



WRITTEN SUBMISSION TO

THE SCHOOL TEACHERS' REVIEW BODY

FEBRUARY 2022

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Introduction

In Autumn 2020, Voice – the Union for Education Professionals became a section of Community Union. The Voice Section of Community Trade Union (hereafter referred to as Voice Community) represents teachers, lecturers, tutors, school support staff, early years and childcare professionals in all workplaces and across the UK.

We remain committed to working productively with the Review Body and the different departments of government on matters of teacher pay, as we have done in previous years and look forward to playing an active part in the discussions.

Roy Rickhuss, General Secretary of Community, said:

*“Community always looks forwards to contributing to the teachers’ pay review. This year, we will use our contribution to highlight our members’ experiences - as collected for our report ‘**The Future of Education**’. We are hopeful the Review Body listen to those experiences and bring forwards a pay proposal that meets our members’ expectations.*

For too long, teachers have been experiencing a real-terms pay cut, additional stress from significant amounts of administration, combined with not enough PPA time and a chronic lack of training and development. It is essential the Review Body tackle these issues if we are to stop the high levels of attrition and maintain experienced teachers in the sector.”

Helen Osgood, National Officer for Education and Early Years, said:

“As we move forward to living with COVID, and working out how we do that safely in the community and in schools, Community members are playing a key role, in ensuring that the lost learning that millions of pupils endured during the COVID years is being addressed. This will take significant time, dedication and effort on the part of our members, and our submission urges the Government to address the problems that the profession is facing, with a view to making education a profession that people want to work in and attracting high calibre candidates.

Our members have for too long, suffered pay freezes, staff shortages and a staff retention crisis in schools. Community Union wants to work with the Government to ensure that the issues that our members are facing are addressed through the pay mechanism, so that we have a profession that feels valued, supported and, above all, young people aspire to be part of in the future.

Our evidence is aimed at ensuring that Community members in the education sector have the necessary support, through appropriate remuneration and increased PPA time, to be in the best possible position to help and support pupils. If we get the provision for the staff right, the rest will follow, and this submission outlines how we believe we can achieve that. The role that our members play in ensuring pupils catch up on lost learning must be recognised by the government, press and public. This is a huge task, and one that our members are prepared to meet head on, but they need backing to do so.

Let’s make the aspiration within this document a reality and make a real difference to the working lives of educational professionals.”

1. **Background**

- 1.1. The situation in nurseries, schools and colleges – across the whole education landscape, is dire. Levels of absence amongst staff are at levels never seen before over a sustained period, and in the short-term, there is little indication that things will improve.
- 1.2. Workload is higher than it has ever been, with teachers preparing their own work, covering for absent colleagues at short notice, delivering lessons in person, online or frequently both, and preparing students for exams that may or may not take place whilst gathering the evidence to certify any teacher assessed grades.
- 1.3. In short, the profession is at breaking point.
- 1.4. Despite a brief increase in applications for initial teacher training there remains a recruitment and retention crisis. Last year, the Review Body noted that teacher supply problems have not been solved and could get much worse due to myriad reasons including severe workload and wellbeing issues. Additionally, the ongoing impact of the pandemic cannot be overstated.
- 1.5. The pandemic has undeniably added to budget pressures, with schools incurring additional staff and non-staff expenditure as a direct result. Every aspect of the work of a school has come under intense pressure, and for a number of teachers, enough is enough. We are already beginning to see vacancies in leadership posts and gaps appearing in the leadership supply chain. There are reports of teachers unwilling to step into the breach due to the workload and lack of financial incentive, and it is clear that action must be taken now, to avert the burgeoning crisis.
- 1.6. The remit received from the Secretary of State for Education asks for evidence on a wide range of aspects which affect the salary of teachers. We are also pleased to note the acknowledgement of the broader structural issues, and we recommend that these are investigated by the Review Body ahead of the next remit.
- 1.7. Regardless of the breadth of remits past and present, we have been frustrated at the restrictions placed upon an *independent* review body. NFER have recommended that “STRB should be given a permanent remit to make independent recommendations on teacher pay, even when the Government considers that pay should be frozen¹” and in the 31st Report, STRB itself states the importance of being “allowed to fully exercise our role in making recommendations on pay uplifts for all teachers and school leaders for 2022/23, based on the evidence, including conditions in the wider economy,”² and this independence is something which we urge the Review Body to exercise in its recommendations.
- 1.8. Not only is it vital that the Review Body consider all of the evidence contained with this and other evidence statements, but it must be mindful of the real-terms losses suffered and endured by the sector over the past decade. This context of low morale, insufficient recruitment, invidious workload and diminishing pay is the reality which the Review Body must not fail to consider.

