



School Teachers' Review Body: Remit for the 34th Report

Response of the Association of School and College Leaders

Contents

	Page
Introduction	4
School Teachers' Review Body 33rd Report	4
Timeliness of the process and report	4
A - Matters for recommendation	5
Pay award	5
Real-terms impact on leadership pay	6
Pay growth and pay intentions	8
Inflation and UK living standards	12
HM Treasury economic evidence to PRBs	13
Recruitment to the profession	13
Introduction of the £30,000 starting salary	14
Initial Teacher Training (ITT)	15
Quality of candidates entering the profession	17
Overseas entrants	18
ITT bursaries and scholarships	20
Retention	20
Classroom teachers	22
School leaders	23
Retention and diversity	25
Equalities considerations, incl the gender pay gap	28
Workload and wellbeing	29
Business leader survey	31
Flexible working	33
Retention - conclusion	35
School finances and cost pressures	36

B - Matters for recommendation	40
Vacancy rates	41
Impact of teacher shortages	42
Pupil population	43
Competitive pay framework	45
International evidence on student loan forgiveness and long-term retention schemes	45
Conclusion	46
Annexes	
Annex One: Calculations and sources	Separate attachment
Annex Two: ASCL Business Leader Survey	Separate attachment
Annex Three: Affordability modelling	Separate attachment

Introduction

1. The Association of School and College Leaders (ASCL) represents over 25,000 education system leaders, heads, principals, deputies, vice-principals, assistant heads, business managers and other senior staff of state-funded and independent schools and colleges throughout the UK. ASCL members are responsible for the education of more than four million young people in more than 90% of the secondary and tertiary phases, and in an increasing proportion of the primary phase. This places the association in a strong position to consider this issue from the viewpoint of the leaders of schools and colleges of all types.
2. ASCL welcomes the opportunity to make a written response to the School Teachers' Review Body (STRB) following the letter from the Secretary of State dated 20 December 2023.

STRB 33rd Report

3. We were pleased to see that, once again, the Review Body felt it was necessary and appropriate to exceed the government's pay proposals for experienced teachers and school leaders.
4. We commend the Review Body for making a bold recommendation of a 6.5% pay award for all teachers and school leaders. This was an award which was sufficient to end the industrial dispute with the four teaching unions which would have resulted in significant industrial action in the autumn term.
5. Whilst acknowledging the increased level of award, this does not mean that the erosion of teacher and leader pay has been restored. It was a step in the right direction, but it must be only the first step. We must see above inflation increases in the coming years, to bring teacher and school leader pay back to the levels at which it would have been if it had kept pace with inflation.
6. We will cover the pay award in more detail later in our submission.

Timeliness of the process and report

7. Frustratingly we must, yet again, raise significant concerns over the timing of the publication of the STRB report and the ministerial response.
8. We have provided evidence in recent years of the impact that late notification of pay awards has on headteachers and business leaders who have already had to set and submit their budgets.
9. It is imperative that the report and the response to it are published in a much timelier manner.
10. We were encouraged to see a commitment from the Secretary of State for Education in her offer letter dated 14 July 2023 to the trade unions to settle the pay dispute, which stated: *'It is the Department's intention to align the timing of the STRB process with the school budget cycle to make it easier for schools to plan ahead, make effective choices and reduce nugatory contingency planning.'*

11. However, it seems that this commitment was short-lived. This year's remit letter was not issued until 17:01 on 20 December. This was over five weeks later than last year.
12. The Secretary of State has asked for the STRB's report to be submitted to her by May 2024. It must then be published along with the ministerial response to it as a matter of urgency.
13. The report and ministerial response must not be published very late in the summer term again – leaving school leaders with the impossible task of having to make last minute budget updates, and teachers and leaders not knowing what their salary will be in September.
14. We must see an end to this practice. The Secretary of State must drive forward the necessary changes to the process and timeline, ensuring that the STRB's reports are published at a time that is meaningful for the sector, to allow budgets to be set and approved incorporating known pay awards.
15. Issuing a remit on 20 December provides no evidence of a willingness to do this.
16. Astonishingly, despite issuing the remit so late, whilst drafting this response, we have received notification that the DfE will not be meeting the initial deadline set by the STRB.
17. Furthermore, the STRB is permitting the DfE to submit its written evidence to a different deadline yet expecting other consultees to stick to the original one.
18. This is simply unacceptable and sets a dangerous and unhelpful precedent.

Matters for recommendation

A. The adjustments that should be made to the salary and allowance ranges for classroom teachers, unqualified teachers, and school leaders in 2024/25.

Pay award

ASCL recommends that:

- ✓ **A fully funded, above inflation pay increase is awarded across all pay ranges for September 2024, as a step towards restoring the real-terms value of teacher and school leader pay.**
- ✓ **This is accompanied by a longer-term commitment and funded strategic plan to fully restore the erosion of pay which has taken place since 2010 together with the re-establishment of previous differentials between pay ranges, particularly as classroom teachers move into leadership.**
- ✓ **Once the real-terms value of pay has been restored, annual uplifts must continue to be fully funded and must at least keep pace with RPI each year, to ensure that teachers and leaders do not experience any further real-terms pay cuts.**

- ✓ **Sufficient funding is provided to ensure that schools can afford to implement these commitments. As highlighted in the STRB's 33rd Report, 'investment is needed'.**

Why are we saying this?

There has been a decline in teachers' real-term pay for more than a decade, in excess of most other public sector workers. This gap is particularly stark for experienced teachers and for leaders, as their pay has grown more slowly than that of newly qualified teachers. While the 6.5% pay increase for 2023/24 is welcome, it goes nowhere near reversing this decade-long decline.

This is clearly impacting on both the recruitment and retention of teachers and school leaders.

ASCL believes that the STRB should consider a variety of factors when considering its recommendation for the 2024/25 teachers' and school leaders' pay award:

- i. The real-terms pay gap that has emerged and widened since 2010
- ii. Worsening recruitment (see also section on Recruitment to the profession.
- iii. Significant retention pressures (see also sections on Retention and 'Vacancy rates and impact of teacher shortages')
- iv. The need to reward high levels of commitment and professionalism across the school sector in England
- v. Record levels of pay growth across the economy
- vi. Inflationary pressures and increased living costs
- vii. Widespread evidence across the sector that dissatisfaction with pay remains a major factor in the intention of many school leaders and teachers to consider industrial action

19. We will explain our rationale behind proposing these factors throughout this section.

Real-terms impact on leadership pay

20. We provided significant data in our submission for the 33rd remit on the real-terms impact on leadership pay and the increases required to restore the real-terms cuts experienced by the profession since 2010.

21. Even the 6.5% pay award in 2023 made very little impact on this due to the continuing higher levels of inflation.

22. Figures 1 and 2 establish the erosion of the value of school leaders' pay based on RPI and CPI. We have updated the charts to show the differences after taking into account 2023 RPI and CPI and the 2023 pay award.

23. School leaders' real pay has fallen significantly since 2010:

Figure 1 – L17 Leadership pay in August 2010 indexed to RPI contrasted with actual pay¹

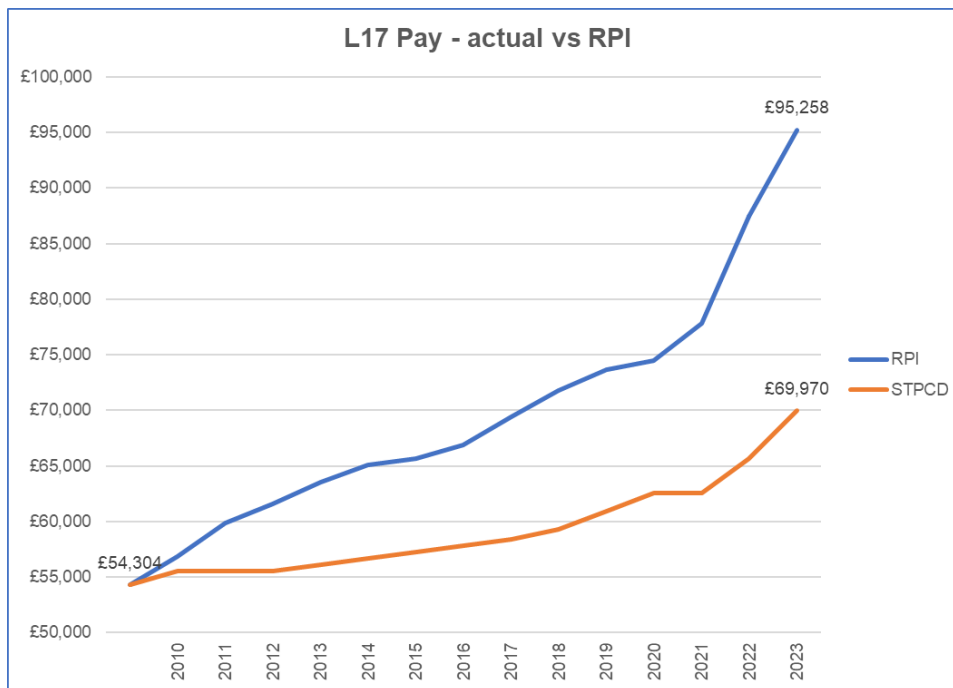
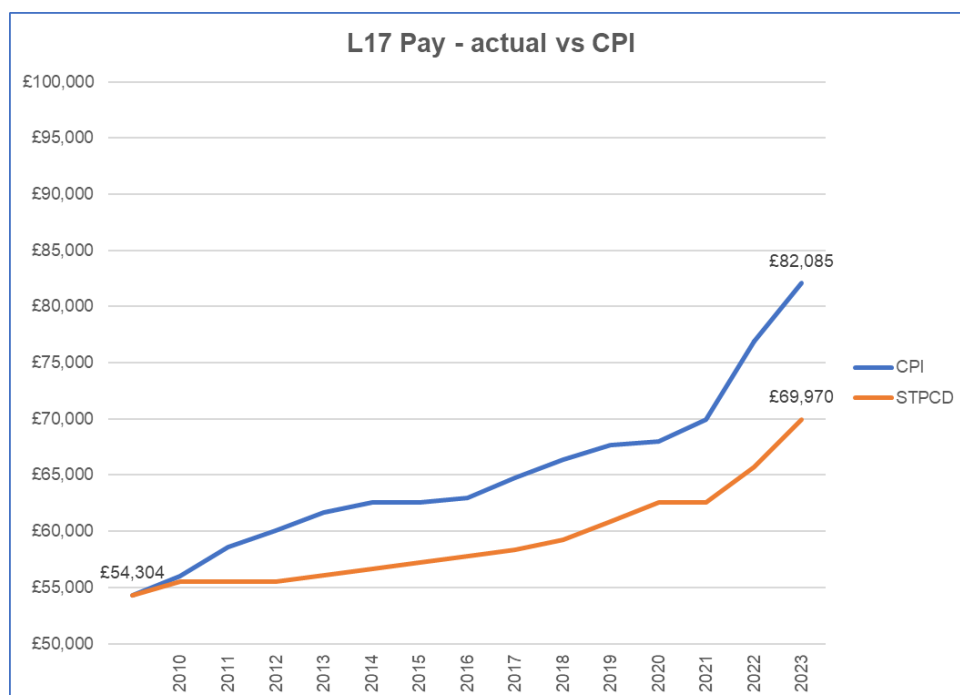


Figure 2 – L17 leadership pay in August 2010 indexed to CPI contrasted with actual pay²



24. Figure 1 shows the gap between actual pay and real pay which started to emerge in 2010 with a pay increase of 2.3% whilst RPI was 4.7%. This was followed by two years of absolute pay restraint. In subsequent years every pay increase bar

¹ See Annex One for calculations and sources (separate document)

² See Annex One for calculations and sources (separate document)

two has failed to match RPI. Even in these exceptional circumstances the increases were only marginally above RPI (2.75% compared to RPI of 2.61% in 2019 and 2.75% compared to 1.1% in 2020), and these marginal increases were immediately wiped out in 2021 with a pay freeze (whilst RPI stood at 4.5%).

25. A similar picture emerges in figure 2 when carrying out the same analysis but using CPI as the measure of inflation. The 2.3% increase in 2010 was at a time when CPI was running at 3.1%, and the pay award only exceeded CPI in four out of twelve subsequent years.
26. It is our view that RPI remains the most valid measure of inflation for pay. As the STRB will be aware, RPI is currently used for annual uplifts to items such as several pension schemes, private sector rents and commercial contracts.
27. For school leaders' pay to have the same purchasing power as in August 2010 based on RPI, a pay increase of 36.1% is required.
28. Even if the less appropriate CPI is used as a comparator, a pay increase of 17.3% is required to restore school leaders' pay to the same purchasing power as August 2010.
29. To summarise, the above analysis shows how far behind school leaders' pay has fallen since 2010. The pay award necessary to right this wrong differs according to which method of calculating inflation is used as follows:
 - i. RPI – 36.1%
 - ii. CPI – 17.3%

Pay growth and pay intentions

30. In 2023, we saw record growth³ in average weekly earnings across the economy with earnings growing by 7.8% in the twelve months to June 2023.
31. ONS figures published in September 2023⁴ showed the same annual growth in regular pay (7.8%) as the previous period, *and 'the highest seen since comparable records began in 2001'* (see figure 3 below).

