



**WRITTEN SUBMISSION TO THE
INDEPENDENT WELSH PAY REVIEW BODY
MARCH 2024**

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Introduction

- i. Community Union | Education and Early Years represents members across the whole range of education settings, from early years and nurseries, through primary and secondary education, into further and higher education and beyond. Our members are our strength, and it is their views and opinions that shape our policy work and are reflected here.
- ii. Roy Rickhuss, General Secretary of Community, said:
“Community is proud to represent education staff across the UK. Our teachers and support staff make a difference to millions of children in classrooms every day.

“However, recruitment is insufficient to meet demand and the pay scales do not encourage retention. Action is needed now to end this crisis.

“Without an above-inflation pay increase, and measures to address workload, the drain of talent and experience from the teaching profession will continue, and schools will be unable to recruit new teachers to fill the ever-increasing number of vacancies.”
- iii. Once again, we are pleased to be able to present evidence to the Independent Welsh Pay Review Body on behalf of our members. With this submission we have endeavoured to present a wide range of evidence to enable us to offer a picture of the workforce situation and the wider situation in which schools currently find themselves.
- iv. It is vital that the Review Body considers the full range of evidence presented to it, ensuring it has a holistic and balanced view, not one which is partial or idealised, or which places more weight upon one evidence stream. This will be particularly important when recommending pay uplifts, which must recognise the precarious situation facing schools across Wales at the moment.
- v. We are pleased to note the inclusion of the administrative and clerical tasks at Annex 3 of section 2 within the STPC(W)D and that the remit is looking at specific tasks affecting leaders as well as teachers.
- vi. We are also pleased that the remit calls for evidence to support the work of ALNCo's, their roles, responsibilities, working time and workload. We know that the hours these staff commit to fulfilling their role is considerable and this, quite rightly, must be recognised.
- vii. But, ultimately, without new funding, without solid investment in our teachers, staff, schools and wider support systems, we will continue to see an exodus of staff, and our education system, already on the brink, will collapse.
- viii. Rob Edwards, Regional Secretary for Community Wales said:
“Community is committed to working together with the IWPRB and the Welsh Government to improve pay and conditions for our members and all those who work in education in Wales.”

- ix. Helen Osgood, Director of Operations and National Officer for Education and Early Years, said:
- “The education profession continues to work in a climate of underfunding, increasingly high workload, and pressure to deliver.*
- “Teachers up and down Wales are facing a real cost-of-living challenge, with some having to take on second jobs to ensure that they can meet basic living requirements.*
- “We urge the IWPRB to acknowledge the commitment, dedication and determination of our teachers - working and achieving at this very difficult and challenging time.”*

Background

1. The situation that our schools and colleges find themselves in continues to be dire. Sky-high interest rates, exorbitant energy costs and rising food prices have contributed to a cost-of-living crisis that is directly affecting our schools as well as the staff that they employ.
2. Community Union understands that a key element of the Independent Welsh Pay Review Body's remit is to ensure that recommendations are affordable, but the teachers who are now struggling to feed their families, who cannot heat their homes and pay their bills, also have affordability concerns.
3. Therefore, the evidence which we present covers a wide range of issues that go beyond those identified in the remit from the Minister for Education and Welsh Language.
4. Once again, we urge the Review Body to seize its independence and make recommendations to address the fundamental issues which affect the education of children in our schools across the country – namely recruitment and retention, workload and pay.
5. Statistics brutally reveal that by 2019 the average real-terms salary for teachers had fallen by over £4,000.¹ In the past twelve months, it has worsened and, across the whole UK teaching workforce, pay has fallen by £4,700 – cuts of over 10%.
6. Whilst last year's pay uplift was extremely welcome, it was unable to bridge the rises caused by inflation and thus continued the trend of below-inflation pay awards which is contributing to the ongoing recruitment and retention crisis in which the sector finds itself.
7. We support the independence of the Review Body – as highlighted in the name, and the process for sharing the views of teachers and leaders who work in the classrooms up and down the country. It is they who will be most affected by any recommendations made, therefore, it is vital that our members, and all constituent parties, have trust in the recommendations it makes.
8. We urge the Review Body to be bold and make the necessary recommendations as they see fit and not be constrained by a pre-determined political concern, because we fear the consequences for the sector if it does not.

