dissatisfaction with workload. Only 46% reported being satisfied "most of the time," a decline from 58% the previous year, while 36% expressed intentions to leave the profession within the next year, up from 25% in 2022. The most prevalent reason for departure was high workload, with 94% citing it as a critical factor.
53. We have reported previously on the excessive hours culture prevalent in our schools with leaders' average reported working hours being 56.6 per week in 2024. Although this is a minor decrease from 57.4 per week in 2023, and consistent with 56.8 in 2022 this is not something that should be heralded.
54. Teachers continued to report working fewer hours on average than leaders, and also reported slightly lower working hours than in 2022 or 2023 (48.7 in 2022, 49.4 in 2023, 48.1 in 2024). Average hours worked per week were also slightly lower for full-time teachers in 2024 (51.9 in 2022, 52.4 in 2023, 51.2 in 2024).⁵⁵
55. Primary teachers worked longer hours in 2023, up 0.7 but this had reduced to a still excessive 52.5 hours per week in 2024. Of those working hours, around 45% (23.3 hours) were spent on teaching with Primary teachers having a slightly higher teaching load to those in secondary schools. Secondary teachers similarly are recorded as working fewer hours than in the previous two years of the study, however at 50.3 hours per week, this too remains dangerously high.⁵⁶

⁵⁴ Working lives of teachers and leaders: Wave 3 (2024) Page 18.

⁵⁵ Working lives of teachers and leaders: Wave 3 (2024) Page 6.

⁵⁶ Working lives of teachers and leaders: Wave 3 (2024) Page 7.

56. As we have reported previously, The World Health Organization reported⁵⁷ that long working hours are a significant contributor to deaths from heart disease and stroke. Between 2000 and 2016, the number of deaths from heart disease due to working long hours increased by 42%, and from stroke by 19%. And yet, the number of people working long hours continues to increase.⁵⁸ “Working 55 hours or more per week is a serious health hazard... [and] long working hours can lead to premature death.”⁵⁹
57. Further backing these findings, this year’s report on the teacher labour market in England by the NFER⁶⁰ highlights the challenges faced by the government in recruiting and retaining teachers. The report concludes that more needs to be done to reduce working hours and workload if retention levels are to improve during a resurgent labour market.
58. Working hours are not the only cause of poor wellbeing. Teachers and school leaders continue to cite Ofsted as a cause of considerable stress contributing to many of them deciding to leave the profession at a time when teacher retention is at an all-time low.⁶¹
59. Indeed 34% of teachers and leaders indicated that they were considering leaving the sector in the next 12 months for reasons other than retirement, with high workload and stress and/or poor wellbeing being the two most commonly cited reasons (both reported by 90%). This is consistent with 2023 and much higher than the 25% seen in 2022.⁶²
60. Mental Health UK found that in the past year, one in nine UK adults had experienced high levels of stress that contributed to them also taking time off work during that period.⁶³
61. This high-pressure toll has led to just less than half of teachers and leaders feeling satisfied with their job. With the proportion who enjoyed teaching most or all of the time decreasing from 84% in 2022 to 78% in just two years.⁶⁴
62. The staff wellbeing score of 43.65 is well below the national averages for England (51.40), Scotland (48.60) and Wales (48.20) and is the lowest recorded within the past five years⁶⁵. According to Taggart et al⁶⁶, scores between 41 and 45 should be considered at high risk of psychological distress and increased risk of depression and those individuals scoring below 40 should seek help.

⁵⁷ World Health Organization / International Labour Organization, “Long working hours increasing deaths from heart disease and stroke” (2021)

<https://www.who.int/news/item/17-05-2021-long-working-hours-increasing-deaths-from-heart-disease-and-stroke-who-ilo>

⁵⁸ Frank Pega et al, “Global, regional, and national burdens of ischemic heart disease and stroke attributable to exposure to long working hours for 194 countries, 2000–2016: A systematic analysis from the WHO/ILO”

<https://www.sciencedirect.com/science/article/pii/S0160412021002208>

⁵⁹ WHO / ILO “Long working hours increasing deaths from heart disease and stroke” (2021)

⁶⁰ Dawson McLean et al. “Teacher Labour Market in England Annual Report 2024” (2024)

<https://www.nfer.ac.uk/publications/teacher-labour-market-in-england-annual-report-2024/>

⁶¹ “Out of Kilter – How to rebalance our school system to work for people, economy and society”, Page 28.

