

British Association of Teachers of the Deaf

Gillian Barton
STRB Secretariat
Office of Manpower Economics

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Dear Gillian

1. Introduction

- 1.1. The British Association of Teachers of the Deaf (BATOD) welcomes this opportunity to submit representations and evidence to the School Teachers' Review Body (STRB).
- 1.2. We would like to remind the STRB of BATOD's unique position as the only professional body which represents the interests of Teachers of the Deaf (ToDs) in the United Kingdom. BATOD would also wish to remind the STRB that its members work in a range of situations and locations, 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 still feels is inappropriate and unhelpful.
- 1.3. ToDs are essential in providing and promoting curriculum access for learners who are deaf (we use this term to include all degrees of hearing loss). In mainstream school settings, the intervention of a ToD is essential in promoting high achievement towards social and educational outcomes. This is in line with the Coalition's recommendations in the DfE Business Plan 2011 - 2015 (ref: Impact Indicators – 'narrowing the gap' [p22]). Additionally, ToDs have a crucial role in supporting the Coalition's Early Intervention initiatives as outlined in the DfE Business Plan 2011-2015, and the White Paper (2010) - The importance of Teaching. ToDs are represented in every Local Authority in England and carry out essential intervention to deaf learners across the entire educational age range. ToDs work within both the maintained and non-maintained sectors. Early Intervention is a key function of ToDs and they work in partnership with NHS and social care services. ToD involvement in early diagnosis and intervention is assessed through a Quality Assurance programme carried out by National NHS consultants.
- 1.4. We would also remind STRB that 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, and profound and multiple learning difficulties.



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2. Matters for recommendation – (as outlined in the letter of 7th October 2015 from Rt Hon Nicky Morgan MP to Dr Patricia Rice - Chair STRB).

What adjustments should be made to the salary and allowance ranges for classroom teachers, unqualified teachers and school leaders to promote recruitment and retention within an average pay award of 1%?

- 2.1 Teacher recruitment and retention is an issue for all schools and services. This is especially true for Teachers of the Deaf. Recent surveys carried out by the Association reveal a retention crisis in the coming years. The current stock of teachers of the deaf is nearing retirement and numbers coming through training providers to replace them are low. In response to the low take up of mandatory qualification training, the number of training providers will fall from five to three. The new Code of Practice highlights the need for qualified teachers of the deaf to provide specialist support to hearing impaired children across the country. Numbers of HI pupils continue to climb in line with population increase and greater numbers of significantly disabled children (where a hearing impairment is present) surviving at birth.
- 2.2 Teacher retention remains an issue with over 38% of newly qualified teachers leaving the profession within five years. Salaries have risen slower than inflation over the last five years and the risks to recruitment and retention are considerable. As a specialist group, teachers of the deaf are particularly difficult to recruit and retain. Surveys carried out by the association show that the majority of posts are not filled in the first round of advertising. Many employers are resorting to employing unqualified teachers and placing them on immediate training which creates a lag in delivering expert intervention.
- 2.3 Assessing teacher performance for good teachers is problematic. Where teachers are identified as demonstrating poor performance, there are robust processes already in place. It is the expectation of this association that teachers are performing well and those who are not are subject to rigorous investigation through the processes already in place. We therefore recommend that all teachers are given a flat pay rise unless their performance is under review

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What adjustments, if any, should be made to the pay and conditions framework to provide additional flexibilities for schools and incentives to recognise performance?

- 3.1 Schools already have a good deal of latitude in awarding pay progression. The current structure of continuous SEN grades and TLR grades gives school management flexibility in terms of differentiated pay across all teachers in a school or service. This flexibility allows schools to reward teachers who agree to



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take on additional responsibilities and are judged (through teacher monitoring and assessment) to be performing well.

- 3.2 Where a teacher wishes to step down from duties commensurate with a specific pay grade (as in the case of SEN and TLR grades) this should be made available with management agreement.

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Whether the existing salary sacrifice arrangements should be extended to provide scope for rental deposits?

- 4.1 We agree with the notion of extended offers of the salary sacrifice scheme. The support for this reflects the difficulty, facing many teachers, in affording accommodation, particularly in London. We are aware that availability of qualified teachers of the deaf is patchy across the country. The availability of funding through salary sacrifice for rental deposits could have a positive effect on addressing distribution of teachers of the deaf across the UK.

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What changes to the document may be appropriate following the introduction of the new registration fee arrangements to finance the Welsh education Workforce Council (EWC)?

- 5.1 We do not take a view on the new Welsh registration arrangements and how they will affect teachers in England.

Summary

BATOD does not support the proposal to vary the percentage pay increase for teachers of the Deaf, rather, to apply a flat rate increase for all Teachers.

BATOD looks forward to receiving details of the outcome of this consultation process in due course and reiterates its willingness to participate further if required.

With best wishes

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