¹ Angela Rayner, "Teachers' pay has been cut" (2019)
<https://labour.org.uk/press/government-admit-teachers-pay-cut-thousands-pounds-year-since-2010/>

Economic picture

9. Sometimes it is difficult to see the wood for the trees. Since 2010, the UK Government has been tightly focused on creating a strong economy with stable growth. However, it began this by freezing public sector pay and taking the UK into an extended period of austerity.
10. Since being granted independence over Education the Welsh Government have proceeded to significantly raise the salary for teachers, but a £30,000 starting salary has only recently been achieved.
11. And whilst other salary points have risen by over 11% (consolidated) in the last two years, data shows that “prices in March 2023 were 18% higher than two years earlier”.² Every sector of society has faced rising costs, but our education settings and staff have not seen their income similarly rise.
12. According to the *Institute for Fiscal Studies* (IFS), “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 2010–11,³ and although there has been some movement to restore funding, the IFS note that there has been just a 3% per pupil increase across Wales in that time.⁴
13. And it is not just direct funding cuts that are affecting schools. The cuts to local authority services and social care provision mean schools have to pick up the pieces when no-one else will, often funding these from their existing budgets.
14. The situations in which we find ourselves is not one of our own making yet our teachers, leaders and support staff continue to pull out the stops to ensure that children and their families are not let down.
15. According to the latest ONS data, pay growth in the private sector was 7.8% in the three months May-July 2023.⁵ Growth in public sector earnings was up at 6.6%, meaning that the 2023 teacher pay award was below both private sector growth and average public sector pay, again holding teacher pay back.
16. Teacher pay continues to lose value relative to whole-economy earnings and to other professional occupations. Without restorative pay awards to make teaching more attractive, not only will we fail to recruit the best graduates into the sector, but overall recruitment will further fail to meet demand.

² School Teachers’ Review Body for England, 33rd Report, (2023). Paragraph 3.9, page 15.

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/school-teachers-review-body-33rd-report-2023>

³ Elaine Drayton et al., “*Annual Report on Education Spending in England: 2023*” (December 2023). Institute for Fiscal Studies, Executive Summary

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

⁴ Luke Sibieta, “*How does school spending per pupil differ across the UK?*” (April 2023). Institute for Fiscal Studies, Executive Summary

<https://ifs.org.uk/publications/how-does-school-spending-pupil-differ-across-uk>

⁵ “*Average weekly earnings in Great Britain*” (December 2023) Office for National Statistics Bulletin

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

17. The latest economic forecasts from the *National Foundation for Educational Research* (NFER) state that teachers will need a pay rise of more than 3.3 per cent next year, to “improve competitiveness.”⁶ This is significantly more than the 1% His Majesty’s Treasury have allocated for public sector pay rises.
18. Community recommends this year’s uplift should be no less than 6.5% and that schools must be provided with sufficient additional funds by the Senedd to fully fund and resource this.
19. Furthermore, Community calls for immediate action to be taken to address this recruitment catastrophe before it begins to more seriously impact our schools.

⁶ Matilda Martin, Teacher pay ‘must exceed 3.3% next year’, says expert (11 December 2023). TES <https://www.tes.com/magazine/news/general/teacher-pay-rise-more-funding-needed>

The Graduate Labour Market

20. The last few years have been full of turmoil – physical, mental and financial, affecting individuals, businesses and the whole economy – and the economic picture continues to be volatile.
21. Data from the Institute of Student Employers (ISE) shows graduate vacancies increased by 9% in 2021 and another 17% in 2022.⁷ And the 2023 report from *What do Graduates do?* confirms this: “The demand for graduates is strong and apparently increasing. It is quite likely that at present there are more vacancies for workers with degree or equivalent qualifications than there are unemployed graduates.”⁸
22. The annual *High Fliers* report agrees that, following a significant cut in graduate employment at the start of the COVID-19 pandemic: “The number of graduates recruited in 2022 jumped by 14.5%, compared with graduate recruitment in 2021, the biggest-ever annual increase in graduate vacancies, taking graduate recruitment to its highest level yet.”⁹
23. Put simply, this means that there are more employment opportunities for graduates, making teaching less attractive, and forecasts are that it will worsen for education as “recruitment targets for the country’s leading employers show that the number of graduate jobs available in 2023 is expected to increase by a further 6.3%.”¹⁰
24. This may be further seen in the data showing that recruitment into the public sector fell by 6.5% over 2021, and by the fall in applications per vacancy which, at 21.1, was the lowest of all the industry or business sectors, despite an 11.3% rise in vacancies.¹¹
25. Due to the uncertain economic picture in the UK, Europe and the wider world, it would be understandable if the domestic labour market weakened, “but at present the UK graduate labour market appears to be bearing up well”.¹² This means our salary structure needs to be able to compete with the best graduate employers.
26. “In 2021/2022 the typical (median) salary for a graduate was reported as £30,921”¹³ and the starting salary for a qualified teacher in Wales from September 2023 is £30,742, slightly higher than the starting salary for an Early Career Teacher across the border in England, but well shy of the £37,896 paid to a qualified teacher in Scotland.

