

CAMPAIGN PLAN 2024



FOREWORD BY THE GENERAL SECRETARY



Teachers are the most powerful instrument for changing lives.

They have an unshakeable belief and optimism for their pupils. They may sometimes feel let down, but they are never defeated and they never give up on their students. However, teachers are experiencing high levels of anxiety as a result of unreasonable expectations placed on them, struggling with the debilitating impact of workload and facing verbal and physical assaults, abuse and discrimination.

The lack of support for children and families is leading to more and more responsibility being placed on them.

In NASUWT, teachers have a union that is always on their side and that is also never defeated and will never give up. A union that exists to protect teachers. A union that will always put teachers first.

In the last year, we've led national disputes in England, Scotland, Northern Ireland, Wales, Jersey, Guernsey and the Isle of Man.

We ran more than 10,000 successful individual workplace ballots last year alone. No other union has ever done more than this. We took action and won improvements for our members across the country. But the message from our members is also clear: we need change. Change can only come from a new UK Government that is committed to delivering a New Deal for Teachers.

The current government has run out of time to fix the problems of 14 years of neglect and decline. They have also run out of time to fix the problems they have created in England's schools and colleges, as well as the chronic under funding of education in the devolved nations.

Whilst we must demand more of Ministers in every nation, we know that all roads inevitably lead back to Westminster. The change that our members want can only come from a new government that is committed to delivering a New Deal for Teachers and for children's education.

The next general election must be a turning point for education. Our members want nothing less than for this to be the best country in the world for children and young people to grow up and be educated in.

We will press every politician ahead of the general election, with our Manifesto for Teachers, to secure the change we want to see. This Campaigns Report sets out many of our priorities for the year ahead. 2023 was a year of action. Join us in making 2024 the year of change.

Dr Patrick Roach
General Secretary

THE ROLE OF NASUWT

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.



A NEW GOVERNMENT FOR A NEW DEAL FOR TEACHERS

The outcome of the next UK general election must be a turning point for the future of our schools/colleges and the teaching profession.

The next government must be one that will commit to delivering a New Deal for Teachers that will address:

- (i) the serious decline in teachers' current and future living standards as a result of the deliberate and damaging policy of austerity;
- (ii) the de-funding of our public services by the UK Government since 2010;
- (iii) the spiral of decline across the UK with regard to teachers' pay, morale, wellbeing, job satisfaction, recruitment, retention and the status of teachers;
- (iv) the decade of attacks on the trade union rights of teachers;
- (v) the undermining of the collective voice of teachers through ongoing attacks on collective bargaining rights, the interference in the work of the independent pay review bodies, and the scrapping of social partnership arrangements;
- (vi) the mounting pressures on teachers and the loss of talented and experienced teachers, particularly in areas of acute disadvantage;
- (vii) the rampant discrimination and exploitation of teachers by school and college employers, employment agencies and umbrella companies;

(viii) the failure to attract, recruit and retain teachers; and

(ix) the widening opportunity gap based upon where children live and are educated.

NASUWT will champion these principles at the next general election, whenever it is called, through our Manifesto for Teachers.

A New Deal for Teachers will only be secured when there is a government in Westminster that is on the side of our teachers, education and public services. Political campaigning must now take priority over industrial action.

We will utilise all available political and educational resources to mobilise members, now and beyond the general election, to secure a government that is committed to delivering a New Deal for Teachers.



A BETTER DEAL ON PAY AND PROGRESSION



The ability to benefit from a high-quality education is the fundamental right of every child.

Securing entitlements for children and young people depends upon securing the entitlements of teachers to the pay and working conditions they deserve and the need to do the jobs they are asked to do.

Addressing the crisis of teacher recruitment, retention and morale must be a core priority for any future government if it is to fulfil its obligations to children, young people and the workforce.

