

# British Association of Teachers of the Deaf

Nicholas Parkinson  
STRB Secretariat  
Office of Manpower Economics

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Dear Nicolas

## 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.



email: [exec@batod.org.uk](mailto:exec@batod.org.uk)  
website: [www.batod.org.uk](http://www.batod.org.uk)  
telephone: 0845 6435181

21, Keating Close, Rochester  
Medway, Kent ME1 1EQ

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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, 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 for public sector pay awards in 2018-19, as set out in the Chief Secretary's letter of 21<sup>st</sup> September;*
- b) *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;*
- c) *The need to ensure that any proposals are affordable and offer best value for money;*
- 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.*

## **Matters for recommendation**

The Secretary of State recommends, to the STRB, the following matters for consideration:

*An assessment of what adjustments should be made to the salary and allowance ranges for classroom teachers, unqualified teachers and school leaders to promote recruitment and retention.*

## **Response from the British Association of Teachers of the Deaf**

The continued stagnation of teacher salaries has resulted in teacher shortages across all areas of education. The number of teachers leaving the profession within five years of qualifying, according to Nick Gibb – Schools Minister - runs at 30%. This is said to be as a result of a number of factors but it cannot be ignored that Teacher salaries have not moved in line with inflation. Clearly, retention is an issue that needs to be addressed through both pay and conditions. Although not the central remit of this response, it is helpful for the minister to highlight Continuing Professional Development and 'supporting a clear and compelling career pathway for Teachers'.



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The minister asks the review body for '*An assessment of what adjustments should be made to the salary and allowance ranges for classroom teachers, unqualified teachers and school leaders to promote recruitment and retention.*' Changes to the rate at which teachers can move up the pay scales (applying to progress more than one level along the Main Pay Spine) have already been put in place and have failed to address the problem of retention. The current system is divisive and open to wide interpretation of what qualifies a teacher to progress more than one level.

In order to address the fundamental issue of teacher recruitment, pay must be a central consideration. This means raising the pay in all scales (including Head teachers and Unqualified Teachers) is essential in maintaining consistent teacher provision across the country.

Retention does not necessarily depend on the rapid progression of pay for teachers. As long as a clear career path and appropriate progressive remuneration is in place (and it currently is), pay does not play a deciding factor in retaining teachers. Other factors, such as workload, access to CPD, and a motivational rather than punitive management regimen, are much more powerful influences in maintaining teacher morale and engagement.

The pattern of recruitment and retention for Teachers of the Deaf follows broadly the same pattern as for all teachers. As Teachers of the Deaf are required to be a qualified teacher of standing before embarking on the mandatory qualification, retention is much less of an issue for this group. However, the latest annual survey carried out by the Consortium for Research in Deaf Education (CRIDE – attached) reveals a severe drop in the number of practicing ToDs over the next 10 to 15 years due to retirement. This is an issue, which requires immediate attention given that numbers of Deaf pupils in education continues to rise (CRIDE 2018).

We ask that consideration to be given to resurrecting the bursary scheme that was put in place in the past to fund places for teachers wishing to enrol for a mandatory qualification and join the workforce as Teachers of the Deaf. This would ensure a supply of ToDs to meet the demand for intervention and support in this sector of SEND.

We continue to support the practice of Head Teachers having some autonomy in setting pay rates in response to recruitment and retention. We would caution against this autonomy being increased beyond the set pay scales set out by the STRB. A marketplace where some schools offer salaries substantially different to others would not necessarily be productive. Recruitment and retention is promoted and maintained by a fair pay structure and career pathway. We support the notion that additional payments can be made to attract pivotal staff but these should lie within the agreed structure of TLRs and SEN allowances.

## Summary

Addressing the matter for consideration, BATOD does not feel that any adjustments to the salary and allowance ranges are necessary or helpful in addressing teacher recruitment and retention. An uplift in all salary ranges, including Head Teachers, is recommended to address the real terms erosion of salaries over the last 10 years.



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In order to address the critical issue of the loss of Teachers of the Deaf through retirement, we recommend a resurrection of the training bursary scheme. This is a simple, time limited and economic way of ensuring the government's commitment to this sector of SEND.

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

**David Couch, Consultant - BATOD**



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website: [www.batod.org.uk](http://www.batod.org.uk)  
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