

2022/2023

Pay campaign

AEP Toolkit

July 2022



INTRODUCTION

The AEP has a very active programme of advocacy and influencing activity through the NEC and the General Secretary. We engage with the Government, civil servants, politicians, and other key influencers, and often work in coalition with organisations, such as those working with CYP and trade unions.

From time to time, in addition to this co-ordinated activity at a national level, we ask our members to get directly involved by engaging with local influencers in your area, such as your local MPs. This helps to amplify our advocacy activity, broaden our networks, and increase understanding of the role and value of educational psychologists.

Members support for our pay claim

We would appreciate members support for the campaign for a pay rise for EPs at a time when the cost of living is rising, and we face significant challenges around recruitment and retention in the profession. As you will have seen from the Soulbury Pay Claim 2022 which was recently shared with you we are seeking a significant pay increase of at least 9% on all pay points, which will begin to address the substantial real terms cuts which Soulbury employees have, like other public sector workers, suffered since 2010.

We would like members to:

Contact your local MP	Contact your local Council Leader if you do not live in the same local authority as you work	Send a tweet, and/or like and share tweets from @AEPpsychologists	Raise the pay claim in any appropriate professional or political forums that you are active in
------------------------------	---	---	---

This short toolkit is designed to provide easy to use resources for members to support the campaign .It contains:

- Background information
- Suggested key messages
- Draft email/letter text
- Draft social media content

BACKGROUND

EPs pay is negotiated with The Soulbury Committee. This arrangement was established in 1948 to provide voluntary collective bargaining machinery for Soulbury Officers who are advisory staff in children's services. It currently covers approximately 4,500 staff, many of whom are EPs. Others represented are educational improvement professionals (previously advisers and inspectors) and young people's/community service managers (previously youth and community service officers).

The 2021/22 agreement provided an increase of 1.75% on all pay points on the Educational Psychologists' pay spines from 1 September 2021. Further, an increase of 1.75% on all London and Fringe area allowances from 1 September 2021.

We are seeking a more significant increase in pay in this year's negotiations.

THE CASE FOR A PAY RISE

EPs offer an essential service. They are a highly skilled workforce, working collaboratively with many other professionals to provide expertise across the education sector, as well as offering a psychological understanding of education and child development.

With the cost of living crisis and inflation hitting a 30 year-high, and with energy bills rising by 50%, it is essential that educational psychologists are fairly remunerated for the highly specialised job they do, and in order to recruit and retain the EP workforce.

With a combination of pay freezes and below inflation increases from 2010 onwards, the real value of EP pay has been cut significantly. Cumulatively, between September 2009 and September 2021, inflation rose by 39.2% when measured by the Retail Prices Index or 26.1% when measured by the Consumer Prices Index, Soulbury pay increases over this period, on the other hand, have an aggregate value of only 13.75%. If Soulbury officers' pay had risen between September 2009 and September 2021 in line with the increase in the Retail Prices Index, their pay rates would be much higher. Educational Psychologists pay at Scale A point 8, if it was RPI linked, would be £65,488 compared to actual £52,440.

In addition to a real terms reduction in pay, we have faced significant increases in pension contributions, greater than those for most other local government employees, under the LGPS's tiered contribution arrangements. Most Soulbury officers are now paying 8.5% or even 9.9% of their pay. With inflation expected to remain high, a pay increase of at least 9% is necessary to avoid adding to the pay losses in real terms since 2010.

There is also a big problem around recruitment and retention of EPs and, at a moment where the challenges are so prominent, there is the risk of acerbating this gap further.

In the pay claim, we have also asked that all EPs who are supervising Assistant EPs are paid an additional allowance for the duration of the supervision in the same way that they are paid an additional allowance for supervising Trainee EPs and also that the cost of HCPC registration fees should be covered by employers. These changes would go some way to acknowledging the value of EP work to each LA.

CONTACTING YOUR MP

How can I find out who my local MP is?

Information about MPs, the constituency and political party they represent can be found on the parliamentary website here: www.parliament.uk/mps-lords-and-offices/mps/.

The best way to contact your MP is through the parliamentary website. This will provide you with their parliamentary details. We recommend sending an email to your MP in the first instance, their address can be found online but will tend to follow the format (firstname.surname.mp@parliament.uk).

