

Secretary of State's Response to the School Teachers' Review Body (STRB) Thirtieth Report 2020

Response of the Association of School and College Leaders

- 1 The Association of School and College Leaders (ASCL) represents over 19,000 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 per cent 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 Government's proposals following the STRB's recommendations to the 30th Remit. This submission is in addition to the joint letter we have sent in partnership with the NAHT, NEU and Voice.

Matter for recommendation

An assessment of the adjustments that should be made to the salary and allowance ranges for classroom teachers, unqualified teachers and school leaders to promote recruitment and retention, within the bounds of affordability across the school system as a whole and in the light of [the Secretary of State's] views on the need for an uplift to starting salaries.

Pay Award

- 3 We start by welcoming the STRB's recommendation for a 5.5% uplift to starting salaries for teachers on the minimum of the main pay range. This is an important step in improving recruitment into the profession.
- 4 However, it is disappointing that the same uplift was not recommended to all pay ranges and allowances for teachers and school leaders or that the current differentials between points and ranges were not maintained.
- 5 The majority of consultees were strongly opposed to establishing a pay structure with a higher starting salary and relatively flatter pay progression,

stating that this would have a negative impact on morale and retention of experienced teachers and school leaders.¹

- 6 Each year we have urged the Review Body not to make differentiated award, a view which has been shared by them in recent years.
- 7 The recommendation for starting salaries is double the award recommended for experienced teachers and school leaders. We have seen no evidence to support the return to differentiated awards which again impact negatively on experienced teachers and school leaders.
- 8 On the back of the differentiated award in 2018 where experienced teachers and school leaders received a significantly lower award than those on the main pay range, this year's award means that these teachers are once again hit hardest. They have also seen the biggest erosion in pay since 2010.

London Pay Areas

- 9 It was reassuring to read that the Review Body shared the same view as ASCL and the majority of consultees with regards to the London pay areas.
- 10 They saw evidence which showed that retention rates for early career teachers were far worse in London than other areas of England. The report states that applying a smaller award to early career teachers in London and reducing differentials between teachers in London and those in the rest of England would simply exacerbate these issues.²

Pay Scales

- 11 We welcome the reintroduction of pay scales into the STPCD but, as stated in our evidence, we believe that they should be a mandatory element of the STPCD in an advisory capacity for minimum pay, rather than compulsory fixed points.
- 12 Although the STPCD is only mandatory for maintained schools, the majority of academies also choose to adopt it. This change would ensure that annual uplifts are applied to all pay points for all teachers employed on STPCD but would also allow employers to pay more than the minimum where they were able to and to address contextual recruitment and retention issues experienced in their schools.
- 13 We also believe that all pay ranges should be reintroduced into the Document, including unqualified teachers, lead practitioners and the leadership pay range.
- 14 We note that this recommendation was made by the Independent Welsh Pay Review Body (IWPRB) in their 2nd Report³. This recommendation has been accepted by the Minister for Education in Wales⁴ and the pay scales for all pay

¹ STRB 30th Report, xi, July 2020

² Ibid, pg 89, para 5.41

³ [IWPRB 2nd Report, July 2020](#)

⁴ [Ministerial response to IWPRB 2nd Report, July 2020](#)

ranges have been reintroduced in the draft School Teachers Pay and Conditions (Wales) Document (STPC(W)D).

- 15 This was based on the same argument and evidence from consultees, yet we have seen a different conclusion.
- 16 We will continue to publish uprated pay scales for all pay ranges in conjunction with NAHT, NEU and Voice and encourage employers to use these as a minimum.
- 17 Although there was consensus amongst consultees on many areas, such as Performance Related Pay, the pay scales becoming a mandatory element of the STPCD and a pay award that was not differentiated and applied to all pay ranges and allowances, it was disappointing to see that these were not recommended.

Performance Related Pay

- 18 On performance related pay (PRP), the majority of consultees, including ASCL, were united in their calls for its removal, providing significant evidence to demonstrate that it is not effective in the education sector, and that it can actually have a negative impact on workload and retention.
- 19 We again note with interest that in their 2nd Report⁵ the IWPRB agreed with the evidence submitted by their consultees and have recommended the removal of PRP.
- 20 The Minister for Education in Wales has accepted this recommendation⁶ and the requirement for pay progression to be linked to performance has been removed from the draft STPC(W)D 2020.
- 21 We hope to see review of the performance-related pay system in the next remit with a view to it being removed from the STPCD.

Recruitment and Retention

- 22 The report acknowledges that while the deterioration in retention rates is most marked for teachers early in their career, the Review Body are concerned that there are also indications of a growing challenge in retaining experienced classroom teachers and those in leadership roles⁷.
- 23 The Department's own evidence recognised that recruitment and retention of school leaders was a challenge.
- 24 In light of this, we would have expected to see a bigger increase recommended for experienced teachers and school leaders.

