

Pay Dispute Update

For the avoidance of doubt, the NASUWT remains in dispute with the Welsh Government over pay, in line with NASUWT Conference Policy.

The Welsh Government's Pay Offer – Update

The NASUWT Cymru Pay Dispute Update Briefing for March reported that the following pay offer had been made:

On top of the 5% already awarded for 2022/23, a fully funded award of 3%: 1.5% to be consolidated and 1.5% to be non-consolidated. 'Non-consolidated' means that this is a one-off payment.

However, the Briefing also reported that the Welsh Government had agreed to recall the Independent Wales Pay Review Body (IWPRB) so that it could revisit the standing offer of 3.5% for 2023/24. The Welsh Government has now decided that it is not going to do this and instead has increased the 3.5% offer for 2023/24 to 5%.

This is of great concern to the NASUWT as the Review Body is the agreed mechanism in Wales for consulting over pay awards for teachers, and the 5% is effectively no increase to what was already agreed. The figure was reached by simply making the 1.5% non-consolidated payment for this year a consolidated payment.

However, the threat made by the Welsh Government to withdraw the offer has not materialised and the Welsh Government has agreed that the payment can be made even though the NASUWT remains in dispute over pay. Members should see the pay uplift in their pay packets this month.

The Welsh Government Workload Commitments

Unique to the pay settlement in Wales, in comparison to the other Nations of the UK, is a series of Workload Commitments that the Welsh Government has made. These include:

- a pause on external engagement (by local authority and regional/School Improvement partners) in relation to scrutiny of planning, lesson observations, learning walks and book scrutiny;
- a process that defines 'included' and 'excluded' activities in detail for the rest of this school year;
- a process of working with School Improvement partners on what the next phase of School Improvement practice should look like, including clear messaging on 'mock inspection' language and culture;
- consultation on new purpose and language in the guidance regarding teacher appraisal;
- articulating the expectation that there will be only one Lesson Observation as standard in the Performance Management process;
- defining a process by which teachers will be able to record/report when this expectation is exceeded;
- reinstating the previous list of Administrative Tasks that teachers should not be performing in the School Teachers' Pay and Conditions (Wales) Document (STPC(W)D);
- consideration of any other administrative tasks not listed via a process through the IWPRB;
- use of the approaches above to reconsider how School Improvement is undertaken in a way that reduces workload, especially duplication of effort;

- streamlining the Professional Learning environment by creating a one-stop-shop for practitioners so that Professional Learning opportunities are more simply defined, more easily accessed and less burdensome;
- creating a process by which the reporting procedures that schools are expected to follow are simplified;
- engaging with unions on Additional Learning Needs (ALN) as part of evidence gathering which will inform the Minister in relation to current implementation.

It is important to note that the first three of these commitments were supposed to be followed through after the February half-term break. However, the NASUWT is not aware of any change in the culture of 'Mock Inspection' from schools, local authorities or the Consortia. However, following consultation over the transition to the new ALN Code, the Welsh Government has agreed to extend the transition by one year.

It is clear to the NASUWT that there is the potential within the Welsh Government Workload Commitments to move towards a new Workload Agreement for teachers in Wales. However, it is also clear that the Welsh Government has some difficulty in translating its commitments into reality. NASUWT Officials have met with Welsh Government Officials to support the Welsh Government in sticking to these commitments and going further, where possible, to deal with the workload issue for teachers in Wales which all agree is a serious problem.

Therefore, the NASUWT has paused the re-ballot over Pay in order to work on the Workload Agreement with the Welsh Government. The NASUWT intends to complete this work before the end of the Academic Year, at which point the Union will expect a package of clear proposals to be made that involve strategies for implementation that can be presented to members. This can then come together with the present Pay proposals for members' consideration. At that point, a decision will be made over a potential re-ballot.



**talk
to us**

Cymru-Wales@mail.nasuwt.org.uk
www.nasuwt.org.uk