⁷ 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/>

⁸ “What Do Graduates Do?” (2023/24), Prospects/AGCAS. Page 9
<https://luminare.prospects.ac.uk/what-do-graduates-do>

⁹ High Fliers Research Centre, The Graduate Labour Market in 2023 (2023) Page 17
<https://www.highfliers.co.uk/>

¹⁰ Ibid. Page 16

¹¹ Ibid. pp11-15

¹² “What Do Graduates Do?” (2023/24), Page 9

¹³ “5 biggest trends in student recruitment in 2022” (31 October 2022)

27. For the second year running, graduate starting salaries at the UK's leading graduate employers are set to increase to £33,500 and in order to remain competitive, teacher salaries must similarly rise. According to *High Fliers*, this is an increase of £1,500 over 2022, "and a rise of 11.7% since 2020 when the median starting salaries at the country's best-known graduate employers was £30,000."¹⁴
28. Once again, Aldi has reported one of the highest starting salaries, with the starting salary for graduates joining its popular trainee area manager programme now at £50,000 in 2023.¹⁵ This contrasts starkly with the starting salary for qualified teachers remaining at £30,000.
29. A rough estimate suggests that had the teacher salary kept up with the rate of inflation over the past 20 years, it would now be worth almost £36,000¹⁶, similar to the current median salary.
30. Data from the *Institute for Social & Economic Research* (ISE) agrees that when "comparing the earnings of teachers to non-teaching graduates we find that from 1993 to 2019, the average teacher earns around 13% less than the average graduate."¹⁷
31. Furthermore, "if the median starting salary of £29,000 paid by employers a decade ago had kept pace with inflation over the past ten years, it would now be worth approximately £39,000 – some £5,500 more than this year's median pay for new graduates."¹⁸
32. And it is not just about pay either: "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."¹⁹
33. Whilst making teaching a hybrid employment option is unlikely, at least in the short-term, we must begin to consider flexible working options in order to attract candidates into education and retain them beyond the first few years. "While making teaching among the highest paid graduate occupations is likely to improve the quality of graduates entering the profession ... raising the salaries of existing teachers"²⁰ will also have significant benefits.

¹⁴ High Fliers Page 18

¹⁵ Ibid.

¹⁶ Teacher starting salary in England and Wales in 2001 was £17,001.

<https://www.in2013dollars.com/uk/inflation/2000?amount=17001>

¹⁷ Joshua Fullard, "Relative Wages and Pupil Performance, evidence from TIMSS" (2021). Institute for Social & Economic Research. Page 9

