

NAHT supplementary evidence to the School Teachers' Review Body (STRB) 30th remit

Introduction

1. NAHT welcomes the opportunity to submit supplementary evidence to the School Teachers' Review Body (STRB) to inform its 30th remit report.
2. NAHT is the UK's largest professional association for school leaders. We represent more than 30,000 head teachers, executive heads, CEOs, deputy and assistant heads, vice principals and school business leaders. Our members work across: the early years, primary, special and secondary schools; independent schools; sixth form and FE colleges; outdoor education centres; pupil referral units, social services establishments and other educational settings.
3. In addition to the representation, advice and training that we provide for existing senior leaders, we also support, develop and represent the senior leaders of the future, through NAHT Edge, the middle leadership section of our association. We use our voice at the highest levels of government to influence policy for the benefit of leaders and learners everywhere.

Inappropriate constraints on the work of the School Teachers' Review Body

4. The Review Body is charged with arriving at an evidence-based view on teacher and school leader supply, taking account of vacancy rates and recruitment and retention issues alongside the wider labour market in England in order to make recommendations on the appropriate salary and allowance ranges for teachers and school leaders, so that pay acts as a lever on teacher and leader supply.
5. Recent remits set by the Secretary of State have attempted to constrain that role by setting affordability parameters for the Review Body to work within. NAHT is deeply concerned that the government's approach to this year's remit represents an attempt to impose even greater constraints, by announcing pay policy in advance of setting the STRB's remit.
6. More than two weeks before issuing his remit letter to the Review Body for

the 2020 pay round¹, the Secretary of State announced his intention to raise starting salaries to £30,000². In January 2020 this was followed by a widely reported press release³ entitled *Teachers set for biggest sustained pay increase since 2005*, which accompanied the DfE evidence submission to the Review Body, reiterating the government's policy intentions.

7. NAHT believes that this represents a more significant interference in the independence of the STRB process than has been the case even in recent years, which attempts to set a publicly announced frame for the Review Body to work within. Not only does the Department for Education submission attempt to determine the precise value at which starting salaries should be set, it invites the Review Body to select one of its three approaches to delivering increased starting salaries over a period of three years.
8. NAHT has argued consistently for an increase in starting salaries over recent remits. In common with other consultees we welcome the recognition that starting salaries are too low to compete with other professions. However, by attempting to restrict the Review Body's considerations to the rate at which all salaries should be increased over a three-year period in order to achieve its a stated policy aim, government fails, once again, to recognise that a much stronger emphasis on retention is required. We urge the STRB to reject this constraint.

The proposed rise in starting salaries must be matched across the profession, including leadership roles

9. There is unanimity among consultees that rises to starting salaries must be matched across the profession. The DfE proposals once again focus only on incentives to enter the profession.
10. NAHT's evidence clearly demonstrates that targeting real pay increases solely on those within the first years of their career, while neglecting experienced teachers and school leaders, will do nothing to improve the skewed age profile in teaching. Indeed, it is likely to undermine retention, damaging the very career longevity that the DfE says it wishes to strengthen.
11. Recent history shows that raising starting salaries while restricting pay uplifts for experienced teachers and leaders will do nothing to improve retention or make leadership roles more attractive. There is a real risk that

¹ [Secretary of State's remit letter to the STRB](#), 18 September 2019

² [DfE press release](#), 2 September 2019

³ [DfE press release](#), 21 January 2020

this approach will cause even greater damage to morale than resulted from 2018's differentiated pay settlement, hastening the exit of more experienced teachers and leaders, and erecting new barriers for those considering leadership positions.