We will:

- campaign to secure a New Deal for Teachers that will deliver:
- a programme to secure real terms pay restoration for teachers;
- a national framework of statutory, contractual conditions of service for all teachers and headteachers, including a maximum 35-hour working time limit;
- stronger rights to tackle violence, assault or harassment of teachers from pupils and parents;

- equal rights for supply and substitute teachers; and
- stronger measures to tackle discrimination, including requiring all school and college employers to publish details of their gender, ethnicity and disability pay gaps.

Continuing Professional Development

Every teacher has a contractual right to continuing professional development (CPD) that is suitable to their individual needs, yet CPD in many schools and colleges is often a 'one-size-fits-all' approach, with no consideration of individual need or career stage.

We will:

- campaign for better funding for CPD;
- lobby for teachers to receive their entitlement for CPD that is suitable to their individual needs;
- advocate for greater teacher input to shape their own CPD as professionals; and
- press for an entitlement to CPD for supply teachers.

A BETTER DEAL ON WORKLOAD AND WORKING HOURS

Directed Time

Many schools do not provide their teachers with an adequate and suitable directed time calendar.

This is detrimental to all staff; in particular, those with caring responsibilities and part-time staff. Many teachers and their employers remain unaware of their contractual rights.

We will:

- create a robust, relevant, interactive and widespread campaign to inform teachers about their contractual rights around directed time and working time;
- lobby for education inspectorates to ask for the directed time calendar;
- campaign to ensure that all schools and colleges consult with unions on their directed time calendar;
- collate and share good practice;
- campaign for directed time for headteachers and school leaders on the leadership spine; and
- continue to campaign for a maximum 35-hour per week working time limit.

Planning, Preparation and Assessment Time

Teachers need to work beyond their allocated planning, preparation and assessment (PPA) time to complete their professional duties.

We will:

- seek amendments to existing regulations to increase PPA time by an additional 10% of all contact time;
- press for sufficient funding and resources to educational institutions, to support the implementation of increased PPA time;
- lobby for the Government to work with NASUWT in developing comprehensive guidelines and frameworks for the effective implementation of increased PPA time;
- campaign for the Government to investigate the accessibility of PPA time for disabled and neurodiverse teachers and identify the specific barriers they face;
- insist that equality impact assessments are undertaken on any PPA legal modifications;

- produce model guidance on the use of PPA for disabled and neurodiverse colleagues; and
- continue to campaign to ensure there is a reduction in overall workload in line with NASUWT's 35-hour per week maximum working time policy.



A BETTER DEAL ON WELLBEING



Mental Health and Inspections

All schools and colleges should have outstanding standards for wellbeing and mental health.

We will:

- work with inspectorates across the UK to provide guidance on how welfare and wellbeing can be further prioritised, and inspection can be seen as a supportive process;
- lobby governments and administrations further over the need for inspectorates to assess mental health and wellbeing in young people and teachers, publishing their findings in every inspectorate report; and
- lobby governments and administrations to include wellbeing opportunities during the working day for all staff and pupils.

Suicide Prevention

There has been an alarming rise in suicide, suicide attempts and suicidal thoughts within the teaching profession. We are concerned about the potential for this number to increase.

In our latest NASUWT Big Question Survey, 81% of members stated that the job had adversely affected their mental health in the previous 12 months. The pressures of the job are leading to a mental health emergency within the teaching profession.

We will:

- campaign for fully funded mandatory mental health training in all schools and colleges;
- lobby for colleagues trained in Mental Health First Aid in all schools and colleges;

- press for suicide prevention training for all school leaders; and
- implement suicide prevention and awareness training for all caseworkers and Workplace Representatives within its national training programme.

Workplace-rated Bullying

Workplace-related bullying has reached unprecedented levels. All forms of bullying are unacceptable and contribute to the poor mental health of teachers. Every teacher has the right to work in a safe environment.

We will:

- undertake a survey into the extent of all types of bullying within the workplace, as well as the role that unconscious bias and prejudice plays in increasing the vulnerability of our members to workplace bullying; and
- develop an action plan to address the findings.

