

**NASUWT SUPPLEMENTARY SUBMISSION  
TO THE INDEPENDENT WELSH PAY REVIEW BODY  
21 MARCH 2025**

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## Introduction

- 1 As has been the case in previous years, the NASUWT is pleased to submit our supplementary evidence to the Independent Welsh Pay Review Body (IWPRB).
- 2 When responding to evidence from pay review body consultees in our supplementary evidence submissions, we focus on evidence and comments from governments and from employer organisations and do not generally comment on evidence submitted by other unions.
- 3 In this respect, we will be commenting upon the evidence and comments submitted by the Welsh Government and the WLGA.
- 4 The events that have cast their shadows over the previous IWPRB remits continue to linger. The continuing cost of living crisis and societal changes since the pandemic have both impacted the working lives of teachers and school leaders. In the NASUWT Annual Survey, 82% of respondents were worried about their financial situation<sup>1</sup>.
- 5 The Union has been vocal in recent times in highlighting the teacher recruitment crisis in Wales. In the NASUWT Annual Survey, the top three concerns respondents saw affecting the profession were Workload, Pupil Behaviour, and School Budget Cuts<sup>2</sup>. In Estyn's Annual Report<sup>3</sup>, they also highlight their concern regarding recruitment and retention and identify pupil behaviour, the Curriculum for Wales, and the comparative strength of other graduate professions as key effectors on recruitment and retention.
- 6 These pay and conditions issues are not new, and the Union has made the case to the IWPRB annually that the focus must be on what is needed and what is right for the future supply and retention of teachers. Moreover,

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<sup>1</sup> <https://www.nasuwt.org.uk/be-involved/big-question-survey.html#Section1>

<sup>2</sup> <https://www.nasuwt.org.uk/be-involved/big-question-survey.html#Section7>

<sup>3</sup> <https://annual-report.estyn.gov.wales/app/uploads/2025/02/recruitment-and-retention-2025-02-11.pdf>

any arbitrary affordability constraints put forward by the Welsh government, which have led to pay deterioration and the current poor state of teacher recruitment and retention should not be a driver for the IWPRB's recommendations. If the IWPRB's recommendations are not within the Welsh Government's allocated budget then it is up to the Government to prioritise, rather than to place a prior limit on the integrity of the exercise. As explained in our Submission, NASUWT remains steadfast in the opinion that a significant above-RPI inflation increase in salary values over a sustained period is necessary to restore teachers' salaries to a level commensurate to their skills and experience.

- 7 The Union remains critical of the Welsh Government's selective acceptance of previous IWPRB recommendations, where only 'cost-neutral' measures have been implemented. NASUWT insists that full implementation of the Review Body's strategic recommendations is necessary to improve working conditions.
- 8 NASUWT has called for school leaders to be entitled to a limit to their working days and hours, including a 35-hour working week. The Union has also asked for the removal of unlimited work hours provisions for teachers in the STPC(W)D. Workload and bureaucracy expand to fill the available space – which at the moment is unlimited. Both these changes would put downward pressure on workload and bureaucracy since the available volume for them will be reduced to manageable dimensions. If such changes are not applied to all staff then there is a risk that work will simply be delegated from one cohort to another.
- 9 The condition of the education infrastructures calls for the IWPRB to demonstrate its independence and recommend the pay and conditions changes needed to help reverse the recruitment and retention trend and see teaching in Wales to be an attractive, rewarding, progressive and sought after professional career.