¹ Jack Worth and Henry Faulkner-Ellis, “The Teacher Labour Market in England”, (NFER, 2021). page 6

² The Thirty-First Report of the School Teachers’ Review Body (OME, 2021). page 2

2. The Impact of the Pay Freeze

- 2.1. In 2020, over the year as a whole, the UK economy saw its largest ever annual contraction, of 9.8%, as measured by real gross domestic product (GDP)... recovering strongly in June and July as lockdown measures were eased.³ And now, inflation is at its highest rate for 30 years, having risen to 5.4% in the 12 months to December.
- 2.2. Even without a pay-freeze the average salary of teachers has not kept up with inflation over the past decade, with some calculations indicating that the cost of living has increased by as much as 31.5% since 2010 (£100 in 2010 is now equivalent to £131.53 today), yet UPS3 has only increased 13.2% in the same time period. And, according to the Institute for Fiscal Studies⁴, experienced teachers have seen pay cut by 8% since 2007.
- 2.3. As we stated in our submission to the Review Body last year, we were shocked by the Chancellor's decision to freeze public sector pay, dubbing it a "kick in the teeth for thousands of dedicated teachers, headteachers, support staff and early years professionals who have been working under extreme pressure during the pandemic,"⁵ with more and more expectations placed on them. And this was echoed by other consultees who were "unanimous in their criticism of the Government's decision to exclude the vast majority of teachers and school leaders from this year's remit."⁶
- 2.4. The ongoing impact of the pay freeze continues to affect our members each and every month – increasingly so as inflation rates soar. And we urge the Review Body to undertake the objective and comprehensive analysis required to fully assess the damage caused, the ongoing impact it continues to have and the action necessary to remediate this.
- 2.5. The Review Body was firmly of the view, "that a pay pause for teachers of more than one year risks a severe negative impact on the competitive position of the teaching profession, jeopardising efforts to attract and retain the high-quality graduates necessary to deliver improved pupil outcomes."⁷ Demonstrating that STRB felt constrained by the narrow and restrictive remit and the mandated pay freeze.
- 2.6. It is interesting to note that if the median graduate starting salary of £29,000 paid by the UK's top employers a decade ago had kept pace with inflation, it would now be worth over £37,200 – some £7,000 more than this year's median pay for new graduates.⁸
- 2.7. And yet wages in both private and public sectors are rising. In April, the lowest-paid will see the National Living Wage rise by 6.6% to £9.50 an hour - which is higher than the current inflation rate, whilst in the private sector growth in average total pay (including bonuses) was 4.2%⁹.

³ STRB 31st Report, page 27:3.4

⁴ <https://schoolsweek.co.uk/pay-freeze-means-experienced-teachers-have-seen-pay-cut-by-8-since-2007-ifs/>

⁵ Voice Community, "Written Submission to the School Teachers' Review Body", (February 2021). page 2

⁶ STRB 31st Report, page 11:2.3

⁷ Ibid., page 69:4.33

⁸ High Fliers Research, "The Graduate Market in 2021", (2021). page 18

⁹ <https://www.ons.gov.uk/employmentandlabourmarket/peopleinwork/employmentandemployeetypes/bulletins/uklabourmarket/january2022>

3. **The Graduate Labour Market**

- 3.1 There has been wide fluctuation in the labour market as a whole, and in the graduate labour market in particular as the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic reached across the economic and employment sectors of the UK.
- 3.2 The High Fliers Report, using data gathered during December 2020, understandably reflects a recruitment market in a state of shock. The data shows that the number of graduates recruited was 12.3% lower than in 2019, the largest annual fall in graduate recruitment at the UK's top employers for eleven years¹⁰.
- 3.3 Graduate recruitment was down in thirteen out of fifteen industries and business sectors with the hardest hit being accounting & professional services firms, engineering & industrial companies and public sector employers, which together recruited almost 1,500 fewer graduates than in 2019¹¹.
- 3.4 In its 31st Report, the Review Body observed, 'the impact of COVID-19 on the graduate labour market may be expected to ease the pressures on teacher supply in the short term through improved recruitment and retention. But the demand for graduates and the wider labour market would be expected to recover fully in the medium term ... The absence of a pay uplift in 2021/22 for teachers presents a risk to this opportunity.'¹²
- 3.5 And we are now witnessing this proof as applications into Initial Teacher Training have fallen as the demand for graduates across the wider labour market has blossomed. According to *What do graduates do*¹³, the majority of graduates were in employment 15 months after graduating and only 5.5% were unemployed and looking for work.
- 3.6 The skilled labour market for graduates is currently very strong. Data from the Office for National Statistics Labour Force Survey¹⁴ show a continuing recovery in the labour market. In November 2021, employment was up 424,00 on pre-COVID levels, and that a further 184,000 people were employed throughout December, taking the total number of UK employees to 29.5 million. Coupled with higher levels of older professionals taking retirement during the pandemic and lower applications, the ratio of vacancies to jobs is as high as it's ever been.¹⁵
- 3.7 According to High Fliers Research, "the largest recruiter of new graduates in 2021 is expected to be the public sector, which is offering a record 5,400 entry-level places at organisations such as Police Now, Teach First and the Civil Service Fast Stream."¹⁶ But how will they compete against organisations offering starting salaries in excess of £40,000 when teaching cannot yet even offer £30,000? Fourteen of the country's best-known graduate employers are paying salaries in excess of £45,000 this year and retailer Aldi pays graduates joining its trainee area manager programme £44,000.

¹⁰ High Fliers Research, "The Graduate Market in 2021", (2021). page 5

¹¹ Ibid., page 11

¹² STRB 31st Report, page 69:4.31

¹³ <https://illuminate.prospects.ac.uk/what-do-graduates-do>

¹⁴ <https://www.ons.gov.uk/employmentandlabourmarket/peopleinwork/employmentandemployeetypes/bulletins/uklabourmarket/january2022>

¹⁵ <https://illuminate.prospects.ac.uk/uk-graduate-labour-market-update-21-december>

¹⁶ High Fliers Research, "The Graduate Market in 2021", (2021). page 12

- 3.8 It is important to note that graduate starting salaries have risen every year until 2010, but “the median starting ... has remained at £30,000 for the last six years¹⁷. And the BBC reported that, according to the Institute of Student Employers (ISE), typical pay for graduates rose to £30,500 in 2021, up by £833, while school leavers saw a jump of £1,039. This increase in salaries suggests that employer costs are going up, put simply "businesses need to invest more to hire graduates".¹⁸
- 3.9 And yet teacher starting pay has still failed to achieve anything like this ‘typical pay’, with starting rates in 2015 being almost £8,000 shy of the median and continuing to languish some £4,300 behind at £25,714 in 2021 - an increase of less than £600 for each of the past six years. At this rate it will take another seven years to achieve the much vaunted £30,000 starting salary. By which time it will no longer have the impact, nor the value, of when it was announced three years ago.
- 3.10 Salary demands are rising across private sector employment. This is an employee market and they are not opting for teaching.