<https://www.iser.essex.ac.uk/research/publications/working-papers/iser/2021-07>

¹⁸ High Fliers Page 18

¹⁹ "What Do Graduates Do?" Page 16

²⁰ "Relative Wages and Pupil Performance, evidence from TIMSS" (2021). Page 4

Demand for Teachers

34. The number of pupils in Wales's schools continues to rise with nearly 470,000 registered pupils in 2023. This is one of the highest pupil populations since 2008 and only slightly down from the peak in 2021.²¹
35. During this time there has been a steady increase in the number of teachers to 24,884, an increase of 227 over the previous year.²² However there continues to be recruitment and retention difficulties in some subject areas, including shortage subjects (such as Welsh, maths, science and modern foreign languages), Welsh-medium schools and schools in areas with high levels of disadvantage."²³ And this has led to over 10% of vacancies being left unfilled.²⁴
36. As with the rest of the UK there is a notable pupil bulge moving through into secondary and tertiary education at the moment²⁵ but, despite an increase in pupil numbers in secondary schools, "pupil-teacher ratios have remained stable since 2018/19 as teacher supply has grown at the same rate as the increase in pupil numbers."
37. According to official figures, as at 2022 the teacher vacancy rate had "fallen since 2018/19". However, the more that we emerge from the pandemic, and the more that graduate employment reopens, the more pressure the sector will come under which will undoubtedly lead to greater mobility of the workforce. Indeed in Primary schools we are already seeing an increase in the number of unfilled vacancies.²⁶
38. Work being undertaken to boost the number of trainees into ITT failed to produce any notable impact prior to the pandemic, and subsequent figures suggest that recruitment has "fallen further for shortage subjects such as maths, science and Welsh to meet less than half of the recruitment targets. Recruitment to modern foreign languages (MFL) and geography ITE courses increased in 2019/20 but continued to remain substantially below target."²⁷
39. Demand for Additional Learning Needs provision continues to rise exponentially, yet dedicated funding for pupils such as the Pupil Development Grant (PDG), for example, has not kept pace with overall inflation. The system is broken.
40. We contend that all of those working in additional learning needs have this duty recognised through the STPC(W)D with appropriate time and remuneration awarded – not just teaching staff.

²¹ Statista, "Number of pupils attending schools in Wales from 2008 to 2023".

<https://www.statista.com/statistics/715845/number-of-pupils-in-wales/>

²² Ibid.

²³ Anusha Ghosh and Jack Worth, "Teacher Labour Market in Wales" Annual Report 2022, NFER. Page 3

https://nfer.ac.uk/media/4zznpygz/teacher_labour_market_in_wales_annual_report_2022.pdf

²⁴ School Workforce Census (2022)

<https://www.gov.wales/school-workforce-census-results-november-2022-html>

²⁵ Schools, pupils and their characteristics (Academic year 2022/23)

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

²⁶ "Teacher Labour Market in Wales" Annual Report 2022. Page 11

²⁷ Ibid. Page 13

41. It may also prove necessary for schools to recruit administrative staff in order to fulfil the workload duties which do not demand the skills and abilities of a qualified teacher, such as the excessive bureaucratic burdens of writing IDPs.
42. Without sufficient staff, admin, support, teachers and leaders we have significant concern that schools will be vulnerable and understaffed especially since the number of qualified teachers leaving the profession has also increased since the pandemic.

Teacher Recruitment and Retention

43. It has long been noticed and highlighted that the exodus of experienced teachers is storing up problems. *The Guardian* newspaper's *Secret Teacher* noted: "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."²⁸
44. In addition, the average age of teachers is falling. 2010 figures from the then *General Teaching Council for Wales* (GTCW) showed the proportion of registered teachers aged under 45 has increased steadily to 57% and Government data shows that, by 2019, the highest proportion of teachers in Wales were aged between 30 and 39 (32.7%)²⁹ with the number of older teachers dropping significantly since 2010.³⁰
45. Again, *The Guardian's Secret Teacher* says: "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."³¹
46. Retaining experienced teachers is vital to provide the knowledge, skills and continuity needed for academic progress, but we also need to recruit high-quality candidates into ITT.
47. According to the 2022 *School Workforce Census*, the number of teachers in Wales actually dropped by 0.6% with a full-time equivalence drop of 0.2%³². And that where new teachers are recruited, we do not have the experienced and mature teachers to nurture our NQTs.
48. According to Jack Worth from the National Foundation for Education Research (NFER): "Policymakers should be aiming to put teaching in a position where it is attractive enough to persuade graduates to enter regardless of what is happening more widely... improving the attractiveness of the teaching profession is an essential and urgent need now to ensure the quality of pupils' education is not further compromised by growing staff shortages."³³

²⁸ Secret Teacher, "The exodus of older teachers is draining schools of expertise" (2018) *The Guardian* <https://www.theguardian.com/teacher-network/2018/may/12/secret-teacher-the-exodus-of-older-teachers-is-draining-schools-of-expertise>

²⁹ Welsh Government, "*School Workforce Census results: as at November 2019 (Revised)*" <https://www.gov.wales/school-workforce-census-results-november-2019.html>

³⁰ Secret Teacher

³¹ Ibid.

