

NAHT supplementary evidence to the School Teachers' Review Body (STRB) 29th remit

1. NAHT welcomes the opportunity to provide supplementary evidence in response to the Department for Education's (DfE) submission to the School Teachers' Review Body (STRB) and to comment on the content of other parties' evidence in relation to its 29th remit.
2. The evidence of our original submission, and that of other respondents, makes clear that the teacher supply crisis remains **critical** at all levels within the profession. There is a unanimous view that a fully funded, above-inflation, undifferentiated pay uplift is required to address the continuing recruitment and retention crisis in teaching.
3. DfE's own evidence states that the real terms value of teachers' salaries (for all teachers and classroom teachers) fell between 2002/3 and 2017/18.¹ Its submission is clear: '...classroom teacher median salaries have seen a drop of 10% and overall teacher median salaries of 11% in real terms'.²
4. In fact, the graph³ presented by DfE shows a generally upward trend in teachers' median salaries from 2002/03 until 2007/08, after which there is a **sustained decline**. The selection of 2002/03, rather than (say) 2007/08, as the base point against which the decline has been measured therefore masks some of the subsequent decline in real salaries. It is clear that the decline of the real value of teachers' pay began in 2007/08 and accelerated steeply from 2010/11. The choice of a 2002/03 base point (paragraph B16) obscures the point at which real salaries actually began to decline.
5. Furthermore, the decline in real terms median teaching salaries is set against what the DfE describes as the 'median salaries of private sector graduates' where a decrease of 15 per cent was recorded. The clear implication this statement seeks to create is that teachers have fared better than others in professional graduate occupations.
6. NAHT believes that this is an **extraordinarily misleading comparison**. A footnote to DfE's chart reveals that the 'median salaries of private sector graduates' refers to graduates from **all** occupations, and **not** graduates in comparable professional occupations.⁴ These data include graduates working in all manner of non-graduate roles, which are not comparable to

¹ [Government evidence to the STRB](#), DfE, January 2019, p32

² Ibid p32

³ Ibid fig 13, p32

⁴ Ibid p32 footnote 37

teaching as a professional occupation.

7. The implication in the Department's submission that teachers have fared better than other graduates in the private sector is not sustainable, because the data does not compare alike groups.
8. In fact, the decline in the real value of teaching salaries in comparison to other comparable graduate occupations is well established.
9. Our own submission, the submissions of other respondents and successive STRB reports clearly demonstrates that the real value of teaching salaries and allowances have, in fact, continued to **decline against other comparable graduate occupations**, making teaching a less attractive option for new entrants and serving practitioners.
10. Alarming, the Department has no plan to restore the value of teaching salaries. Instead it hopes that its recently launched recruitment and retention strategy⁵, and associated early career framework⁶, will achieve a turnaround in the perceptions of teaching as a career.
11. NAHT welcomed these developments. Indeed, we were actively and formatively engaged with both developments. However, alone they are insufficient to resolve the crisis.
12. The DfE's consistent misunderstanding is that the non-financial rewards of teaching, which principally involve the professional satisfaction of making a difference to children's lives, somehow outweigh the need to pay teachers and school leaders fairly.
13. It is true that a strong sense of moral and public duty drives many teachers and school leaders. However, it is extraordinary folly to assume that this means that pay is unimportant to those considering a career in teaching, or serving teachers and leaders thinking of leaving the profession.
14. Teaching is a hugely demanding **professional occupation**, requiring considerable personal resilience and long working hours. Teachers and school leaders deserve to be well remunerated for their work, rather than see their salaries consistently falling behind other graduate professions.
15. The denial of the importance of pay, combined with the decade of below inflation pay uplifts which have undermined the real value of teaching salaries, is entirely at odds with DfE's marketing of the profession. It denigrates the work of teachers and school leaders; it sends a signal to prospective entrants and serving professionals alike that their work

⁵ [Teacher recruitment and retention strategy](#)

⁶ [Early Career Framework](#)

educating Britain's future scientists, engineers and doctors is undervalued.

