

## SOULBURY

## DIGEST

OFSTED/Licence to Practise

Car user allowances

Workload



## SOULBURY PAY 2009

Lengthy negotiations on Soulbury pay for September 2009 have led to a marginally improved pay offer which the Soulbury unions have now accepted with great reluctance.

The agreement gives a backdated 1% pay increase from September 2009 to most Soulbury officers. Some officers, however, will receive no pay rise, as the Conservative-led Local Government Employers have imposed a pay freeze on the higher points of the Soulbury pay structure. A similar freeze is now threatened for the whole of local government for 2010.

The NUT and the other Soulbury unions have made it clear that this grossly inadequate pay increase, and the Employers' refusal to make a pay offer to some Soulbury officers, will substantially damage recruitment and retention to key roles in school improvement services, education psychology and other crucial areas of children's services workforce.

The agreement does, however, provide for the introduction of the revised EP pay structure, delivering faster pay progression on a shorter scale for Main Scale EPs.

## The agreement

### Educational improvement staff

1% up to and including point 19 of their spine

### EPs

1% for all Scale A EPs and for Scale B EPs paid on points 1 to 8

### NAYCEO members

1% for officers paid on points 1 to 8 of their spine

No pay offer was made for Soulbury officers paid above those points.

VISIT [www.teachers.org.uk/soulbury](http://www.teachers.org.uk/soulbury)

NUT: THE UNION FOR ALL SOULBURY OFFICERS

**Soulbury pay 2010 - see page 2**

# Soulbury pay 2009 (continued)

The Employers' original pay offer - made in October last year - was for a 1% increase on those points of the Soulbury pay structure below the minimum points for Principal postholders. The Employers pointed to the 2009 agreement in the NJC for Local Government Services - the main local government negotiating body - for a 1% increase. They also pointed to the pay freeze imposed on local authority officers paid above the NJC scales, stating that they would not be making a pay offer for all Soulbury officers for 2009.

The NUT and the other unions rejected this offer which sought to impose a pay link with local government staff, rather than with school leaders and other education professionals, and impose a pay freeze on many Soulbury officers including some in main and senior grades. The unions pressed the Employers to reconsider their position.

The NUT's consultation with Soulbury members demonstrated that members shared the Union's opposition to this unacceptable offer but also showed that members' concerns about job security in the current climate meant that support for

industrial action to secure a better offer would not be forthcoming. Most members agreed that the Union should in the circumstances reluctantly reach some form of pay agreement in order to provide a 2009 pay increase for at least some Soulbury staff.

In the event the Soulbury unions obtained a marginally improved offer which meant that the overwhelming majority of Soulbury officers in main and senior grades have received a 1% increase. Revised pay scales will be available shortly at [www.teachers.org.uk/soulbury](http://www.teachers.org.uk/soulbury)

## SOULBURY PAY 2010

The Local Government Employers have told the NJC trade unions that they will not offer any pay increase for 2010-11. Although Soulbury is a separate negotiating body, it is likely that Soulbury unions may face the same threat of a pay freeze in 2010. All the trade unions involved will be discussing a common campaign against the threatened pay freeze

# UPDATE ON OFSTED

Since the new school inspection framework came into force on 1 September 2009, the NUT has received hundreds of emails from members who have concerns about the new OFSTED framework.

In particular, NUT members have been worried by the new limiting judgements on pupil achievement, safeguarding and pupil behaviour, which they perceive to be arbitrary and unfair.

The NUT has pressed OFSTED and HMCI Christine Gilbert for reassurance on the issues raised by members. On safeguarding, Christine Gilbert has confirmed, "safeguarding grades of satisfactory or good do not limit the overall effectiveness to those grades...a school judged to be satisfactory in its safeguarding arrangements may still be judged to be outstanding..."

It would be useful for NUT Soulbury members who have responsibility for school safeguarding issues to review current arrangements with schools, in light of OFSTED's heightened expectations in this area, particularly if the LA undertakes CRB checks or other statutory requirements on behalf of schools.

On attainment, Christine Gilbert has said, "A school may be judged to be outstanding if

attainment is average, or even low, provided that learning and progress are outstanding...all schools, whatever their circumstances, have the opportunity to be judged outstanding for their overall effectiveness..."

The NUT is not convinced that inspectors are taking sufficient account of children's actual progress in learning. However, assurances from HMCI will be useful in evaluating whether inspectors are conforming to OFSTED's criteria.

Many NUT members are extremely concerned about inspectors evaluating pupil behaviour on the basis of the conduct of a single child within a classroom. HMCI has said that inspectors should "take care not to overemphasise the behaviour of one individual with an identified behavioural difficulty..."

NUT Soulbury members who have responsibility for supporting schools are advised to encourage schools to use their right to complain if they believe they have grounds to do so. Schools can report any concerns during the inspection by calling either 08456 404040 or 08456 404045. After the inspection, the school should write to the National OFSTED Complaints Team.