³² "*School Workforce Census results: as at November 2022*"

³³ Jack Worth, "*Dire teacher recruitment data should concern policymakers*" (2023) *Schools Week* <https://schoolsweek.co.uk/dire-teacher-recruitment-data-should-concern-policymakers/>

49. And yet, despite on average receiving 9.1 applications per post advertised, vacancy figures remain high growing from 4.2% in 2010/11 to 5.6% in 2018/19.³⁴ This suggests that pupils' education is beginning to be compromised, despite the best efforts of teachers and leaders.
50. Despite rising by 5%, due to the continued impact of rampant inflation, salaries for teachers actually fell in real-terms in 2022–23.³⁵ Salaries for more experienced and senior teachers have fallen by over 10% in real-terms since 2010. And whilst having a competitive starting salary is important when you embark on a new career a sustained and competitive pay structure is necessary to support and sustain experienced teachers.
51. This is made abundantly clear by the Government's own statistics, which showed that teacher numbers had decreased by 0.6% - almost 160 teachers in the past twelve months. Of the 1,080 that chose to leave, nearly two thirds did so for reasons other than retirement.
52. It is critical that action is taken now. We need to be more effective in recruiting appropriate candidates into teaching, doing more to support them and grow them, and rewarding and retaining the experience we already have. "Increasing teachers' pay would likely improve both recruitment and retention and is a key lever within the Government's direct and timely control," states Jack Worth of NFER. "However, pay needs to be rising faster than average earnings to increase competitiveness."³⁶
53. In addition to pay, we need to consider the workload and wellbeing aspects of teaching as a priority. "The 2021 national education workforce survey highlighted the continued challenge of unmanageable workload for school teachers and school leaders (EWC, 2021). Indeed, the survey suggested that school teachers were working more hours in 2021 than they were in 2016. Progress with reducing teacher workload would likely help to improve teacher retention."³⁷

³⁴ Anusha Ghosh & Jack Worth, "Teacher Labour Market in Wales Annual Report 2020"

<https://files.eric.ed.gov/fulltext/ED608761.pdf>

³⁵ "What has happened to teacher pay in England?" (11 January 2023).

³⁶ "Dire teacher recruitment data should concern policymakers".

³⁷ "Teacher Labour Market in Wales" Annual Report 2022. Page 17

Pay and Conditions

54. It is important to reflect that, due to the cost-of-living crisis, pay is very much a determining factor for many teachers, leaders and support staff, and that schools are insufficiently resourced to afford any uplift without it being directly funded by Government.
55. But, in addition to pay, we need to consider the workload and wellbeing aspects of teaching, the support staff and services in our schools and around our schools. External pressures and demands on the system are having a disproportionate impact on the culture within schools. This lack of capacity in wider public services, the increase in children and young people experiencing destitution,³⁸ ongoing post-pandemic scarring, challenging pupil behaviour and the inadequacy of ALN provision also contribute to negativity in the workplace.
56. Schools have too many, often conflicting responsibilities, and underfunded children's services mean that teachers and support staff are unsupported. This is having a demonstrable effect on the job satisfaction and wellbeing of educators, which will have a knock-on effect on children and young people.³⁹
57. And the 2021 national education workforce survey highlights the "continued challenge of unmanageable workload for school teachers and school leaders (EWC, 2021)."
58. Furthermore, public sector pay has been reduced so much compared to the private sector that the Institute for Fiscal Studies claims not only that "public sector pay will fail to keep pace with inflation this year ... [but] ... this comes after more than a decade in which public sector pay has already been falling relative to the private sector." The IFS concludes that "the public-private pay differential is now less favourable to the public sector than at any point in the past 30 years".⁴⁰
59. We need a funding settlement that matches current levels of demand on schools and colleges. We need more support for our struggling local services. We must ensure there is sufficient financial resource for schools to provide high quality education and support to children and young people.⁴¹
60. Since 2010, teacher pay did not rise on at least three occasions and was capped at 1% for five consecutive years, therefore there is still significant ground to be made up in order for teacher pay to be the recruitment and retention tool that it once was.
61. According to Jack Worth, school workforce lead at the National Foundation for Educational Research, in *TES*,⁴² the latest economic forecasts mean teachers will need a pay rise of more than 3.3% next year to "improve competitiveness."

