

Dr Patricia Rice
Chair, School Teachers' Review Body
Office of Manpower Economics
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30th January 2019

Dear Dr Rice

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 Qualified Teachers of the Deaf (QToDs) 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 Local Authority schools. Furthermore, the QToDs' specialist role operates in a very wide age range of contexts: from the point of very early diagnosis via the Newborn Hearing Screening Programme to Further and Higher Education settings.
- 1.3 QToDs 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 QToD is essential in promoting high achievement towards social and educational outcomes. Additionally, QToDs have a crucial role in supporting the Government's Early Intervention initiatives and ongoing improvements to outcomes for all children. QToDs are represented in every Local Authority in England and carry out essential intervention to deaf learners across the entire educational age range. QToDs work within both the maintained and non-maintained sectors. Early Intervention is a key function of QToDs and they work in close co-operation with NHS and Social Care services.
- 1.4 We would also remind STRB that the context of the work of many QToDs is very similar to that of teachers of learners with other low incidence special educational needs eg teachers of children with visual impairment, multi-sensory impairment, and profound and multiple learning difficulties.

Secretary of State for Education - Damian Hinds – sets out the following conditions to which the STRB should have regard:

- a) *The need to ensure that any proposals are affordable across the school system as a whole;*
- 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) *Evidence of the wider state of the labour market in England;*
- d) *Forecast changes in the pupil population and consequent changes in the level of demand for teachers;*
- e) *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.*

Secretary of State for Education - Damian Hinds – sets out matters for recommendation:

1. *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, within the bounds of affordability across the school system as a whole.*

- 1.1 Teacher recruitment and retention continues to be an issue for all schools and services. This is especially true for Qualified 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, especially Headships. The Code of Practice (CoP) requires Qualified Teachers of the Deaf to provide specialist support to deaf children at all phases across the country. Numbers of deaf pupils continue to climb in line with population increases and greater numbers of significantly disabled children (where a hearing impairment is present) are surviving at birth and entering the education system.
- 1.2 Teacher retention remains an issue with a significant number of newly qualified teachers leaving the profession within five years. As a specialist group, Qualified 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. The rising age cohort of current Qualified Teacher of the Deaf stock means that significant numbers of QToDs will be retiring from the profession over the next five years. 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.
- 1.3 We would contend that overall funding for schools has declined, in real terms, over that last 10 years. We acknowledge that this is also the case for all public sector

workers. We are seeing a reduction in public services affecting the most vulnerable in our society.

- 1.4 Deaf children, given the right intervention and support, can become contributors to society. If deaf pupils do not receive specialist support, primarily from a Qualified Teacher of the Deaf, they risk becoming a cost and burden to society. Deaf pupils with specialist support are more likely to enter the job market and live independent lives. This is in contrast to many other disabilities which will always require some level of social care.
- 1.5 Recruitment and retention of high quality specialist Qualified Teachers of the Deaf can ensure that pupils are given the best chance of living an independent life.

2. Recruitment of Teachers of the Deaf

- 2.1 The training route for QToDs usually requires that candidates for Mandatory Qualification (MQ) training have at least three years teaching experience, post qualifying. The MQ is delivered in five centres across the UK and takes one year full time and two years part time, usually whilst the teacher is employed in a ToD role. Full time courses are run in a limited number of sites.
- 2.2 In our view, there are not enough trained Qualified Teachers of the Deaf in the job market. This may be because, once in a teaching post (eg in a mainstream school), a teacher is unable to access funding for a one year course (from the LA) or is unwilling to embark on a two year training course whilst working.
- 2.3 ***In order to address the issue of the scarcity of trained Qualified Teachers of the Deaf, we are already in discussion (along with the National Deaf Children's Society) with the Department for Education about the establishment of bursaries. We also wish to suggest a return to secondment, funded by Local Authorities. With secondment funding in place, Local Authorities could plan for future staffing through recruitment of teachers willing to train. A full time one year course would accelerate the provision of sufficient numbers of Teachers of the Deaf in the marketplace. This would also attract younger teachers to train and enter the profession giving a greater 'value for money' for the training. We would also have less of a problem where we are perpetually seeing large numbers of QToDs retiring year-on-year.***

3. Retention of Qualified Teachers of the Deaf

- 3.1 Many teachers, once trained, have a high commitment to teaching deaf children. Retention rates are high and career progression is available. Qualified Teachers of the Deaf are paid an additional allowance in recognition of their mandatory qualification and specialist role in teaching children with sensory impairment.

- 3.2 Factors which affect retention are the same as those affecting all teachers and include high workload and pay. As pay is the main subject of this response it is right to cite this as a significant factor in retaining quality staff.
- 3.3 The facility for schools to develop their own pay arrangements has not translated into increased recruitment and retention of teachers. There is a good deal of pay flexibility, working within a minima and maxima, available to Head Teachers but reduced school funding has resulted in depressed salary increases operating more 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 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.
- 3.4 Qualified 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 – usually lower. Predictability is a required factor in teacher retention and career progression and we do not support individual pay arrangements.

Summary

BATOD acknowledges the need to ensure that any proposals are affordable across the school system as a whole. The notion of affordability is difficult to assess. Clearly, teacher salaries have declined in real terms and this has, undoubtedly, affected the numbers of students willing to train as teachers. We have outlined why we feel individual pay arrangements are not an answer to the problem and may, in fact, stifle career progression.

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



Paul Simpson, National Executive Officer, BATOD