

Rt. Hon. Michael Gove MP
Secretary of State for Education
Department for Education
Sanctuary Buildings
Great Smith Street
London
SW1P 3BT

25 May 2012

Dear Michael

We write to advise you that today the NUT and the NASUWT are issuing a formal joint declaration of commitment by our two unions to protecting teachers and defending the education service through jointly co-ordinated action. The NASUWT and the NUT together represent over 85% of the teaching profession.

We have raised with you over the last two years the growing, deep concerns of our members about the adverse impact of Government's policies on teachers and the implications this has for the provision of high quality education. Both unions have current trade disputes with the Government.

Children and young people are entitled to be taught by those who are recognised and rewarded as highly skilled professionals and have working conditions which enable them to work effectively to provide the highest quality of education for all. The Government's policies with regard to pay, pensions and conditions of service, and the impact of the cuts on jobs in schools, sixth-form colleges and across the education service, are seriously jeopardising that entitlement.

The evidence our unions have collected from regular dialogue and engagement with our members and from many other sources, including the Government's own statistics, shows that we now have a profession in crisis. Teacher morale is extremely low, with over half of teachers seriously considering leaving the profession altogether.

In the Autumn term, teachers will be in the second year of the pay freeze. They will have had six months of increased pension contributions with more increases to come. Workload and working hours are already excessive. There are high levels of stress, which are increasing as a result of punitive performance management and capability procedures and the prospect of having to work to 68 or higher to get a full pension. Job insecurity will have continued to increase due to the impact of the EBac on non-EBac subjects and savage cuts to education funding, which have already taken their toll on the many specialist support

services on which teachers in schools rely. All of this is underpinned by the continuing opposition to the DfE's reforms of the Teachers' Pension Scheme, its proposals with regard to the national pay framework and its consistent undermining of teachers' professionalism.

As a result of our joint declaration, the overwhelming majority of the teaching profession are now united in their determination to oppose the attacks on teachers.

We believe, in the light of this declaration that it is important for you to meet with our two unions as quickly as possible to engage in genuine dialogue to seek to address the concerns of teachers, who are central to securing our shared aspiration of maintaining and enhancing our world-class education system.

Yours sincerely



NASUWT
General Secretary



NUT
General Secretary