³⁸ Suzanne Fitzpatrick et al. *"Destitution in the UK"* (2023) Joesph Rowntree Foundation,

<https://www.jrf.org.uk/report/destitution-uk-2023>

³⁹ *"Teacher Wellbeing Index"* (2023). Page 59

⁴⁰ Bee Boileau, Laurence O'Brien and Ben Zaranko, *"Even if real pay is cut by 5%, public sector workforce may need to be cut by more than 200,000 by 2024 to stay within current spending plans"* (2022)

<https://ifs.org.uk/news/even-if-real-pay-cut-5-public-sector-workforce-may-need-be-cut-more-200000-2024-stay-within>

⁴¹ *"Teacher Wellbeing Index"* (2023). Page 59

⁴² Matilda Martin, Teacher pay 'must exceed 3.3% next year', says expert (11 December 2023), *TES*

<https://www.tes.com/magazine/news/general/teacher-pay-rise-more-funding-needed>

62. Research by Joshua Fullard from the *Trends in International Mathematics and Science Study* shows that “workers respond to an increase in relative wages by improving their productivity due to a fall in perceptions of inequity (Akerlof 1982). According to this hypothesis, when workers feel they are more valued, through a higher relative wage, they work harder. There is suggestive empirical evidence that concerns about fairness and equity do influence effort, see Fehr et al., (2009) for a review of this literature. Therefore, teachers’ higher relative wages could drive the productivity of teachers, and thus pupil outcomes, through the mechanism of feeling more valued.”⁴³
63. “Sainsbury's has 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.”⁴⁴ For comparison, an NQT working an average of 50 hours each week would be paid just £15.77 per hour.⁴⁵
64. In order to address the recruitment and retention issues, we recommend a fully-funded pay uplift of not less than 6.5%.
65. Schools must receive additional funds from the Department to cover the costs of any recommendation. Failure to provide this will exacerbate the funding crisis in our schools and will lead to further restructuring and redundancies. Most importantly, it will not improve conditions for staff and will harm the outcomes for pupils.
66. But it is not just about pay. As in previous years, we urge the Review Body to cast its net wider than the pay award. We have seen the impact that pay portability can have in support teachers returning to the sector after time out for parental leave. There are still details to be worked out and clarity is needed at paragraph 15.4 of STPC(W)D but it is a step in the right direction.
67. Other factors that would be likely to impact include flexible working, increased PPA time and the introduction of a work limit such as can be seen in Scotland. It may be that introducing a working limit, or an entitlement to protected holiday would be a way of reducing workload outside of the classroom and would be a good place to start.

⁴³ “Relative Wages and Pupil Performance, evidence from TIMSS” (2021). Page 2

⁴⁴ “Sainsbury's increases pay as supermarkets battle for staff” (2024), BBC News
<https://www.bbc.co.uk/news/business-67883985>

⁴⁵ £30,742 starting salary – 50 hours of work per week – 39 weeks of term

Workload and Wellbeing

68. As we have already mentioned in the previous section, the issue which until very recently topped the list of issues for teachers was workload and the fact that they did not feel they had any control over it.
69. High workload (92%), government initiatives or policy changes (76%), and other pressures relating to pupil outcomes or inspection (69%) are the top factors affecting teachers.⁴⁶ Workload affects teacher retention, therefore we agree with NFER that “reducing teacher workload and supporting teacher well-being should therefore remain a high priority for the Welsh Government and other stakeholders.”⁴⁷
70. Community noted in our *The Future of Education*⁴⁸ report that “international comparisons show that teachers in the UK spend more time working than in many other high-performing countries”, with some estimates suggesting teachers work an average of 50 or more hours each week.
71. The *Working Lives of Teachers and Leaders* report for England goes further, recording that leaders reported working more hours on average (56.8) than teachers, with full-time teachers working 51.9 hours and 37.3 hours for part-time teachers.⁴⁹
72. Not only do UK teachers spend more time directly working with pupils, but 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.”⁵⁰
73. We noted in our response last year that long working hours are a significant contributor to deaths from heart disease and stroke.⁵¹ 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.⁵² “Working 55 hours or more per week is a serious health hazard... It’s time that we all, governments, employers, and employees, wake up to the fact that long working hours can lead to premature death.”⁵³
74. The *Teacher Wellbeing Index* and the Department for Education’s own *The Working Lives of Teachers and Leaders* report both agree that there are major issues with workload leading to stress, exhaustion and burnout.

