

11th February 2009

Dr A Wright
Chairman
FAO Mr. J. Perrett,
School Teachers' Review Body,
Office of Manpower Economics,
Kingsgate House,
66-74 Victoria Street
London SW1E 6SW

Dear Dr Wright

1.Introduction

1.1 The British Association of Teachers of the Deaf (BATOD) welcomes this further opportunity to submit representations and evidence to the School Teachers' Review Body (STRB).

1.2 BATOD is the only professional body which represents the interests of Teachers of the Deaf (ToDs) in the United Kingdom. The Association's members work in a range of situations and not only in LA schools. Furthermore, the ToDs specialist role operates in a very wide age range context: from the point of very early diagnosis via the Newborn Hearing Screening Programme to Further and Higher Education settings. Also, many ToDs operate under the classification of 'unattached teachers': a classification which BATOD feels is inappropriate and unhelpful.

1.3. We believe ToDs are essential in providing or promoting curriculum access for learners who are deaf. In mainstream settings ToDs are crucial in enabling the Government's inclusion agenda to be effective for this group. Many ToDs also have major responsibilities in supporting the Government's Early Intervention initiatives.

1.4. The context of the work of many ToDs is very similar to that of teachers of learners with other low incidence special educational needs, e.g. teachers of children with visual impairment, multi-sensory impairment, autistic spectrum disorders or speech & language difficulties.

2.Matters for recommendation - item g (as outlined in the letter of June 2008 from Ed Balls to Bill Cockburn).

2.1 We are cognisant of the current financial climate and the issue of affordability, but our members inform us that they are working under increasing pressures.

2.2 Despite the intent to reduce the administrative burden, teachers are having to cope with a growing amount of paperwork. SEN teachers in

particular, are increasingly required to complete sizeable quantities of documentation linked to SEN review and accessing funding streams at an individual learner level. Much of this is completed outside the basic 1265 hours. Furthermore in local authorities, the Children Services Transformation agenda continues to create change and uncertainty for many BATOD members.

2.3 These issues compound other anomalies that have arisen through recent Teachers Pay and Conditions reviews. The removal of management allowances and the introduction of TLRs have led to significant financial disadvantage for some ToDs. Furthermore, the total erosion of the protected payments in respect of the mandatory ToD qualification was completed at 31st December 2008 with the end-date for Assimilation Protection payments, creating a reduction in salary for some BATOD members. This precipitated a number of associated queries to BATOD.

2.4 Hence, as BATOD has argued before, the ToDs role becomes more demanding while the rewards seem far from sufficient and, in some cases, are reduced. Consequently, we would still like to make the comment that BATOD, like the NUT, believes there should be a significant increase in teachers' pay. At the present time it would appear that the proposed increase is well below the rate of inflation, which clearly means that teachers will be considerably less well off. BATOD stated, in its submission of September 2008, that we do not think a 2.3% increase is sufficient for any of the three years mentioned. In the light of the current economic climate, we do not think that pay levels should be decided so far ahead. We propose that further, periodic consideration and review is necessary.

2.5 BATOD continues to believe that overall budget increases should be above inflation and that the budget should be adjusted to include any percentage increase in inflation during the next two years. The Association feels very strongly that teachers' pay should be such that it is comparable to other graduate professions, particularly those requiring specialist post graduate qualifications. BATOD agrees with the NUT in believing that appropriate remuneration is a factor which makes a significant contribution to attracting high quality individuals to the teaching profession and ensuring that they do not leave prematurely. The availability of effective teachers is vital to the Government's ongoing objective of driving up standards in pupil attainment and the achievement of ECM matters objectives at an individual child level.

2.6 Whilst not specifically within the scope of item 'g', the Association believes that all aspects of the remuneration agenda are inexorably linked. BATOD acknowledges that the Government is to take forward the STRB recommendations linked to improving the use of pay policies for unattached teachers and we appreciate that the reform of SEN Allowances is being considered.

2.7 However, the Association remains disappointed that issues related to SEN allowances have not yet been resolved. There is a significant consensus (RIG, NUT, BATOD and others) which supports the view that additional payments for teachers of children with SEN should continue. However, BATOD believes the STRB should ensure that any new proposals provide, as the current provisions do, for SEN payments to be made to teachers with mainly teaching responsibilities. Whilst the regulations should not preclude SEN teachers from receiving TLR payments, it is vital that SEN payments recognise the additional skills, qualifications and demands made upon such teachers.

2.8. BATOD would like to stress that the potential for the significant pay cuts which were the reality for thousands of teachers following the implementation of the TLR system, should not be a possibility regarding new SEN allowances. It would be counterproductive if SEN teachers were to lose pay at a time of general pay cut for teachers in real terms.

2.9 BATOD continues to believe that these allowances are an important element of the rewards and incentives for teachers who, like ToDs, work in the SEN field. Although it appears that a review of SEN allowances may take place, BATOD feels that a further percentage increase to the SEN allowances must be made until the outcome of the review is made known.

Yours sincerely

Peter Preston, Consultant

Paul Simpson, National Secretary