



NASUWT
The Teachers' Union

CAMPAIGN PLAN 2023





**FOREWORD
BY THE
GENERAL
SECRETARY**

As the old adage goes: 'No one forgets a good teacher'. They just forget to pay them well and, not only that – they forget to treat them well, too.

In spite of the public praise from Ministers at its peak during the pandemic, - teaching today ranks in the relegation zone when it comes to graduate pay. How can any government claim to value teachers when they have presided over a system that has seen teachers' pay fall by more than 25% in real terms in the last decade and when there is mounting evidence of teachers being broken by excessive working hours and by the unsustainable demands placed on them?

Teachers in the UK work the longest hours in Europe. Too many employers pay lip-service to teachers' contractual rights and are deploying the most hostile of employment practices, with the use of fire and rehire. Governments and administrations have a duty to stop these abusive practices.

Our fight for education and for the rights of teachers begins right here, right now. It starts with the priorities set by our members at our Annual Conference – on workload, pay, the wellbeing of teachers and pupils, and on equalities – including our fight against racism, sexism and misogyny.

We will take forward this Campaign Plan with governments and administrations, and also into our workplaces, to secure a better deal for teachers.

The NASUWT will never stand by whilst employers play fast and loose with our members' terms and conditions of service, or fail to uphold the standards we expect, or think it's OK to threaten teachers with the sack in order to drive down their pensions, pay and working conditions.

We applaud our members across the country who have already taken a stand, fought back and won – demonstrating the power of being part of the Union – successfully defending pensions, pay and working conditions, and winning the right to be consulted fully on future changes affecting their employment.

And whilst we will always challenge bad employment practices, we will also work to promote good employment practices and demand better from all governments and administrations – fair pay, respect for rights at work, and positive action to tackle the impact of the cost-of-living crisis and to restore the value of teachers' pay.

That is what it means to be the NASUWT.

Join with us and join in and help us to deliver our agenda for change and for a better deal for all teachers.

Dr Patrick Roach
General Secretary

THE ROLE OF THE NASUWT

The NASUWT is The Teachers' Union and is the voice of the teaching profession.

Our aim is to improve and protect the status, morale and working conditions of the teaching profession so that teachers and headteachers can provide the best education and support to children and young people.

We are committed to ensuring that teachers and headteachers are recognised and rewarded as highly skilled professionals with working conditions that enable them to focus on their core role of leading teaching and learning.

CONTEXT

Right now, there is a hostile environment that is impacting on our members at work and driving a teacher recruitment and retention crisis.

Real terms pay, excessive workload and working hours, disregard for health, safety and welfare requirements, and declining levels of wellbeing are culminating in more and more teachers and headteachers at risk of self-harm and suicide. This is not the education system we want to see and it is no way to deliver the world-class education we want for children and young people.

In this context, teachers are fighting back. Last year, we secured successful national threshold-busting ballots in Scotland, the Isle of Man and Guernsey, to add to our mandate in Northern Ireland. And, in England and Wales, our campaign delivered a massive 90% vote in support of industrial action – the highest level of turnout and the highest levels of support for action we have ever secured in a national vote.

The way we bring about the change we want to see is when members take part in the Union, stand together, and act together. No anti-trade union ballot laws will stop us from doing whatever it takes to win for our members.

No government can expect to rely on anti-trade union laws and assume that they will get away with detrimental changes to our members' conditions at work. However, demanding the repeal of anti-trade union legislation and winning a stronger voice for our members at work will remain a key priority. With threats to our members' working conditions, we will always support our members – up to and including industrial action – to tackle workload, to defend pension rights, to win improvements to working conditions, and to challenge unacceptable pupil behaviour, bullying and other adverse management practices. With 198 days of strike action announced by the NASUWT in the last year alone, the Union is doing everything to fight for our members.