⁵ [Ibid, pg 69, para 4.47](#)

⁶ [Ibid.](#)

⁷ [Ibid, x](#)

- 25 The continued differentiated awards, coupled with the erosion of pay since 2010 have actually worsened this situation.
- 26 We are seeing anecdotal evidence that the increased responsibility and overbearing workload caused by the Covid-19 pandemic is likely to have a negative impact on recruitment and retention of school leaders, particularly Headteachers.
- 27 This is something that will need to be addressed as a matter of urgency. We call on the Secretary of State to reconsider his response to the report and to uplift the pay award to other pay ranges.

Affordability

- 28 We are again dismayed that the Education Secretary has ignored all the evidence which showed that his claim that a 3% increase was affordable within the sector was flawed.
- 29 ASCL, along with the majority of the statutory consultees, provided evidence to back this up in their submissions⁸. This position has not changed.
- 30 The STRB heard about funding issues for themselves from school leaders in their visits to schools, saying that '*many of the schools we had visited had needed to restructure their staffing to balance budgets and several head teachers noted that this presented risks to pupil outcomes.*'⁹
- 31 Our members tell us that their budgets were already overstretched, and in many schools where there may have been a small projected surplus, this has been swallowed up by additional costs and income losses related to Covid-19.
- 32 There are differing financial pressures across the system due to individual school circumstances and the make up of staff cohorts.
- 33 London has traditionally had a higher proportion of teachers on the main pay range, so will be particularly hard hit by the higher increases proposed for points M1 to M5.
- 34 The recently agreed NJC pay award¹⁰ for support staff is also unfunded.
- 35 As a result of the award being unfunded, schools are having to look to more drastic cost-saving exercises which will include further staffing restructures/redundancies and further cuts to planned budgets for learning resources and premises.
- 36 Some are reporting the impact is likely to result in a deficit budget.
- 37 This clearly demonstrates the need for the award to be fully funded.

⁸ ASCL Evidence and Supplementary Evidence to STRB 30th remit

⁹ Ibid, pg 116, para D.30

¹⁰ [LOCAL GOVERNMENT SERVICES' PAY AGREEMENT 2020-21](#)

The STRB's recommendations should be funded in full. As was usual practice until recent years, pay awards should be funded and arrangements to facilitate this should be made in a timely manner.

Proposed changes to the STPCD

- 38 We note that there are changes proposed to the Document in addition to the pay uplift and the inclusion of advisory pay scales.
- 39 One of the proposals is in relation to section 26 on Additional Payments. Employers have previously been allowed to award these payments to a teacher 'other than a Headteacher'¹¹. This is now proposed to be changed to a teacher 'other than a teacher on the leadership pay range'¹².
- 40 We must object to this proposed change. Firstly, there is no explanation or rationale included for the change. Secondly, this is a change that would have an adverse impact on our members, both in terms of potential increased workload and financial detriment.
- 41 In addition to receiving the lowest of the recent differentiated pay awards and suffering the greatest erosion in pay, this proposal could also prevent them from receiving an additional payment to which they have previously been entitled to – resulting in a reduction in pay.
- 42 There is no reference to any protection or safeguarding for those teachers on the leadership pay range who are already in receipt of such payments.
- 43 We therefore recommend that this change is not implemented and that the payments remain as 'to a teacher other than a Headteacher'.
- 44 The second proposed change is in relation to the Determination of Applicable Salary Range which states that '*a teacher who on 31 August 2020 was being paid in accordance with one of the London Area pay ranges must continue to be paid in accordance with that range*'.
- 45 There is no explanation for, or rationale behind, this proposed change and we cannot agree to it.

Timeliness of the process

- 46 We were pleased to see the remit letter issued much earlier than has been the case in recent years. It was unfortunate that the process was then inevitably delayed by the General Election and the Covid-19 pandemic meaning that the report and response were published at the start of the Summer break again.
- 47 However, we cannot find ourselves in this position again, so it is vital that the remit for the 31st Report is issued as soon as possible.

¹¹ STPCD 2019

¹² Draft STPCD 2020

- 48 All consultees need sufficient time to work on their evidence, even if this cannot be submitted until after the Comprehensive Spending Review (CSR) has been completed. Any amendments which may be necessary after the CSR can then be made before submission.
- 49 We hope that this is of value to your consultation, ASCL is willing to be further consulted and to assist in any way that it can.

Louise Hatswell
Pay and Conditions Specialist
Association of School and College Leaders
8th September 2020