



**National Education Union**  
Hamilton House  
Mabledon Place  
London WC1H 9BD  
T 0345 811 8111  
[neu.org.uk](http://neu.org.uk)

**Joint General Secretaries**  
Dr Mary Bousted BA (Hons) MA PhD  
Kevin Courtney

Andrea Bradley - EIS  
Patrick Roach - NASUWT  
Seamus Searson - SSTA

6 January 2022

By email: [abradley@eis.org.uk](mailto:abradley@eis.org.uk)  
[patrick.roach@mail.nasuwt.org.uk](mailto:patrick.roach@mail.nasuwt.org.uk)  
[seamuss@ssta.org.uk](mailto:seamuss@ssta.org.uk)

Dear Andrea, Patrick and Seamus

We are writing to express our solidarity greetings to all - Educational Institute of Scotland (EIS), National Association of Schoolmasters Union of Women Teachers (NASUWT), Scottish Secondary Teachers' Association (SSTA), members in your strike action next Wednesday.

Educators across our countries have seen a huge decline in real terms educators pay and are united with you in remedying.

We were inspired by your impressive ballot results across all your disputes.

Alongside sister unions, we are just about to collude our national ballot of all teachers and support staff in England and Wales. We are united with you, in fighting for a properly funded inflation plus pay rise.

We wish you every success in your dispute.

Victory to the EIS, NASUWT, SSTA and victory to the education workers.

In solidarity

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Mary W. Bousted".

**Mary Bousted**  
**Joint General Secretary**

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Kevin Courtney".

**Kevin Courtney**  
**Joint General Secretary**



The Educational  
Institute of Scotland

Ref: AB/LM  
23 January 2023  
[lmeechan@eis.org.uk](mailto:lmeechan@eis.org.uk)

Mary Bousted  
Joint General Secretary

Kevin Courtney  
Joint General Secretary

National Education Union  
Hamilton House  
Mabledon Place  
London  
WC1H 9BD

[Mary.Bousted@neu.org.uk](mailto:Mary.Bousted@neu.org.uk)  
[Kevin.Courtney@neu.org.uk](mailto:Kevin.Courtney@neu.org.uk)

By email only

Dear Mary and Kevin

Firstly, thank you to you both and to the National Education Union for the solidarity greetings to EIS members as they take strike action in pursuit of a fairer pay settlement than the 5% (9% real-terms pay cut) that continues to be offered by the Scottish Government and local authority employers. Your solidarity is deeply appreciated by the EIS and its members.

As you may be aware, this offer was made to teachers in Scotland in August 2022, well past the point that a pay award should have been made to them- April 2022. Now, in late January 2023, they are still waiting.

Despite our members' overwhelming rejection of a 5% pay offer, as demonstrated through two ballots, and an overwhelming mandate gained for the programme of strike action that is now underway, the Scottish Government and COSLA (the local authority employers' body) have moved little in almost 6 months- still seeking to pressure teachers in Scotland to accept a deep real-terms pay cut- this when their salaries have already been eroded on the scale of 20-25% since 2008.

I am sure you will recognise this narrative given the very strong parallels with the situation regarding teachers' pay in England and Wales, and the lack of political will at government level to address both the long-term erosion of pay

and the current cost-of-living pressures that teachers across the UK continue to endure.

This brings me, on behalf of the EIS, to congratulate the NEU on achieving industrial action mandates that will enable teachers in England and Wales to further demonstrate their rejection of 5% and pursue fair pay, as teachers in Scotland are similarly forced to do at present.

It is testament to the strength of feeling of teachers about what is increasingly perceived as governments' real contempt for them, dressed up in warm words and sophistry, that in spite of the deliberately restrictive anti-trade union legislation that remains in force, and amidst the dispute rightly pursued by fellow trade unionists in Royal Mail, that our respective unions were able, in almost every case, to beat the ballot thresholds and achieve industrial action mandates.

Similarly, it is clear from your ballot results that support staff in England and Wales are deeply dissatisfied with the pay cut being imposed upon them- albeit that the ballot result for support staff members in England narrowly missed the turnout threshold required for strike action.

I hope that this will dissuade the governments in England and Wales from seeking to divide teachers and support staff on the issue of pay. Sadly, the Scottish Government for all its claims about its trade union-friendly credentials, is shamefully seeking to do this in Scotland.

The First Minister herself repeatedly presents a very misleading picture of teacher pay since 2018, in the media and in the Scottish Parliament, citing the cumulative gains of our 2018-20 Value Education, Value Teachers campaign (13.5%- only half of the real-terms pay erosion since 2008), adding this to the paltry 2.2% for 2022 and incredulously, the 5% which has been rejected by teachers repeatedly and so not paid to them. A very simple calculation shows that the most that teachers have received is 15.7% since 2018... the real-terms value of which has now been more than wiped out by inflation.

The FM also repeatedly asserts that the same cash pay offer accepted by school support staff, should be agreeable to teachers – despite huge differences in the percentage uplifts. The principle of sectoral collective bargaining has been displaced by the imperative of public sector pay suppression overall.

Worse still, the assertions repeatedly reference 'the janitor' and 'the dinner lady' in a school having accepted the same offer, in a disgraceful bid to pit worker against worker, teacher against dinner lady, and to stoke resentment rather than solidarity across groups of workers. This is yet worse when we consider that the majority of workers in each group are women and Scotland's gender pay gap persists at 10%.

Those support staff also had to ballot for and threaten industrial action that would close schools in order to achieve their pay award in early August – which is equivalent to almost 10% for staff earning less than £20k, at a point in time when teachers were being offered a pathetic 2%.

EIS members in Scotland are now in the process of taking their third day of strike action since November. We have been strike-strong the length and breadth of Scotland, as I am sure our NEU colleagues in England and Wales will be from February 1<sup>st</sup> onwards. Full EIS solidarity to NEU and its members in preparing for the action and throughout the programme of strike action when the time comes.

Our national Executive has agreed that from 28<sup>th</sup> February, our members will take a further four days of strike action- some of this coinciding with NEU strike action- if the dispute remains unresolved.

As things stand, it does not appear the Scottish Government is willing to direct any further funding to local authorities to enable settlement of the dispute. Whilst talks have taken place in recent weeks- this, on the face of it a more favourable picture than in the wider UK- from one meeting to another, the Scottish Government and COSLA are bringing nothing fresh to the table- just the insistence that the Teachers' Side must compromise yet further in the negotiations.

Clearly, there continues to be miscalculation in Scotland of the strength of our members' resolve, as there does in England and Wales by the UK and Welsh governments; and misjudgement about the moral and financial unacceptability of another real-terms pay cut for education staff.

Our respective industrial action campaigns are and will be, essential in prompting a revision of the current political miscalculations, in the interests of pay justice for educators, and thereby, for the benefit of the children and young people that our members teach, support and care for.

For now, thank you once again, congratulations and solidarity from the EIS to the NEU!

Very best wishes and full solidarity

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Andrea Bradley". The script is cursive and fluid, with the first letters of "Andrea" and "Bradley" being capitalized and prominent.

Andrea Bradley  
General Secretary