Privacy Rights and Digital Security

In this digital age where data has increasing value and technology is presenting more opportunities for the Union to become more effective, connected and better able to serve members, there are those who seek to exploit that technology in order to undermine and attack teachers.

It is of paramount importance that the Union take all steps to ensure the digital and data security of all members and the Union itself.

Additionally, the Westminster Government's continued attacks on trade union rights, including the pernicious Strikes (Minimum Service Levels) Act, seeks to remove the right to privacy of trade union members and lay representatives.

We will:

- campaign for employers to adopt policies which require that the consent of each individual member of staff must be obtained before they are recorded in staff meetings, telephone calls, INSET and delivering lessons online;
- lobby for stronger protection of the privacy rights of teachers at work;
- provide training, advice and information to members and representatives to secure the data protection rights of members;
- oppose and resist the deployment of union-busting practices by employers and governments;
- demand the repeal of anti-trade union legislation; and
- use appropriate technology to assist in protecting members' privacy rights.



CAMPAIGNING FOR EDUCATION SYSTEMS THAT DELIVER FOR CHILDREN AND YOUNG PEOPLE

Erosion of the Curriculum

Schools are limiting the scope of their curriculum due to pressure from the Government financially and the bias toward more academic courses in league tables. Less funding to employ teaching staff in non-core subjects reduces the breadth of the curriculum. Because of this, many young people are seeing their choices significantly limited.

This reduction in vocational and creative courses is having an impact on teacher employment. Because of this, many students whose skills are more suited to practical coursework and assessment are being disadvantaged.

We will:

- continue to lobby governments and administrations to set out plans to grow vocational and creative courses, ensuring specialist teacher recruitment and retention is improved;
- meet with governments and administrations to share evidence of students being failed due to a lack of educational options which suit their learning and assessment strengths; and
- continue to pursue the development of the whole curriculum in conjunction with governments and employers, to ensure that every subject area is able to offer courses that suit all learners.

Lack of Specialist Teachers

There is a growing tendency of coercing teachers to instruct outside of their specialism. This is detrimental to both teachers with specialist expertise in these areas and to students who are deprived of the skills of trained and talented professionals.

Some teachers welcome the opportunity to develop new areas of expertise outside of their initial specialism; these teachers must be provided with the time and training necessary to acquire specialist knowledge and pedagogy. We will engage with governments and

administrations to press them to reinstate funding for teachers in order to support expert and optimum provision for students.

Reclaiming Teacher Autonomy

Teachers' autonomy and professionalism in the workplace have been relentlessly eroded and denigrated in recent years.

The constant micro-management, scrutiny and excessive control of teachers is stifling their creativity, passion and enthusiasm for the profession. This straitjacketed approach by employers is contributing to the current recruitment and retention crisis, while having a catastrophic impact on the morale of the teaching profession as a whole.

We will:

- lobby governments and inspection bodies to ensure that schools, academy trusts and colleges allow teachers to have a right to teach and manage their class with autonomy as a respected and valued professional;
- continue to monitor the impact of unacceptable micro-management and monitoring practices, such as quality assurance, mock inspections and deep dives, on the recruitment, retention and workload of teachers; and
- campaign for employers' policies to acknowledge the value of a teacher's professionalism.

Children with Special Educational Needs or Disabilities

Many children identified with educational, health, care and additional needs in mainstream schools are not supported or given equal access to a high-quality curriculum to suit their needs.

The opportunity and time to work with any additional support staff is minimal. Not all teachers are specialists in special educational needs (SEN); additional support and funding is required to expand the facilities for teachers, support staff and pupils with SEND/ALN/ASN.



We will:

- lobby governments and administrations to increase funding to ensure both mainstream and SEND/ALN/ASN teachers have training to ensure they have the knowledge and skills to teach pupils and students in their workplace so they can reach their full potential;
- press governments and administrations to increase funding to provide those pupils and students with education, health, care, additional support and other resources needed for them to reach their full potential; and
- explore the potential for joint research, all the while supporting the Union to collate and evaluate data on the accessibility of education for all.