¹⁷ High Fliers Research, “The Graduate Market in 2021”, (2021). page 17

¹⁸ <https://www.bbc.co.uk/news/business-59231225>

4. Teachers

4.1. Supply and Demand

- 4.1.1. Twelve years ago, the global financial crisis and recession that followed in the UK had a profound effect on the jobs market,¹⁹ echoes of which have been seen again as a result of the COVID-19 pandemic. Indeed, the Review Body noted last year that, ‘the impact of COVID-19 on the graduate labour market may be expected to ease the pressures on teacher supply in the short term through improved recruitment and retention. But the demand for graduates and the wider labour market would be expected to recover fully in the medium term.’²⁰ The latest information on recruitment shows that this has indeed shown this to be the case, with teacher trainee numbers already back to their pre-pandemic levels.²¹
- 4.1.2. Job vacancies in schools are running at 1.5million (November 2021) and substantial staffing gaps are present in key subjects, particularly in secondary schools. And this is more worrying when placed alongside projected pupil growth of 15% between 2018 and 2025.
- 4.1.3. Once again, the number of newly qualified teachers joining the system has fallen to around 20,000, down from a peak of 26,494 in 2015. And to compound recruitment difficulties, over 20% of new teachers leave within their first two years of teaching and 33% within their first five years, a situation which has worsened year on year since 2010. 85% of teachers who joined in 2018 were retained after one year, the corresponding figure for the 2010 cohort was 86%. 73% of teachers who joined in 2016 were retained after three years, the corresponding figure for the 2010 cohort was 78%. 67% of teachers who joined in 2014 were retained after five years, the corresponding figure for the 2010 cohort was 71%.²²
- 4.1.4. Although the official statistics²³ show that FTE teachers in England have increased by 7,000 since last year, and by 20,000 since 2010, administrative staff, auxiliary staff and technicians are all down, collectively by about 15,500. Many of the duties previously undertaken by support staff have had to be picked up by those working in classrooms, of particular concern is the reduction in technicians in Art and Science dropping by 5000, since they play a critical preparation role which reduces the workload of teachers and TAs whilst also promoting safe working environments and secure storage of equipment and maximising learning time for pupils. All of which contributes to the increase in workload and the decline in morale.
- 4.1.5. The data goes on to show that in 2020, 5% of qualified teachers increased their working hours and 6% decreased their working hours. Such changes in working patterns produced a decrease equivalent to approximately 2,300 FTE qualified teachers between 2019 and 2020 and we expect to see that increase dramatically as a result of the pandemic. And whilst there continues to be a reduction in the number of teachers leaving for reasons of retirement, there remain notable numbers of teachers leaving for other reasons.

¹⁹ High Fliers Research, “The Graduate Market in 2021”, (2021). page 14

²⁰ STRB 31st Report, page 69:4.31

²¹ <https://www.tes.com/magazine/news/general/secondary-teacher-trainee-pandemic-boost-evaporates>

²² STRB 31st Report, page 48:3.44

²³ <https://explore-education-statistics.service.gov.uk/find-statistics/school-workforce-in-england>

- 4.1.6. Jack Worth, the lead economist and school workforce lead for the National Foundation for Educational Research, notes the struggle that leaders are facing trying to recruit staff.²⁴ Indeed, the first recommendation from the NFER is for the government to improve the work-life balance for teachers, saying "Reducing teacher workload and supporting wellbeing should remain a priority for the government in the post-pandemic recovery phase," and it does appear as if "workers might be developing a different attitude towards the jobs market. Job searches have less urgency, job quality is more important than pay."²⁵
- 4.1.7. Pam Tuckett, chair of Kreston International's academies group and head of education at accountants Bishop Fleming, said schools face "difficulties in finding suitable staff, with shortages likely to result in higher salaries ... particularly for PPA and supply cover²⁶ ... There's also the potential for an education skills drought as all schools rush to spend catch-up funds on a limited pool of highly skilled people needed to support pupils' mental health, academic and physical needs as the recovery programme ramps up."²⁷

²⁴ The Teacher Labour Market in England, (NFER, 2021). page 4

²⁵ <https://luminare.prospects.ac.uk/uk-graduate-labour-market-update-21-december>