But we also know that winning for members is all about working with employers and governments. That is what we will continue to seek to do, using our Campaign Plan. Winning agreements which will make our members' working lives better. Winning a better deal for teachers which will deliver a better deal for children and young people, too.

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A BETTER DEAL FOR TEACHERS



A BETTER DEAL FOR TEACHERS – PAY

Teachers are working harder than ever for less pay and the prospect of inferior pensions when they retire. Governments and administrations have failed to invest in teachers and their actions have slashed teachers' real terms pay since 2010, causing serious financial hardship for many teachers as a result of substantial real terms pay cuts to their pay.

This has been exacerbated by the ongoing cost-of-living crisis, including the rising costs of fuel, food, housing and energy, which have contributed to increased levels of poverty and widening inequality, with teachers now reporting using foodbanks because they are unable to make ends meet. Real terms pay cuts are now widely recognised as a key driver of the teacher recruitment and retention crisis.

In response, the NASUWT is working to challenge government underfunding of schools and colleges, including balloting members for industrial action. Teaching has to be an attractive profession that rewards and celebrates experience through fair and equitable pay. The NASUWT will continue to campaign for real terms pay restoration for all teachers and headteachers, together with a pay system that properly recognises and rewards supply teachers.

In addition, we will campaign to:

- remove the link between pay progression and performance management and appraisal;
- protect the rights of Upper Pay Range (UPR) teachers and challenge employer abuse of UPR teachers who are expected to take on management roles;
- secure fair treatment for part-time teachers and conduct research on the experiences of teachers who work on part-time contracts;
- secure equal pay rights and entitlements for supply teachers.

Pensions

We will:

- campaign to break the link between the state pension age and the teachers' pension age;
- work with other trade unions, community groups and civil society organisations to oppose any increase in the state pension age and campaign for its reduction over time.

Recruitment and retention

The ongoing and worsening teacher recruitment crisis and the failure to invest in high-quality training and development for the future of the profession are deeply concerning.

This crisis is a result of governments and administrations that have:

- underfunded education;
- allowed teachers' pay to fall increasingly behind inflation;
- encouraged aggressive accountability measures driven by inspectorates, middle-tier organisations and schools;
- introduced workload-intensive initiatives without adequate funding, time or training; and
- failed to recognise the rising tide of behavioural problems that blight working in schools.

We will:

- press for pay and conditions that support the competitiveness of teaching in the graduate labour market and provide an attractive and motivating reward package for teachers at the start of and throughout their careers;
- campaign for the removal of other disincentives to entering teaching, including persistently high workload levels, poor wellbeing, lack of clear career progression pathways, poor pupil behaviour and inadequate ongoing professional development opportunities; and
- press for ITE programmes to reflect the status of teaching as a highly skilled and professional activity and for all routes, including those based in schools, to benefit from the support and expertise of higher education institutions; and
- seek to ensure teachers and leaders are given the resources they need to provide critical in-school experience to ITE participants in a way that is manageable, recognises the range of additional responsibilities teachers and leaders have, and does not impose excessive workload burdens on them.

A BETTER DEAL FOR TEACHERS – WELLBEING

Violent pupils

The health of teachers in schools is being put at risk by pupil indiscipline and the failure by employers to take necessary and appropriate action to secure safety in schools and colleges.

Across the country, teachers are experiencing physical and verbal assaults and, in too many schools, assaults are seen as a normal part of teaching. The education and wellbeing of young people in schools is also being compromised where school/college employers tolerate pupil indiscipline and violence.