## **The Welsh Government's Evidence**

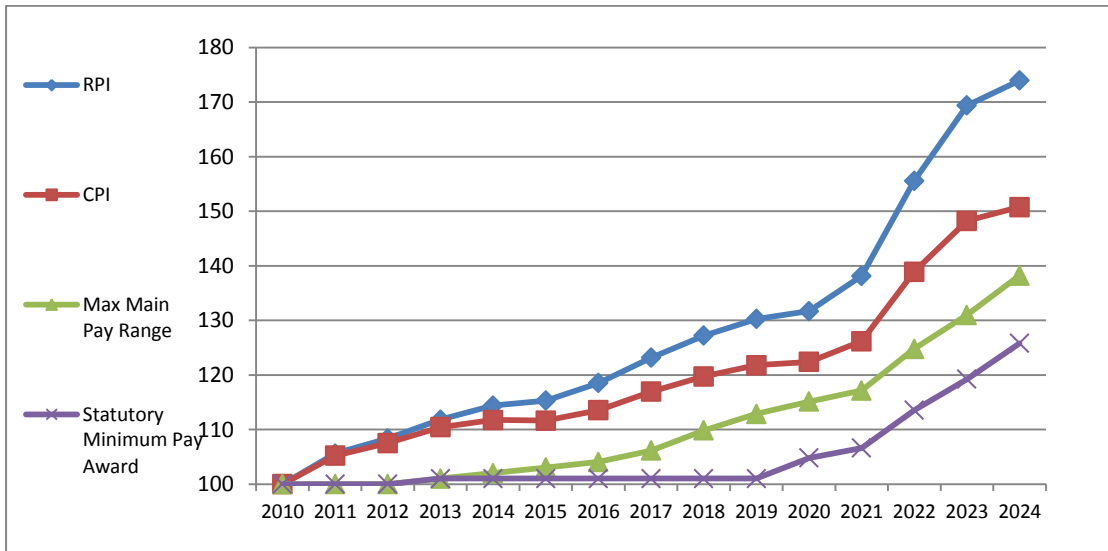
- 10 In November 2024, Lynne Neagle MS, Cabinet Secretary for Education, in her written statement<sup>4</sup> on the 5.5% pay uplift made no reference to the award being fully funded. The Welsh Government's Evidence in 2.5, 2.6 and 3.1 explains that school funding is un-hypothecated, and so any pay uplifts applied does not mean that the required money to fund that uplift will trickle down into individual school budgets.
- 11 Over the past weeks, NASUWT has engaged with schools who note that a proportion of the funding for the 5.5% uplift have come from the individual school budgets, since the local authority formulate funding for it based on an arbitrary salary benchmark rather than fully fund the finances required. These schools were in deficit because of it, and were applying redundancy procedures as a consequence of it.
- 12 This unacceptable situation where schools have to make teachers redundant so as to afford the pay uplift designed to contribute to recruitment and retention of teachers should not exist, and so the IWPRB must include a recommendation that any pay uplift should be fully funded.
- 13 In 3.3 the Welsh Government identify the continuing school budget reserves carried forward – most recently totalling £115M across Wales. It was also noted that 309 centres had negative reserves totalling £40 million. The remaining 1,159 schools had positive reserves, 357 of which had reserves in excess of 10% of their total delegated expenditure.
- 14 This pattern of inequality and hoarding of public finances is a long-standing issue, and the Welsh Government has taken very few steps to address the situation. The Government is hamstrung by the provisions of Local Management of Schools, and so NASUWT continues to lobby the Welsh Government on seeing the dismantling of LMS in Wales.

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<sup>4</sup> <https://www.gov.wales/written-statement-teachers-pay-award-202425>

15 Section 2 of the Welsh Government’s evidence focuses on the affordability of teacher pay in various contexts. RPI and CPI are not two of those contexts.

**Indexed price increases compared to teachers' MPR increases, 2010 to 2024<sup>5</sup>**



16 In both the best- and worst-case scenarios, teachers’ pay has failed to keep pace with price increases as measured by both the RPI and CPI inflation measures. Teachers remain significantly poorer in real terms than they were in 2010.

17 In light of the aforementioned recruitment crisis, can the Welsh Government afford *not* to address the real-terms pay deficit? The future prosperity of Wales depends on our young people, they are our future citizens. This therefore calls for a prioritisation of funds for education. Failing our young people by not providing those funds will only shore up further problems for the future in health and social care – both core responsibilities of the Welsh Government.

18 The Welsh Government claims that recruitment and retention is not solely addressed by pay. There are other factors that affect recruitment and

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<sup>5</sup> NASUWT Submission to IWPRB 2025 (“NASUWT Submission IWPRB 2025 Final.docx”)

retention as mentioned in the introduction above, and the Welsh Government has set up numerous working groups to address issues such as workload, ALN and ITE. However, the glacial pace at which these groups have moved over the past few years, with very little real-life outcomes, suggests that this is fast becoming a failed approach. The IWPRB is in a key position to be able to make explicit recommendations in these areas.

### **The WLGA's Response**

19 Under "Financial Challenges", the WLGA point out that any additional costs as a result from any changes to pay and the STPC(W)D as a statutory instrument must be fully funded by the Welsh Government. This agrees with NASUWT's position in paragraphs 10 to 12 above.

20 The WLGA recognise that recruitment and retention of staff remain a challenge for schools and Local Authorities, and they maintain that recruitment and retention is multi-factorial and salary and allowances ranges are just one part of the solution.

21 It is worth noting in that respect that in the most recent NASUWT Annual Survey<sup>6</sup>:

- 79% of Wales respondents did not think that teaching is competitive with other professions in terms of the salaries and awards on offer;
- 74% of Wales respondents thought that individuals are being put off a career in teaching because of levels of pay;
- 86% of Wales respondents have experienced more work related stress in the past 12 months;
- 30% of Wales respondents were satisfied with their job;

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<sup>6</sup> <https://www.nasuwt.org.uk/be-involved/big-question-survey/big-question-survey-explore-the-data.html>

- 77% of Wales respondents have seriously considered leaving the teaching profession.

22 Whilst the recruitment and retention problem is multi-faceted, this data suggests that salary and allowances are a significant part of the problem, and so a key part of the solution. The Welsh Government cannot attend to the other issues and allow the real-terms pay gap to grow.