16. Low starting pay, poor career progression and a heavy workload act as strong disincentives to commencing or continuing a career in teaching. Like any other professional, teachers seek to achieve a good standard of living, and one where financial reward is not eroded year after year.
17. NAHT is therefore dismayed that the DfE's submission presents irrelevant generalist information about the 'public sector' in order to press the Review Body to consider the 'affordability' of any pay recommendation. For example:
 - the section on the *General economic outlook* implies that teachers and school leaders were in some way beneficiaries of the 'biggest pay rise in almost 10 years for around one million public sector workers in Britain'⁷ In fact, as our evidence demonstrates, almost two-thirds of teachers and school leaders received **another** below inflation pay uplift, meaning that the real value of their pay continued to fall further behind other comparable graduate occupations.
 - in the section on the UK economy, the DfE submission states that '...real wages are rising at the fastest rate for two years'⁸ – that may be the case, but as noted above real wages continue to fall for two-thirds of the teaching profession.
 - at paragraph 25, the DfE submission draws a comparison between public sector and private sector that is not specific to teaching or to graduate occupations, **conflating matters unrelated to teacher supply**.
 - the increase in the national living wage is irrelevant to teaching which is a professional graduate occupation, as are changes to income tax, which are recognised as being of the greatest benefit to very high earners.⁹
18. The Department continues to deny the ongoing crisis in teacher supply, through the selective use of evidence. NAHT is astonished that DfE continues to quote teacher vacancy rates as being stable at around 0.3 per cent or below. This is despite the fact they have previously acknowledged that vacancy rates obtained as part of the school teacher workforce census are unlikely to reflect recruitment difficulties fully.¹⁰ We are shocked at this ongoing complacency in the face of overwhelming evidence provided by NAHT and other organisations.

19. We refer the STRB to paragraphs 132 to 134 of our submission which

⁷ Ibid p4 para 8

⁸ Ibid p10

⁹ Ibid pp4-5

¹⁰ NAO (2016). Training New Teachers. P18 para 17

address the apparently low vacancy rate recorded through census data. As noted at paragraph 133, DfE previously collected and reported data on the proportion of state-funded schools that had at least one advertised vacancy or one temporarily filled post on census day. Our submission highlights that this data appears to be missing from the Department's 2017 data summary. No reason has been provided to explain why such useful data is no longer reported.

20. Our submission also deals with matters raised by the DfE in its section *Applying the pay award*.¹¹ At paragraphs 58 to 65 of our evidence we are clear that our support for pay flexibilities, including performance related pay progression, was on the basis that these remained distinct from the annual review of teachers' pay conducted by the Review Body.
21. The majority of schools have retained notional pay points for the main, upper and leadership pay ranges. Unions update these notional pay points each year, following the conclusion of the STRB process. NAHT's position is that all teachers and school leaders have a legitimate expectation to receive the annual pay uplift that is agreed.
22. NAHT rejects the Departments view¹² that the annual uplift is not intended to be applied universally. The purpose of the annual uplift is to ensure that salaries are adjusted to ensure their competitiveness against comparable graduate occupations. At the very least this should mean protecting the value of existing teaching salaries against inflation.
23. The annual uplift to pay arising from the STRB process is not about rewarding individual performance. It is about maintaining a predictable and attractive salary and allowance structure for the profession as a whole. That structure must also provide for pay progression, as part of the positive proposition for teaching as a career.
24. Our experience is that where the full annual pay uplift is not applied across a school, this is usually a result of budget pressures, rather than resulting from a negative evaluation of teacher performance. It is not in the interests of schools as employers to erode the notional national pay scales, as this has the potential to undermine recruitment and retention, potentially creating a whole series of unintended consequences and driving perverse incentives.
25. NAHT's submission is clear – we remain implacably opposed to any form of differentiated pay award. The annual uplift should be common and should be applied to all salaries and allowances in payment.

¹¹ Ibid p23

¹² Ibid p23

26. We draw the Review Body's attention to the morale sapping impact that the narrowing of the pay differential between leaders and teachers has driven. The anger and frustration among our members following the Secretary of State's decision to ignore the Review Body's recommendation remains palpable. This, of itself, presents a threat to the pipeline of future school leaders, and the retention of existing professionals.
27. NAHT's original submission rejects the Department's view that
- '...flexibilities in the pay system mean that the cost of the award to individual schools depends significantly on decisions made by those schools, [and that the STRB's] recommendations should still take full account of affordability when considering the school system as a whole i.e. considering existing pressures and the resultant scope for increases in costs nationally'.¹³*
28. We reiterate our view that consideration of the **affordability** of its recommendations is not a matter for the STRB.
29. Rather, the Review Body's role is to take an independent, evidence-based view on teacher and school leader supply taking account of vacancy rates and recruitment and retention issues alongside consideration of the wider labour market in England, in order to make recommendations on the salary and allowance ranges for teachers and school leaders so that pay acts as a lever on teacher supply.
30. The STRB cannot fulfill that role if government imposes a **de facto pay cap** on its work, effectively fettering the STRB's independence and statutory functions. NAHT regards this as an unacceptable interference in the independent work of the Review Body.
31. NAHT therefore again urges the Review Body to act without regard to the constraints which the DfE has attempted to impose.
32. Schools continue to face an **acute funding crisis**. We support the view advanced by other respondents that there should be no assumption that sufficient headroom exists within school budgets to fund (even) a one per cent base line increase to salaries. Government must ensure that the teachers' pay award for 2019/20 is fully funded.

Ian Hartwright
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¹³ Ibid p12