³ [Average weekly earnings in Great Britain: August 2023, ONS](#)

⁴ [Average weekly earnings in Great Britain: September 2023, ONS](#)

Figure 3



32. ONS data published in January 2024⁵ shows that ‘*annual growth in both real total and regular earnings (excluding bonuses) has risen on the year*’.
33. The ONS Labour market overview for January 2024, reported that annual growth in regular earnings between September and November 2023 was 6.6%, and annual growth in total earnings for the same period was 6.5%⁶.
34. Their latest report for February 2024⁷ reports that ‘*nominal earnings growth remains strong, although it has eased a little in recent periods. Annual growth in regular earnings between October to December 2023 was 6.2% and annual growth in total earnings for the same period was 5.8%.*’
35. Average weekly earnings across the whole of the economy rose by 6.2% on the regular pay measure in the year to December 2023. Average earnings growth in the public sector continues to be lower (5.8% in the year to December 2023) than that in the private sector (6.2%).
36. Vacancies over the period November 2023 to January 2024⁸ fell by 26,000 to 932,000, falling for the 19th consecutive period. However, total estimated vacancies still remained 131,000 higher than pre-pandemic levels.

⁵ ONS Labour market overview, January 2024

⁶ *Ibid*

⁷ ONS Labour market overview, February 2024

⁸ *Ibid*

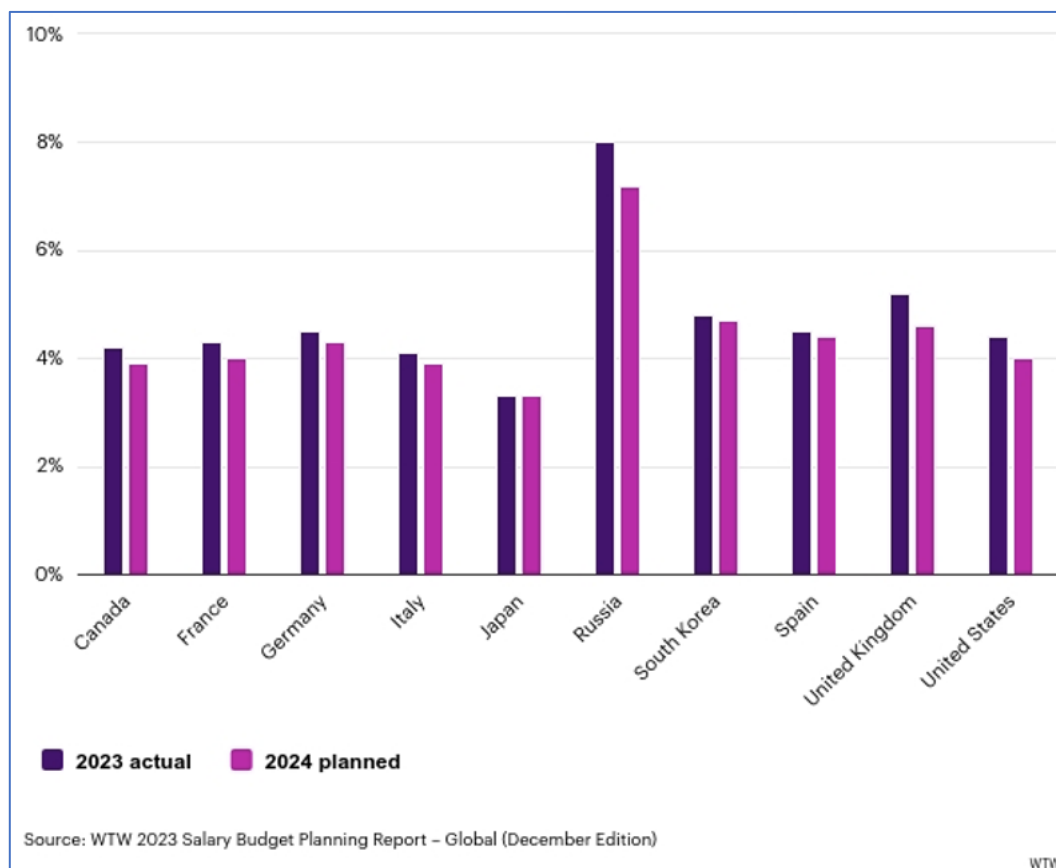
37. Results from WTW’s global survey ‘The Salary Budget Planning Report’ published in June 2023⁹ suggested that although increases (by UK employers) in 2024 are anticipated to be lower than in 2023, they are still expected to be higher than budgeted for in the last ten years.

38. The main driver influencing changes in salary budgets was cited as inflationary pressure (by 71% of UK employers).

39. The survey also showed that attracting and retaining employees is still causing difficulties for almost half of employers (46%). Actions taken to address these ongoing pressures include over a third (37%) increasing starting salaries, and the same proportion have also increased base salaries for all employees. Employers are also turning to non-pay actions to attract and retain staff, with more than half (57%) increasing workplace flexibility.

40. A further survey in December 2023¹⁰ showed a consistent picture on anticipated increases for 2024 (see figure 4 below).

Figure 4



⁹ [UK employers adjust 2024 pay raises following record rises in 2023](#)

¹⁰ [2024 employee pay trends](#)

41. Incomes Data Research's (IDR) pay intentions poll in November 2023¹¹ asked employers about the predicted level of pay increase in 2024. Some 46% of respondents anticipated awarding an increase of between 4% and 4.99%, and 24% said it was likely to be 5% or more.
42. The latest insights¹² from IDR show *'that recent pay settlements across the economy have been around the 5% level, which is consistent with average earnings growth of 6% to 7%. However, average earnings reflect all payments made including bonuses, overtime, shift payments, and location allowances. Most private sector companies have pay review dates in January and April and the level of these awards will give an indication of the level of average earnings growth in future months.'*
43. Although teachers and school leaders received a pay award of 6.5% in 2023, this still represented another real-terms pay cut due to the continuing high levels of inflation.
44. Additionally, the 5% award in 2022 represented one of, if not the, biggest real-terms pay cuts seen by the profession.
45. The strength of feeling on this resulted in ASCL, for the first time in its almost 150-year history¹³, moving to a formal ballot for industrial action over pay, conditions and funding.
46. A report by NFER¹⁴ published in July 2023 (before the STRB's recommendations were officially made public) said this in its conclusion:
- 'In the context of an intense teacher recruitment and retention challenge, an STRB recommendation of 6.5% in 2023/24 (if the newspaper reports are correct) would be a welcome first step for addressing the lost competitiveness in teachers' pay over the last decade. Our forecast analysis suggests that it is likely to have a more positive impact on supply compared to other proposals put forward by the DfE earlier this year. It is crucial for the Government to ensure that schools have the funds to pay for the pay increase awarded.*
- However, over the longer-term the analysis shows that even a pay award of 6.5% is unlikely to make a highly significant difference to the overall supply picture on its own. Pay awards in 2024/25 and beyond that merely match the anticipated growth in average earnings in the wider labour market are unlikely to significantly address the pressing recruitment and retention challenges. There therefore remains a need for a wider strategy for improving recruitment and retention that is based on a long-term plan to continue to improve the competitiveness of teacher pay and/or financial incentives, action to improve the non-financial attractiveness of teaching, or a combination of both.'*
47. So, although pay growth is important, it must only be one factor within a medium-term strategic plan to restore the real-terms value of teacher and school leader pay.

¹¹ [One-quarter of employers planning pay rises of at least 5% in 2024](#)

¹² [Earnings growth remains strong at 6.2%, but is easing back, IDR, February 2024](#)

¹³ [School leaders union to vote over strike action for first time over pay and staff shortages, Sky News, April 2023](#)

¹⁴ [Policy options for a long-term teacher pay and financial incentives strategy, NFER, July 2023](#)

Inflation and UK living standards

48. Inflation remains an important factor in the determination of wages across the UK and cannot be ignored.
49. Although there has been falling inflation since October 2022, it has remained at high levels, and has not fallen as fast as the government hoped it would.
50. Inflationary increases are always cumulative, so these more moderate increases are on top of figures in excess of 10% in 2023.
51. Office for Budget Responsibility (OBR) forecasts¹⁵ place RPI at 5.1% for 2024.
52. RPI was 5.2% in December, falling slightly to 4.9% in January¹⁶. CPI rose unexpectedly in December from 3.9% to 4% and remained at 4% in January 2024¹⁷. It is only predicted to fall to 2.8% by the end of 2024.
53. Furthermore, the OBR suggested that inflation (CPI) will not reach the Bank of England's 2% target until 2025. The latest data¹⁸ from the Bank of England suggests that CPI is projected to be 2.3% in two years' time, and 1.9% in three years.
54. The impact of high inflation on living standards has been significant, cited as 'the largest reduction in living standards since Office for National Statistics records began in the 1950s'.¹⁹
55. Furthermore, the OBR has said that it does not expect living standards to return to pre-pandemic levels until 2027-28. It has also said that living standards, as measured by households' real disposable income, were expected to be 3.5% lower in 2024-25 than their pre-pandemic level.²⁰
56. Interest rates have been increased fourteen times since December 2021, leaving them at 5.25% - a fifteen-year high.
57. The cost-of-living crisis is clearly not over. The reality is, whilst inflation may have halved and energy may be slightly cheaper than it was last year, they are still higher than pre-pandemic prices. Moreover, food and housing are not cheaper.
58. A recent seminar by the Resolution Foundation, showed that households are making huge cutbacks in spending to make up for the increases in costs. They can only do this on food, groceries, and energy – they cannot reduce their spend on housing costs.
59. In April 2023, Sky News²¹ reported on the number of teachers having to take second jobs or use food banks due to their salary not covering their outgoings in the midst of the cost-of-living crisis.

¹⁵ [OBR Economic and Fiscal Outlook, November 2023](#)

¹⁶ [ONS Inflation and price indices, January 2024](#)

¹⁷ [Ibid](#)

¹⁸ [Monetary Policy Report – February 2024](#)

¹⁹ [Ibid](#)

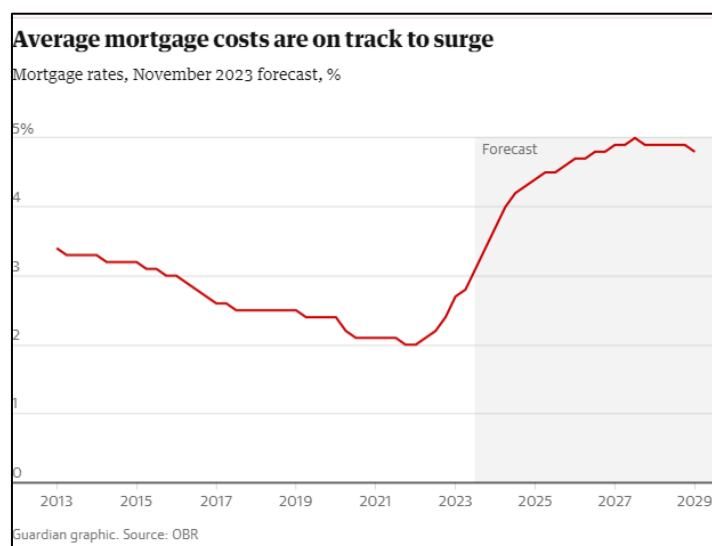
²⁰ [Ibid](#)

²¹ [Teachers report taking on second jobs, skipping meals and using food banks to cope with costs, Sky News](#)

60. Some mortgagors are protected for now with fixed rates, but potentially this is 'ticking time bomb'²² as they come to an end.

61. A Guardian article²³ in December 2023, states that 'about half of all mortgages have repriced since December 2021. A further 5m are expected to be hit by 2026. For the typical owner-occupier rolling off a fixed rate between the summer of this year and the end of 2026, the Bank expects monthly repayments to increase by about £240, a jump of about 39%.' (See figure 5 below).

Figure 5



62. The economic outlook remains uncertain. The impact of conflict in the Middle East and disruption to global trade caused by events in the Red Sea remains unclear.

HM Treasury Economic Evidence to Pay Review Bodies

63. We find it staggering that this report, which the government deems to be so important, was not published in time for consultees to comment on as part of evidence submissions.

64. In previous years, this has been published in December or January, yet at the time of writing (19 February), it has not been published.

Recruitment to the profession

ASCL recommends that:

- ✓ **Starting salaries and whole-career earning potential must be competitive with comparable graduate salaries to attract the very best graduates into the profession.**
- ✓ **Limited flexible working opportunities in relation to other comparable professions must be compensated for in the rest of the compensation package.**

²² ['Sleepless nights': UK homeowners fear 2024 mortgage timebomb, Guardian, January 2024](#)

²³ [Five charts explaining the UK's economic prospects in 2024](#)

- ✓ **Closer alignment is needed between DfE initiatives to improve recruitment to the profession and the work of the STRB (for example, teacher degree apprenticeships and the recruitment of overseas teachers to ITT).**
- ✓ **An holistic approach to bursaries and other incentive payments made by the DfE must be taken so that they support the pay framework as set out in the STPCD.**

Why are we saying this?

