

THE TEACHERS' PAY AWARD 2015-17

As previously reported to members, the NASUWT National Executive rejected the 2015-17 Teachers' Pay offer when it met in September 2015.

The NASUWT believes that the offer is inadequate to address the key issues of teachers' pay, the shortage of supply teachers and excessive teacher workload which it purports to address.

The NASUWT also believes that the offer is inadequate to reward teachers in the context of the additional expectations which the Scottish Government intends to place on teachers through its proposed National Improvement Framework.

At the Scottish Negotiating Committee for Teachers' (SNCT) Panel meeting on 26 October 2015, the NASUWT opposed the offer. Unfortunately, other unions did not and the full SNCT was, therefore, advised that the majority decision was acceptance of the offer.

The NASUWT will continue to maintain its national trade dispute with the Scottish Government and its industrial action instructions www.nasuw.org.uk/IndustrialActionScotland to defend and support teachers.

THE AWARD

PAY

A 1.5% uplift in pay from 1 April 2015 to 31 March 2016. Thereafter, a 1% uplift in pay from 1 April 2016 to 31 March 2017.

The NASUWT's view

This falls far short of the minimum of 15% necessary to restore teachers' pay to 2010 levels and does not even begin to compensate the majority of teachers for the real-terms reduction in salary they have endured following year-on-year pay freezes, increased pension contributions and the rise in the cost of living.

Continuing with the 'austerity' approach to teachers' pay means that teachers will suffer a continuing fall in living standards.

In addition, this pay award will exacerbate, rather than address, the deeply worrying signs of the growing teacher recruitment and retention crisis across Scotland.

SUPPLY

An evaluation and review of the impact of the recommendations of the Supply Teachers' Working Group will be concluded by January 2016 with a view to addressing any ongoing issues in the delivery of supply teaching.

The NASUWT's view

The NASUWT has always been clear that the crisis in supply teacher availability can only be addressed by restoring supply teachers' pay levels to those which existed before the slashing of short-term supply teachers' pay and the creation of a two-tier system in 2011.

The NASUWT opposed the 2011 SNCT Agreement and has argued consistently since, with the Scottish Government and employers, that any 'solution' to the supply teacher crisis which does not restore supply teachers' pay levels will be no solution.

Unfortunately, despite protests from the NASUWT, the Working Group does not have supply teachers' pay in its remit.

The 2015-17 pay award does not address the issue of the two-tier pay system supply teachers face. All that is offered is to evaluate the impact of the Supply Working Group's recommendations in January 2016. Therefore, what may initially seem like a reasonable proposal to review the plight of short-term supply teachers is nothing more than a smokescreen to avoid addressing the pay differential.

The NASUWT therefore believes that the part of the award relating to supply teachers is meaningless.

WORKLOAD

An agreed statement and principles for managing teacher workload.

The NASUWT's view

Evidence shows that teachers' working lives are being blighted by excessive workload. The award does nothing to address this. It does not restore the protections against excessive workload which were removed through the 2013-15 SNCT Agreement, which the NASUWT opposed.

The NASUWT's work on the Tackling Bureaucracy Working Group has secured a recognition that teachers' workload is excessive and unacceptable. The Working Group has made a series of recommendations to reduce workload, including that Working Time Agreements should be reviewed at school level to reduce bureaucracy. The NASUWT has played a key role in securing these achievements, details of which are available on the NASUWT website.

The Employers' statement supporting the award in relation to managing teacher workload repeats the recommendations of the Working Group and that is welcome. However, it does not address the deteriorations to terms and conditions or make any proposals which would ensure that the Working Group's recommendations are being implemented fully by employers. This is why the NASUWT continues to campaign for teachers' pay and conditions to be enshrined in statute so that employers have no option but to implement them.

The award fails to introduce any new measures to make a tangible difference to workload burdens. The NASUWT therefore has no choice but to reject it and to continue supporting members to take the NASUWT's national action short of strike action which is the only real protection for teachers www.nasuwt.org.uk/IndustrialActionScotland.

CONCLUSION

The NASUWT believes that children and young people are entitled to be taught by those who are recognised and rewarded as highly skilled professionals and the derisory pay award falls far short of what is required.

The NASUWT will continue supporting members to take the Union's national action short of strike action which is the only real protection for teachers.

NASUWT NATIONAL ACTION INSTRUCTIONS ALREADY IN PLACE TO PROTECT TEACHERS

Cover

Members should not exceed the contractual 22.5 hours' contact time to provide cover.

Working Time

Members should not exceed their contractual working time of 35 hours per week.

Planning, Preparation and Correction (PPC) Time

Members should refuse to teach their timetabled lessons if they do not have one third of their class contact time as timetabled PPC time.

Administrative and clerical tasks

Members should refuse to undertake any clerical and administrative tasks as defined in Annex E of the Teachers' Agreement.

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