Post-pandemic Impact of Teacher and Pupil Mental Health

The issue of teacher and pupil mental health continues to be adversely affected by unmanageable workloads and adverse demands.

There are also mounting signs of negative mental health, wellbeing issues and those impacted from Long Covid, which show that teachers, pupils and their families are increasingly stressed and have limited resources to support them.

The wellbeing/mental health of teachers and pupils is paramount in order for a school/college to thrive.

We will:

- highlight positive mental health for all teachers post-pandemic through advice, development, support, training and showcasing good practice;
- join with the relevant trade union centres in lobbying for the RIDDOR reporting system to be changed so work-related stress absence is reportable;
- hold national, regional and local wellbeing events for members;
- organise wellbeing training for Local Association Executive Members which can then be cascaded;
- ensure that wellbeing continues to be on the agenda at all NASUWT Consultation Conferences;
- produce specific wellbeing/mental health data after surveying members;
- maintain the Long Covid campaign and call for the Government to implement a national curriculum and pastoral strategy for mental health and resilience across schools to mitigate the pandemic's social effects;
- continue to promote Mental Health First Aid courses and the role they play in supporting teacher wellbeing; and
- campaign for a reduction in waiting times for all those seeking a diagnostic outcome for neurodiverse or mental health conditions, as well as appropriate NHS support pathways for them that are fully funded.



FIGHTING FOR EQUALITY

Maternity Pay

There has been no progress with occupational maternity pay in the teaching profession. It is not equitable with other professions in the public sector - and members suffer real hardship within a short space of time under the current system.



We will:

- survey, analyse and report on the occupational maternity pay rights in schools and other public sector areas;
- lobby governments and administrations to increase the pay of teachers on maternity leave; and
- lobby governments and administrations to improve maternity rights, including portability of maternity rights and removing the requirement to repay.

Underlying Health Conditions

Many teachers who suffer from issues associated with their physical health or mental wellbeing are more than capable of performing their roles to a high standard, with additional support from employers where appropriate.



However, it is too often the case that employers are unwilling to provide the necessary support to such teachers, resulting in job loss or even teachers

leaving the profession altogether. Indeed, there is an apparent increase in the number of cases of teachers with underlying health conditions having their employment terminated for reasons connected to their conditions.

Evidence shows that teachers from ethnic minority backgrounds, disabled teachers and older teachers are more likely to report higher levels of work-related stress and wellbeing concerns - stemming from insufficient support being provided by employers.

We will:

- seek to make sure employers are fully aware of their legal and moral obligations towards staff that may require any additional support in order to fulfil their role;
- make members fully aware of their specific legal workplace rights; and
- take serious action to tackle ableism in the workplace faced by those with underlying conditions, as well as by disabled and neurodiverse teachers.

Miscarriage Leave

Teachers experiencing a miscarriage before the end of their 24th week of pregnancy are not entitled to statutory maternity, paternity or parental bereavement leave or pay, so any time off would be at the discretion of the employer. This is both upsetting and traumatic for those affected.

We will:

- campaign for a change in the law with regards to miscarriage and have it included within maternity and paternity rights;
- write to all employers, urging them to remove miscarriage from their sickness absence policy and treat it as an independent condition deserving of its own policy;
- inform and educate all reps on how to tackle miscarriage and sickness absence with employers; and
- work with sister unions to develop a model policy, including for supply teachers, and training for our reps.

ORGANISING FOR THE FUTURE

Anti-trade Union Laws

The UK has some of the most restrictive anti-trade union laws in Europe. This prevents trade unions from representing their members and denies workers protections in the workplace.

The current government has consistently degraded trade unions and workers' rights.

We will work with the TUC to repeal the anti-trade union legislation, including, but not limited to:

- the requirement to conduct postal ballots for industrial action;
- the removal of minimum service levels;
- ballot thresholds;
- automatic dismissal for those who refuse to attend work during periods of strike action; and
- the ability to sequestrate trade union funds.