²⁶ Academies Benchmark Report (Kreston Global, 2022). page 12

²⁷ <https://www.krestonreeves.com/news/multi-academy-trusts-financial-surplus/>

4.2. Morale & Motivation

- 4.2.1. Our *The Future of Education* report testifies that Voice Community members and all education staff have been working intensely in difficult circumstances and many are exhausted to such an extent that there are worrying reports of an imminent staff exodus.²⁸ One of the biggest challenges facing the education sector is retention of experienced teachers. This is not a new trend, but rather one that has persisted over time since well before the coronavirus pandemic. Evidence from the school workforce census over the past decade shows that experienced and skilled teachers are leaving the profession in droves, and Voice Community data shows that 22.39% of our members plan to leave the education sector within the next three years. There were differences among roles, but across schools 1 in 5 are planning to leave:
- 24% of classroom teachers intended to leave;
 - 14% of head teachers or senior leaders; and
 - 23% of supply teachers.
- 4.2.2. It came as no surprise to the sector that the pay freeze exacerbated existing recruitment and retention challenges, with the NGA commenting, “It is difficult to understand how imposing a public sector pay freeze on teachers can be justified”²⁹ And we agree with NAHT that it was “an act of gross and irresponsible folly”.
- 4.2.3. The increase in teacher leaving rates between 2011 and 2019 and the numbers of teachers leaving the profession for reasons other than retirement are very clear evidence that the profession is in crisis, and yet time-after-time their calls are not heeded. “In recent years, the share of exits due to reasons other than retirement has increased, with around 85% of exits in 2018 as compared with 60% in 2011. This is concerning as it means a much larger share of exits are now driven by teachers moving to other jobs rather than because they are retiring”.³⁰
- 4.2.4. There was already a substantial problem with recruitment and retention, but the pandemic has deepened the crisis, with Voice Community members noting, “the biggest challenge will be experienced teachers leaving education”.³¹ And this seems to be borne out as an increasing number of “graduates who leave teaching appear to be entering higher-paying occupations (10 per cent higher since 2015)”.³²
- 4.2.5. Morale is rock bottom and “now, more than ever, experienced classroom teachers are feeling abandoned... the retention strategies put in place by the Department for Education (DfE) seem to centre around the early career teacher... however, these cash incentives don't seem to be working.”³³

²⁸ The Future of Education Report (Voice Community, 2021). page 12

²⁹ STRB 31st Report, page 13:2.13

³⁰ Luke Sibbets, “Teacher shortages in England” (EPI, 2020). page 11

³¹ The Future of Education Report (Voice Community, 2021). page 15

³² <https://www.tes.com/magazine/news/general/most-teachers-wouldnt-earn-more-different-job>

³³ Haili Hughes, “Preserving Positivity” (John Catt, 2020). Page 15

- 4.2.6. The perfect storm of international disruption, restrictions to personal liberty, AND the imposition of a pay freeze whilst requiring teachers to put themselves on the front line has come at a cost. One Voice Community member highlighted that many staff are leaving “because the job itself is challenging enough but the way we have been treated throughout the pandemic has been shocking. Staff will either be off with stress or just want out”.³⁴
- 4.2.7. The government mandate to provide remote learning provision was an insult to teachers and leaders, who were already fully engaged in delivering learning to their pupils despite the lack of adequate infrastructure. The approaches to teaching and learning, whilst maintaining positive and open communications with parents and families as well as pupils, all had to be reimaged, further adding to an already high-pressure situation. The additional workload caused by the pandemic, imposed upon a profession that was a skeleton of its former self, is the straw that has broken the camel’s back.
- 4.2.8. The Teacher Wellbeing Index indicated that over half of all education staff had considered leaving the sector due to workload. And of those who were not planning on immediately leaving, 57% reported they would like to work fewer hours than they currently do.³⁵
- 4.2.9. In the business sector, hybrid working has become a feature of everyday working. It may be that hybrid working becomes a permanent aspect of working life – it is efficient and cost-effective, and it can contribute to improvements in staff wellbeing. “Most workers feel that, on balance, their wellbeing is better as a consequence of hybrid working.”³⁶ Characteristics of hybrid working could help to support retention of staff but are largely absent from education.
- 4.2.10. In our ***The Future of Education*** report, we recommend that increased PPA time for all schools staff and added flexibility, including the ability to take it at home, together with a reduction in data demands, could help to ease some of the workload burden.³⁷ This would require additional teaching and non-teaching staff, and would not be a quick fix, but is a long-term strategy which would both build capacity in the sector and support wellbeing.
- 4.2.11. As we have previously recommended in our submissions to the Review Body, adequate time to undertake all of the duties will significantly improve morale and motivation for teachers, and this should be considered a long-term strategy alongside a substantial pay increase to restore and re-establish teacher pay.
- 4.2.12. There have been large real-terms falls in teacher pay over the last decade, with pay levels at least 8% lower than in 2007, just before the financial crisis. There are also clear signs that these declines in teacher pay have been associated with a worsening in teacher recruitment and retention, particularly since about 2015.³⁸ Correcting teacher pay and addressing workload and wellbeing through an increase in PPA would go some way to assuaging the haemorrhaging of teachers, and it cannot happen too soon for the profession.