⁶² Working lives of teachers and leaders: Wave 3 (2024) Page 20.

⁶³ Philip Inman in *The Guardian* “UK unemployment falls as wages growth hits lowest in two years” (2024)

<https://www.theguardian.com/business/article/2024/aug/13/uk-unemployment-falls-wages-growth-inflation>

⁶⁴ Working lives of teachers and leaders: Wave 3 (2024) Page 15.

⁶⁵ “Teacher Wellbeing Index” (2023) Education Support, 2. Mental health of education staff, Page 8.

https://www.educationsupport.org.uk/media/0h4jd5pt/twix_2023.pdf

⁶⁶ “Warwick–Edinburgh Mental Wellbeing Scale (WEMWBS)” (2006) NHS Health Scotland, University of Warwick and University of Edinburgh

<https://warwick.ac.uk/fac/sci/med/research/platform/wemwbs/using/howto/>

63. According to Dr Robin Bevan one of the most important ways to relieve workload stress is to avoid unplanned additional tasks. Given that teachers are required to follow a timetabled week and to deliver lessons based on a prerequisite curriculum the amount of unplanned additional tasks should be minimal, but the reality is that too many things are demanded at the last minute preventing even the best organised individual from effectively discharging their duties.
64. We need to ensure that every teacher is guaranteed PPA time and additional time for leadership duties as it is in most schools.⁶⁷ And strategies to programme meetings and other directed-time activities considering both the spread throughout the year and also the volume and impact of that work, should be a requirement rather than simply good practice. This would support part-time workers and be more family friendly.

Planning Preparation and Assessment Time

65. Time is what is needed to support teachers to remain in the profession. Time for planning, preparing, and assessing learning, or whatever other tasks the teacher may prioritise. And yet England's teachers are recorded as working between 50 and 53 hours each week.⁶⁸ When multiplied by the 39 working weeks in a school year the amount of time a teacher spends working is a worryingly high 1950 hours. Given that directed time is supposedly limited to 1295 hours, this is almost 700 hours beyond, or an additional 17 hours each week.
66. When compared with other high-performing countries such as Japan (511-615 hours per year) and Finland (551-677 hours per year) or even against the OECD average (672-772 hours per year) it is clear that teachers in England spend more time working in the classroom, and even more time working outside of the classroom.⁶⁹ They spend more time planning, preparing and resourcing, and delivering lessons than in many other jurisdictions and this, when combined with high-stakes testing, an unforgiving accountability regime and performance related pay, is another driver for teachers leaving the profession.
67. And it is not only the number of hours that is the problem, but the intensity of the work. "Research from Thomas et al. (University of Birmingham, 2003) found that teachers' working weeks were much more intensive than those of other professions and that despite teachers seemingly having so many holidays, a large proportion of these are used to complete work that they didn't manage to cram into the previous term or to undertake preparation for the next term."⁷⁰
68. We have already identified that as the pupil bulge moves through the system there is an opportunity to reduce the pupil:teacher ratio and attend to the workload burden of teachers through the volume of contact time. It is clear that the benefits of reducing teacher contact time through the increase of PPA goes far beyond supporting mental wellbeing and reducing stress. Reducing contact time could also reduce the long working hours that The World Health Organization report as being "a significant contributor to deaths from heart disease and stroke."⁷¹ Evidence from the Teacher Workforce Survey in 2019 notes that teachers in the UK often work in excess of 50 hours each week.

⁶⁷ Dr Robin Bevan in TES "How to spread out your teaching workload" (2024)

<https://www.tes.com/magazine/sponsored/dfc/how-spread-out-your-teaching-workload>

⁶⁸ Prof. John Jerrim and Sam Sims, "The Teaching and Learning International Survey (TALIS) 2018" (2019) Page 75.

https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/media/5f6484c2e90e075a01d2f4ce/TALIS_2018_research.pdf

⁶⁹ OECD "teaching Hours Indicator"

<https://data.oecd.org/teachers/teaching-hours.htm>

⁷⁰ Haili Hughes, "Preserving Positivity", John Catt Educational (2020), Page 40.