The number of people wanting to become teachers is falling at an alarming rate²⁴. It is essential that we have a sufficient supply of high-quality teachers joining the profession if we are to maintain or improve current educational standards, and that ITT incentive payments do not become financial disincentives once teachers become subject to the STPCD.

ASCL believes that the STRB should consider a variety of factors relating to recruitment when making its recommendations:

- i. Introduction of the £30,000 starting salary
- ii. Recruitment to ITT targets
- iii. Quality of candidates entering the profession
- iv. Overseas entrants
- v. Bursaries and scholarships
- vi. Flexible working (see Flexible working section)

65. The crisis in recruitment and retention is well documented and is aptly summarised in the 2023 National Foundation for Educational Research (NFER) ‘*Teacher Labour Market in England*’ report:²⁵

‘The teacher recruitment and retention challenge in England has significantly intensified since the pandemic. Recruitment to initial teacher training (ITT) was considerably below target last year across a range of subjects and as of February 2023, this year’s ITT recruitment is likely to be little better than last year, while teacher vacancies are significantly higher than the year before the pandemic. The recent trends in recruitment and retention affirm that addressing recruitment and retention should be an urgent policy priority in order to ensure schools have sufficient staff to provide a high-quality education for pupils in England.’

Introduction of the £30,000 starting salary

66. Whilst we are pleased to see the government’s 2019 manifesto²⁶ commitment finally realised, we remain concerned about its competitiveness.
67. In 2019, £30,000 may well have been an aspirational starting salary, but by September 2023, after the impact of the pandemic and cost of living crisis, this was no longer the case.

²⁴ [ASCL Manifesto for the 2024 General Election](#)

²⁵ [Teacher Labour Market in England 2023, NFER](#)

²⁶ [Conservative Party Manifesto 2019](#)

68. IDR's Pay Benchmarker²⁷ shows that the median salary for trainees starting a graduate training programme in 2023 was £29,000. For trainees with a post graduate level qualification, however, the median was higher at £31,800.
69. The Institute of Student Employers (ISE) Student Recruitment Survey²⁸ reports a median salary for a graduate of £32,000 in 2023.
70. High Fliers²⁹ expected the median graduate starting salary in 2023 to be £33,500.
71. As the next two sections highlight, the continued poor recruitment to ITT and the decline in quality of graduates entering the profession demonstrates that the £30,000 starting salary has not achieved what the government intended, and much more needs to be done.
72. We do not believe that this is just a case of looking at the year one salary. Good quality candidates will be comparing whole-career earning potentials, and the DfE's insistence on ignoring the importance of pay across the board is one of the reasons why we have not seen an uptick in recruitment.

Initial Teacher Training (ITT)

73. It is hard to describe the current situation in recruitment to ITT as anything other than desperate.
74. Recruitment for 2022/23³⁰ (importantly, the first cohort who would benefit from the £30,000 starting salary) was disastrous.
75. Recruitment for 2023/24³¹ was even worse, with just 62% (down from 70% in 2022/23) of the target achieved overall, and just 50% for secondary subjects (down from 57% in 2022/23). Urgent action is needed to address this.
76. Figure 6 below shows recruitment by subject using data from the ITT Census 2023/24³².

²⁷ [Pay for graduate trainees, IDR, February 2024](#)

²⁸ [What is the average graduate salary? ISE, November 2023](#)

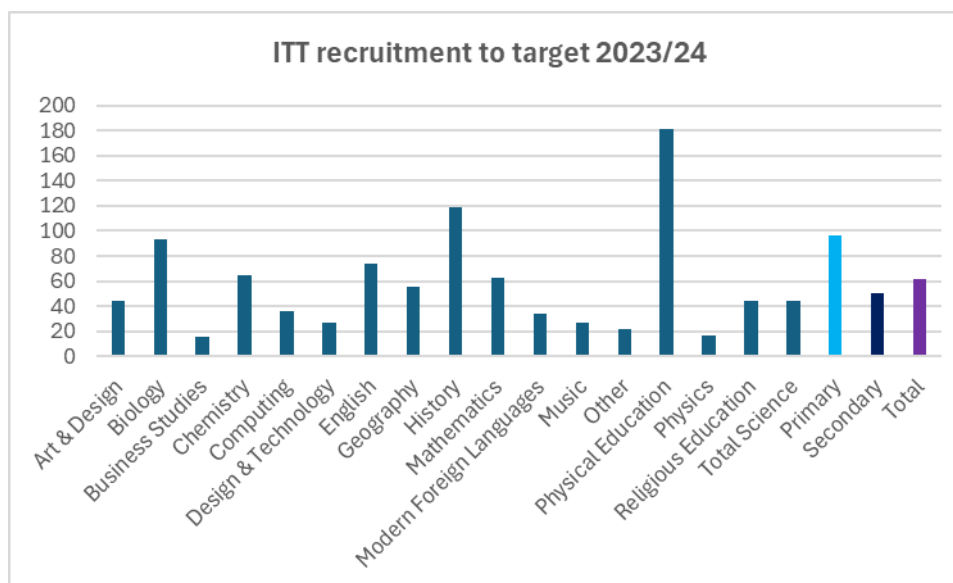
²⁹ [The Graduate Market in 2023, High Fliers](#)

³⁰ [ITT Census 2022/23](#)

³¹ [ITT Census 2023/24](#)

³² [Ibid](#)

Figure 6



77. Just two subjects achieved 100% of the target, and in fact exceeded their respective targets considerably. History recruited 119% and Physical Education 181%.
78. Physics again recruited just 17% against target – no change from 2022/23. This poor performance remains closely followed by Design and Technology at just 27%, a slight improvement from 25% in 2022/23 and 22% in 2021/22, but still dire.
79. Modern Foreign Languages fell again to 34% (from 36% in 2022/23). This is less than half of the proportion recruited in 2020/21 (72%) and 2021/22 (71%). It is clear to see the impact of the huge reductions year-on-year in entrants from overseas (see next section).
80. In the latest ITT teacher training performance profiles³³, the DfE has changed the methodology in calculating the pass rate for QTS due to a change in data source (there is no explanation as to the reason or source).
81. Now, only trainees with course outcomes are included in the statistics. The trainees who are yet to complete their ITT course are no longer included.
82. To enable comparisons to be made with previous years, the data from 2017/18 has been revised to reflect the change.
83. Figure 7 below shows the data for the previous years before the change in data source alongside the data from the new source.

³³ [ITT performance profiles 2021/22](#)

Figure 7

Year	Old method	New method
2017/18	91%	95%
2018/19	91%	95%
2019/20	91%	96%
2020/21	87%	95%
2021/22	80%	93%

84. The total number of trainees reported for 2020/21 in the original published data was 35,371³⁴, but in the revised figures from the new data source the total number for 2020/2021 is 31,698 - a difference of 3,673.
85. For 2021/22, the ITT Census³⁵ reported 37,069 new entrants, but on the revised figures published in the 2021/22 ITT performance profiles reported 31,747 - a difference of 5,322.
86. This means that over 10% of the trainees are excluded from the reported figures for 2020/21 and over 14% for 2021/22, masking the proportion of trainees who did not go on to achieve QTS for reasons other than not passing.
87. So, the disastrous recruitment to ITT drops even further, despite the revised published figures apparently painting a much rosier picture.

Quality of candidates entering the profession

88. At the same time as seeing poor ITT figures, the percentage of graduates entering the profession with a first-class degree fell again in 2023/24, from 24% in 2022/23 to 22% (26% in 2021/22).³⁶ This also speaks to the failure of the £30,000 starting salary, and is indicative of the fact that the best graduates will be looking for careers that offer good long-term earning potential.
89. The data also shows that the percentage of candidates with a first-class or 2:1 in their first degree fell from 76% in 2022/23 to 73% (78% in 2021/22)³⁷.
90. The proportions entering the profession with a first-class degree continue to not be reflective of the proportion of graduates who gained a first-class degree nationally. Just 26% of those who entered the teaching profession in England in 2021 had gained a first-class degree, compared with 32%³⁸ of all graduates doing so (latest HESA data available³⁹).
91. The overall proportion of graduates gaining a first-class or 2:1 in England in 2021/22 was the same as for those entering the teaching profession.

³⁴ [ITT performance profiles 2020/21](#)

³⁵ [ITT Census 2021/22](#)

³⁶ [ITT Census 2023/24](#)

³⁷ [Ibid](#)

³⁸ [Higher Education Student Statistics: UK, 2021/22 - Qualifications achieved | HESA](#)

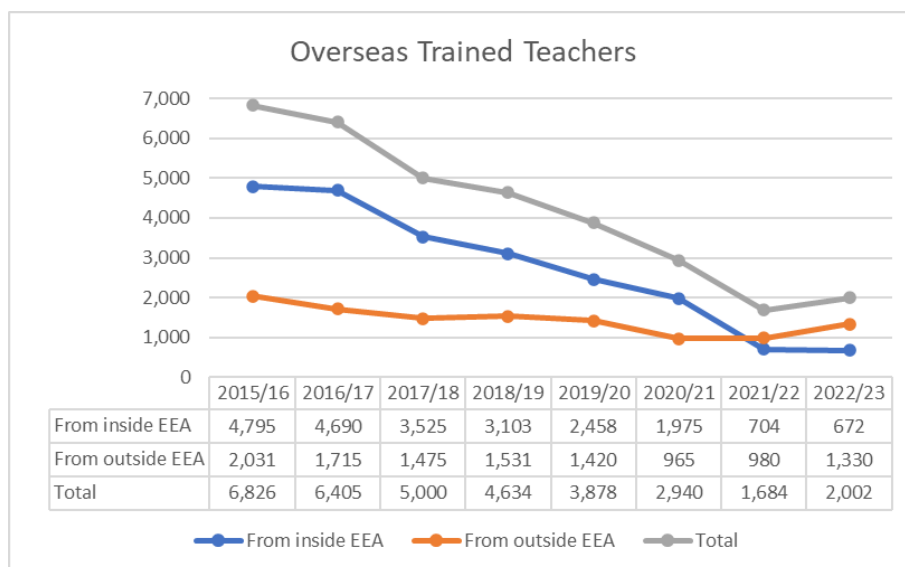
³⁹ [Ibid](#)

92. In the HESA data, it is also reported that ‘Of students receiving qualifications in education and teaching, 77% were female while for science subjects, 78% of engineering and technology qualifications were awarded to males.’
93. This would suggest that teaching is not as an appealing career to those gaining a first-class degree as it is to those gaining a 2:1, nor is it to men.
94. There is an urgent need to raise the profile and status of the profession, to ensure that it attracts the best graduates to make teaching their first choice of career.

Overseas entrants

95. Recruitment of overseas trained teachers has contributed to the overall recruitment issues.
96. The number of entrants from overseas declined rapidly between 2015/16 and 2021/22. In 2015/16 there were 6,826⁴⁰ entrants, which fell to 1,684 in 2021/22.
97. In 2022/23 there were just 672 entrants from within the European Economic Area (EEA), compared with 4,795 in 2015/16, representing a huge drop of 86%.
98. Until 2021/22, the decline had been from both inside and outside the EEA, but since then it has only been in entrants from within the EEA⁴¹, clearly demonstrating the impact of the UK leaving the European Union.
99. In both years there has been an increase in entrants from outside the EEA.
100. Figure 8 below demonstrates the numbers involved and shows the level of decline overall, and from within the EEA.

Figure 8



⁴⁰ TRA Annual Report and Accounts 2022/23

⁴¹ Ibid

101. Again, the majority of the fall in applications was from Spain, from 269 in 2021/22 to 236 in 2022/23 (compared to 776 in 2020/21). The biggest increases from outside the EEA were from the USA up from 540 in 2021/22 to 633 in 2022/23 and Australia, up from 159 in 2021/22 to 348 in 2022/23.⁴²
102. Modern Foreign Languages continues to bear the brunt of this impact. It is clear to see, in the table above, the loss of over 4,000 teachers a year from within the EEA since 2015/16.
103. For 2023/24 just 1,023 language trainees were recruited out of a targeted 2,985⁴³. Now that targets are adjusted to take into account any under-recruitment in the previous year, there is clearly going to be an even bigger problem next year, with a shortfall of 1,962 recruited in 2023/24.
104. We know that the Department introduced a new approach⁴⁴ to recognising teachers from overseas, which included allowing teachers from nine new countries to apply for QTS. The new approach was announced in June 2022, and came into effect from 1 February 2023.
105. In our evidence for the last remit, we expressed our disappointment at the Department's forecasts of the impact that this new approach might have, with their mid-range annual forecast suggesting it would only provide an additional 619 additional overseas teachers.
106. With recruitment to languages remaining dire, even this modest increase is looking unlikely.
107. Sadly, another Departmental forecast appears to be more accurate – that of the declining trend in QTS award over the last three years. *'Given this trend, we may see QTS awards (especially to those from the EEA) continue to fall.'*
108. Recruitment of overseas trained teachers remains a significant area of concern. The recently announced immigration changes⁴⁵ certainly do not serve to improve this, given the aim of the announcement, to cut net migration.
109. Whilst some of these changes are not applicable to teaching, this was not made at all clear, and may well have served as a deterrent to overseas teachers who were considering coming to England to teach. The changes certainly did not include anything which may serve to attract or encourage overseas trained teachers.
110. We acknowledge that some bursaries and scholarships have been opened up. However, looking at just one example, the international relocation payment (IRP) of £10,000 was made available to cover *'visas, the immigration health surcharge and relocation'* but recent immigration changes significantly increase some of these costs.

