

British Association of Teachers of the Deaf

Stephen Baker
Deputy Director
School Employment and Teacher Retention

26th July 2017

Dear Stephen

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.
- 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. Additionally, ToDs have a crucial role in supporting the Government'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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School Teachers' Review Body's (STRB's) recommendations and response from the Secretary of State for Education (Justine Greening).

Recommendations by the SDRP review body were made in light of specific considerations required by the Secretary of State for Education. These considerations are set out below:

- a) The need to ensure that the proposals reflect the Government's policy that public sector pay awards in 2017-18 are limited to an average of 1% and are focused on addressing recruitment and retention pressures;*
- b) The need to ensure that any proposals are affordable at both a national level and within the existing budgets of individual schools;*
- c) Evidence of the national state of teacher and school leader supply, including rates of recruitment and retention, vacancy rates and the quality of candidates entering the profession;*
- d) Evidence of the wider state of the labour market in England and Wales;*
- e) Forecast changes in the pupil population and consequent changes in the level of demand for teachers;*
- f) The Government's commitment to increasing autonomy for all head teachers and governing bodies to develop pay arrangements that are suited to the individual circumstances of their schools and to determine teachers' pay within the statutory minima and maxima.*

In response to these considerations, the STRB review body made the following recommendations which are dealt with in turn.

- A 2% uplift to the minimum and maximum of the main pay range;
- A 1% uplift to the minima and maxima of the upper pay range, the unqualified teacher pay range and the leading practitioner pay range;
- A 1% uplift to the minima and maxima of the leadership group pay range and all head teacher group pay ranges;
- A 1% uplift to the maxima and minima of the Teaching and Learning Responsibility (TLR) and Special Educational Needs (SEN) allowance ranges.

In our view, the relative stagnation of teacher salaries has resulted in teacher shortages across all areas of education. This is particularly acute in the field of Teachers of the Deaf and we draw attention to the following:

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The need to ensure that the proposals reflect the Government's policy that public sector pay awards in 2017-18 are limited to an average of 1% and are focused on addressing recruitment and retention pressures;



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- 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 recruitment issue where schools and services are unable to recruit to posts, including Headships. The Code of Practice (CoP) highlights the need for qualified Teachers of the Deaf to provide specialist support to hearing impaired children at all phases 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 a significant number of newly qualified teachers leaving the profession within five years. 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 continues to create a lag in delivering expert intervention. A 1% (2% in a small number of cases) increase in pay will not, in our view, address the current problem of recruiting and retaining Teachers of the Deaf. There is a risk that schools and services will be unable to deliver outcomes in line with Education, Health and Care plans, which carry a legal obligation.

3
The need to ensure that any proposals are affordable at both a national level and within the existing budgets of individual schools;

- 3.1 Currently schools are facing unprecedented budget pressures. The National Schools Funding Formula has meant significant cuts to schools' budgets across the country. It is unlikely that current funding is sufficient to maintain staffing at its current level. As an Association, we support schools and services in campaigning for increased budgets in order to support children at risk of poor educational outcomes and life chances.
- 3.2 The notion of 'affordable' is not one we accept. We believe sufficient funding needs to be made available to all education services. At the present time we feel funding for education is inadequate.

4
Evidence of the national state of teacher and school leader supply, including rates of recruitment and retention, vacancy rates and the quality of candidates entering the profession;

- 4.1 We contend that vacancy rates for Teachers of the Deaf remain high. This is especially the case for school leaders in schools for the Deaf where a number have been unable to recruit to these posts.

5
Forecast changes in the pupil population and consequent changes in the level of demand for teachers.



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- 5.1 Pupil populations have been steadily rising over the last ten years. Keeping pace with this rise, in terms of teacher recruitment and retention, is proving difficult in all sectors. This is especially the case in Deaf education where we have evidence of an increase in childhood deafness together with additional difficulties which require additional staffing and support.

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The Government's commitment to increasing autonomy for all head teachers and governing bodies to develop pay arrangements that are suited to the individual circumstances of their schools and to determine teachers' pay within the statutory minima and maxima.

- 6.1 The facility for schools to develop their own pay arrangements has not translated into increased recruitment and retention of teachers. We are currently facing a crisis in schools' funding which may further depress salaries where school Heads are able to determine salaries within 'statutory minima and maxima'. Reduced school funding has resulted in depressed salary increases more operating in the *minima* than the *maxima*. We believe the profession needs clear pay scales and structures so that teachers are able to clearly see the pay for any post. Individual arrangements have meant the same post in one school is not necessarily paid at the same level in another. This is confusing for the job market and fails to retain or attract teachers to the profession.

Teachers of the Deaf have, for many years, had a clear salary progression through SEN and TLR awards. Allowing latitude in this area has resulted in similar posts being paid differently. Predictability is a required factor in teacher retention and career progression.

Summary

BATOD does not support the proposal to limit pay increases to 1%. We feel this is insufficient to maintain adequate teacher supply, especially in the area of Deaf Education but also across the entire profession.

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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