

SALARY

Scottish teachers 'worse off by thousands' in pay

Earnings decrease puts nation's educators near bottom of global heap, says union

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TEACHERS IN Scotland have missed out on tens of thousands of pounds in pay since 2010, with the best-paid classroom staff down by more than £30,000 and headteachers by nearly \$65,000 in real terms, an analysis shows.

The study by a teaching union shows that failure to keep pace with inflation and increasing pension contributions have put Scotland near the foot of international rankings.

The figures also reveal that a teacher on point 1 of the main scale missed out on £18,177 cumulatively between 2010 and 2016; while a teacher at point 6 missed out on \$25,753 over the same period.

The news has left some older teachers deeply concerned about the financial fate of their younger colleagues (see box, "A secondary teacher's story", right).

Jane Peckham, the Scotland organiser for the NASUWT teaching union, said that while officials knew the situation was bad, she had been "quite shocked" to see the findings of her organisation's analysis.

Details of the research emerged at NASUWT Scotland's annual conference in Edinburgh this month, where members heard that the country ranked 22nd out of 32 nations for teacher salaries, according to the Organisation for Economic Cooperation and Development.

Reopen negotiations

The union used the analysis to push to reopen negotiations on last year's 2.5 per cent rise for 2015-17, described by Ms Peckham as "grossly inadequate". That attempt failed last week, but officials hope their evidence can influence pay negotiations for the period after 2017, which will start later this year.

Meanwhile, the general secretary of another union has said that teachers at the top of the pay scale in England are £2,108 a year better off than equivalent teachers in Scotland.

Not paid the 'living wage'

Teachers are not the only people in education finding it tough to make ends meet.

National statistics for 2015 reveal that 29,000 workers in the education sector were not earning the "living wage" of £8.25 – a rise of 4,000 from 2014 ([bit.ly/ScotPay](#)).

Dougie Atkinson, professional officer for the Voice Scotland union, said that non-teachers – such as those working in early years, additional needs support staff and early literacy support staff – suffered most from budget cuts.

He added: "We need to make sure that in seeking to keep up teacher numbers and award them modest pay rises, we do not make early-years and support staff suffer disproportionately. The government will not make any inroads on their flagship policy of narrowing the attainment gap without these key members of staff."

Dave Watson (pictured), head of public affairs for Unison Scotland, said that the Scottish government had agreed to

public-sector workers being paid at least the living wage. Education staff not earning the living wage were more likely to be found in the private or charities sectors; private

nurseries, for example, were "notoriously bad payers".

But low pay remained a concern for many even if they earned the living wage.

Mr Watson pointed to research from his union which showed that, in real terms, public-sector pay in Scotland had fallen by 12 per cent since 2009 (see [bit.ly/UnisonPay](#)).



Seamus Scarson told the Scottish Secondary Teachers' Association annual conference in Crieff last week that the Scottish government was "failing to address the fundamental issue of teacher's pay" and called for a "substantial increase" to retain and attract teachers.

But while teaching unions are broadly in agreement about the level of pay decline, there are tensions over the best way forward.

Drew Morrice, an assistant secretary at the EIS teaching union, said that he was "amazed" by a call at NASUWT Scotland's conference for an independent pay-review body.

The union wants it to replace the existing Scottish Negotiating Committee for Teachers (SNCT), which comprises the government, local authorities and teaching organisations.

Mr Morrice, who represents teachers on the SNCT, said such a move would leave teaching organisations with less influence and would not allow the flexibility to address other areas

of concern – such as workload – when there was little scope for substantial pay increases.

School leaders' organisations, meanwhile, have warned that declining pay is causing the supply of potential headteachers to dry up.

Jim Thewliss, general secretary of School Leaders Scotland, said the "job-sizing toolkit", which sets salaries for promoted posts, was "less and less fit for purpose".

Teachers were discouraged from going for headships, he added, as the job had become much more complex – but this had not been reflected in salaries.

"If the government is going to be true to its word in looking to [ensure] a high-quality teaching profession, then they are morally bound to reflect that in what they pay," said Mr Thewliss, whose organisation represents secondary school leaders.

His counterpart in the primary sector, Greg Dempster, general secretary of the school

How teachers' real-terms income has fallen**



SALARY AT 1 APRIL 2016	
0*	£22,416
1	£26,895
2	£28,491
3	£30,111
4	£31,860
5	£33,876
6	£35,763
1	£36,870
3	£38,991
6	£43,845
5	£50,319
8	£54,681
11	£60,162
17	£78,852
19	£86,319

Additional pension contributions 2010-16	Cumulative shortfall as a result of below RPI pay increases	Combined cumulative loss 2012-16
MAIN GRADE		
£632	£13,808	£14,440
£1,632	£16,545	£18,177
£1,992	£17,530	£19,522
£2,105	£18,533	£20,638
£2,228	£19,602	£21,830
£2,999	£20,852	£23,851
£3,736	£22,017	£25,753
CHARTERED TEACHER		
£3,851	£22,680	£26,531
£4,073	£23,997	£28,070
£4,240	£26,892	£31,222
HEADTEACHERS AND DEPUTY HEADTEACHERS		
£5,299	£30,980	£36,279
£5,758	£33,660	£39,419
£7,126	£37,024	£44,149
£10,402	£48,534	£58,936
£11,387	£53,129	£64,516

*Probationary ** Figures do not factor in loss of a National Insurance rebate from April 2010, which takes another 14% off take-home salaries. Source: NASUWT

leaders' body AHDS, told *TESS* this week that pay was a crucial factor in making headships more desirable, but that reducing workload and bureaucracy were also essential.

Mr Dempster recently proposed a controversial solution to the problems of teacher pay and workload: remove non-class contact time and ask teachers to work more, while also paying them more.

This week, new education secretary John Swinney told *TESS* that, on teacher pay, he would show "a willingness to be open to discussion with the profession and with the wider stakeholders in the education debate".

He conceded that there had been "an extensive period of pay restraint in the public sector", driven by the UK government's austerity agenda, but argued that the Scottish government had had "significant" success in protecting jobs. ●

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A secondary teacher's story

I love my job and don't do it for the money, but as a father of teenage children, husband and mortgage-payer, I have to be concerned about the pay decline.

I find myself trawling supermarkets for discounted items, my clothes are almost all gifts and we've been selling things in car-boot sales. My working life regularly involves lots of tutoring and marking - teaching's much-hyped holiday time seems a distant memory.

The recent school buildings situation in Edinburgh has resulted in most teachers going above and beyond to ensure that young people are not disadvantaged. If only those who built my workplace had taken as much care.

I am well down the road to retirement and younger colleagues are amazed that I own my own house. They won't be able to raise a family,



buy a house and support their own children on a teacher's salary.

I look around at neighbours in the police service (who retire at 50) and ask myself, can I keep working until I am 70? Pay freezes, below-inflation rises, the tampering with our pensions and National Insurance contribution increases have meant austere times for all teachers. But it's the next cohort of younger teachers who, more than us, won't get the quality of life that they deserve.