



## **Joint Statement to the Independent Welsh Pay Review Body**

**Association of School & College Leaders  
National Association of Head Teachers  
National Education Union  
UCAC  
Voice**

### **Teacher pay – the united view of the profession**

Our organisations, representing the overwhelming majority of teachers and school leaders in Wales, set out below our united position on key issues for the IWPRB as it prepares to respond to the Education Minister’s remit.

The issue of teacher pay is high on the political agenda. That is as it should be – teachers and school leaders have seen the real value of their pay cut relentlessly since 2010, with cuts of some 15% against RPI inflation. The adverse impact on teachers, school leaders, schools and students is clear to see.

Our organisations are united in our determination that these real terms cuts must be reversed as a matter of urgency.

A significant, above-inflation pay increase sufficient to begin the urgent restoration of the real-terms cuts and damage to teacher and school leader pay since 2010, must be applied to all pay scales and allowances and fully funded by the Welsh Government.

This is the clear signal that needs to be sent to the profession to underline its value and begin to address the recruitment and retention problems the profession faces. It would constitute an important first step towards positioning teaching as an attractive career option for new graduates and offer some tangible proof to serving teachers and school leaders that their contribution to the future of the nation’s children is valued.

## **The 2<sup>nd</sup> Remit**

We need to make sure that pay levels and the pay structure support career progression and retention. Piecemeal reform of the teacher pay structure is not enough and any so-called “targeting” approach will simply create new problems.

All teachers and school leaders deserve a pay rise, and this is another clear signal that needs to be sent to address the recruitment and retention problems the profession faces. We therefore urge the IWPRB to undertake a holistic review of the pay structure, in order to create a positive proposition for teaching as a graduate career choice.

The fragmentation of the national pay structure and imposition of Performance Related Pay have contributed to the teacher pay problems.

This underlines the need to restore the national pay scales, including prescribed points on the Main, Upper and Leadership pay scales, pay portability and a robust appraisal system that is not linked to pay, so that the serving and potential teachers and school leaders know that they will be valued within a fair and transparent pay structure.

Such a structure would continue to contain flexibilities allowing employers to establish pay policies which are fit for purpose and determine teachers’ pay levels within set limits while taking into consideration the complexities of each role and the context of their individual school.

## **Teacher supply – impact of pay cuts**

In its First Report, the IWPRB stated their concerns about the recruitment and retention of teachers and leaders. The IWPRB concluded that the steady decline in the competitiveness of teacher pay is contributing significantly to the recruitment and retention problems. Although the 2.4% pay award recommended by the IWPRB was increased to 2.75% by the Government, this was not, however, sufficient to begin to tackle these problems. It was only just above RPI inflation and did not enable the decline in the competitiveness of teacher pay to be decisively reversed. This followed the Westminster Government’s decision to cut back the 3.5% recommended by the STRB in 2018.

The latest evidence shows that the recruitment and retention problems continue to grow at all levels of the profession. Recruitment problems continue, but the teacher retention problems also continue to get worse. Our organisations are clear that the teacher recruitment and retention crisis, which has developed and deepened in recent years, cannot be solved without effective action to restore the real terms cuts to teacher pay and to significantly improve the position of teaching in the graduate labour market.

The Westminster Government’s Secretary of State for Education has declared its intention to increase teacher starting pay to £30,000 nationally by September 2022. This is welcome, and we look forward to seeing the Welsh Government’s proposals in line with their commitment to no detriment for Welsh teachers and school leaders following the devolution of pay, but we need urgent action to improve pay levels and pay prospects for all teachers and school leaders.

Any increases to starting pay must therefore be accompanied by equivalent increases to all teacher pay points and allowances, alongside reform to provide appropriate rewards within a fair and transparent pay structure. The recruitment and retention problems affect the whole profession and a holistic response is needed to re-establish the attractiveness of teaching as a long-term career choice.

## **School funding – cuts not reversed**

Schools have suffered significant real-terms cuts since 2010. Between 2010-11 and 2018-19, gross budgeted expenditure on schools has risen by 4.4% (£108 million) (cash terms). This is a 7.9 % decrease in real terms. (At 2017-18 prices, using HM Treasury GDP deflators, June 2018.)

Schools are also increasingly concerned about the contradiction between Welsh Government claim that pay increases are fully funded then provide funding for this to Local Authorities who do not pass this on in full to schools. This situation can not continue in Wales. In other areas of the UK this funding is guaranteed to schools.

We call on the IWPRB to refuse to be constrained by the Welsh Government's failure to restore the funding cuts. The IWPRB must make the recommendations needed to improve teacher pay in real terms and relative to other graduate professionals and tackle the recruitment and retention crisis.

We firmly believe that affordability does not form part of the remit for the IWPRB and as such they should resist any attempts from the Welsh Government to constrain their decisions thereby imposing a de-facto pay cap.

## **Conclusion**

Each of our organisations will be presenting separate evidence to the IWPRB on the matters included in the Education Minister's remit letter to the IWPRB. It is important to note, however, that these separate sets of evidence will be underpinned by the recognition of all of our organisations of the need for urgent action to tackle the recruitment and retention crisis by significantly improving pay levels and prospects for all teachers and school leaders.

The biggest step forward in solving the teacher supply crisis would be to cut teacher leaving rates in early career. While we support the proposal for higher starting pay, without commensurate uplifts to subsequent years' pay rates and to all teacher pay points the teacher supply crisis could be worsened.

We call on the IWPRB to reflect in its recommendations the united view of the teaching profession.

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