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NASUWT

The Teachers' Union

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General Secretary
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Rt Hon Nadhim Zahawi MP
Secretary of State
Department for Education
Sanctuary Buildings
Great Smith Street
London
SW1P 3BT

Dear Nadhim,

A Better Deal on Teachers' Pay

You will be aware of the incredible contribution made by teachers and headteachers to assure the quality of education for the nation's children.

However, after 12 years of real-terms pay erosion, which has left teachers facing the biggest squeeze on their living standards for half a century, England also faces an emergency for the future of the teaching profession.

Throughout the pandemic, it was teachers and headteachers who put their lives on the line, ensuring that children continued to be taught, looked after and able to secure the qualifications and awards they deserved. Teachers and headteachers have done everything asked of them, often working around the clock, to ensure that pupils did not lose out.

But, as the public clapped in praise of our teachers and headteachers, the profession has endured below inflation pay awards and real-terms cuts to their pay.

With inflation now at double-digit levels and the cost of living increasing daily, many teachers are today unable to cope financially - forced to work two or three jobs; forced to use food banks; and forced to leave their jobs because they simply cannot afford the costs of getting to work. For supply teachers, the cumulative impact of years of failure to address endemic low pay has driven thousands of supply teachers out of the profession, leaving schools without access to qualified teacher cover.

Our members are also concerned that the Government has, again, sought to interfere in the work of the School Teachers Review Body and decided, once again, to delay the publication of the Review Body's Report.

The NASUWT further notes with serious concern that the proposals made by the Government to the pay review body would represent a further significant real terms pay cut for all teachers. This is neither acceptable nor sustainable in the current circumstances.

The findings from the NASUWT's latest 'Big Question' research for 2022 confirms that 73% of teacher and headteacher respondents are seriously considering leaving the job – further deepening the recruitment and retention crisis and putting at risk children's future life chances.

We believe that children and young people deserve better and it is also clear that the profession has endured enough.

The NASUWT is clear that an immediate programme of pay restoration is needed, commencing with at least a 12% pay award this year for all teachers, recognising the 20% real terms reduction to the value of teachers' pay since 2010.

You should be clear that in the event that this year's teachers' pay award does not, as a minimum, address our concerns, the NASUWT will have no alternative than to ballot our members for industrial action this autumn.

Teachers did not create this cost of living emergency and the NASUWT does not accept that our members should be expected to pay the price of the Government's failure to address cuts to their pay, erosion of their pensions or threats to their job security.

The NASUWT asks you to act now to protect the future of the teaching profession and to recognise and reward fully our teachers and headteachers for the efforts they make every day on behalf of children and young people.

Yours sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Patrick Roach', written in a cursive style.

Dr Patrick Roach
General Secretary