# Building a 21st Century Schools' System

The Children, Schools and Families Bill, setting out the Government's latest plans for education policy, is making its way through Parliament. Some of its proposals may still make it onto the statute book before the election. They include:

- Parent and Pupil Guarantees, setting out what parents can expect from every schools and a range of "entitlements" for every child;
- The Licence to Practise, to be introduced in 2010, requiring every teacher to have their qualified status revalidated every five years in order to continue practicing;
- An intensification of the current school improvement and intervention policies, giving additional powers for the Secretary of State to direct action by LAs unwilling or unable to do so and an enhanced role for School Improvement Partners (SIPs); and
- The introduction of School Report Cards as an additional form of school accountability, using a range of measures to determine a single grade for schools' performance.

The NUT sees the proposals relating to school intervention as continuing the trend of narrowing the options available to LAs, encouraging 'transformation solutions' as the only means of improving schools in difficulties. It also demonstrates the Government's trend of micromanaging schools and LAs, by legislating to prevent LAs from genuinely considering the best

options for supporting schools where performance is below average.

A running theme is the removal of the last traces of LA-based expertise in favour of "commissioned services", with no reference to their quality or the value of LA personnel's detailed knowledge of local schools and their circumstances. LAs would be required to end the practice of maintaining link advisors and use SIPs as the sole means of communicating with schools.

The NUT is campaigning against the proposals for the Licence to Practise, as it believes that there are already more than sufficient measures of accountability for teachers without this new imposition. It has particularly serious implications for teachers who work on a supply basis, are returners to the profession or who work part time, as these groups are most likely to have difficulty accessing CPD. Soulbury members may also need to be "revalidated" in order to continue working in their current posts.

The NUT has already presented to the Secretary of State more than 18,000 signatures from members who are opposed to the Licence to Practise proposals. See the NUT website [www.teachers.org.uk](http://www.teachers.org.uk) to find out more and how you can become involved in this campaign.

## CAR USER ALLOWANCES

The NUT continues to seek to prevent Soulbury officers being unfairly disadvantaged by changes to car user schemes.

Following discussions, the national Soulbury Committee has issued joint advice to Local Authorities on the issue. LAs have been advised that, whenever they consider changing their schemes, they should specifically consider the position of Soulbury officers and matters such as the distances they travel, the sometimes anti-social hours they work and the heavy or voluminous resources they may need to carry with them.

If changes have already been made without consulting the Soulbury unions locally, LAs should where appropriate consider doing so now. Where changes are considered in future, the Soulbury unions locally should be consulted.

The advice is set out in JESC Circular 169 which you can find at [www.teachers.org.uk/soulbury](http://www.teachers.org.uk/soulbury).

Soulbury members affected by such changes should ask their local NUT Soulbury representatives or NUT local secretary to take up the issue on their behalf.

# SATs Campaign

The joint NUT/NAHT assessment reform campaign continues. Both unions have lobbied all of the main political parties but have still not received a commitment from the Government to review the current high stakes Key Stage 2 tests.

The NUT is conducting a ballot of members who are head teachers, deputy head teachers and assistant head teachers for a boycott of KS2 SATs tests in English and Maths in May 2010. The NAHT is balloting the same constituency in the same categories of schools.

The NUT has recently issued guidance to members advising them not to introduce practice tests or any other activity which is designed specifically to prepare for the National Curriculum tests. Soulbury NUT members who advise primary schools can support the campaign by reflecting the NUT/NAHT advice in their own work with schools.

NUT Soulbury members can also get involved with the campaign by signing the national petition and asking friends, family and colleagues to do so and by participating in a range of local activities which will be taking place, including SATs Saturdays, where NUT members take the campaign to the wider public. See the dedicated "End SATs" section of the NUT website for more details, or contact your local NUT Division to find out what is happening in your area.

# SOULBURY WORKLOAD AND WORKING TIME

A joint union-employer survey has shown the scale of the workload problems facing Soulbury officers and the recruitment problems facing Soulbury services.

The NUT wishes to offer a big thank you to the sample of Soulbury members who participated in the survey. Some key findings are:

- Well over half of Soulbury officers surveyed said recruitment had been much harder in the past 2 years, while almost half said retention had also become more difficult. Over three-quarters said that their service had too few staff for the workload involved.
- Nearly all said workload and professional responsibilities had increased over the past 2 years. Almost 80 per cent work more than 40 hours per week on average, with half working more than 6 hours at evenings and weekends. Fewer than half felt that these working hours were reasonable given the employment package.
- Most reported restrictions on taking leave in term time and difficulties in taking their full leave entitlement. Only half received TOIL or additional pay for extra hours worked.

The response from local authorities was much lower and many admitted they did not know the position in their Soulbury services. Those authorities which did reply clearly do not appreciate the scale of the increases in workload and responsibilities and do not believe recruitment and retention problems are as serious as those actually working in the services.

The NUT will use the survey results to support the case for an appropriate pay increase for Soulbury officers in 2010 and for urgent action on workload and responsibilities.

Join the NUT – the largest teachers union and the union for all Soulbury officers – now at

**[www.teachers.org.uk](http://www.teachers.org.uk)** or call

**0845 300 1669 or 020 7380 6369**