Some MPs will also have a constituency email address which you can use to contact them. After you have sent an email to your MP we recommend calling their office directly, their telephone number should be available on the parliamentary website. If this is not available, most MPs will have their own website with contact details on this, a quick search online will be able to direct you to this. You can also call the parliamentary switchboard on 0207 219 3000 and tell them your local MP's name and they will transfer you to their parliamentary office.

You can contact an MP through social media. Check the MP has a blue tick next to their name as this will confirm it is a verified account and not someone impersonating them.

You can also contact your MP through their Party's local branch. You can find these by ringing the main telephone line for the political party and asking for further details.

DRAFT EMAIL TEXT/LETTER TO CONTACT YOUR MP

Dear [Insert name of MP],

Educational Psychologists

I am writing to you as a member of the Association of Educational Psychologists (AEP) and as an Educational Psychologist myself. As my local MP, I would appreciate your support in making the case for a pay rise for educational psychologists.

AEP is the professional association and trade union for 3,500 Educational Psychologists across the UK. EPs offer an essential service as a highly skilled workforce. We work collaboratively with many other professionals to provide expertise across the education sector, as well as offering a psychological understanding of education and child development. We seek to promote positive mental health and social wellbeing for all children and young people. We have particular expertise and statutory responsibilities regarding special educational needs and disabilities (SEND).

With the cost of living crisis and inflation hitting a 30 year-high, and with energy bills rising by 50%, it is essential that educational psychologists are fairly remunerated for the highly specialised job they do, and in order to recruit and retain the EP workforce. We are seeking a significant pay increase of at least 9% on all pay points, which will begin to address the substantial real terms cuts which Soulbury employees have, like other public sector workers, suffered since 2010.

While it would be true to say that average earnings for all workers have not kept pace with inflation, the scale of reduction in EPs pay is much greater. EP pay has risen by 13.5% since 2010, compared to an average earnings increase for all workers of 27%. These increases are actually real terms decreases relative to inflation, measured by RPI at 39.2%. To illustrate further, EP pay at Scale A, Point 8, would be £65,488 if it was keeping pace with inflation, where it is actually now £52,440. In addition to a real terms reduction in pay, we have faced significant increases in pension contributions, greater than those for most other local government employees.

The Educational Psychology profession is experiencing significant recruitment and retention issues. In our most recent workforce survey, two thirds of respondents reported difficulties with recruitment and half of respondents were concerned about their local authority's ability to fulfil statutory obligations. Many councils are using agency staff and associates, where they are available, in order to plug gaps in the workforce, such as to meet statutory SEND deadlines. This is expensive and not a sustainable way to deliver a quality educational psychology service.

Educational Psychologists pay is negotiated with the Soulbury Committee, which is co-ordinated by the Local Government Association. I would very much appreciate it if you

would write to the following key office holders at the LGA and DfE, to raise the issues in my letter and encourage them to agree a fair pay rise.

- Cllr James Jamieson, Chairman of the Local Government Association
- Cllr Shaun Davies, Labour Leader and Senior Vice Chair, Local Government Association
- Mark Lloyd, CEO of the Local Government Association
- Secretary of State, James Cleverly MP (emphasising the recruitment and retention challenges for the EPs workforce)

Thank you in advance for your time, and I look forward to hearing from you. If you would like to meet with representatives of the AEP, please do let me know.

Best wishes,

[Name]

[Address]

SUGGESTED SOCIAL MEDIA CONTENT



After a decade in which real terms pay for Educational Psychologists has fallen, this year we are asking for a pay rise to fairly remunerate EPs and help recruit and retain.



I'm supporting the @AEPsychologists campaign for a pay rise to fairly reward EPs and help us recruit and retain for our vital work with children, young people and families.



After years of real terms cuts to pay for Educational Psychologists, please support our call on the @lgacomms #SoulburyCommittee for a fair pay rise this year.

FURTHER INFORMATION

More information about AEP can be found on our website:
[Association of Educational Psychologists \(aep.org.uk\)](https://www.aep.org.uk).

If you have any further questions, please contact Connect, AEP's Westminster based team, at: aep@connectpa.co.uk