⁴² [Ibid](#)

⁴³ [Ibid](#)

⁴⁴ [A fairer approach to awarding QTS to overseas teachers, DfE](#)

⁴⁵ [Home secretary unveils plan to cut net migration, December 2023](#)

111. We are aware of the DfE's policy initiatives to increase the number of overseas students undertaking ITT placements, and the immigration changes will also impact on these students.
112. We are concerned that many schools may find it challenging to sponsor overseas teachers and support their wellbeing.
113. We firmly believe that there needs to be a longer-term review and a strategic and holistic approach in order for the profession to benefit from overseas trained teachers.
114. However, we do have ethical concerns about the apparent increasing reliance on recruiting teachers from overseas and the impact that this may have on their home countries.

ITT bursaries and scholarships

115. As ITT bursaries and scholarships are awarded to trainees, they sit outside of the STRB's remit. However, given the significant sums now involved, we are becoming increasingly concerned about the impact they are having on the pay framework. We think there needs to be closer alignment between the decisions being made by the DfE in their decision-making on what is appropriate around these awards and the STRB in order to avoid unintended consequences.
116. For example, an ITT trainee who is awarded a tax-free scholarship of £30,000 is going to take sizable real-terms pay cut when they are appointed to M1 and are then subject to tax, National Insurance and teachers' pension deductions.

Retention

ASCL recommends that:

- ✓ **Retention at all levels is made a key focus for the government and the Department, in order to retain the teachers and school leaders who have already chosen the profession and who are fully trained and qualified. This will in turn reduce the number of new teachers we need to recruit into the profession, bringing with it savings in recruitment, training, onboarding and mentoring costs.**
- ✓ **Tailored student loan repayment arrangements for all teachers and leaders should be introduced⁴⁶. This should range from no repayment for teachers in certain shortage subjects to a sliding scale of repayment rates depending on subject, phase, sector, whether the teacher or leader is in a hard-to-recruit area, and how long they stay in the profession.**
- ✓ **The scope of the STRB and the STPCD is broadened to include those working in business leadership roles to ensure that they receive the recognition and remuneration for the crucial roles they hold and which support other school leaders to deliver their core functions.**

⁴⁶ ASCL Manifesto for the 2024 General Election

- ✓ **The government works with trade unions and key stakeholders on a strategic plan to raise the profile of the education workforce.**
- ✓ **The workload of teachers and leaders is addressed by fully supporting the recommendations of the Workload Reduction Taskforce⁴⁷ and ensuring that they are implemented swiftly, including the provision of sufficient resources for schools to enable this.**
- ✓ **The wellbeing of the workforce is supported and improved by acting on the recommendations of multiple stakeholders⁴⁸, including recommendations around accountability and inspection⁴⁹.**
- ✓ **Schools are provided with the training and resource needed to enable them to fully embrace flexible working.**

Why are we saying this?

We know that retention to the profession remains challenging and that moving into and staying in school and college leadership is increasingly unattractive due to the poor pay differentials, less favourable working conditions and disincentives to work until retirement age. This is compounded by the extreme pressure and lack of job security associated with our high-stakes accountability system. The retention rate after five years for new headteachers under the age of 50 is 84% in primary schools and just 75% in secondary schools⁵⁰.

We also know that entry to, and progression within, teaching and leadership continues to be more challenging for people with certain protected characteristics. Recent research from the National Foundation for Educational Research⁵¹, for example, found that the under-representation of people from ethnic minority backgrounds, most pronounced at senior leadership and headship levels, is largely driven by disparities in the early career stages, particularly Initial Teacher Training.

Despite all these challenges the majority of the DfE's focus remains on recruitment to the profession and early years. It is also the case that too many policy initiatives are stand alone and do not form a cohesive career-long package that changes to meet the need of teachers throughout their professional and personal journey.

ASCL believes that the STRB should consider a variety of factors relating to retention when making its recommendations:

- i. Retention rates for classroom teachers
- ii. Retention rates for school leaders
- iii. Retention rates for specific groups/categories
- iv. Equalities considerations including the gender pay gap
- v. Workload and wellbeing
- vi. Flexible working

⁴⁷ [Workload Reduction Taskforce](#)

⁴⁸ [TWIX 2023, Education Support](#)

⁴⁹ [The future of inspection, ASCL](#)

⁵⁰ [School leadership in England 2010 to 2020: characteristics and trends, DfE 2022](#)

⁵¹ [Racial equality in the teacher workforce, NFER 2022](#)

Retention of classroom teachers

117. The retention of classroom teachers remains a significant area of concern, one which we feel continues to be overlooked in the focus on recruitment.
118. A record number of teachers left the profession last year at 43,997. Of that figure, almost 40,000 left for reasons other than retirement, the highest number since pre 2010/11. Of those, 20% were aged between 25-29. That means that 7,775 teachers who have recently trained and joined the profession left.
119. However, it was also reported that there has been a 40% increase in teachers taking early retirement in England and Wales⁵², and it remains the case that England has one of the youngest teaching workforces in the OECD. If more focus were put on this then we would see a growth in the overall numbers.
120. One of the key findings of the Teacher Tapp and SchoolDash annual report⁵³ on teacher recruitment and retention was that only 59% of teachers now expect to still be teaching in three years' time (down from 74%-77% pre-pandemic).
121. The retention rate after one year fell again in 2022, from 87.6% to 87.2%, meaning that one in eight teachers leave the profession after just one year.⁵⁴
122. After a slight increase in 2021, in 2022 the retention rate for two years after qualifying fell from 82.7% to 80.1% meaning that one in five teachers leave after two years.⁵⁵
123. The slight increases seen in the retention rate for those three to six years after qualifying in 2021 were not repeated. In fact, retention rates fell across all categories in 2022.
124. The rate of drop off after five years remains staggering with just 68.7% remaining in the profession. This means that almost one in three teachers leaves the profession after just five years.
125. The retention rate after ten years fell from 59.7% to 58.7% in 2022, meaning that fewer than three out of every five teachers were retained by this point.⁵⁶ We are particularly concerned that not enough focus is given to this cohort of leavers who are likely to be those starting a family and therefore those most likely to be cost-sensitive. We believe that a number of DfE initiatives, such as the recently enhanced 'Levelling Up Premium', will only exacerbate the feeling of being less well-off that this group experiences due to a number of factors hitting them at this point in their career.
126. Better retention has a magnifying effect. For every seven teachers that are retained in the profession, the result is that ten fewer teachers need to be recruited⁵⁷.

⁵² [Number of teachers in England and Wales retiring early jumps by 40%, Financial Times](#)

⁵³ [Teacher Recruitment and Retention in 2023, Teacher Tapp and SchoolDash, June 2023](#)

⁵⁴ [School Workforce Census, 2022 data](#)

⁵⁵ [Ibid](#)

⁵⁶ [Ibid](#)

⁵⁷ [Dire teacher recruitment data should concern policymakers, NFER, December 2023](#)

127. We can look at the impact this would have on several examples. Firstly, let's look at reducing the number of early retirements by 50%, by encouraging teachers and leaders in those age groups to continue working for longer. On the figures reported for September 2023 of 5,610, if half of these (2,805) were retained, then it would mean that 4,007 fewer teachers and leaders would need to be recruited.
128. Secondly, let's look at the overall number of teachers and leaders who left for reasons other than retirement. In the 2022 SWC, there were 39,930 leavers. If they had all been retained, then it would mean that 57,042 fewer teachers would need to be recruited.
129. Thirdly, let's look at the leavers aged between 25-29. If we had retained the 7,775 who left in 2022, it would have meant that 11,107 fewer teachers would need to be recruited.
130. This shows just how crucial the retention of teachers and leaders is, and how the focus cannot remain solely on recruitment. Put simply, if we can resolve the retention crisis, this will go a long way towards resolving the recruitment crisis.

Recruitment and retention of school leaders

131. ASCL remains concerned about the recruitment and retention of school leaders.
132. We acknowledge that the recruitment and retention of early career teachers was (and continues to be) disastrous, but this issue is not exclusive to early career teachers. It applies across the profession, including school leaders.
133. We have previously cited a variety of evidence, including our own member surveys, showing an increase in the number of leaders who are considering leaving the profession, either for early retirement or for a role outside education.
134. We know that many teachers and leaders put on hold their plans to leave or retire during the pandemic, and it was acknowledged that this contributed to slight increases in retention⁵⁸.
135. However, as mentioned in paragraph 119, above we are now seeing the impact of this in the significant increase in early retirement.
136. The April 2023 publication of the DfE's '*Working Lives of Teachers and Leaders*' (WLTL)⁵⁹ reported that 25% of teachers and school leaders were considering leaving the state school sector in the next twelve months for reasons other than retirement. This was higher for those working in secondary settings, at 28%, and for non-ECT classroom teachers at 25%.
137. The most cited reason for not seeking promotion was concern about the impact on work-life balance (31%).
138. The WLTL report along with other research and anecdotal reports from our members, lists a variety of factors affecting school leaders' decisions to leave the

⁵⁸ [School leadership in England 2010 to 2020: characteristics and trends](#)

⁵⁹ [Working Lives of Teachers and Leaders, Wave 1, DfE April 2023](#)

profession, including workload, exhaustion/fatigue, lack of recognition/respect from the government and accountability.

139. But pay is also important – as we highlighted last year, in our member survey where 59.1% said that their salary has an impact on them remaining in the profession.
140. This was also reflected in the WLTl report, where the majority (61%) of teachers and leaders were dissatisfied with the salary they received for the work they did.
141. A report from Education Support, '*1970s working conditions in the 2020s*⁶⁰, published in June 2023 also said: '*No doubt, pay is a significant driver of teacher attrition. In the last 30 years, teachers' salaries have fallen relative to other professions for teachers of all ages. In a survey for the Commission of over 1,000 teachers in secondary state schools in England, 57% said that increasing pay was the most important change needed to prevent teachers from leaving.*'
142. The Department must get to grips with and acknowledge the importance of pay to experienced teachers and school leaders, and the potential it has to impact, not only on the recruitment, but particularly on the retention, of these groups of staff. This has been made abundantly clear by the strength of feeling shown by members of all teaching unions in the industrial disputes of 2023.
143. As we highlighted last year, the data in the '*School leadership in England 2010 to 2020*' report showed that in addition to the numbers of middle and senior leaders leaving the profession, significant numbers of each were returning to lower roles within the system. This masks the true extent of the issue. It also shows that, as well as there being fewer teachers and middle leaders wanting to move into promoted roles, a good number of people already in those positions do not want to stay in them - so much so that they would rather return to a lower paid role with less responsibility and, in many cases, protections of the STPCD in relation to working time.
144. Whilst we do not wish to re-rehearse all of the same issues as we highlighted last year, we feel that the retention rates for senior leaders under age 50 are so severe that we need to reiterate them.
145. The retention rate for new headteachers under 50 in primary schools after five years was 84%. The retention rate for new headteachers in secondary schools after five years was just 75% in 2020.
146. To put this into context, the retention rate for classroom teachers over the same period was 68.5%.⁶¹
147. Figures 9 and 10 below demonstrate the retention rates for primary and secondary leaders versus classroom teachers overall.