⁷¹ WHO / ILO "Long working hours increasing deaths from heart disease and stroke" (2021)

69. Increasing PPA to 20% would mean teachers delivering fewer lessons each week. Teach First argues that this would give teachers more time to spend on planning and professional development, ensuring that lessons were properly outlined for their pupils. "The ECF has set the precedent that ringfenced PPA time is important for professional development. We are simply arguing that this rationale should be extended across a teacher's career, so all teachers can keep improving, as well as avoid getting burned out in the process."⁷²
70. And there is positive evidence where schools have already implemented an approach to increased PPA. Noel-Baker Academy in Derby gives staff 20% of time for PPA and has seen huge benefits, not least in the areas of recruitment and retention. Headteacher Ann Donaghy commented: "In 2018, we were able to reduce our teachers' timetables by investing in more full-time teachers rather than supply teachers." This investment meant the school attracted applicants into permanent employment, vastly reducing the reliance on supply staff. She notes: "Permanent staff [are] much cheaper and better for the children in terms of stability and quality of provision." And in turn, this leads to "improved pupil outcomes, bettering our teaching staff recruitment and retention, and giving us time to invest in really well-thought-out extracurricular provisions".⁷³
71. As we have called for in previous submissions, Community continues the clarion for an increase to the basic amount of PPA time for classroom teachers from 10% to 20%. This does not have to be a wholesale jump but could be increased incrementally over the next few years as the availability of teachers increases.

Pay and Allowances

72. Data from the Office for National Statistics (ONS) shows that annual growth in employees' average regular earnings (excluding bonuses) was 4.9% covering the period June to August 2024. The last time that growth was lower than this was in April to June 2022, when it was 4.7%.⁷⁴ This means that last year's teacher pay award was only marginally higher than average annual wage growth. Given that teacher pay currently languishes at 2010 values, this is inadequate to boost recruitment or to power retention resulting in a teacher vacancy rate in November 2023 of 0.6 per cent - double the rate pre-pandemic.⁷⁵
73. The pay rise for 2024-25 put real-terms pay for new teachers at about the same level as 2010, and "roughly matches" recent growth in private sector wages, the Institute for Fiscal Studies said in its public sector pay report.⁷⁶ And teachers and other public sector occupations have fallen further down the pay distribution scale, even when their usually more generous employer pension contributions are taken into account.⁷⁷

⁷² Grainne Hallahan in TES, "Why doubling PPA could help tackle the attainment gap" (2021)

<https://www.tes.com/magazine/teaching-learning/general/why-doubling-ppa-could-help-tackle-attainment-gap>

⁷³ Grainne Hallahan in TES, "Why doubling PPA could help tackle the attainment gap" (2021)

⁷⁴ ONS - Average weekly earnings in Great Britain (October 2024)

<https://www.ons.gov.uk/employmentandlabourmarket/peopleinwork/employmentandemployeetypes/bulletins/averageweeklyearningsingreatbritain/october2024>

⁷⁵ Jasmine Norden in TES "Experienced teacher pay 9% below 2010 levels despite rise". (2024)

<https://www.tes.com/magazine/news/general/experienced-teacher-pay-below-2010-levels-despite-rise>

⁷⁶ Jonathan Cribb et al. "Pressures on public sector pay", Institute for Fiscal Studies (September 2024)

<https://ifs.org.uk/publications/pressures-public-sector-pay>

⁷⁷ "Experienced teacher pay 9% below 2010 levels despite rise".

74. This has resulted in teacher and school leader pay being around 22% lower in real terms than in 2010 when measured against Retail Prices Index (RPI) inflation. It is vital that this damage to teacher and school leader pay and conditions is repaired to fix the recruitment and retention crisis. Community calls on The Review Body to make a 7% uplift to teacher pay rates to begin closing this gap.
75. In the private sector, annual average total earnings growth was 4.7% with average regular earnings growth for the public sector dropping to 5.2% in June to August 2024, down on the previous three-month period (5.7%).⁷⁸ Therefore, in order to even remain competitive, teacher pay must at least match these annual rises.
76. In the education sector, there has been a fall in the pay gap between the highest-paid teachers and the average-paid teachers. In 2007-09, the highest-paid teachers (in the 90th percentile) earned 47% more than the average teacher. In 2021-23, this difference compressed to 41%.⁷⁹
77. Community has previously warned before about “frontloading” the pay structure. Having a competitive starting salary is only important when you embark on a new career. And although we agree that teaching needs a competitive and attractive starting salary it does nothing to support or sustain experienced teachers. It is clear that the effects of this frontloading on the teacher recruitment crisis have not been as positive as had been hoped, with perhaps, the unintended consequence of this action being to make more experienced teachers feel forgotten and undervalued.
78. In their submission to the 30th remit, NEOST noted “the risk of an over-focus on starting pay at the expense of other teachers”. ASCL added, “that the increase in starting salaries to £30,000 should be matched across all pay ranges and allowances, maintaining the current differentials between points and ranges”, with NAHT observing “the Department remained narrowly focused on early career teachers”.⁸⁰ And Community shares these concerns.
79. The pay system should also reflect the significant contribution of experienced teachers and leaders to education.⁸¹ Teacher retention is key to ensuring effective teacher supply and quality. In its latest report, the STRB itself made the connection between pay levels and recruitment/retention, stating that: “spending too little may also give rise to serious problems with subsequent costs which can represent poor value for money.”⁸²
80. Cuts to teacher and school leader pay are a false economy, because they damage our education service and in so doing damage the country’s economic future. When wastage rates remain high across the sector at 6% for those with at least ten years’ experience rising to 9.5% for those with less than five years of experience [it is crucial that] the pay system properly reflects the significant contribution of experienced teachers and leaders to education.⁸³