12. The DfE remains complacent about the risks of a policy focused solely on incentives for entrants to the profession. Indeed, it was the profession itself that recognised the growing recruitment and retention crisis in teaching well in advance of government. Our own *Leaky pipeline* report (2017), which built upon previous annual NAHT surveys dating from 2014, offered a significant contribution to that evidence base well in advance of DfE's recognition and acceptance of the extent of the problems afflicting teaching.
13. As a result, DfE's recruitment and retention strategy was devised and implemented long after the crisis, which continues to worsen, had become established. NAHT is concerned that, once again, DfE is behind the curve in its understanding of the pressures and barriers that are causing a crisis in leadership supply. The Department risks repeating previous mistakes by ignoring the clear evidence of leadership supply difficulties and choosing to focus only on early career teachers.
14. This complacency is evident in the underpinning logic of its current approach to pay. The DfE's evidence states that '...pay is a lower relative priority for these [more experienced] teachers in their decisions whether to remain in the profession – in comparison to workload or flexible working opportunities that the department is addressing through our recruitment and retention strategy – and that salaries compare more favourably currently on the upper and leadership pay ranges.'⁴
15. NAHT and other consultees present compelling evidence to the contrary. Pay is a rising indicator of dissatisfaction among both teachers and leaders and the contributory factor that can cause professionals to reach the tipping point where they finally quit the profession.
16. The belief that non-pay solutions are sufficient to deliver a resolution are misguided. Moreover, steps to promote more flexible approaches to working are in their infancy, and dependent on a wide range of other intersecting influences and barriers. Similarly, the weight of available evidence indicates that workload reduction strategies are having, at best, an extremely limited impact on the hours worked, stress or well-being of those within the profession.
17. NAHT regards this view on pay as little more than wishful thinking, predicated on the notion that altruism and self-sacrifice are overriding

⁴ [Government evidence to the STRB](#) p 20

motivators for those working in teaching. This represents a comprehensive failure to recognise that teaching cannot compete with other similar professional decades-long occupations without a coherent and progressive salary structure that recognises both experience and leadership responsibility.

18. Our evidence presents DfE's own data showing rising wastage rates for heads, deputies and assistant heads within their first three years in post. It is impossible to see how delivering further differentiated pay uplifts that discriminate against experienced teachers and leaders will do anything other than drive more of them from the profession, particularly when set against a background of accrued losses to the real value of their pay that run to tens of thousands of pounds over the last decade.
19. The headline rise in starting salaries combined with slower pay progression, in smaller increments also guarantees that pay in teaching will fall further behind other comparable graduate professions immediately upon implementation, once again positioning teaching negatively in the graduate and graduate career-changer market place. As a result, teaching will continue to struggle to compete with other graduate professions, and leadership recruitment will continue to suffer.

Affordability

20. We reiterate the position set out in our submission of the irrelevance of considerations of affordability to the STRB's labour market analysis. Decisions about affordability sit in a wider policy context that is not within the purview of the STRB.
21. In common with other consultees, NAHT continues to believe that the government must **fully fund** pay increases across the profession; such funding must be **in addition** to the commitment that government has made to increase school funding by 2022-23. Given the decline in the real pay of teachers and leaders that has occurred since 2010, it is essential that government makes available additional funding to restore these salaries. Doing so is a critical component of any strategy designed to create a compelling proposition for a decades-long professional career in the teaching profession.
22. It is not clear that schools will have sufficient fiscal headroom to meet increased staff costs. A significant proportion of schools are due to receive an increase in funding of just 1.8 per cent in 2020-21. This is lower than the average cost of the pay increase for schools and will therefore place yet further pressures on their budgets.

School workforce data

23. Our submissions to the both this and the 29th remit made reference to previously published annual school census data that recorded the number of schools reporting having at least one advertised vacancy or one temporarily filled post on census day in November each year. This data had inexplicably disappeared from publications after 2016. NAHT has pressed DfE for the release of this data since we began assembling evidence for our submission to the 29th remit.

24. The DfE publication SFR 25/2017 (June 2017) *School Workforce in England: November 2016*⁵ stated:

‘In 2016, 12.3 per cent of all schools reported having at least one advertised vacancy or temporarily-filled post on the census day in November. For primary schools, it rose from 6.9 per cent in 2015 to 8.9 per cent in 2016, and for secondary schools it rose from 23.0 per cent in 2015 to 27.0 per cent in 2016’ [shown at table 3.1 & 3.2 in SR44/2016⁶ which provides local analysis data].