⁶⁰ [1970s working conditions in the 2020s: Modernising the professional lives of teachers for the 21st Century](#)

⁶¹ [School Workforce Census 2021](#)

Figure 9

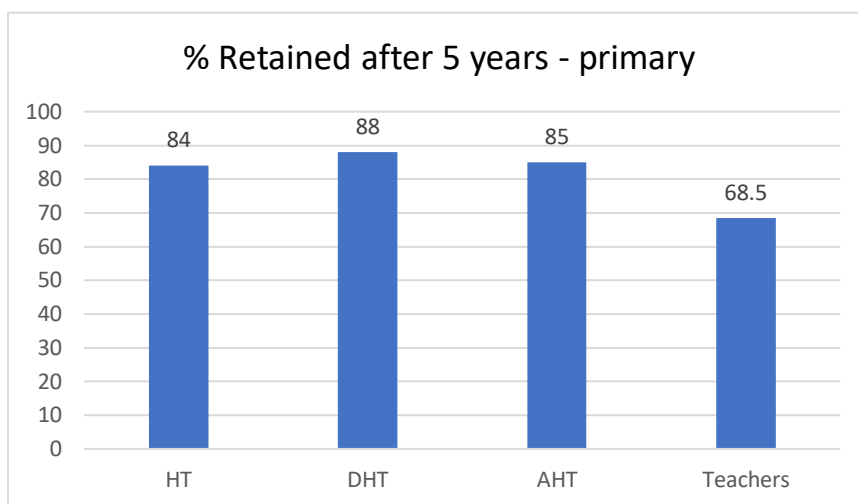
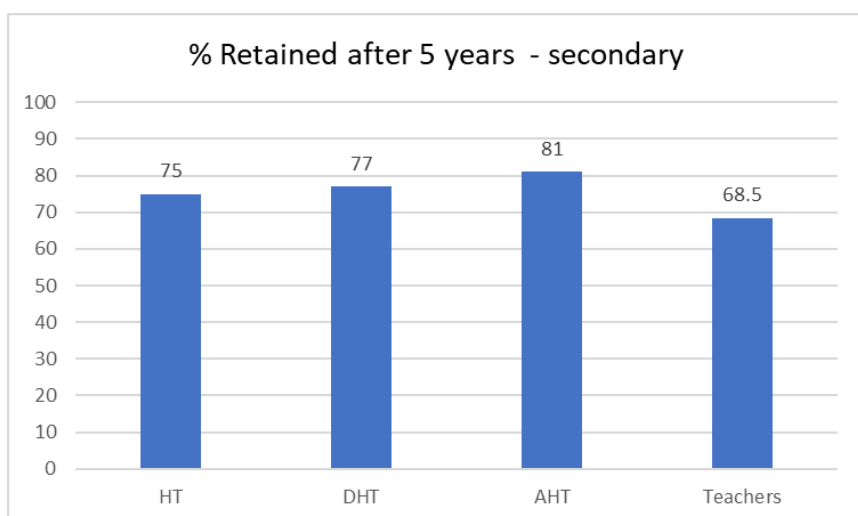


Figure 10



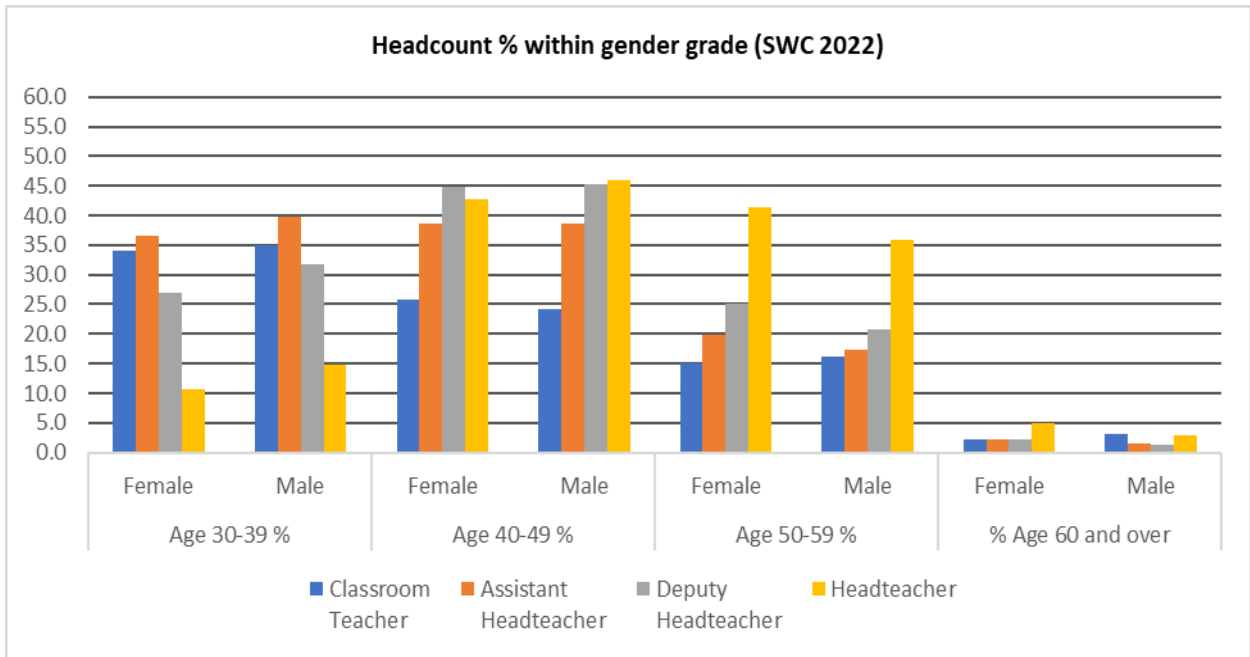
148. Although these figures are not, as yet, quite at the disastrous levels of early career teachers, they should be a serious concern to the government and the Department.
149. The SWC data does not show retention rates for school leaders, so it is impossible to keep track of this unless the Department publishes a report like the *'School leadership characteristics: 2010 to 2020'*. It is not acceptable that this data is not made publicly available annually along with the other SWC data.

Retention and diversity

150. There are also some other areas of concern when looking at leavers by role, age and gender.
151. We know that a third of the teaching workforce is aged between 30-39, 28% are aged 40-49 and 76% are female.
152. However, when we look at the breakdown of gender by role within each age band, it highlights an almost even split between male and female classroom teachers aged 30-39, with a slightly higher proportion of men.
153. This difference increases across assistant headteacher, deputy headteacher and headteacher roles.

154. For ages 40-49, there are slightly more males than females in classroom teacher and assistant headteacher roles, but for deputy headteacher and headteacher roles, as with age 30-39, there are more males.
155. Using data from the 2022 SWC⁶², the figure 11 below shows the breakdown for each group by role and gender.

Figure 11



156. This is clearly not reflective of the workforce overall, and again provides evidence of the loss of women from the workforce between 30-39 and 40-39, but also the lack of representation of women in leadership roles, particularly more senior ones.
157. In both 2020/21 and 2021/22, more women aged between 30-39 and 40-49 left the profession than men. In 2021/22 the proportion of female assistant/deputy headteachers and headteachers who left increased from 2020/21.
158. Using data from the 2022 SWC, figures 12 and 13 below show the overall numbers of leavers for each role in the two age groups and for women.

⁶² School workforce Census 2022

Figures 12 and 13

Year	2020/21				2021/22			
Age	Total	CT	AHT/DHT	HT	Total	CT	AHT/DHT	HT
40-49 All	7169	5890	820	460	8876	7227	1057	592
40-49 F	5247	4402	563	283	6499	5409	722	369
% F	73.2	74.7	68.7	61.5	73.2	74.8	68.3	62.3

Year	2020/21				2021/22			
Age	Total	CT	AHT/DHT	HT	Total	CT	AHT/DHT	HT
30-39 All	9675	8772	773	130	12333	11183	982	168
30-39 F	7130	6551	506	73	8934	8167	666	101
% F	73.7	74.7	65.5	56.2	72.4	73.0	67.8	60.1

159. When considering this alongside the workforce data above, it shows that not only are there fewer women in those roles in the two age groups, but we are also losing more women from both of them each year, and this is increasing.
160. There are many factors that can be affecting this, but we believe that this is down to lack of flexible working opportunities, particularly to women returning from maternity leave, but also from the gender pay gap which we have highlighted over several years now⁶³.
161. We know that performance-related pay contributes to the gender pay gap, and we are pleased to see that it will soon be removed from the STPCD. However, the pay gap is already baked into those salaries. We would welcome further analysis of the pay gap on a national level, encompassing all senior leadership roles within schools and trusts.
162. We again call for a focus on teachers who go on maternity leave and how the retention of these teachers can be improved. We know that other professions offer much more in the way of flexible opportunities⁶⁴ and it is at this point that parents will consider those flexibilities, particularly when so many flexible working requests are not successful.
163. We simply cannot simply keep reporting on the increasing numbers of teachers and leaders who leave the profession each year. With recruitment in the dire situation that it is, we must do everything we can to keep those who do decide to go into teaching.
164. This needs to happen not only to ensure that there are sufficient classroom teachers for the projected increased numbers of pupils in secondary schools, but also to stabilise and secure the supply pipe for teachers to progress to middle and senior leadership roles.

⁶³ [Closing the gender pay gap in education: a leadership imperative](#)

⁶⁴ [Flexible and hybrid working practices in 2023, CIPD](#)

Equalities considerations, including the gender pay gap

165. A joint report in 2021 by ASCL, NAHT, NGA and WomenEd '*Closing the Gender Pay Gap in Education: A Leadership Imperative*'⁶⁵ highlighted that there is a significant gender pay gap across education and this is particularly the case for school leaders.
166. Building on this report, joint annual analysis⁶⁶ of the gender pay gap was carried out. In November 2023, the analysis showed that '*the pay gap between female and male secondary headteachers was the largest in 12 years, with women earning £3,908 less on average than their male counterparts*'.
167. The gap for primary heads continued to narrow, but still stood at £2,181 less on average for women.
168. Furthermore, *the gender pay gap begins to increase from age 35-39, with the difference in average salaries more than doubling by the next age group (40-44), from £3,596 to £7,819. This year, the difference by age 60 and over for heads reached an average £15,961.*
169. This data, coupled with the data in the SWC detailed in our previous section, demonstrates the extent of the real equalities' issues affecting women working in leadership roles. This is particularly concerning when the teaching workforce is predominantly female.
170. We support and reiterate the comments made by the review body in its 33rd report:

'We agree with our consultees on the need for more frequent and detailed equality and inclusion data. The initial work conducted by the Department, included in its evidence for STRB's 32nd report, was a welcome first step in this area. Data transparency is a prerequisite for identifying and addressing inequalities and inclusion challenges and for securing stakeholders' confidence in the Department's commitment to addressing these. These data also assist us in identifying any differential impacts our recommendations may have on those with protected characteristics.'

STRB observation: *Detailed equality and inclusion data should be published annually as a priority.'*

171. The initial work by the Department must be what the review body describes it as '*a welcome first step*' and not 'job done' as appears to be the view of the Department.
172. Furthermore, as mentioned earlier, we know that entry to, and progression within, teaching and leadership continues to be more challenging for people with certain protected characteristics. In 2022, NFER research⁶⁷ found that the under-representation of people from ethnic minority backgrounds, most pronounced at

⁶⁵ [Closing the gender pay gap in Education - a leadership imperative](#)

⁶⁶ [Gender pay gap for secondary heads widest for a decade, warn education organisations, on Equal Pay Day](#)

⁶⁷ [Racial equality in the teacher workforce, NFER, 2022](#)

senior leadership and headship levels, is largely driven by disparities in the early career stages, particularly Initial Teacher Training.

173. Further research by NFER in 2024 '*Ethnic diversity in the teaching workforce: evidence review*⁶⁸, found that '*Teacher retention is lower for teachers of colour than for their white counterparts. Beyond high workload, key reasons for leaving include (1) overt and covert racial discrimination; (2) disillusionment with their ability to make a difference for pupils from ethnic minority backgrounds; and (3) lack of progression opportunities.*'
174. It goes on to say that '*In England, there are currently no government targets, programmes or funding to improve ethnic diversity in the teaching workforce, in contrast to Scotland and Wales.*'
175. We believe that the state-funded education sector in England is not fulfilling its public sector equality duty and is failing to demonstrate that it has pay arrangements which are not discriminatory and that do not pay women less than men for work of equal value.
176. The education organisations (ASCL, NAHT, NGA and WomenEd) have made a series of recommendations to the government to help tackle the gender pay gap in education:
- To review the equality implications of the current pay system, including the immediate removal of performance-related pay.
 - To renew or replace the EDI Hub funding, discontinued by the government in 2020.
 - To provide greater support to help mitigate the systemic barriers to flexible working for all roles, including encouraging better sharing of caring responsibilities, e.g. paternal leave.
 - To improve their data monitoring to allow monitoring of other pay gaps, for example ethnicity or disability.

Workload and wellbeing

177. The 2023 Teacher Wellbeing Index⁶⁹ (TWIX) reports that the wellbeing of school and college leaders is a genuine and significant concern. It states that the past seven years of the reports '*document a clear picture of stressed, overworked staff, with almost a quarter of school and college leaders reporting acute stress as well. These findings suggest that we can expect continued high levels of attrition from the workforce. It is hard to attract new talent to a profession that others are leaving in droves.*'
178. The report showed that stress levels at work increased in 2023. Some of the key findings were:
- 89% of senior leaders / 78% school teachers are stressed (up 5%/6% from 2022); this rises to 95% for headteachers.
 - 40% of senior leaders and 36% of school teachers reported experiencing burn-out (up 3% / 9% from 2022).

