

No. 516 January 2025



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UPPER PAY SCALE

NASUWT Leeds recently sent round a survey to our members in order to give us a picture of what is going on in Leeds regarding pay progression to the Upper Pay Scale.

So far, we have had 17 replies, which show that the following are mainly being used to deny progression to UPS:

- budget constraints
- the role does not demonstrate a substantial or sustained contribution to school.

NASUWT expects that teachers who are eligible to apply to move to the upper pay range will be awarded progression to the upper pay range automatically. NASUWT also expects that the only reason an employer may decline a threshold application is if a teacher is subject to formal capability proceedings.

We are hearing of teachers who have been on M6 for 10 years or more and others stuck on UPS1 for 15 years! Your headteacher cannot deny an application for the reasons above, nor can they say that a TLR covers any "substantial or sustained contribution to school" so this can't be used as evidence when applying for UPS. Some members have said they feel anxious about asking to apply for UPS as the headteacher is not approachable and fear some "retribution" for applying.

Maternity Leave or Other Long Term Absence

If you are starting maternity leave or if you know that you are going to be absent for longer than usual (e.g. you are undergoing planned surgery or other medical treatment) you should ask for an adjustment to your appraisal objectives for the current and next academic year. The objectives that you have already agreed to should be reduced to take account of the anticipated absence. This would enable you to meet the reduced and attainable objectives and meet the criteria for pay progression.

Periods of absence on maternity, paternity, adoption or parental leave, which are statutory or contractual, cannot preclude you from crossing the threshold. Your school's pay policy will outline how periods of absence due to maternity, paternity, adoption or parental leave will be dealt with. **Schools must not discriminate directly or indirectly against anyone because of a protected characteristic and this includes pregnancy and maternity leave.** Seek further advice if you feel you have been denied progression because of this.

If you have not already contributed to the survey and would like to in order to give us an even better picture, please use this link.

UPS SURVEY

Adverse Weather

All employers should have a policy in place for actions to be taken when there are adverse weather conditions that may affect the opening of schools.

Schools may be unable to open for a variety of reasons, including:

- breakdown in the heating;
- frozen or burst pipes;
- inaccessibility of roads and/or the site due to very heavy snowfall or other adverse conditions.

Teachers need to ensure that they are aware of how the school will communicate with them if a decision is made to close the school. If a decision is made that the weather conditions are such that it is not appropriate to open the school for pupils, then there should be no reason why the school should expect staff to come into school. If the conditions are unacceptable or dangerous for pupils, then the same considerations apply to staff.

It would be reasonable for the school to expect that if the school is closed, staff will use the time to undertake appropriate work-related activities at home. However, due to the complexities involved, the additional workloads incurred and the likelihood that many staff members will have caring responsibilities, it is **not appropriate for synchronous online learning to be adopted** for a short-term closure.

If a decision is made to close the school, this should be deemed an unavoidable closure.

Any suggestion by the school management or employer that when the school has been closed, teachers should be expected to make up for this by:

- giving up leave;
- using any of the five teacher days;
- losing planning, preparation and assessment (PPA) time or lunch breaks; or
- losing pay;

should be firmly rejected.

It should be made clear that teachers will, as always, act professionally to do everything they can during lessons to ensure that pupils cover the work that they need to do and may have missed during the closure.

If the school is open as usual, staff should make all reasonable efforts to get into work. For more advice, please check out the union's "[Adverse Weather](#)" page.

First General Meeting of 2025!



Tuesday 4th February 2025 at 7pm
Leeds City College,
Printworks Campus (LS10 1JY)
and via Zoom.

Buffet provided!

Please contact us at casework.LEEDS@nasuwt.org.uk to reserve your place. Expenses for travel to the venue will be reimbursed.