³⁴ The Future of Education Report (Voice Community, 2021). page 16

³⁵ Jack Worth, “The Teacher Labour Market in England” (NFER, 2020). page 12

³⁶ <https://illuminate.prospects.ac.uk/uk-graduate-labour-market-update-21-december>

³⁷ The Future of Education Report (Voice Community, 2021). page 18

³⁸ <https://ifs.org.uk/publications/15552>

5. Matters for Recommendation

5.1 Pay

- 5.1.1 Teacher pay is not generous. As has already been noted, the starting salary for teachers languishes some £4,300 behind the median starting salary for graduates. At the other end of the pay scale (U1-U3), more experienced teachers effectively saw a real-terms freeze between 2014 and 2021.³⁹ And across England, median earnings for teachers were three bands lower than for other professional occupations, at £24,000 compared to £27,000.⁴⁰
- 5.1.2 Average classroom teacher pay rose 3.4 per cent to £38,400, while average heads' salaries rose 2.6 per cent to £73,500⁴¹ but it is important to note that this does not indicate average pay rises. For the current financial year this is likely due to the reduction in experienced teachers leaving the profession as a result of the uncertainty caused by the pandemic. However, these increases are small and are all significantly less than the 7.5% real-terms growth in economy-wide average earnings between 2014 and 2021.⁴²
- 5.1.3 Furthermore, ONS figures show an increase in total pay across the economy of 5.9% in the three months to September 2021 and growth in average earnings has been sustained, at 4.2% in the three months to November 2021.⁴³ Therefore failure to initiate a meaningful uplift to teacher pay will have serious repercussions throughout the sector.
- 5.1.4 Arguments from the past in support of a lower salary due to greater rewards such as enhanced pension benefits simply no longer hold water as pay and other benefits have been systematically degraded. According to *The Daily Mail*, funding in education for schools is “not generous” and the school budget settlement is “as tight as it was last year” despite DfE claims of record funding.⁴⁴
- 5.1.5 Any optimism surrounding a growing economy has been crushed by the rates of inflation, and in April the Health and Social Care Levy will drain a further 1.25% in National Insurance contributions from salaries. Last year's pay freeze was initiated over interest rates averaging 1.2%, but already in 2022 inflation is now expected to hit 7% by April. “And although inflation will fall back thereafter ... [it] won't drop to the 2% target until April 2023.”⁴⁵
- 5.1.6 Teachers' wages tend to grow at a slower rate than they would expect in an alternative profession, meaning “many teachers would be financially better off over the course of their career if they leave”.⁴⁶ This must be addressed if teaching is to regain the lustre that it once held. The study by the Institute for Social and Economic Research at the University of Essex also found that a “10 per cent rise in teacher salaries produces a ‘modest’ effect on pupil attainment”, demonstrating a causal effect between pay and attainment.

³⁹ <https://ifs.org.uk/publications/15552>

⁴⁰ STRB 31st Report, page 34:3.21

⁴¹ <https://schoolsweek.co.uk/school-workforce-england-november-2020-data/>

⁴² <https://ifs.org.uk/publications/15552>

⁴³ <https://www.ons.gov.uk/employmentandlabourmarket/peopleinwork/earningsandworkinghours/timeseries/kac3/lms>

⁴⁴ <https://www.dailymail.co.uk/news/article-6884173/Senior-civil-servant-admits-budgets-schools-not-generous.html>

⁴⁵ <https://www.bbc.co.uk/news/business-12196322>

⁴⁶ <https://www.tes.com/magazine/news/general/most-teachers-wouldnt-earn-more-different-job>

- 5.1.7 Putting all of this together it is clear that the government must act. We recommend a pay uplift, fully funded by the Department, that covers the increase in the cost of living and the additional deduction in National Insurance. This should be no less than 10%.

5.2 Affordability

- 5.2.1 As Voice Community has outlined on numerous occasions, it should not be the place of the unions to reflect on the affordability of plans – this is the role of government evidence, specifically from the Treasury, and whilst we acknowledge that the Review Body have been tasked, through the remit, to consider affordability, this should only form a small part of the recommendations.
- 5.2.2 An article in *Schools Week* confirmed what we feared – that, according to Schools Minister Robin Walker, schools will have to meet the cost of all teacher pay rises over the next three years from their core budgets.⁴⁷ But how can schools fund a pay increase for teachers without the funds to do so?!
- 5.2.3 The Government has proclaimed it is restoring per-pupil funding to 2010 levels over the next three years, but this back to the future economics ignores the fact that in the last decade energy costs have soared, and VAT, pension and National Insurance costs and inflation have all risen, yet schools have to meet these costs out of their budgets. There is no extra money for pupils and little chance that funding to support SEN in mainstream schools will be found. There is also the expectation on schools to deliver education recovery, and, it seems, to contribute more to repairs.⁴⁸
- 5.2.4 Over the past year schools have worked hard to manage their finances. There has been some additional funding from central government to meet certain specific spending demands caused by the pandemic such as testing and education recovery initiatives. Schools may also have benefitted from the cancellation of exams and other reduced costs caused through school buildings not being fully open during lockdown, but this is not consistent across the sector. The 10th Annual Kreston Academies Benchmark recently reported that “that the average in-year financial surplus for a multi-academy trust (MAT) doubled to more than £460k in 2021 up from £221k in 2020.”⁴⁹ However, the report does acknowledge that primary academies have fared less well due to them incurring additional costs through being open to more pupils for a longer period of time during the pandemic.

⁴⁷ <https://schoolsweek.co.uk/pay-rises-must-be-met-from-schools-core-budgets-minister-confirms/>

⁴⁸ <https://community-tu.org/back-to-the-future-economics-doesnt-help-schools-meet-rising-costs>

⁴⁹ <https://www.krestonreeves.com/news/multi-academy-trusts-financial-surplus/>

- 5.2.5 Therefore, the picture of high levels of reserves and expert fiscal prudence belies a reality of increased costs through energy increases, improvements to technology infrastructure to facilitate remote learning and from poor quality estates which have contributed to ventilation issues.
- 5.2.6 Finally, affordability should not come at the expense of pupil learning, nor of a dedicated and committed workforce. If DfE can find £26 million additional funding for Ofsted, then funding for pay - which would be spent on staffing, and circumvent the need for schools to raid their own budgets to fund a pay rise - will allow the already reported budget increases to be spent on improving learning and outcomes for children so desperately affected by COVID-19 over the past 24 months.

