



The Rt Hon Gillian Keegan MP
Secretary of State

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Dr Mike Aldred
Chair, The School Teachers' Review Body

20 December 2023

Dear Mike,

I want to thank the School Teachers' Review Body (STRB) for its independent expert advice over the past year, and the vital role it plays in the pay round process.

I am pleased that, following your 2023/24 recommendations, we were able to deliver a 6.5% award for experienced teachers and our manifesto commitment to increase starting salaries to at least £30,000, which has now been achieved across England. This was an outcome that required a significant and exceptional additional investment in school funding. As a result of this award and the additional funding provided to support schools to deliver it, unions agreed to end their strikes, and I thank you for your contribution to this outcome. I want to extend my thanks for your work over your two years to date as Chair. I was glad to be able to meet you and issue last year's remit in my first month as Secretary of State, and appreciate our engagement since.

As we start another pay cycle, I am now writing to ask for your recommendations on the pay and conditions for teachers and school leaders for 2024/25. I appreciated your observations on the strategic questions I asked last year, which have been built into the Department's thinking about this year's remit and our broader policy work. I also appreciated the observations in your last report around the benefits of targeted remuneration to address subject-specific recruitment and retention challenges. I would welcome your further views on the potential benefits, in principle, of targeting remuneration by subject in the future.

In 2023/24, pay review bodies across government recommended historically high pay awards for their respective workforces in light of the extraordinary macroeconomic context. Accepting these recommendations, whilst not increasing borrowing, required tough decisions. It is vital that the STRB consider the historic nature of the 2023/24 award and the Government's affordability position that will be set out further in written evidence.

In 2024-25, the government is continuing to increase investment in schools, but it remains important that the STRB carefully considers the Department's evidence on the impact of pay rises on schools' budgets, alongside consideration of the Department's evidence on a fair pay award.

Matters for recommendation

I refer to the STRB the following matters for recommendation:

- An assessment of the adjustments that should be made to the salary and allowance ranges for classroom teachers, unqualified teachers, and school leaders in 2024/25.

Considerations to which the STRB should have regard

In considering your recommendations on pay and views on wider structural matters you should have regard to the following:

- a. Potential equalities impacts associated with any changes proposed to the STPCD.
- b. The cost pressures that schools are already facing and may face over the year (and how they affect individual schools).
- c. The need to ensure that any proposals are not too difficult or onerous for schools to implement.
- d. 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.
- e. Evidence of the wider state of the labour market in England.
- f. Forecast changes in the pupil population and consequent changes in the level of demand for teachers.
- g. 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.

I would be grateful if the STRB could aim to provide a report on this matter by May 2024.

Thank you once again for the significant contribution of the STRB to teacher pay policy. I look forward to receiving your recommendations.

With best wishes,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Gillian Keegan', with a long horizontal flourish extending to the right.

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