⁷⁸ ONS - Average weekly earnings in Great Britain (October 2024)
<https://www.ons.gov.uk/employmentandlabourmarket/peopleinwork/employmentandemployeetypes/bulletins/averageweeklyearningsingreatbritain/october2024>

⁷⁹ “Experienced teacher pay 9% below 2010 levels despite rise”.

⁸⁰ 31st Report of the School Teachers’ Review Body, (2021) paragraph 2.32, Page 16

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/school-teachers-review-body-31st-report-2021>

⁸¹ DfE, Government Evidence to the STRB (21 February 2023) paragraph 19, Page 12

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/evidence-to-the-strb-2023-pay-award-for-teachers-and-leaders>

⁸² 34th Report of the School Teachers’ Review Body, (2024) paragraph 2.50, Page 16.

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/school-teachers-review-body-34th-report-2024>

⁸³ Government Evidence to the STRB, paragraph 20, Page 12.

81. And yet, 58% of teachers and leaders continue to express dissatisfaction with their pay.⁸⁴
82. Despite rumourmongering, evidence strongly suggests that teacher pay awards have little impact on the wider economy with the governor of the Bank of England dismissing concerns raised by the Conservatives that the new government's plans for public sector pay rises would risk stoking inflation and keep interest rates higher for longer.⁸⁵
83. Mr Bailey stated that, "private sector wage developments ... [tend]... to "lead" the public sector, rather than the other way around." Going on to note that "pay awards of 5-6% would have a relatively small impact on headline inflation."⁸⁶
84. We have made the case before that a truly independent Review Body must feel empowered to make the recommendations needed to reverse the real terms pay cuts since 2010, restore pay competitiveness and tackle the workload problems. It is then for Government to make, and be accountable for, the political choices on the investment needed to repair the damage to pay, conditions and supply.
85. Data from the Institute of Student Employers shows graduate vacancies increased by 9% in 2021 and another 17% in 2022.⁸⁷ This means that "employers' long-term need for a higher skilled workforce ... will increase, not decrease, with a focus on the need to develop and retain early talent."⁸⁸
86. And when "Sainsbury's announced ... it will increase minimum pay for employees outside London to £12 an hour, with wages for staff in the capital increasing to £13.15 an hour."⁸⁹ It is clear that teacher salaries, and those of teaching assistants need serious attention in order to be able to attract and retain professional applicants.⁹⁰
87. Therefore, the pay award for 2025, and subsequent years, must be significant and it must be sustained in order that it can make a difference to recruitment and retention because it is not just about attracting and developing new teachers, but ensuring we maintain the breadth and depth of experience within the sector.
88. The approach of the previous government to "front-load" the pay system has had a disastrous impact on the retention of experienced teachers. The Guardian's *Secret Teacher* notes: *Newly qualified teachers have many strengths, such as energy and adaptability, but they're not experts in the art of teaching – and nor should they be expected to be. I fear that by losing our top tier of experienced professionals, overall quality will drop, generation on generation.*⁹¹

⁸⁴ Working lives of teachers and leaders: Wave 3, (2024) Page 13.