⁶⁸ [Ethnic diversity in the teaching workforce: evidence review, NFER 2024](#)

⁶⁹ [Teacher Wellbeing Index 2023, Education Support](#)

- *51% of staff experienced insomnia or difficulty sleeping (up 6% from 2022). This was highest amongst senior leaders at 55%.*
- *84% of senior leaders / 82% of school teachers experienced at least one symptom of poor mental health due to work.*

179. This year the survey asked about experience of inspections. The findings on this area were:

- *73% of staff thought inspections were not fit for purpose.*
- *64% of staff consider inspections do not deliver reliable judgements.*
- *71% of staff thought inspections negatively impact their mental health and wellbeing.*
- *Staff working in England are more likely to have negative feelings towards the inspection process, compared to other nations.*
- *Staff working in England are also more likely to say the inspection process has a negative effect on their mental health.*

180. The 2023 Teacher Wellbeing Index score for England was 43.44, much lower than the National Adult Population score of 51.4 for the same period, and slightly down from 43.9 in 2022.⁷⁰

181. The wellbeing of school teachers is at its lowest level for the last five years, and the wellbeing of senior leaders is lower in 2023 than it was pre-pandemic.

182. The report states that those *'with scores of between 41 and 45 should be considered at high risk of psychological distress and increased risk of depression'*.⁷¹

183. Workload and working hours also remain a significant concern for the profession, both at classroom teacher level and school leader.

184. The WLTL showed that school leaders work on average 56.8 hours per week, and teachers work 48.7 hours. Reported hours were 'particularly high among heads (58.8) and especially secondary head (60.5), and also higher among middle leaders (51.5) than the average for teachers.

185. We believe that there should be provision within the Document to give school leaders some guaranteed maximum working hours and guaranteed breaks. Currently the only protections for school leaders are that they cannot be required to work on weekends or bank holidays, but this was indeed something we saw happen throughout the pandemic. The only reference is to the working time regulations, which is simply not sufficient.

186. School leaders cannot be expected to be what is almost 'on-call' throughout evenings, weekends and school holidays.

187. We welcome the introduction of the Workload Reduction Taskforce and its aim to reduce workload. However, we remain conscious of the fact that the STPCD framework does not include a mechanism for compensating teachers for

⁷⁰ [Teacher Wellbeing Index 2022, Education Support](#)

⁷¹ [Ibid, \(pg 25\)](#)

excessive additional hours worked, either through overtime payments of time in lieu. We believe that until a wholesale review of the framework takes place, and a financial accountability is included, in line with other sectors, then the embedded culture of long hours will be impossible to eradicate.

188. ASCL has, along with other teaching unions, consistently called for the removal of performance-related pay (PRP) from the Document for several years and has provided significant and compelling evidence to support this request.
189. The Review Body itself highlighted '*Pay progression, including the appropriate use of performance- or capability-related pay*' a future priority for review in its 32nd report.
190. We were pleased to finally see this actioned as a recommendation from the Workload Reduction Taskforce.
191. ASCL is keen to see this replaced with a robust appraisal system which supports a teacher's professional development.
192. We must see significant and impactful reductions to workload and improvements to wellbeing in order to address the issues faced by the education workforce.
193. It is important to note that school business leaders are included in the senior leader categories in the TWIX report and in a separate 'School Business Leader Wellbeing Index 2024'⁷² report by Education Mutual. This showed that for 82% of respondents, excessive workload affected their mental health and wellbeing at work, and for 47% this was affected by working long unpaid hours.
194. However, business leaders are not included in the remit of the taskforce. ASCL continues to raise this issue and we hope to see the remit extended to cover these crucial roles, in order to address the significant retention issues that the sector will face over the next three years.⁷³

Business Leader Survey

195. Business leaders are a crucial and integral part of school leadership. Where schools or trusts do not have a strong business leader, or business leadership team, then the work of the rest of the school leaders is compromised and their workload is increased. This is affirmed in our position statement⁷⁴ which says:

Business or executive leaders who undertake whole school, college or trust responsibilities are an integral part of the leadership team. ASCL believes that this should be reflected in their status and remuneration.

Where this is not the case, there should be a review of the business leader's pay to ensure their crucial role is appropriately recognised and remunerated.
196. We believe that business or executive leaders who have whole school, college or trust responsibilities should be paid with parity to other leadership colleagues

⁷² School Business Leader Wellbeing Index 2024, Education Mutual

⁷³ Annex Two – ASCL Business Leader Survey (separate document)

⁷⁴ ASCL Position on policy

holding the same level of responsibility, regardless of the route they have taken into education leadership.

197. There is no national pay framework that specifically recognises business leadership roles, and pay for these roles is locally determined. As a result, there is a disparity in the level of pay and recognition in these roles.
198. The situation has been exacerbated by outdated job profiles used by some local authorities which do not always reflect how the responsibilities and accountabilities of these roles and the profession have evolved over time.
199. Local authorities operate their own job evaluation and grading framework, generally within the National Joint Council (NJC) pay scales, and this varies greatly between authorities. The result is a fragmented situation where some schools are denied access to higher pay scales which are warranted by these roles, and others are not.
200. We recently surveyed our members working in business leadership roles (Annex Two⁷⁵). The results show that although 88% of respondents are members of the senior/executive team in their establishment, 70% of respondents felt that their pay was below that of their senior leadership colleagues.
201. Furthermore, 29% of respondents reported that they were paid on NJC points 1-43, meaning that their salary is lower than point L5 on the leadership pay range.
202. Some 48% of respondents feel inadequately rewarded for the role they undertake, and 12.7% feel significantly underpaid.
203. NJC pay awards in 2022 and 2023 saw those working in business leadership roles receive the lowest pay awards across the education workforce, a flat rate of £1,925 in 2022 regardless of level of salary, and a flat rate of £1,925, capped at a minimum of a 3.88% in 2023.
204. This has widened the gap between the pay of business leaders and other senior leadership colleagues.
205. Without a doubt, the most worrying, but possibly not surprising statistic from the survey was that 50% of respondents intend to leave their role within the next three years. This has increased from 29% in our 2021 survey.
206. This presents a huge risk to the sector. The work business leaders carry out and the responsibilities they hold are critical to the education system. Unless something changes as a matter of urgency, trusts and schools face losing the significant expertise and experience that business leaders bring. Business leaders have a wealth of transferrable skills which enable them to move to higher paid roles in other sectors and professions, often with more flexible working opportunities than are on offer in the education sector.
207. We believe that this needs to be addressed by broadening the scope of the STPCD and the remit of the STRB to include those working in business leadership roles.

⁷⁵ Annex Two – ASCL Business Leader Survey (separate document)

208. These roles are not served well by the NJC arrangements as demonstrated by our survey results, nor would they be by the reinstatement of the School Support Staff Negotiating Body as proposed by Labour. Pay would still be determined locally, so the problems would be perpetuated.
209. By bringing the role into the STPCD alongside other senior leadership roles such as assistant headteacher and deputy headteacher, business leader pay would be set in the same way giving full recognition to their whole school responsibilities and increasing their perceived status.
210. In our earlier 'Equalities considerations' section, we raise the issue of women being underrepresented in leadership roles and being paid more than their male counterparts. The school business leader workforce is also predominantly female. However, just as in teaching, higher paid business leaders are predominantly male. This means that it is highly likely that in a senior leadership team made up of a mix of men and women, the female leaders will be paid less than the male leaders, with business leaders likely to be the lowest paid member of leadership, regardless of the level of responsibility and accountability they hold. This is something that simply must be addressed.
211. If no action is taken, as well as losing the extensive knowledge and expertise held by business leaders, this will in turn drive up the workload of headteachers, CEOs and other school leaders trying to fill the gaps.
212. We repeat our call for the review body to recommend that those working in business leadership roles to be brought into the remit of the STRB and for the scope of the STPCD to be broadened to incorporate all school leadership roles. This will help support the whole school leadership team and in turn contribute to workload reduction.

Flexible working

213. Flexible working can be used to improve the wellbeing and work-life balance of all staff. It can help with both recruitment and retention.
214. Whilst it is not without its challenges for some roles in education, flexible working is still not utilised as widely as it could or should be.
215. There is some creative⁷⁶ and innovative practice⁷⁷ taking place in the sector, but there is room for much more.
216. It was good to see flexible working highlighted as an area of priority in the STRB's 32nd Report⁷⁸, but disappointing that it was not included in the remit for either the 33rd or the 34th report.
217. Wellbeing and work-life balance are such an important issue for the sector, as highlighted in the previous section, and as such much more importance needs to be placed on these benefits.

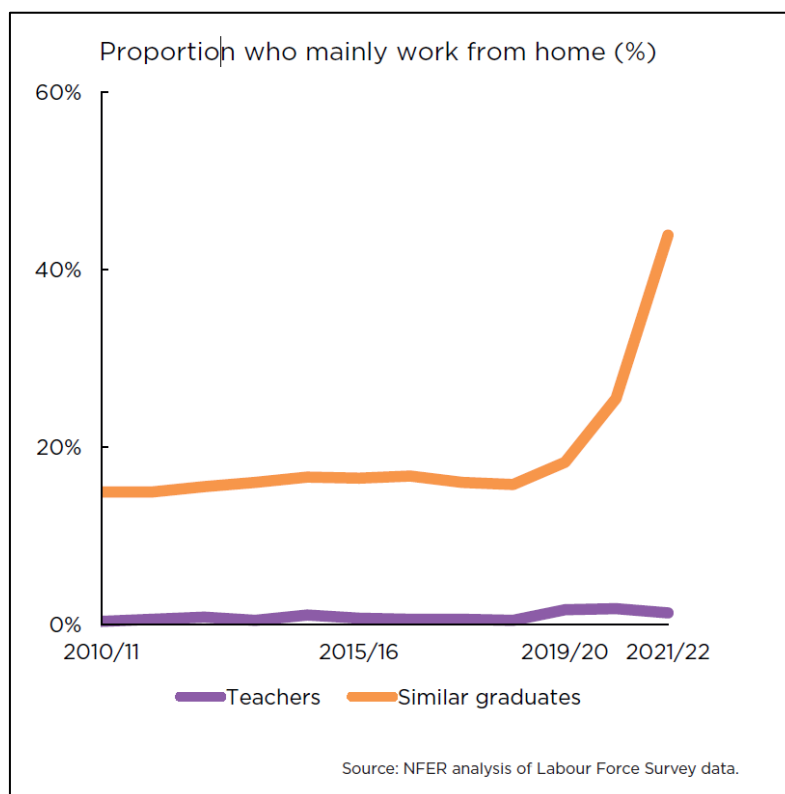
⁷⁶ [How we're making flexible working a reality for all staff, Pioneer Education Trust](#)

⁷⁷ [How we're giving teachers a nine-day fortnight, Dixons Academies Trust, January 2024](#)

⁷⁸ [STRB 32nd Report](#)

218. We welcome the legislative changes brought in following the government’s ‘*Making Flexible Working the Default*’ consultation.
219. Schools rapidly discovered that they were able to incorporate so many more flexible working practices than would have been thought possible prior to the onset of the pandemic, but it appears that much of this has returned to normal pre-pandemic practice.
220. The ‘*Teacher Labour Market in England 2023*’⁷⁹ stated that ‘*Flexible working arrangements have become increasingly prevalent in recent years, as widespread office closures during the pandemic led to the rapid adoption of home working across the labour market. However, while working from home may work well for many office-based occupations, it is much less well-suited to teaching. Data from the LFS shows that the pandemic did not substantively affect the prevalence of home working for teachers, while the proportion of similar graduates who reported mainly working from home increased rapidly from about 15 % up to 2018/19 to 44% in 2021/22.*’
221. Figure 14 below is taken from the report and demonstrates the difference between teachers and other graduates.

Figure 14



222. The report goes on to say that working from home is not completely unavailable to teachers. ‘*Surveys of teachers and leaders in schools show that some teachers had arrangements with their school to do activities such as lesson planning, preparation and marking off-site (CooperGibson Research, 2020).*’

⁷⁹ [Teacher Labour Market in England 2023, NFER](#)

223. CIPD research⁸⁰ shows that in 2023, 6% of employees changed jobs due to lack of flexible working opportunities, and a huge 12% left their profession or sector altogether. Women are more likely to have changed their profession or sector than men.
224. ONS data shows that 44% of UK workers work remotely / from home at least some of the time (hybrid or full-time remote). Over half of UK employers offered remote work in 2023. 78% of remote workers reported an improved work-life balance.
225. A report published in February 2024, '*Flexible After Fifty*'⁸¹, showed that '*almost 75% of over-50s want to have flexibility in their work to achieve a better work-life balance, with many also having caring responsibilities.*'
226. The report also highlighted flexible working as '*the most important consideration for over-50 workers wishing to remain in their current roles*'.
227. As the research and data show, employees will change jobs, and even professions, due to a lack of flexible working options, something which was already an issue in schools even before the pandemic but is now even more so.
228. Furthermore, with better pay available elsewhere in the graduate marketplace, coupled with more opportunities for working flexibly⁸², teaching is clearly becoming a much less appealing option.
229. The government and Department must now step up their support and championing for flexible working and provide sufficient funding to enable schools to overcome some of the barriers that they face.
230. However, it must be acknowledged that even if significant improvements were made, there will be limitations due to the nature of the teaching profession and this must be compensated for elsewhere in the pay and conditions package, including by offering a much more competitive salary at all stages of a teacher or leader's career.