Collective Action

We are concerned by the aggressive attitude that some employers take towards Workplace Representatives.

This position needs to be challenged quickly and decisively whenever it occurs, to help protect our reps.

We will:

- educate members on the importance of getting involved in the Union and acting collectively;
- continue to work with the TUC, WTUC, STUC and ICTU to promote the importance of collective action in workplaces; and
- continue to pursue the objective of securing elected representatives in every workplace.

Valued Worker Scheme

We applaud employers that treat their employees fairly, engage with trade unions and provide good terms and conditions. The Union's Valued Worker Scheme highlights and recognises such employers.

We will continue to work with other trade unions to promote and develop the Valued Worker Scheme.



A BETTER DEAL FOR ALL NATIONS

Northern Ireland

We welcome the publication of *Investing in a Better Future*, the final report of the Independent Review of Education in Northern Ireland. However, we are concerned that the report hasn't gone far enough in addressing the fragmented nature of education in Northern Ireland. We are also concerned that the report recommends that a new professional body is established for teachers and lecturers where elected teachers would be in a minority.

We will:

- lobby the Northern Ireland Executive to ensure education is properly funded;
- press for a single employer for teachers and one department of education;
- resist any change to academic selection that involves classroom-based assessment; and
- campaign for a professional body which is representative of the profession and commands its respect.



Scotland

NASUWT surveys and other research, including the Scottish Government-commissioned *Behaviour in Scottish schools* research study, published in November 2023, confirm that violent incidents in schools are now more prevalent than ever.

In light of increasing violence in schools and classrooms, clear national advice on seclusion and restraint/physical intervention has never been more important.

We will:

- lobby the Scottish Government to complete the national advice on seclusion and restraint/physical intervention expeditiously, ensuring that national advice will:
 - a. be created in partnership with NASUWT to ensure guidance clearly reflects the views of teachers;
 - b. include clear and agreed definitions of seclusion and restraint/physical intervention;
 - c. take into account the duty of care to all, including staff and other young people, by ensuring rights are not viewed exclusively through the lens of the child who may be the subject of an intervention;
 - d. have been considered through an equality lens, taking, for example, appropriate cognisance of the impact of gender-based violence, and linking to the ongoing national work of the Gender Equality Taskforce in Education and Learning (GETEL);
 - e. consider associated workload burdens and avoid placing teachers in harm's way, ensuring teachers will feel safe and supported at work;
 - f. be accompanied by the right for any teacher to access appropriate training;
 - g. be supported by an investment in sufficient resources for local authorities, schools, headteachers and teachers, including the provision of supervision for teachers; and
 - h. include a timeframe for national review and have appropriate mechanisms built in to allow for further revision.

Wales

Wales faces extreme challenges with regards to poor learner behaviour.

This has contributed to a teacher recruitment and retention crisis in Wales and increased numbers of disputes that have led to strike action to protect teachers where employers have failed to do so.

We will:

- lobby the Welsh Government to set up a Behaviour Summit so that all stakeholders can discuss and seek solutions to increased challenges from learner behaviour;
- press for increased funding in local authorities and schools to create more capacity in alternative provision and increased support for teachers in the classroom;
- campaign for the Welsh Government to support increased awareness at local authority level to ensure that education directorates have a full understanding of safeguarding legislation and procedures, to ensure that they do not undermine the important frontline work being done in schools;
- push the Welsh Government to make a positive impact on teacher workload so that teachers have more time for behaviour management, while also reducing class sizes to increase teacher behaviour management capacity;
- take all appropriate action, up to and including industrial action, to protect teachers where employers have failed to do so, challenge ineffective behaviour management policies and the failure to implement existing behaviour management policies; and
- ballot members where schools and/or local authorities attack teachers for trying to bring discipline into schools in extremely difficult circumstances.





GET ACTIVE

Join us and Join in

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



SCAN THE QR CODE
TO JOIN US AND TO
FIND OUT MORE.

NASUWT
The Teachers' Union