25. This data is critical because the DfE’s standard measurement of vacancy rates vastly under reports the true scale of the recruitment challenges facing schools, a fact acknowledged by the Department themselves as long ago as 2017.⁷ For example, the School Workforce Census for 2018 records a completely misleading vacancy rate of just 0.2 per cent.⁸

26. NAHT has finally secured an update to data provided in SFR 25/2017. The update given to the DfE’s trade union recruitment and retention reference group meeting on 31 January 2020 states:

‘...The schools workforce census showed a decrease in the percentage of schools with at least one unfilled vacancy. In 2018 11.1 per cent of all schools reported having at least one advertised post or temporarily-filled post on the census day in November, compared to 11.9 per cent in 2017. For primary schools it decreased from 8.2 per cent in 2017 to 7.1 per cent in 2018 and for secondary schools it increased from 28.2 per cent in 2017 to 29.4 per cent in 2018, showing the increasing difficulties in tackling supply.’ [unpublished]

27. For ease of reference these data are summarised in the table on the following page.

⁵ [School Workforce in England, SFR 25/2017 \(June 2017\)](#)

⁶ <https://www.gov.uk/government/statistics/local-analysis-of-teacher-workforce-2010-to-2015>

⁷ NAO (2017). [Retaining and developing the teaching workforce](#)

⁸ [School Workforce Census 2018](#)

	Percentage of schools which reported having at least one advertised vacancy or temporarily filled post on census day			
	2015	2016	2017	2018
Primary	6.9	8.9	8.2	7.1
Secondary	23.0	27.0	28.2	29.4
All schools	N/A	12.3	11.9	11.1

Sources:

- 2015 & 2016 SFR25/2017⁹ and DfE local analysis of teacher workforce 2010-2015¹⁰
- 2017 and 2018 written update provide to DfE teacher recruitment and retention trade union group, 31 January 2020 [unpublished]

28. In the secondary phase the number of schools with pupils being taught by **at least** one temporary member of staff or carrying **at least** one vacancy has **risen** from about one in four to almost one in three between 2015 and 2019.

29. While there has been some improvement in primary schools, the proportion of schools with least one vacancy or pupils being taught by at least one temporary member of staff **remains higher** than it was in 2016. Comparable data for school leadership posts is not collected.

30. The lack of stable, permanent staffing has a profoundly negative impact on the progress and attainment of pupils, ultimately affecting their outcomes and life chances, and overall school performance. NAHT finds it extraordinary that the analysis and tables containing this useful and revealing data have not been part of the published summary since 2016.¹¹

Matters for consideration raised by the STRB for response by consultees

The principles underpinning the Department's proposals for the classroom teachers pay structure