Retention: conclusion

231. All of the above shows that the government's plan to only raise salaries for early career teachers is not addressing recruitment and will not address retention.
232. The government appears unable to acknowledge the fact that teacher and school leader pay has been significantly damaged by its decisions to restrain or freeze pay over the last 10-12 years.
233. This does not compare favourably with other countries. An IPPR report⁸³ published in July 2023, showed that some European countries such as Sweden, Hungary and Czechia saw real wages increase by around 30% in the period from 2010-2020, even before the cost-of-living crisis. Most maintained pay at 2010

⁸⁰ [Flexible and hybrid working practices in 2023, CIPD](#)

⁸¹ [Flexible After Fifty, 50+ Choices Roundtable, February 2024](#)

⁸² [Dire teacher recruitment data should concern policymakers, Jack Worth, NFER, December 2023](#)

⁸³ [The public sector needs a real pay rise, IPPR, July 2023](#)

levels. In contrast, the pay of teachers in England was 4% lower in 2020 than in 2010.

234. The report goes on to say that *'If the government continues on its current trajectory of suppressing public sector pay, especially in key occupations such as nursing and teaching, the salary gap between the UK and other European countries will continue to widen. This has the potential to in turn exacerbate staff shortages in the UK as skilled public sector workers leave to countries where they can enjoy a much better standard of living.'*
235. One of the recommendations in the report is that *'Once the government has committed to restoring real-terms pay it must outline a plan to increase the purchasing power of public sector workers for the next five years. This will boost labour market confidence in public sector professions.'*⁸⁴
236. The STRB's 33rd report said: *'The primary objective of our recommendations is to start to address, in a balanced way, the structural deterioration in the pay of teachers relative to comparable professions and the inadequate recruitment of graduates.'*
237. The introduction to the NFER report *'Policy options for a long-term teacher pay and financial incentive strategy: an assessment of options and their impacts and costs'*⁸⁵ states *'The intensifying teacher supply challenge, relative loss of competitiveness in teacher pay over the last decade and the research evidence showing that pay and financial incentives can be effective at improving recruitment and retention, means there is a strong case for the Government developing a long-term strategy to increase pay and incentives, and improve recruitment and retention.'*
238. One of the recommendations in the *'Teacher Labour Market in England 2023'* is that: *'The government should develop a long-term strategy for improving the competitiveness of teacher pay relative to other occupations, while ensuring that schools have sufficient funding to enact these pay increases without making cuts elsewhere.'*
239. The consensus on this is clear.

School finances and cost pressures

240. It remains ASCL's position that any adjustment to salaries should come with an uplift in funding to schools. Staffing costs are the biggest single expenditure of any school, accounting for on average 75%. Any adjustment is difficult to budget for. This is impossible to do when the pay award is not known for certain until after the start of the academic year for which it is being awarded. No business would be expected to operate on such a model.

⁸⁴ *Ibid*

⁸⁵ *Policy options for a long-term teacher pay and financial incentive strategy: an assessment of options and their impacts and costs, NFER, July 2023*

Affordability

241. It is important that affordability for the coming funding year is not considered in isolation. In other words, the financial stability or vulnerability experienced at individual school or trust level in 2023/24 will set the context for their capacity to set a functioning budget for 2024/25. This is difficult to evidence using national statistics as the most recent available data will be at least a year old. Below we attempt to set the scene using the best available data for national income and expenditure trends, to consider available capacity for absorbing cost pressures.

Sector expenditure statistics

242. Government statistics⁸⁶ for LA maintained schools (2022/23) report that income has risen by around 3.1%, whilst expenditure is up by 5.1%.

243. According to government figures, LA maintained schools spent, on average, 45% of total expenditure on teachers in 2022/23. This is less than in the previous year (46.8%) and continues a downward trend. The government statistics also indicate an increase in the number of schools in deficit (13.1%, up from 8.8% in 2021/22). This indicates that the increase in other costs has outstripped the increases in staffing. For example:

- Energy costs increased by 60%. The Energy Bill Relief Scheme (EBDS) will have offered some support, but it's impact will have been felt differently across the sector.
- Agency supply costs are up 17% on the previous year.
- Catering supplies and staffing are up 6.4% on the previous year.

244. The trust sector is evidencing similar trends in expenditure. The *Kreston Reeves Benchmark Report 2024*⁸⁷ looks at data for 2022/23 and reports that:

- Energy costs have risen by an average of 49%.
- Staff costs have reduced as a percentage of total cost, whilst non-staff costs have increased by around 16%.
- Supply costs have increased by 16% per pupil for a medium sized MAT.
- 47% of trusts reported an in-year revenue deficit compared to 26% in the previous financial year.
- 1.7% of trusts reported a cumulative deficit compared to 0.6% in 2021/22.

245. In our evidence for 2022/23 we commented that the best available information at the time was for March 2022, which was prior to the surge in general inflation and in particular, energy prices.

246. In this submission we are using figures available for 2022/23 which probably represents the first year of 'normal' working since the pandemic. Unsurprisingly, these figures also reflect surging inflation and energy costs.

⁸⁶ [LA and school expenditure, DfE](#)

⁸⁷ [Kreston Reeves Benchmark Report 2024](#)

247. We remain extremely concerned about the impact of inflationary cost pressures on school funding, and about the risks associated with years of pay erosion across the sector amidst a recruitment and retention crisis. We think that the data indicates a decline in resilience across the sector more broadly.

Rising costs are diminishing the purchasing power of schools

248. In its December 2023 annual report⁸⁸ on education spending, the Institute for Fiscal Studies (IFS) indicated that total spending on education has fallen significantly as a share of national income since 2010-11. In 2022-23, spending on education represented about 4.4% national income, compared with 5.6% in 2010-11.

249. The IFS suggests that school costs are likely to increase by almost 4% using the standard measure of economy wide inflation (GDP deflator), and that this will just about be matched by growth in funding at national level. We understand that using the GDP deflator as a measure of calculating real-terms changes in funding indicates that, in 2024/25, spending will be returned to 2010 levels.

250. However, we do not think that the GDP deflator is a sensible inflation measure to use in estimating school costs. We think that CPI is a more realistic measure.

251. The IFS⁸⁹ also models the impact of school costs more closely tracking CPI. This model indicates that school spending power will be around 4% less than in 2010. Should support staff pay uplift in 2024/25 track the uplift in the National Living Wage (NLW) for 2024, we can expect a further increase in school costs of at least 1%. The impact of the differences in these two measures will determine the adequacy of the core schools budget.

End of recovery funding

252. We are very concerned about the impact of the withdrawal of several strands of recovery funding associated with the Covid-19 pandemic at the end of this academic year. In its annual report⁹⁰, the Education Policy Institute (EPI) indicates that the pandemic has caused the disadvantage gap to widen across all phases of education.

253. School leaders and their staff are well-placed to target funding and support where it can have optimal impact. We estimate that £0.76bn will be allocated to the National Tutoring Programme⁹¹ (NTP), Recovery Premium⁹² and 16-19 Tuition Fund⁹³ in the academic year 2023-24. At the time of writing all of these income lines are time-limited grants that will cease at the end of the funding year 2023/24. If the government does not extend these grants, schools will need to make cuts to their budgets accordingly.

⁸⁸ [Annual report on education spending, England 2023, IFS](#)

⁸⁹ [Ibid](#)

⁹⁰ [Annual Report 2023, EPI](#)

⁹¹ [National Tutoring Programme, guidance for schools, academic year 2023-24](#)

⁹² [Recovery Premium Funding, Allocations and conditions of grant 2023 to 2024](#)

⁹³ [16-19 Tuition Fund for academic year 2023 to 2024](#)

254. According to the Kreston Reeves report⁹⁴, Covid recovery income represented around £87 per pupil in the trust sector in 2023. Kreston Reeves report that this is 1.3% of total income in that sector.

Funding

255. ASCL welcomes the additional funding that has been targeted to the core schools budget. In 2024-25 the core schools budget will be £59.6bn. This funding is to support mainstream and specialist provision. It includes additional grants, such as the mainstream schools additional grant (MSAG) and the teachers' pay additional grant (TPAG), that are or will become baselined into the core schools budget over time.

256. In December 2023, a ministerial statement⁹⁵ from the schools minister Damian Hinds advised that mainstream school funding in the DSG will increase nationally by 2% per pupil in 2024-25, compared to 2023-24. Including the additional funding for teachers' pay, overall mainstream schools funding will increase by 2.6% nationally.

257. The statement also confirmed that, in 2024/25 funding for high needs will increase by 4.3% nationally, compared to 2023/24. Every local authority will receive an increase in funding of at least 3% per head (of their population aged 2-18).

An inbuilt challenge to achieving the national average uplift

258. Minimum per pupil funding levels (MPPL) were introduced as part of the government's levelling-up agenda and to support the development of a national funding formula (NFF)⁹⁶, based on need. (MPPL is a factor in the Schools NFF only).

259. We note that, in this spending review period, the MPPL has not kept pace with the GDP deflator. This means that, for schools that are relying on the MPPL, achieving the national average uplift is extremely unlikely and contributes to their inability to meet cost pressures.

260. In 2024/25 we estimate that around 23% of primary schools will be funded at or within 5% of the MPPL £4610.

261. In 2024/25 we estimate that around 25% of secondary schools will be funded at or within 5% of the MPPL £5995.

262. Figure 15 below shows the rate of increase of the MPPL against the standard measure of economy wide inflation (GDP deflator).

⁹⁴ Ibid

⁹⁵ Ministerial statement on education funding, December 2023

⁹⁶ Ministerial statement on education funding, September 2019

Figure 15

Funding year	MPPL uplift	GDP deflator
22/23	2%	6.8%
23/24	0.5%	6.1%
24/25	1.4%	1.6% (projected)

262. We understand that HM Treasury has committed to funding the rise in employer contributions to the Teachers' Pension Scheme. This rise will increase employer contributions by five percentage points and will be effective from April 2024. At the time of writing, we do not know what methodology will be used to allocate this new grant, and therefore cannot test it for adequacy.

263. Appendix Three⁹⁷ includes affordability modelling examples for a range of different types of school.

Matters for recommendation

B. The potential benefits and challenges, in principle, of targeting remuneration by subject in the future in order to address subject specific teacher shortages.

ASCL recommends:

- ✓ **A competitive pay framework that does not differentiate.**
- ✓ **A responsive career-long retention scheme/s that can be adjusted as demand requires.**

Why are we saying this?

Teaching needs to be financially rewarding in order to be attractive and there are significant recruitment challenges across the profession that need to be addressed at a national level.

264. We believe that the STRB should consider a variety of factors when making recommendations:

- i. Vacancy rates
- ii. Impact of teacher shortages
- iii. Pupil population
- iv. International evidence on student loan forgiveness and long-term retention schemes.

⁹⁷ Appendix Three – Affordability modelling (separate document)

Vacancy rates

265. In 2022/23, the number of vacancies increased by almost 50%, from 1,564 in 2021/22 to 2,300. This number has more than doubled since the 2020/21 figure of 1,098. This is the highest since 2010/11 according to the historical data published in the SWC⁹⁸. The rate of teacher vacancies is also at its highest since 2010/11 at 0.5.
266. When compared with historical data from 2010/11, the rate of increase overall is alarming with over five times as many in 2022/23, rising from 452 to 2,334. The increase in vacancies for classroom teachers increased even further, with six times as many in 2022/23, rising from 355 to 2,120.
267. The latest Teacher Labour Market in England⁹⁹ report also highlights this as an issue: *'Schools posted 93% more vacancies in 2022/23 compared to the year before the pandemic.'*
268. Temporarily filled posts have also increased in 2022/23, by almost 50% from 2,247 in 2021/22 to 3,308.
269. The number of leadership vacancies has also more than doubled since 2010/11, rising from 97 to 214 in 2022/23. As with other grades, the number of vacancies was the highest since data recorded in the SWC in 2010/11¹⁰⁰.
270. These are all clear indicators that the recruitment crisis is getting worse.
271. We have highlighted for a number of years that since 2019 the data is no longer separated by specific leadership role as used to be the case it is just report as 'headteacher and other leadership'.
272. This year the data is even less granular, and is simply reported as leadership, with no separate details for headteachers. Although data for Headteachers is available within the 'Explore data' function, there is still only the 'other leadership' category available, not by specific role.
273. This makes it impossible to fully analyse the data and to unpick where specific issues may exist.
274. It remains our view that the SWC data masks a number of issues in relation to leadership recruitment.
275. Leadership recruitment remains a challenge. Again, we set out later in our evidence a number of steps which would help to improve this.
276. A report¹⁰¹ by TeachVac in January 2023 showed that there were more leadership vacancies advertised during 2022 than in each of the previous two years, where recruitment was affected by the pandemic.

