



**BRIEFING**

## **TEACHERS' PAY AWARD**

**1 September 2021**

### **Introduction**

1. The NASUWT - The Teachers' Union - in addition to the support we are providing to our members across the UK, is committed to ensuring that Members of the Scottish Parliament remain informed of developing challenges in schools and colleges.
2. The latest position of the Scottish Negotiating Committee for Teachers (SNCT) Employers' Side was that a 1.22% award is to be made to teachers for 2021-22. Notwithstanding the significant delays in coming forward with this derisory offer, the NASUWT is clear that the current offer falls significantly short of teachers' expectations and is wholly inadequate in the context of increased cost-of-living pressures and against a backdrop of a real-terms deterioration in the value of teachers' pay since 2010.
3. The NASUWT has undertaken an indicative survey of its members in Scotland. The response from our members has been overwhelming:
  - 85% reject the current pay offer of 1.22% for teachers in Scotland;
  - 82% believe that the current pay offer is unfair in the current circumstances;
  - 78% agree that a pay award of 1.22% will have a negative impact on their morale;
  - 86% would be willing to take some form of industrial action in response to the current pay offer; and
  - 74% would be willing to vote for strike action to get a better pay deal.

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4. A total of 713 teachers in Scotland responded to the NASUWT survey on the pay offer between 1 and 12 October. Below is a selection of comments from respondents to the survey, giving their views on the pay offer:

*“The pay offer will be damaging to the country as a whole - too many experienced teachers will leave the profession, and it will be our children who suffer.”*

*“The workload has vastly escalated during the pandemic. It is unlikely that terms and conditions will revert to pre-pandemic times. This pay rise is an insult.”*

*“I cannot believe that after all the uncertainties of the last two years, and all the extra effort put into ensuring that children were not disadvantaged, and dealing with the chaos and extra work caused by the SQA, and having to make substantial and relatively unsupported skill-set leaps, we are to receive less than the rate of inflation.”*

*“It is just so disappointing to think how far behind in pay terms we are. The cost of living is rising and we are being left behind. Undervalued and underpaid for what we are expected to achieve.”*

*“This is not a pay rise but a pay cut in real terms. My electric and gas have gone up by £46.95 (5%) per month and my food bill by 12% since January, so we are going to struggle.”*

*“Morale is on the floor and we are kicked and kicked again. If we are not even considered worthy of pay in line with inflation, then what is the point? Even as a full-time teacher, I now have to think carefully before heating my home.”*

*“I am already struggling to pay bills. I rarely go out, don't go on holiday, have a very basic mobile phone, no gym memberships or Sky packages. Very, very little savings.”*

5. The anger of teachers over the failure to deliver a fair pay award is clear and should not be underestimated. The current offer of 1.22% represents a further significant real-terms pay cut to teachers' pay, compounding a decade of erosion in the value of teachers' salaries.
6. Pay is a major issue for concern for NASUWT members, adding to their concerns over excessive workload, wellbeing and health and safety. Urgent intervention and action by the Scottish Government is required to ensure the continued support of teachers in securing plans for education recovery. No option is being discounted by the NASUWT in supporting our members, collectively, to secure a fair pay award.
7. At a time when more and more is being asked of the profession, the Union has written to the Cabinet Secretary, Shirley-Anne Somerville, asking her to take such steps as are necessary to insist that employers come back to the negotiating table urgently with an improved offer which will deliver real progress towards pay restoration for teachers.
8. The NASUWT remains committed to working with the Scottish Government on these matters in the interests of the teaching profession and the education of our children and young people.
9. Teachers have expressed their anger and opposition to the current pay offer, with a clear commitment to further action if the Scottish Government and local authorities do not come forward with an improved offer that addresses the year-on-year erosion of their salaries.
10. Please show your support for teachers by raising this issue directly with the Cabinet Secretary.

For further information, please contact:

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