We will:

- continue to support members through all means possible where employers fail to protect teachers from aggression and violence, including by continuing to utilise 'Refusal to Teach' ballots in cases where the school or authority is not addressing 'workplace violence' by pupils, and robustly challenge employers who seek to undermine such legitimate industrial action;
- lobby governments and administrations for a significant increase in investment in alternative provision;
- lobby governments and administration to produce clear behaviour guidelines to ensure that nurture principles are not used as a methodology to mask abusive behaviour or indiscipline, or to massage published exclusion data;
- request that governments and administrations ensure that school leaders record all instances of aggression and violence towards all staff;
- issue guidance reminding headteachers and employers of their full responsibilities in ensuring incidents of aggression and violence are recorded and made available for inspection;
- lobby to make it a legal requirement for schools to ensure that risk assessments, based on the incident records, are not just made available, but presented to all staff who are asked to work with or around those students;
- work with agencies such as the Health and Safety Executive (HSE) to highlight the statutory requirement for effective risk assessments for all workplace hazards;
- support schools to take effective action to ensure staff safety and wellbeing by providing training for Workplace Representatives' training on drafting behaviour policies and contributing to behaviour risk assessments; and
- produce updated guidance on dealing with violent and abusive behaviour.

Inspection of schools and colleges

The perceived demands of inspection are a major contributor to the excessive workload and bureaucracy that blights the lives of teachers.

We will:

- campaign for the abolition of Ofsted in its current form and press for its replacement with a supportive framework based on collaborative professional peer reviews of school performance by teachers and school leaders;
- work with the other education unions to call for an immediate freeze of all inspections in order that a full mental health impact assessment on teachers and school leaders be carried out; and
- support efforts to secure the repurposing of Estyn to become a supportive inspectorate.

Affordable housing

We will campaign for a change in government policy to address the housing crisis, which should:

- include teachers in all definitions of key workers;
- ensure reserved housing provision across all areas solely for key workers; and
- create and extend discount schemes for rental and first-time buyers of at least 30% below market prices in all areas where teachers struggle to afford suitable housing.

A BETTER DEAL FOR TEACHERS – WORKLOAD

Tackling excessive workload is cited as the top priority across the profession. Governments and administrations across the UK have to take effective action to reduce teacher workload and enforce contractual limits on directed/working time.

Working hours and the length of the working day

The length of the school day and increased contact time with pupils has grown in many schools, often by shortening breaks and lunchtimes, and numerous meetings/twilight sessions of excessive duration.

The lengthening of the school day and increased contact time with pupils is having a detrimental impact on teachers' health, safety and wellbeing.

Teachers are being denied statutory and/or contractual breaks through requests to work through lunchtimes and breaks.

Teachers are increasingly not being effectively consulted over annual working time arrangements at the beginning of the school year, being put under pressure to complete tasks outside of agreed working arrangements, and there is inconsistency across the UK.

We will:

- build a campaign to educate and support members to challenge attacks on their contractual rights on working hours;
- reinvigorate the Union's longstanding policy of a maximum 35-hour working week for all teachers;
- survey schools on opening and teaching hours;
- publish updated guidance on directed time allocations and break entitlements;
- work with Valued Worker Scheme employers and unions to promote best practice to the structure of the school day; and
- support members through all means available where school days are being lengthened.





A BETTER DEAL FOR SUPPLY AND SUBSTITUTE TEACHERS

Supply and substitute teachers are vital members of the teaching workforce and an important component in the educational structure. However, supply teachers are frequently marginalised and suffer from far less favourable terms and conditions than the permanent teacher workforce, including because of adverse agency and umbrella company practices.

It is a fundamental injustice that all supply and substitute teachers across the UK, including teachers working for supply agencies, are not automatically enrolled into the Teachers' Pension Scheme (TPS) from the first day of their employment as a teacher.

We will:

- lobby for amendments to the Agency Workers and TPS, to ensure that all supply teachers are automatically enrolled in the TPS for their entire employment, irrespective of the status of their employer;
- advocate a return to local authority managed supply pools where these have been abolished;
- campaign for all supply, substitute and agency teachers to receive full equivalent permanent teacher employee entitlements to pay, pensions, family leave and flexible working from the first day of their placement in a local authority, school or academy trust; and
- press for all supply and substitute teachers to receive entitlements to serve as accredited trade union representatives, with access to trade union facility time, as appropriate.