⁹⁸ [School Workforce Census 2022](#)

⁹⁹ [The Labour Market in England Report, 2023 NFER](#)

¹⁰⁰ [Ibid](#)

¹⁰¹ [The Labour Market for School Leaders in England, TeachVac](#)

277. The number of primary assistant headteacher vacancies advertised in 2022 (1,013) was the highest since 2017 (723). In secondary schools, the number of assistant headteacher vacancies recorded in 2022 was 1,872, also higher than the previous four years.
278. The report also highlights the re-advertisement rate for headteacher vacancies during 2021/22 at 25% for primary schools and 19% for secondary schools.
279. Headteacher vacancies in secondary schools increased in all regions in 2022, with London having the largest number of vacancies.
280. The number of headteacher vacancies recorded by TeachVac during 2022¹⁰² was 2,619, higher than the previous two years, and may well be a sign that some leaders who worked through the pandemic decided to change posts, or leave the profession during 2022. This is something to which we have alluded in our previous evidence submissions.
281. Again, we believe that this demonstrates that there are serious recruitment issues which are not reflected in the SWC data.

Impact of teacher shortages

282. In our evidence submission last year, we highlight the impact that teacher shortages were having on the sector¹⁰³.
283. The '*Teacher Labour Market in England 2023*'¹⁰⁴ report warns that '*Last year's under-recruitment of subject specialists is likely to further contribute to teacher shortages in subjects which schools already find it difficult to recruit for. Recent NFER research has shown that this leads to schools relying on strategies to mitigate against teacher shortages, such as relying more heavily on non-specialist and supply teachers to teach specific subjects, which have the potential to impact the quality of education for pupils (Worth and Faulkner-Ellis, 2022b).*'
284. In addition, we know that this is having a huge impact on the workload of school leaders. They are not only having to navigate through these difficulties but, as the 2022 report¹⁰⁵ shows, are also more likely to have to pick up a heavier teaching load because of the ongoing, and now worsening, recruitment challenges.
285. The government should be championing the profession, but instead we see too much denigration of teachers and school leaders, which then makes its way into the media¹⁰⁶ and is bound to influence the decisions taken by graduates considering joining the profession and teachers and leaders already in it.

¹⁰² [Ibid](#)

¹⁰³ [ASCL evidence to the STRB 33rd Remit](#)

¹⁰⁴ [Teacher Labour Market in England 2023, NFER](#)

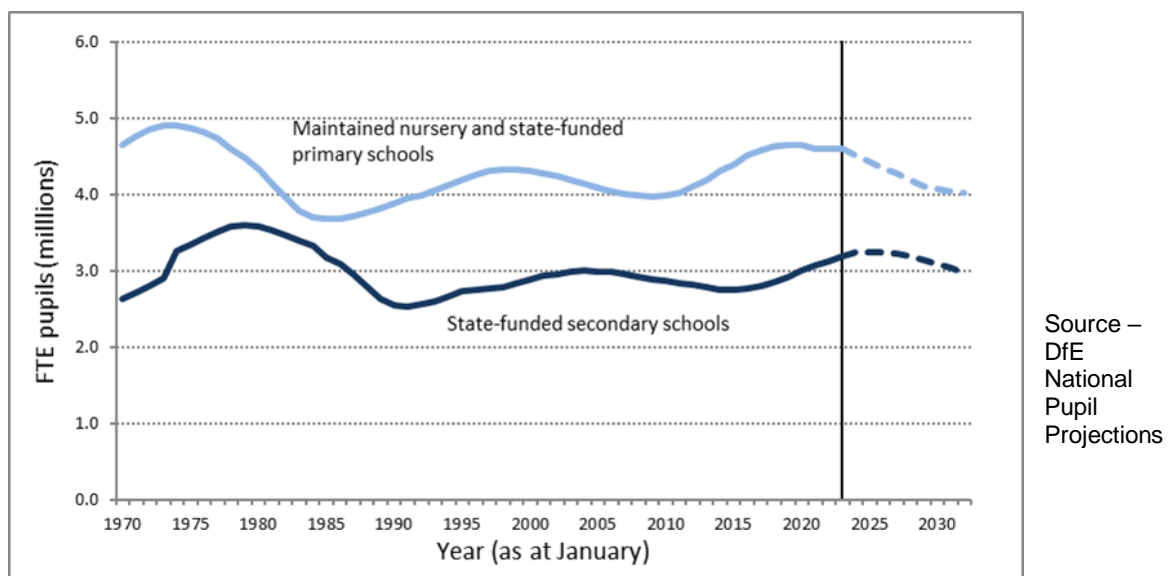
¹⁰⁵ [Teacher supply and shortages: the implications of teacher supply challenges for schools and pupils, NFER 2022](#)

¹⁰⁶ [School leaders' unions write to Education Secretary demanding apology for her 'insulting' and 'unacceptable' remarks](#)

Pupil population

286. The latest National Pupil Projections¹⁰⁷ show that numbers in secondary are now projected to peak at 3,244,000 in 2024 and 2025 before decreasing to approximately 3,191,000 in 2028. The updated 2028 projection would mean only 2,000 fewer pupils in secondary schools than in 2023.
287. In nursery and primary schools, the overall population in 2028 is forecast to be 4,181,000. This is 116,000 higher than the model published in 2022. However, it would still be 412,000 lower than the actual population in 2023. So, the population is still projected to fall, but at a slower rate.
288. The 2023 overall projection model shows an increase of 214,000 on the total at the end of its projection period (2032) that the project model published in 2022.
289. Figure 16 below shows the actual (2023) and projected pupil numbers by school type in England.

Figure 16



290. The 2022 School Workforce Census¹⁰⁸ (SWC) data shows that there was an increase in the number of full-time equivalent (FTE) secondary teachers from 213,567 in 2021/22 to 216,013 in 2022/23.
291. However, despite this increase, historical SWC data¹⁰⁹ shows that the overall trend since 2010/11 is downwards (see chart below). In 2022/23 there were 2,723 fewer FTE secondary teachers than in 2010/11¹¹⁰.

¹⁰⁷ [National Pupil Projections 2023](#)

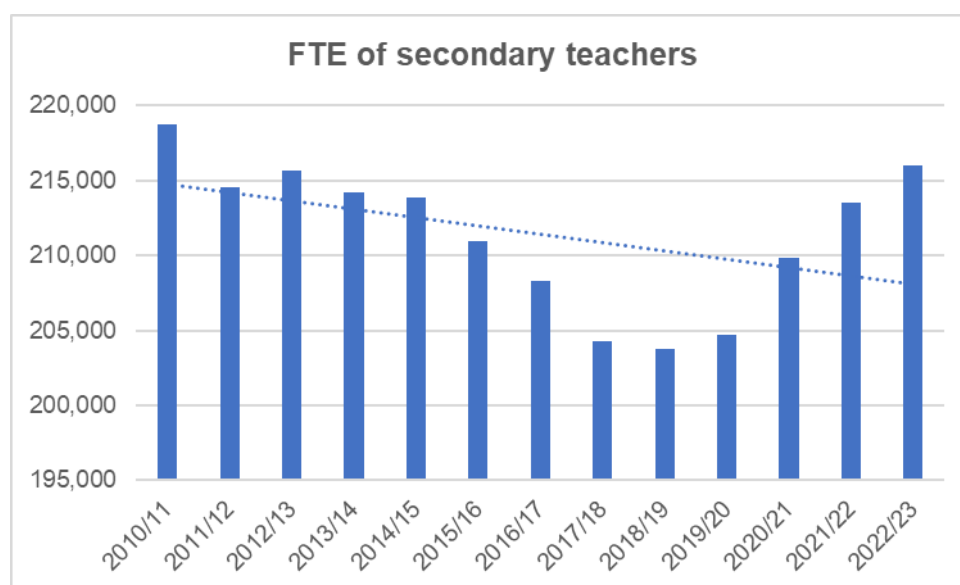
¹⁰⁸ [School workforce in England 2022](#)

¹⁰⁹ [ibid](#)

¹¹⁰ [ibid](#)

292. This is in stark contrast to the change in pupil population which has increased significantly and is projected to continue to do so.
293. Latest ITT recruitment¹¹¹ and retention data¹¹² suggests that the numbers of secondary teachers will continue to fall. This will lead to an inevitable increase in class sizes and Pupil Teacher Ratio (PTR), which will further increase the workload for those already employed in schools and creating a vicious circle in relation to the retention of those teachers (see figure 17 below).

Figure 17



294. As a result of pupil increases in secondary schools without the corresponding increase in teachers, the PTR has increased from 14.8 in 2010/11 to 16.8 in 2022/23¹¹³. Furthermore, the PTRs across the sector were all higher in 2022/23 than in 2010/11. These proportions must not be allowed to increase further.
295. The Department may well celebrate¹¹⁴ that there are more teachers in the profession than there were in 2010/11, but what it seems to conveniently overlook is the fact that there are also more pupils in schools than in 2010/11.
296. This was fact checked by Full Fact in June 2023¹¹⁵. The claim was ‘*new data shows that there’s a record number of teachers in England’s schools*’. Full Fact’s verdict was ‘*It’s true that the number of full-time equivalent teachers in England is the highest since comparable records began in 2010/11. But pupil numbers have increased at a faster rate, meaning there are now fewer teachers relative to the number of pupils than in 2010.*’
297. They also said ‘*It’s true that data published last week shows that, as of November 2022, there are 468,371 full-time equivalent (FTE) teachers in state schools in England—an increase of 2,800 since the previous year, and the highest number since comparable records began in 2010/11.*’

¹¹¹ ITT Census 2023

¹¹² [ibid](#)

¹¹³ [ibid](#)

¹¹⁴ [Record number of teachers in England’s schools, DfE, June 2023](#)

¹¹⁵ [England has fewer teachers relative to the number of school pupils than in 2010](#)

But these figures don't show how the number of teachers has changed in relation to the number of pupils.

Selective use of official information without appropriate context and caveats can damage public trust in both official information and the government. Caveats and context should always be included when claims are made, and oversights rectified when they occur.'

Competitive pay framework

264. As a point of principle ASCL believes that there should be a competitive pay framework in place that makes teaching an attractive proposition across a career. This should not differentiate by subject, phase or location.
265. Indeed, as indicated above, we are concerned that some of the DfE's current retention incentives are going to make teaching actively unattractive when they end as they are solely focussed on only one part of a teacher's career. For example, when a teacher comes to the end of the new enhanced 'Levelling Up Premium' they are likely to face a pay cut just at the time in their life when many may wish to start a family.
266. We are much warmer towards the idea of a programme that can sit alongside the pay framework and can be adjusted to meet shortages. We have talked previously about using a student loan forgiveness mechanism for achieving this; however, we do recognise that not all teachers will have loan repayments to make.
267. There is evidence¹¹⁶, however, that loan forgiveness schemes can improve retention and we think there is merit in the STRB being given a remit to do further work on this. It is worth noting that a student loan takes an average of 29 years and 4 months to pay off, with the average debt being just under £48k in England.¹¹⁷

International evidence on student loan forgiveness and long-term retention schemes

268. We are also aware of the CONNECT Plan in Singapore, whereby Singapore's Ministry of Education (MoE) deposits a certain quantum for every teacher each year depending on their length of service. Payouts comprising a portion of the accumulated amount are given every three to five years while the teacher remains in service. This is in addition to the salary and bonus payments that teachers receive. We think there is merit in the STRB also being given a remit to do further work on how such a scheme might operate in England.
269. Our view is that a loan forgiveness scheme and 'long service' payment plan are not mutually exclusive.

¹¹⁶ The Impact of Incentives to Recruit and Retain Teachers in "Hard-to-Staff" Subjects: An Analysis of the Florida Critical Teacher Shortage Program

¹¹⁷ [UK Graduate Statistics & Employment Rates | 2023 Analysis \(standout-cv.com\)](https://www.standout-cv.com/uk-graduate-statistics-employment-rates-2023-analysis)

270. We are strongly of the view that any scheme would need to be run alongside the pay framework so that it did not interfere with that, and that appropriate adjustments are made. We are therefore of the view that they should sit within the STRB's remit rather than being treated as annual bursary arrangements are now.

271. It is also clear from international evidence on financial retention schemes that the financial amount has to be sufficiently enticing in order to make a difference. We would be keen to understand where the funding for any schemes would come from - not just on start-up, but in future years.

Conclusion

272. In addition to providing our evidence on the items covered in this remit, we have made recommendations in each of the areas of strategy and action that we believe would improve the recruitment, retention, workload and wellbeing of the education workforce.

273. Whilst some are longer-term solutions which are broader and do not fall purely within the remit of the STRB, there are many which do, and we believe that these should be implemented swiftly.

274. As a fundamental principle, we believe that sufficient funding should be provided to ensure that all schools can implement any proposals and recommendations.

275. We believe that education must be seen as an investment and not a cost. This is a view which we were pleased to see is shared by the STRB in its 33rd Report¹¹⁸, *'Investment is needed to proactively manage the worsening recruitment position and declining competitiveness of teacher pay. It will be more cost-effective to act sooner rather than later. The cost of failure is high: it affects teaching quality and adversely impacts on children's education.'*

276. We hope that this response is of value to your consultation. ASCL is willing to be further consulted and to assist in any way that it can.

Louise Hatswell
Conditions of Employment Specialist: Pay

Association of School and College Leaders
19 February 2024

¹¹⁸ [STRB 33rd Report](#)