⁸⁵ Richard Partington in *The Guardian*, "Bank of England dismisses Tory claims" (2024) <https://www.theguardian.com/society/article/2024/aug/01/bank-of-england-dismisses-tory-claims-public-sector-pay-rises-will-stoke-inflation>

⁸⁶ *The Guardian*, "Bank of England dismisses Tory claims" (2024)

⁸⁷ Nicola Thomas, "5 biggest trends in student recruitment in 2022" (31 October 2022) Institute of Student Employers <https://insights.ise.org.uk/policy/blog-5-biggest-trends-in-student-recruitment-in-2022/>

⁸⁸ "5 biggest trends in student recruitment in 2022"

⁸⁹ "Sainsbury's increases pay as supermarkets battle for staff" (2024) BBC News <https://www.bbc.co.uk/news/business-67883985>

⁹⁰ For comparison, an Early Career Teacher working an average of 50 hours each week would be paid just £15.49 per hour based on a £31,650 starting salary – 52.4 hours of work per week – 39 weeks of term.

⁹¹ Secret Teacher in *The Guardian*, "The exodus of older teachers is draining schools of expertise" (2018) <https://www.theguardian.com/teacher-network/2018/may/12/secret-teacher-the-exodus-of-older-teachers-is-draining-schools-of-expertise>

89. And the evidence is clear that the average age of teachers is falling, and experience is being lost from the sector. In 2013, the OECD teaching and learning international survey found the average age of teachers in secondary schools in England was 39 – almost four years younger than the global average. Government figures show that the number of older teachers has dropped significantly since 2010.⁹²
90. The Guardian's *Secret Teacher* goes on to state: *The only way to reverse the declining average age of teachers is by changing the culture of the profession and giving people incentives to stay in the job. But any real shift will come too late for teachers like me, who have enjoyed only a handful of years in the presence of colleagues with decades of experience. Without their guidance, confidence and expertise, we've got a knowledge gap about what works in teaching – and that's a problem.*⁹³
91. One of the reasons that experience is being lost is that in too many schools teachers are being denied progression on both the Main and Upper Pay Scales. Despite the Department's own evidence recently stating: *their expertise is substantial and their contributions should be recognised and valued. These teachers also play a vital role in supporting and mentoring their early career peers and providing a pipeline for progression into future leadership.*⁹⁴ Several Community members have been told "we are not a UPS school"! Unless there is capacity in school budgets many teachers will leave due to their experience not being rewarded.
92. As we have said before, Community is very much opposed to differential pay awards. When retention throughout the profession is so crucial, it is important that all teachers are treated equitably. We are very much in favour of the reintroduction of mandatory pay scales as a minimum statutory provision in all schools, to ensure a level playing field across the whole school sector.

Threshold and the Upper Pay Scale

93. Another step that could be taken to address this issue of pay progression for experienced teachers is to look again at the artificial barrier of threshold.
94. Originally, the Upper Pay Scale was introduced to offer an alternative career path to teachers who worked to stay in the classroom rather than to go into management and leadership roles. Essentially the difference between a teacher at the beginning of their career and a teacher paid on the Upper Pay Scale is one of skill and experience. And yet, feedback from our members is that in many schools additional tasks and increased workload are an expectation of "UPS teachers". This was not the original intention.
95. Unhelpfully, there appears to be a blurring of the distinction in many instances between Upper Pay Scale and Teaching and Learning Responsibilities. To be clear an experienced teacher who is paid on the Upper Pay Scale does not have to be a subject leader, nor have additional pastoral duties. Similarly, the National Teacher Standards⁹⁵ do not specify additional or expanded expectations just because a teacher is paid on the Upper Pay Scale.

⁹² "The exodus of older teachers is draining schools of expertise" (2018)

⁹³ "The exodus of older teachers is draining schools of expertise" (2018)

⁹⁴ Government Evidence to the STRB paragraph 61, Page 23.

⁹⁵ DfE: Teacher Standards Overview

https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/media/5a750668ed915d3c7d529cad/Teachers_standard_information.pdf

96. As a result of this confusion, we see some merit in a reconsideration of the two pay scales and a possible merging of the Main and Upper Pay Scales. This would remove the somewhat artificial barrier of threshold and open up the higher end of the salary scale potentially to all classroom teachers improving the retention of experience. It could also present a perhaps more attractive career structure to potential and current teachers. And, as IES evidence states, so “many teachers and leaders are unclear about the requirements for progression to the UPR and the expectations of those working at the UPR” that the structure is ripe for reform.⁹⁶