⁹ [School Workforce in England](#), November 2016, SFR 25/2017

¹⁰ [Local analysis of teacher workforce: 2010 to 2015](#) SFR 44/2016

¹¹ [Local analysis of teacher workforce: 2010 to 2015](#) SFR 44/2016

31. NAHT welcomes the Department's recognition that starting salaries in teaching are inadequate. We have presented plentiful evidence over recent remits to demonstrate the lack of competitiveness of teaching salaries in comparison to other professional graduate occupations.
32. Although a starting salary of £30,000 per annum represents a positive step forward, in common with other consultees, we note that the three-year transition period means that this is likely to be outstripped by other professional and graduate level jobs over the implementation period. Improving and maintaining competitive starting pay relative to other graduate professions, as part of an overall package of reward, is an essential pre-condition for creating a compelling proposition for a decades-long career in teaching. There is also no suggestion of linking the proposed increases to inflation, which would surely be prudent given the uncertainties associated with Britain's trade negotiations with the European Union.
33. In our response to the 28th remit we set out our opposition to a differentiated pay award. We noted that focusing an increase on those in the very early years of teaching (or on teachers of particular subject specialisms, or in specific geographical locations) would further demoralise existing teachers and school leaders who had endured eight years of cuts to real pay. We cited evidence from our members who told us that differentiated pay awards are hugely unhelpful, creating division among the teaching workforce and unnecessary management challenges for school leaders.
34. NAHT has previously presented comprehensive and compelling evidence that established that shortages occur throughout all phases and disciplines within the teaching profession. It seems that the Department has still failed to grasp the fact that the investment in incentives to bring recruits into teaching needs to be matched by similar on-going investment to retain teachers and leaders within the system, and at all career stages. The current proposals fall well short of that ambition.
35. NAHT does **not**, therefore, support the proposal to increase starting salaries while 'flattening' the salaries of experienced teachers and leaders to deliver lower rates of annual pay progression. NAHT believes this is self-defeating and destined to fail. The Review Body itself has recognised that both recent graduates and career-changers 'look forward' when making career decisions, carefully taking into account future pay and career progression, alongside a range of other factors. Restricting salaries for experienced teachers and school leaders, and reducing the prospect of pay progression, will simply make career pathways in teaching less attractive.

36. Our evidence demonstrates clearly the damage that the erosion of the real value of leaders' pay, and the differential for leadership responsibility, has wreaked upon leadership supply. This proposal will simply exacerbate those problems.
37. There is a real risk that a differentiated award, in combination with lower annual pay progression will drive further fragmentation within the teaching profession undermining collegiality, collaboration and cohesion. The result of narrowing pay differentials will be to exacerbate wastage rates, further destabilising the age and experience profile of the profession.
38. NAHT is clear that a **new pay settlement for the profession as a whole** is required. Its overarching objective should be to contribute to a compelling and sustainable proposition for teaching as a decades-long career, with clear, transparent national pay scales and a range of incentives to offset high living costs. Such a settlement must also be **demonstrably fair** to all within the profession

The options for the MPR/UPR

39. Our evidence to the current remit reiterates NAHT's longstanding view that failing to consider the structure of leadership pay **alongside** teachers' pay is an act of folly, because this undermines the critical importance of the need for a pay continuum to support retention and the leadership pipeline.
40. We are clear that the pay structure of the teaching profession requires **fundamental strategic reform** in order to retain existing teachers and leaders, and to secure the leaders of the future. NAHT believes that the development of an effective pay structure is central to re-positioning teaching as a long-term professional occupation. Pay must provide a basis for progression and for the recognition of experience, additional responsibility and leadership. We urge the STRB to recognise that the pay of teachers and leaders are intrinsically connected, forming a critical part of the **career continuum**.
41. We are not alone in this view. Other consultees have recognised the need for the reintroduction of national pay structure that includes national pay scales; the need to include all leadership roles such as CEO and executive head posts within the STPCD; and that classroom teachers' pay cannot be separated from the crisis in school leadership supply. Other fundamental issues have been raised such as the efficacy of the existing system of TLRs that reward middle leaders.
42. NAHT believes that tinkering with separate elements of the current pay system has the potential to destabilise the profession even further. The data from own surveys demonstrate that middle and senior leadership supply is brittle, and that many leaders are close to breaking point. A wide

range of unforeseen and unintended consequences could all too easily result from these poorly considered proposals.

43. NAHT therefore urges the STRB to reject this piecemeal approach and **instead press government to issue a full remit to consider how best to reform the pay structure for the teaching profession.** We suggest that there is real merit in gathering teachers' and leaders' representatives together alongside Review Body members and civil servants to engage in a planned programme of shared endeavour to find a solution to this issue. The children of our nation deserve no less than to be served by highly trained, experienced and well-led teaching professionals. We urgently need a pay structure that is capable of delivering this.
44. An interim settlement is therefore required. We recommend for this year's pay round that government begins, on a clearly defined timetable, a programme of pay uplifts that will restore the real value of all salaries and allowances in payment to 2010 levels. This would act as signal of good faith to the profession, allowing time to discuss, scope and implement a comprehensive new pay structure for the profession.

