

EMBARGO: 0030 hours
Friday 15 October 2004

Support for bullied pupils will be undermined if a plan to replace the entire management allowances structure in schools across England and Wales gets the go ahead, the National Union of Teachers warns today (Friday 15 October 2004) in evidence to the School Teachers' Review Body.

The scheme ignores pastoral responsibilities in the list of factors attracting additional payments yet pastoral work is vital to the effective running of schools and to pupils facing bullying and other problems. Teachers with pastoral responsibilities also provide a vital link with parents for pupils who may be truanting or whose behaviour is deteriorating.

Yet their responsibility for pupils' personal and social development is ignored in the criteria for the new structure resulting in teachers taking on such roles not being eligible to apply for the new teaching and learning allowances.

Schools must carry out an audit of all posts of responsibility by 31 December 2005. Teachers currently receiving allowances for responsibilities that do not fit the new criteria will not qualify for the new payments unless they negotiate new teaching and learning responsibilities.

Existing allowances are to be safeguarded for three years but frozen at current levels for that time. The three year maximum will impact on teachers in schools facing reorganisation, educational change or closure, or who are close to retirement age. Retirement one year after the safeguarding period will result in a lower pension which is based on final year salary.

The plan comes from the Rewards and Incentives Group which consists of the Government and five other teacher organisations from which the National Union of Teachers was excluded. It envisages the scheme being introduced at no extra cost and in time at less cost than the existing structure.

It proposes freezing existing management allowances, depriving teachers of their rights to permanent safeguarding, and imposing an "Excellent Teachers Scheme" which is rationed and only available to one in five teachers.

The NUT has called on the Review Body to carry out further and wider consultation with the full involvement of the Union before making any decisions on the scheme.

"There have been few occasions when proposals on pay have caused such widespread opposition and concern," said Steve Sinnott, NUT General Secretary. "If these proposals

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are implemented, thousands of teachers face loss of responsibility, status, pay and pension.

“I call on our colleagues from the other teacher organisations to think again.

“These proposals are bad for teachers, schools and education. They have caused real concern and distress in staffrooms throughout the country,” said Steve Sinnott.

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