Teaching and Learning Responsibilities and SEN Allowances

97. Teaching and Learning Responsibility and Special Educational Needs Allowances currently apply to the whole of a teacher’s salary and are pro-rated if that individual works part time. It could be assumed that the duties are the responsibility of someone else during that teacher’s absence, but increasingly, teachers are assuming whole school duties for which they are the sole person responsible, whilst also working part time. Jack Dyson notes in *Schools Week: The STPCD restrictions have contributed to “unhealthy flexible working arrangements where people haven’t been fairly remunerated for the job they’re doing.”*⁹⁷ In short, teachers are being discriminated against because of their chosen working pattern.
98. Some Multi Academy Trusts have taken action to address this and are deviating from national pay and conditions to more “fairly” reward part-time teachers for extra leadership and management responsibilities. Community would support changes to the pay document to allow the full value of a TLR to be paid to a teacher who has sole responsibility regardless of their working time.

⁹⁶ Anneka Dawson et al. *Teachers’, leaders’ and governors’ views on the pay framework* (2018) Page 28.
https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/media/5f57bdb6e90e07146161d45b/Teachers_Pay_Framework_RR854.pdf

⁹⁷ Jack Dyson in Schools Week. “The trailblazer schools already flexing TLR payments” (2024)
<https://schoolsweek.co.uk/teacher-pay-the-trailblazer-schools-already-flexing-tlr-payments/>

Summary

99. Community have experienced a very different way of working with the new Labour Government over the past few months, but there remain deep-rooted issues to be resolved, not least, teacher workload. The changes to the School Teachers' Pay and Conditions Document to include the list of administrative tasks that teachers should not do is a reasonable start, but it needs to be felt in the classroom very soon.
100. The fact is that teachers, leaders and the wider education workforce are doing more than their primary roles every single day as demand for specialist services rises and provision is further and further cut. Teachers are doing more, and yet "education spending as a share of national income has not seen a sustained rise since the early 1970s."⁹⁸
101. As we see the pupil bulge move through Primary School, and now through Secondary School we have an opportunity to improve the pupil:teacher ratio. The anecdotal evidence is that students learn better in smaller class sizes, so reducing the ratio could have a dramatic improvement on pupil engagement and behaviour as well as improving teacher workload and wellbeing. Of course, this will come at a cost, and it will be essential that this cost is not borne by the schools otherwise any benefits will be immediately lost.
102. There are other benefits that need to be felt by teachers and school support staff.
103. Language matters, the way we talk about our schools and education workers must change. Pupil and parent behaviour towards staff must improve and part of this is the narrative that we build around our schools. We need to be positive about the work that they do because what we say can have longstanding implications and create a reputational web that is difficult to untangle; we must avoid perpetuating our own doom loop.⁹⁹
104. But talk on its own is not enough. The relative value of teachers (and support staff) must be addressed. We are under no illusion that this is a big ask but is desperately needed to redress the losses sustained over the past 15 years and to deliver on improvements to recruitment and retention. This is why Community are asking for an uplift of 7% to continue the journey started last year to make teaching a more attractive proposition.
105. Removing the unnecessarily bureaucratic barrier of threshold would also play a role in improving the attractiveness. Not only would this be a powerful way of showing the sector that they are worth more than just M6, but also confirm that teachers on the upper pay scale are not required to do additional duties just because they have passed threshold. Similarly, we want greater clarity on TLR and SEN allowances.
106. As with previous submissions, and in concert with our sister unions, we would like to see a national pay scale of mandatory minimum points replace the current advisory scales as this will also have a significant improvement on retention across the workforce - as would guaranteed pay portability.

⁹⁸ Elaine Drayton et al., "Annual Report on Education Spending in England: 2023", Page 14.

⁹⁹ Gareth Evans in TES "Why we should change pessimistic narratives around teaching" (2024)

<https://www.tes.com/magazine/analysis/general/why-we-should-change-pessimistic-narratives-teaching>

107. Finally, in addition to the list of administrative tasks, we need to ensure that teacher pay, and conditions address the matter of workload which remains the single biggest issue affecting the workforce. As we have mentioned many times in the past, it is time to re-evaluate Planning, Preparation and Assessment time and to consider increasing it, not all at once, but in staged increments to a minimum of 20%. This will allow teachers to dedicate sufficient time to planning and assessment within directed time as well as addressing the teaching burden which is much higher than other similar education systems.
108. We look forward to the opportunity to discuss these things further and to put them into practice for the good of the profession.