Implementation of the Department's proposals

45. The preceding sections make clear NAHT's view that the proposals set out in the Department's evidence are flawed. We set out above how, contrary to the stated policy aims, this approach risks further damage to recruitment, retention and the leadership pipeline. The impact on school leaders will be considerable. Not only will they see the value of their own roles diminished by falling salary differentials, they will be responsible for implementing a policy which is likely to be hotly contested and deeply unpopular.
46. Many experienced teachers will resent reductions to annual pay progression, while some who have several years' service will earn little more than those joining the profession, with a consequent impact on morale. The premium for school leadership will be further impacted, potentially impacting leadership supply. Many may conclude that the additional responsibility of leadership is not matched by the small uplift in pay.
47. The impact of the proposed policy on school finances is hard to predict and likely to create very significant challenges for some school leaders and governors. As the STRB itself has recognised, the fragmented nature of the school system means that it is very difficult to make a meaningful system-wide assessment of affordability. Government's much quoted headline figure of a £14.4 billion investment in schools, in reality amounts to an additional £7.1 billion in new funding over three years, because the former figure is cumulative.

48. While this is not an inconsiderable amount it will only have the effect of restoring the real value of school funding to 2009 levels, delivering a decade of flat funding. The additional funds that individual schools receive will vary considerably, offering no guarantee that individual schools will have sufficient funds to meet the proposed uplifts. Once again, NAHT emphasises the need for pay uplifts to be fully funded.
49. The impacts on the wider system will vary widely. The absence of pay portability often impedes movement between jobs within the system, while leadership salaries based on school size mean that single form entry and smaller schools struggle to recruit leaders with experience.

Conclusion

50. NAHT believes that there is a need to enact coherent reform to the structure of the teaching profession to support recruitment, retention and the leadership pipeline. Our strong view remains that it is not possible to deliver strategic reform unless teaching and leadership are considered as part of a career continuum. We repeat our call for a **concurrent review** of teachers and leaders pay.
51. In the interim, there should be a timely pay settlement for this year's remit that delivers an undifferentiated pay uplift across all salaries and allowances in payment, as the first step of a clear strategy to restore the real value of teachers' and leaders' pay to 2010 levels.
52. NAHT continues to **believe** that:
- the real value teachers' and leaders' pay must be **restored** to 2010 levels
 - the **purpose** of the annual pay uplift is to protect salaries against erosion by inflation and maintain their competitiveness in the graduate labour market – it should **not** be conflated with performance measures
 - **national pay scales** should be restored and reviewed to ensure that pay progression is also restored across the school system, regardless of school type
 - any **uplift to starting salaries** should be accompanied by uplifts to reintroduced 'scale points' above and beyond the annual uplift for inflation
 - the erosion of the differential for leadership caused by 'targeted' pay uplifts over recent years must be restored.
53. NAHT believes that any pay uplift must be **fully funded** by government to ensure that all schools have the resources to deliver the pay award.

54. NAHT remains **opposed** to:

- differentiated or targeted approaches to pay – we do not support the focusing of uplifts or incentives solely on early career teachers
- pay being focused on particular subjects, phases or areas
- performance related pay progression – consultees responses make clear the weight of the profession’s opinion that performance related pay progression does not work in teaching; and that its operation raises a range of equalities issues.

55. NAHT **calls** for:

- teachers and school leaders to be formally recognised as Key Workers,
- the STRB to recommend specific actions to support the retention of serving deputy and assistant head teachers, including the protection of leadership time
- the role, accountabilities and responsibilities of CEOs, executive heads, and heads of school (and other similar or related roles) should be codified within the STPCD
- the development of a national pay scale for school business leaders that is aligned with the leadership scales within the STPCD.