⁴⁶ “Working Lives of Teachers and Leaders – wave 1”. Page 46

⁴⁷ “*Teacher Labour Market in Wales*” Annual Report 2022. Page 17

⁴⁸ The Future of Education Report (Voice Community, 2021) Page 16
<https://community-tu.org/campaigns/sector-campaigns/the-future-of-education/>

⁴⁹ “Working Lives of Teachers and Leaders” – wave 1”. Page 14

⁵⁰ Haili Hughes, “*Preserving Positivity*” Page 40

⁵¹ World Health Organization / International Labour Organization (2021)
<https://www.who.int/news/item/17-05-2021-long-working-hours-increasing-deaths-from-heart-disease-and-stroke-who-ilo>

⁵² 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>

⁵³ World Health Organization / International Labour Organization (2021)

75. The *Teacher Wellbeing Index* notes that 78% of all staff are stressed.⁵⁴ This is an overall increase of 3% over 2022, with class teachers seeing a 6% rise and leaders a 5% rise.
76. 34% of staff felt, or it was suggested to them, that they were exhausted – a 4% increase on 2022. And 35% were experiencing signs of burnout – a 7% increase over last year.⁵⁵
77. The proportion of all staff (78%) and senior leaders (89%) reporting stress is the highest that have been recorded by the *Teacher Wellbeing Index*. And the level of staff who experienced mental health issues due to their work is the highest ever seen (39%).
78. They conclude that it is likely that “this population will experience negative physical and mental health outcomes as a consequence of these working norms.”⁵⁶
79. These data suggest a significant worsening of teacher wellbeing. With the most recent comparable scores for the wider UK population (up to September 2021) indicating that teachers and leaders were experiencing lower levels of wellbeing than the adult population as a whole.⁵⁷
80. And it is hard not to conclude that this will have a major impact on teacher recruitment and retention. *Teacher Workload Index* notes, “importantly, we would expect teachers who are stressed, tired and unhappy at work to – quite understandably – work less well than they otherwise could, with a range of knock-on effects for children and young people.”⁵⁸
81. We have been highlighting the issue of staff workload and wellbeing in local schools and seeking to address it as a health and safety issue. The *Working Time Regulations (1998)* established that workers should not be working in excess of 48 hours per week, yet this occurs far too frequently in our schools.
82. To be clear staff are entitled, under legislation, to time to rest and recharge, coupled with guaranteed rest breaks and holiday - these are designed to protect a worker’s wellbeing, but as noted, teachers and school leaders all too regularly work excessive hours because there is always work to be done.
83. For those working these excessive hours this could actually cause schools to accidentally cause staff to be working for less than the national minimum wage.
84. Moreover, if communications are sent outside of normal working hours and staff are required to respond, it could be argued that they are ‘on call’ or ‘on standby’. This will have a profoundly negative impact on evenings, weekends and holiday periods where teachers and leaders are never truly able to switch off and disconnect.

⁵⁴ “*Teacher Wellbeing Index*” (2023) Education Support, 1. The Challenges, Page 7

⁵⁵ Ibid. Page 22

⁵⁶ “*Teacher Wellbeing Index*” (2023) Education Support, Our conclusions. Page 54

⁵⁷ “Working Lives of Teachers and Leaders – wave 1”. Page 76

⁵⁸ “*Teacher Wellbeing Index*” (2023) Education Support, Our conclusions. Page 54

85. The right to disconnect is an important one and one which was signed into law in France in 2017. Whilst we appreciate that the Review Body does not have such authority, we do believe that it is time to reflect on the working hours of teachers and leaders. Maybe considering the model adopted in Scotland where teachers have a 35-hour working week teaching no more than 18½ hours would be a place to start.
86. Finally, the right to disconnect is an important one and it would be something which is easy for the Review Body to recommend for inclusion in future publications of the STPC(W)D. Teachers are already restricted from working directed time at weekends or at lunchtimes. A strengthening of this wording, and the inclusion of a right to disconnect at weekends and during school closure periods would be greatly appreciated by the sector and would be a starting point for addressing the wider workload issues.