5.3 A £30,000 Starting Salary

- 5.3.1 The commitment to a £30,000 starting salary for teachers was unveiled by then Secretary of State for Education, Gavin Williamson, in September 2019, with a plan for it to be phased in over three years. That same Secretary of State, in oral evidence given to the Review Body in 2021, reiterated this pledge to a £30,000 salary within the timescale of this parliament. We note the current Secretary of State has further committed to increasing teacher starting pay to £30,000 and yet the timetable for this continues to drift. With no new deadline being set, we have concerns that the Government's commitment to this is waning, whilst all the time the salaries of all teachers suffer.
- 5.3.2 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".⁵⁰ And Voice Community shares these concerns.
- 5.3.3 Haili Hughes, analysing research from the Policy Exchange, found that "teaching does not follow a predictable linear pattern; from the 50,000 entrants into state teaching every year, roughly a third of these are experienced teachers returning to the profession. Therefore, much of the work that the DfE is doing in thinking up incentives that focus on attracting new people to the profession is somewhat missing the point."⁵¹
- 5.3.4 Given the overwhelming evidence from unions, and independent research, it seems obvious that whilst the proposed action to address the teacher starting salary is significant and should not be further delayed, it must not be done in isolation. The evidence from the Teacher Workforce Survey clearly shows that retention must also be a key focus for this and future pay awards.

⁵⁰ STRB 31st Report, page 16:2.32

⁵¹ Haili Hughes, "Preserving Positivity" (John Catt, 2020). Page 16

5.4 Pay and Conditions

Workload & Wellbeing

- 5.4.1 Of all the mechanisms put in place for Early Career Teachers, for Voice Community, the one which warranted the most attention was the additional Planning, Preparation and Assessment time afforded. We noted in our ***The Future of Education***⁵² report that “international comparisons show that teachers in England spend more time working than in many other high-performing countries with some estimates suggesting teachers work an average of 50 hours each week with much of this work undertaken in the evenings and at weekends, having detrimental impact on a teacher’s homelife.” And teacher and head teacher members went on to state that it was workload, followed by pressures of the role, that were the key drivers causing staff to want to leave the sector.
- 5.4.2 The benefit of a reduced teaching load and additional PPA time has been a part of our submission to the Review Body for the past few years and the promise of extra PPA time will help with teacher recruitment and retention according to research reported by TES.⁵³ Doubling PPA time would reduce teaching loads and would allow staff to focus their efforts and the planning and feedback aspects of teaching – aspects which we know are burdensome but which also have a significant impact on improving pupil performance.
- 5.4.3 There are a number of further burdens which are driving teacher, leader and support staff workload. The Review Body notes that “wellbeing and workload issues were frequently raised in our discussions of teacher retention ... workload was exacerbated by cuts to social services, lack of classroom support and increased time managing safeguarding concerns.”⁵⁴ And it came as no surprise to us that the pandemic has exacerbated these workload issues beyond breaking point through further reduction in access to support service, additional work to support children in need and carrying out government mandated recovery activities – all of which demanded an increasing amount of time.
- 5.4.4 The benefits of reducing teacher contact time through the increase of PPA goes far beyond supporting mental well-being and reducing stress, The World Health Organization reported⁵⁵ 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 is increasing.⁵⁶ Evidence from the Teacher Workforce Survey notes that teachers in the UK often work in excess of 50 hours each week. “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.”⁵⁷

⁵² The Future of Education Report (Voice Community, 2021). page 16

⁵³ <https://www.tes.com/magazine/teaching-learning/general/why-doubling-ppa-could-help-tackle-attainment-gap>

⁵⁴ STRB 31st Report, page 81:6.13

⁵⁵ <https://www.who.int/news/item/17-05-2021-long-working-hours-increasing-deaths-from-heart-disease-and-stroke-who-ilo>

⁵⁶ <https://www.sciencedirect.com/science/article/pii/S0160412021002208>

⁵⁷ <https://www.who.int/news/item/17-05-2021-long-working-hours-increasing-deaths-from-heart-disease-and-stroke-who-ilo>

- 5.4.5 Teach First have also put forward the proposal for an increase in PPA, arguing that, "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 teachers' career, so all teachers can keep improving, as well as avoid getting burned out in the process."⁵⁸ This fits comfortably with the detail we set out in our previous submissions to the Review Body.
- 5.4.6 We know that teachers in England 'teach' on a much more frequent basis than in many other high-performing systems. Data from the OECD and TALIS reports outline the amount of time different countries spend on planning and teaching, measured over a set period of time, and whilst not always directly comparable, this gives an indication of the workload experienced by teachers in England.
- 5.4.7 In the 2018 TALIS report, England's teachers are recorded as working between 50 and 53 hours each week.⁵⁹ When multiplied by the 39 working weeks in a school year, we have a very rough estimate of the amount of time a teacher spends working - and it is a worryingly high 1950 hours, or almost 700 hours beyond directed time, or an additional 17 hours each week.
- 5.4.8 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 than colleagues in other countries.⁶⁰
- 5.4.9 Teach First argue that delivering fewer lessons per week would give teachers more time to spend on planning and professional development that would ensure lessons had been 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.
- 5.4.10 There is evidence emerging from schools that have already implemented an approach to increased PPA. Noel-Baker Academy in Derby give staff 20 per cent of time for PPA and they have 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".⁶¹

⁵⁸ <https://www.tes.com/magazine/teaching-learning/general/why-doubling-ppa-could-help-tackle-attainment-gap>

⁵⁹ TALIS 2018, p75

https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/918993/TALIS_2018_research.pdf

⁶⁰ <https://data.oecd.org/teachers/teaching-hours.htm>

⁶¹ <https://www.tes.com/magazine/teaching-learning/general/why-doubling-ppa-could-help-tackle-attainment-gap>

- 5.4.11 Voice Community calls on the Review Body to look again at the Pay and Conditions Document and to consider increasing the basic amount of PPA time for classroom teachers to 20%.