CAMPAIGNING FOR EDUCATION SYSTEMS THAT DELIVER FOR CHILDREN AND YOUNG PEOPLE



We believe that every learner should have access to a professional, trained and well-supported teacher and that every teacher has access to the tools, time and trust necessary to reach, teach and inspire the generations and communities they have been entrusted to serve. Teachers should be protected from having to promote harmful political propaganda and from interference in the workplace.

There is a lack of funding and proper training available to fully meet the needs of these pupils and students, exacerbated by the woeful underfunding of community support and Child and Adolescent Mental Health Services (CAMHS), and the lack of training that teachers are given to support the wellbeing of pupils and students.

We are deeply concerned about the lack of adequate SEND/ALN/ASN funding for all children and young people that have additional needs, and that families are struggling to secure specialist provision, an appropriate diagnosis for their children and appropriate support in schools. We are further concerned at the shortage of educational psychologists and other specialists that work with children and young people who have SEND/ALN/ASN. We will continue to lobby governments and administrations to ensure they adopt and enact the five priorities of the Education International New Deal for Teachers campaign to:

- increase investment in quality public education systems;
- guarantee labour rights and decent working conditions;
- invest in quality teacher training and professional development;
- trust and respect teachers and their pedagogical expertise; and
- involve teacher unions in policy through social dialogue.

We will:

- lobby governments and administrations for increased funding so that schools and specialist services can identify and meet the needs of children and young people with SEND/ALN/ASN;
- campaign for governments and administrations to adequately fund behaviour support services in all educational settings with targeted funding for this specific purpose, in order to enable pupils with behavioural needs to receive the support they deserve;
- lobby for fully funded training and specific teaching resources to support staff to meet the needs of refugee and asylum seeker children and young people;
- campaign for a fully funded package of educational wellbeing support for refugee and asylum seekers and a significant increase in funding and access to CAMHS, which reflects need; and
- advocate a change to, or repeal of, the existing guidance whereby refugees who volunteer to assist in schools (or other settings) can be threatened with the loss of their refugee status.

FIGHTING FOR EQUALITY



Women's health and the workplace

Women make up the majority of the teaching profession and they play an essential and positive role in schools and colleges. Yet women's health concerns are often downplayed and even dismissed by employers in the workplace, resulting in many women being forced out of the profession.

Despite the fact that women are disproportionately vulnerable to long-term inflammatory immune conditions such as endometriosis and ME/CFS, many sickness-absence and health and safety policies fail to address gender-specific conditions.

We believe that UK equality law should classify the various symptoms of menopause as a disability and include a legal duty for employers to provide reasonable adjustments for workers experiencing symptoms.

Too many highly skilled and experienced staff are being forced out of the profession due to lack of support.

We will:

- continue to campaign for a greater awareness of intersectional gender-sensitive health and safety issues in schools and colleges;
- lobby for a requirement for gender-sensitive sickness absence and health and safety policies in schools and colleges, with mandatory training for all managers;
- promote the NASUWT Menopause Policy Guidance and training in all workplaces;
- lobby governments and administrations for the menopause to be recognised as a disability under equality law;
- provide specific training for NASUWT negotiators on bargaining for gender-sensitive health, safety and welfare policies in schools and colleges; and
- campaign to ensure free access to appropriate medication.

Ageism in teaching

Older teachers are a valuable asset to the teaching profession in terms of their experience, skills and long-term contributions to teaching and learning. However, due to ageist perceptions, stereotypes and discrimination, older teachers are often overlooked for promotion, ignored or disproportionately threatened with capability procedures, with the sole purpose of driving them out of the profession.

Age discrimination within the teaching profession is often disregarded as a protected characteristic, resulting in systemic ageism going unchallenged and older teachers pressured into leaving their jobs well before their retirement age.