PPA and CPD

87. Our previous written and oral submissions to the IWPRB have highlighted the importance of work/life balance and how that can be improved by extending the right to planning, preparation and assessment (PPA) time.
88. We noted in our *The Future of Education*⁵⁹ report and have highlighted in earlier chapters of this evidence submission that “teachers in the UK spend more time working than in many other high-performing countries, with some estimates suggesting teachers work an average of 50 hours each week. Much of this work is undertaken in the evenings and at weekends, having a detrimental impact on a teacher’s homelife.”
89. Teacher and head teacher members went on to state that it is workload, followed by pressures of the role, which are the key drivers causing staff to want to leave the sector. Indeed the Review Body quoted us as saying so in their 4th Report.⁶⁰
90. And the Review Body agreed in their 4th Report that “workload arising from non-contact tasks such as administrative and clerical tasks, PPA time, cover supervision and its management, examination invigilation, staff absence definition and management of staff absence, leadership and management time and the provision of school calendars” all needed much more clarity.⁶¹
91. We want to see PPA time apply to all teachers and those staff who are delivering lessons.
92. Teach First have also put forward the proposal for an increase in PPA, arguing that support for Newly Qualified Teachers 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.”⁶² This fits comfortably with the detail we set out in our previous submissions to the IWPRB.
93. 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. They go on to say that this will lead to improved teacher wellbeing and teacher retention, which will lead to greater classroom stability as teachers are likely to be present more of the time and to remain in post for longer.
94. 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. There are also benefits for the pupils and for the schools where they work.

⁵⁹ The Future of Education Report. Page 16

⁶⁰ The 4th Report of the Independent Welsh Pay Review Body (2022) Paragraph 5.42
<https://www.gov.wales/independent-welsh-pay-review-body-fourth-report-2022>

⁶¹ IWPRB 4th Report (2022) Paragraph 6.25

⁶² 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>

95. As we have cited in previous submissions, evidence from schools that have already implemented an approach to increased PPA, such as Noel-Baker Academy in Derby, show the benefits that can be achieved by giving staff 20% of time for PPA. 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".⁶³
96. As we have called for in previous submissions, Community continues the clarion call 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.
97. Time for the completion of duties is vital and will help to address workload and wellbeing, but time for developing and improving is just as important.
98. In addition to PPA time, dedicated time for staff development would improve teacher retention. When you compare the situation in England and Wales with other high-performing nations it is clear to see "the thinness of the state's commitment to its teacher development. In Singapore, teachers have a right to 100 hours a year of professional development (Parliament, 2014), [England and Wales are] 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."⁶⁴
99. 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.⁶⁵ 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.⁶⁶
100. What Community would like to see is a system that provides individualised and meaningful development opportunities, as well as the necessary institutional training, such as safeguarding, that is annually mandated.
101. According to EPI,⁶⁷ a formal entitlement for teachers to 35 hours of high quality CPD a year could 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. And 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.

⁶³ Grainne Hallahan in *TES*, "Why doubling PPA could help tackle the attainment gap" (2021)

⁶⁴ 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 30
<https://www.ippr.org/research/publications/out-of-kilter>

⁶⁵ Matilda Martin, "Just 4 in 10 teachers found their last Inset day useful" (2024) *TES*
<https://www.tes.com/magazine/news/general/just-4-10-teachers-found-last-inset-day-useful-cpd>

⁶⁶ "Working Lives of Teachers and Leaders" – wave 1. Page 22

⁶⁷ 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/>

Summary and Conclusion

102. As in previous years, Community continues to make the case that any form of pay restraint will fail to incentivise the right kind of high calibre professionals to enter the profession. The graduate labour market is such that pay again needs to be lifted in order to be attractive and must remain attractive to retain qualified teachers into experience.
103. Failures to address factors impacting on teacher wellbeing continues to cause teachers to leave the profession. Excessive workload, high levels of stress and unreasonable levels of accountability all must be addressed, without which they will continue to have a direct impact on the ability of schools to recruit the necessary staff to ensure high-quality education for all learners.
104. We would like to see better implemented limits on teacher time, and for these limits to be extended to school leaders. In addition a right to disconnect from work outside of working hours should be implemented in order to immediately support wellbeing.
105. We are calling for a minimum 6.5% increase to each salary point and allowance, reminding the Independent Welsh Pay Review Body, that workforce salaries still lag behind other graduate salaries, and this is affecting recruitment into the sector.
106. In addition to pay, we call on the IWPRB to consider increasing the basic amount of PPA time for classroom teachers 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.
107. Finally, it is time to address the entitlement to high-quality, personalised, professional development, to ensure that each teacher is skilled in the areas they personally want to be, as well as the areas the school needs them to be.
108. We look forward to further discussions around these proposals.