Performance-Related Pay

- 5.4.12 Following evidence from unions, the Review Body has stated in the last three reports that “further research should be conducted by the Department on the equality implications of the teachers’ pay system”.⁶² Voice Community would urge the Review Body to undertake this research as a matter of some importance, because there is a body of evidence to suggest that not only is the system of performance-related pay unfair, but that it actually drives equalities impacts across the system.
- 5.4.13 And TUC data suggests that teaching is one of the worst offenders, with an 18.4% pay divide between male and female teachers. The gulf widens the more senior staff become, with women in state school leadership positions earning £5,700 less than men and when age is added into the data, the divide widens further still. Female headteachers under the age of 40 earn £5,400 less than their male counterparts, while those in their 40s earn £7,700 less, those in their 50s earn £11,300 less, and those aged 60 or over earning a £13,500 less.⁶³ The data also suggests that women in teaching experience lower rates of promotion, while evidence from the European Commission and the Equality and Human Rights Commission suggests that the introduction of competitive performance-related pay is making the gender pay gap worse.
- 5.4.14 The gender pay gap across education is apparent when, on average, across all state funded schools including academies, female teachers earn £2,900 less than their male counterparts (£37,700 compared to £40,660). Voice Community believes that one of the driving forces behind the division is performance-related pay.
- 5.4.15 Evidence gathered and published in 2014⁶⁴ already showed clearly that performance-related pay had a negative impact on teacher wellbeing, motivation and ultimate job satisfaction. This was especially the case when systems were based on areas which could be unfairly influenced by elements outside of a teacher’s direct control – such as test scores in standardised assessment, or pupil attendance and behaviour.

⁶² STRB 31st Report, page 80:6.9

⁶³ <https://www.careerteachers.co.uk/career-advice/blog/eliminating-the-gender-pay-gap-in-schools>

⁶⁴ “A review of the evidence on the impact, effectiveness and value for money of performance-related pay in the public sector” (The Work Foundation, Lancaster University, 2014). pp8, 43

- 5.4.16 The report goes on to outline that in education, “the vast majority of PRP schemes incentivise outcomes on student test scores.”⁶⁵ This has the unintended consequence of narrowing the curriculum so that it focuses much more on preparing for the test rather than providing the ‘broad and balanced’ curriculum that the government demands. This work often centres on ‘borderline’ pupils who seem to be unwitting pawns in the success criteria. Furthermore, it sets teacher against teacher and schools against schools in a never-ending competition to ‘win’ a higher position in league tables and stave off inspection, and this has led to cases of outright cheating, where school officials have conspired to alter students’ test scores.⁶⁶
- 5.4.17 We know that teacher performance cannot accurately be assessed solely through pupil performance data. We also know that many teachers see their work as a vocation and gain their motivation from the work they undertake and the lives they inspire, rather than striving to reach some spurious goal. There may be a risk that performance-related pay can detract from this intrinsic motivation, rendering the process null and void.⁶⁷ Furthermore, “economic theory suggests a number of reasons why a straightforward private sector logic for PRP might not translate into the public sector – and teachers in particular.”⁶⁸

5.5 The wider operation of the pay framework

- 5.5.1 As we outlined in our evidence to the 31st Pay Review, reform of the pay structure is long overdue. Voice Community has in the past recommended that consideration be made to removing the threshold and having one teacher pay scale. This is due to ongoing concerns around progression onto the upper pay scale, especially when so many teachers and leaders are unclear about the requirements for progression to the UPR and the expectations of those working at the UPR. Increasingly, the process to progress has become unnecessarily bureaucratic with evidence gathering requirements contributing to excessive workload and dissuading eligible teachers from making what the STPCD describes as an “application”.
- 5.5.2 The Review Body noted that, “Some existing UPR teachers told us they did not feel the framework was effective in rewarding or incentivising teachers who wanted to stay in the classroom and those on UPR3 reported feeling they had ‘reached a ceiling’ with nowhere to progress.”⁶⁹ And we agree that “further reforms, ..., would be needed in future to ensure the pay framework for classroom teachers recognised high performance and increases in teaching excellence and capability, while also rewarding teachers for taking on management and leadership responsibilities.”⁷⁰ We would go further and state that the time for reform is now.