We will:

- campaign for greater awareness of ageism and ageist policies and procedures within schools and colleges, and for all teachers to be protected from ageism in the workforce;
- lobby for a requirement for schools and colleges to monitor and publish their staff profile by age, along with other protected characteristics; and
- conduct research to explore support given to older workers and use this research to ensure the issues facing members can be addressed more readily.



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A BETTER DEAL FOR ALL NATIONS



Northern Ireland

The key to restoring devolution in Northern Ireland is not simply a matter of addressing concerns about trade but ensuring that the cuts that have been imposed across all of the UK, including Northern Ireland, as a consequence of Government austerity and bad decision making are reversed.

We will:

- work within the Irish Congress of Trade Unions to support the return and strengthening of devolved government;
- campaign with sister unions and other parties for fair funding for education in Northern Ireland; and
- demand that the UK Government properly funds the public sector across the UK.

Tackling the teacher recruitment and retention crisis in Wales requires action to fund schools in Wales at least equivalent to schools in England. We will campaign to:

- (a) restore the value of teachers' pay
- (b) secure a fit-for-purpose accountability system by repurposing Estyn and abolishing Middle Tier organisations that have little purpose and offer low value for money;
- (c) deal with the failings of the Curriculum for Wales; and
- (d) support teachers in taking back control of classrooms and deal robustly with poor learner behaviour.

We will be campaigning for a Better Deal for Teachers in Wales to secure a restorative pay settlement in Wales and effective measures that will tackle excessive workload, poor pupil behaviour and aggressive accountability.

Scotland

Members in Scotland have seen 'workplace violence' become one of the key challenges to emerge post-pandemic.

The health of teachers in schools is being put at risk by pupil indiscipline, stress, and failure by employers to take necessary and appropriate action to secure safety in schools and colleges.

We will:

- lobby Government to produce clear behaviour guidelines to ensure that nurture principles are not used as a methodology to mask abusive behaviour or indiscipline, or to massage published exclusion data;
- continue to utilise 'Refusal to Teach' ballots in cases where the school or authority is not addressing 'workplace violence' by pupils, and robustly challenge employers who seek to undermine such legitimate industrial action; and
- support schools to take effective action to ensure staff safety and wellbeing by providing training for Workplace Representatives on drafting behaviour policies and contributing to behaviour risk assessments.

ORGANISING FOR THE FUTURE

Winning for our members and growing our union requires the effective leadership and organisation of members in every workplace. The Union's future success depends on growing more of our members to become active members within their workplaces.

Trade unions have been subject to draconian legislation that severely impacts on workers' rights to organise and defend their rights in their workplaces and communities.

The current Westminster Government is pursuing a radical extension of laws that ensure a minimum service in schools – a direct attack on the profession's right to strike which will continue to be resisted by the NASUWT.

Anti-trade union restrictions represent an attack on workers' rights to fair pay, decent jobs and good terms and conditions. We will work with other trade unions to: resist any further restrictive trade union legislation and seek the repeal of all anti-union laws, including the Trade Union Act 2016; win stronger rights for unions to access workplaces; win recognition; and establish collective bargaining rights and the right for trade union members to vote online during industrial action ballots.

In addition, we will develop and take forward our work to:

- develop and train workplace leaders;
- increase member participation in union elections;

- give greater power to members to organise within their workplace, employer group and Local Associations;
- strengthen members' collective representation and collective bargaining within employer structures;
- win better deals on trade union recognition and securing recognition rights where they do not exist;
- equip lay activists with access to modern tools, techniques and technology to grow and strengthen member participation and activism;
- prioritise investment in resources, training, events and infrastructure to support and develop active lay leaders; and
- overcome the barriers to active member participation from under-represented groups and those in precarious employment, including supply teacher members.



Join us and Join in

The NASUWT is the voice of teachers at work. Your voice is strongest where members come together to ensure a strong NASUWT voice in the workplace. There are many ways to get involved and our reps are entitled to time off for training, too. Find out more at:

www.nasuwt.org.uk/GetActive

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