

Meeting with local teachers over pay

Yesterday I met a group of local teachers to discuss their pay. We agreed that talks need to resume between the government and the teaching unions, and agreed that the cost of living squeeze has taken its toll on the spending power of their salaries as with others.

They told me of difficulties in recruiting and retaining teachers locally, especially in some subjects like computing where there were other jobs than teaching readily available in our area. I said more data and examples would be helpful to their case, as employers do need to ensure pay levels are high enough to fill vacancies.

I agreed to renew my conversations with Ministers about these pay issues following my meeting with them. I have of course had various talks with NHS and Education Ministers over how to resolve the pay disputes already and made suggestions to them. They also asked about a possible extension to boundaries for London weighting in pay, which I said I would also put to Ministers. This has not been on the government agenda, and talks about national pay levels are a more likely route to early changes in salary.