⁶⁵ “A review of the evidence on the impact, effectiveness and value for money of performance-related pay in the public sector” (The Work Foundation, Lancaster University, 2014). Page 61

⁶⁶ Ibid., Page 7

⁶⁷ Ibid., Page 5

⁶⁸ <https://policybristol.blogs.bris.ac.uk/2018/01/29/lessons-learned-from-imposing-performance-related-pay-on-teachers/>

⁶⁹ STRB 31st Report, page 95:C18

⁷⁰ Ibid., page 83:6.20

- 5.5.3 We accept that there may be some merit in retaining the MPR / UPR distinction and recognise that this may have some motivational impact on teachers by allowing them to aspire to higher salaries for remaining in the classroom. However, as previously noted, there is widespread misunderstanding of the roles and responsibilities of those on the upper pay scale, leading to spurious demands being placed on experience, such that some staff deliberately choose not to progress. This abuse of the upper pay range leading to increased workload demands and responsibility is also contributing to the exodus of staff within the first few years of teaching, and certainly reducing the number of skilled and experienced classroom practitioners.
- 5.5.4 Similarly, the way that Teaching and Learning Responsibility points are allocated and distributed is uneven across settings – especially between Primary and Secondary schools - with staff ostensibly with responsibility for similar subject areas and widely different salary points, often without financial recognition for the additional leadership duties they hold. And interestingly some TLR holders report that the payment levels are insufficient for the additional workload.
- 5.5.5 All of this distracts from teachers' and leaders' core duties of educating children. Furthermore, they encourage unhealthy workforce culture and contribute to the difficulties in recruiting and retaining quality staff. Voice Community urges the Review Body to review the pay framework for classroom teachers to ensure it recognises high performance and increases in teaching excellence, supporting and encouraging experienced teachers to remain whilst also providing an attractive career option for Early Career Teachers.
- 5.5.6 With that in mind, we reiterate our previous position on differentiated pay increases. Voice Community is opposed to differential pay increases as they often seem unfair, rewarding inexperience over experience and maturity. Pay increases must be meaningful and should not unduly impact any section of the workforce to the detriment of the others, including those on the leadership pay scale. Differentials should be maintained until research has been undertaken to show that change will bring about improvements over the current system. Change – such as the introduction of a £30,000 starting salary - should be carefully implemented to avoid unintended consequences.
- 5.5.7 Finally, Voice Community was pleased to note the inclusion of advisory pay points within the 2021 STPCD. Prior to this inclusion, we have, together with our sister unions, issued joint pay advice to schools in England, including national pay points.⁷¹ We continue to call for the restoration of the national pay structure with appropriately-increased and mandatory pay points as a minimum entitlement for all teachers and school leaders.

⁷¹ <https://community-tu.org/joint-advice-on-school-teachers-pay-in-england-2021-22>

6 **Summary**

- 6.1 Teacher pay has for too long suffered and deteriorated in value. It is no longer sufficient to draw new applicants into the profession and provides scant reward for those who wish to remain. "If policymakers want to recruit and retain the most effective teachers, they need to ensure that teachers starting salaries remain competitive and that the pay scales are adjusted so that experience is rewarded, because as things stand, for many, it does not pay to be a teacher."⁷²
- 6.2 A real-terms pay increase is necessary, one which restores the value of teacher in the face of inflation, increased living costs and rising energy prices. It is essential that teacher pay maintains this restored value in the future. Voice Community believes that a fully-funded increase of 10% is fair and reasonable. It is unreasonable to require schools and academies to fund this from any reserves they may have prudently built up over the past 24 months as they already have to bear the burden of increased pension and National Insurance increases.
- 6.3 Teacher supply remains a concern. Whilst there is evidence that the public see teachers as having relatively high job security, this has not led to stability in the recruitment and retention figures. Indeed, although the pandemic could be seen to have contributed to an increase in applications to ITT, it remains to be seen how many of these will graduate as qualified teachers and mature in the profession.
- 6.4 In addition to pay, workload and wellbeing are significant contributors to staff happiness. Currently, there is a requirement for staff to receive a minimum 10% PPA time. Some schools see this as a target, and others fail to achieve the minimum on a regular basis. More graduates are seeking improved working conditions, and this can be achieved through additional time to complete duties. Therefore, Voice Community is recommending an increase of PPA to 20% for all teaching staff and those who are directed to lead classroom learning.
- 6.5 A culture needs to be developed so that staff have the right to disconnect from the workplace, ie not being expected to answer emails and phone calls out of hours, to support mental health and wellbeing. This would be in line with the aims of the Staff Wellbeing Charter which was launched earlier this academic year. Furthermore, the Government needs to adhere to this charter, to which it has signed up, to ensure that all school staff, including leaders, are given the right to disconnect.
- 6.6 Teachers need to be released to teach and funded to do so. Successive funding cuts have withered school support services so that they are no longer effective nor functioning at a time when there has never been a greater need. The disadvantage gap is growing because these services are unable to bridge the gap and support children's physical and emotional needs. Any withdrawal or diversion of existing funding from schools would jeopardise further the support that vulnerable children and young people are receiving. Therefore, the pay increase for teachers must be fully funded by central government to protect these learners and the schools and staff they rely on.

⁷² Joshua Fullard, reported in - <https://www.tes.com/magazine/news/general/most-teachers-wouldnt-earn-more-different-job>

- 6.7 The pay structure - its various points, ranges and allowances - is also vulnerable. It is vulnerable since many aspects are not fully understood and open to interpretation. Despite the pay freedoms afforded them, the vast majority of academies do adhere to the tenets and scales of the School Teachers' Pay and Conditions Document, which speaks volumes for the value of the publication. However, there is scope for improving understanding and achieving greater clarity, and reducing inequality, and we urge the Review Body to consider how this might be achieved in their recommendations.
- 6.8 Finally, we trust that the Review Body will consider all of the evidence and look widely at the situation before making its recommendations to government. And we look forward to working together to address these and other wider pay and conditions issues.