020 3824 0468
info@sixthformcolleges.org
www.sixthformcolleges.org

Sixth Form Colleges Association
THE VOICE OF SIXTH FORM EDUCATION

Phil Child,
Staff Side Secretary,
NJC for Staff in Sixth Form Colleges,
Hamilton House,
Mabledon Place,
London WC1H 9BD

20th October 2026

Dear Phil,

National Joint Council Teachers' Pay 2026/27

I am writing on behalf of the National Joint Council (NJC) Employer Side, following the NJC teaching committee meeting, held on 16th October 2026, to respond formally to the Staff Side's 2026/27 pay claim for teachers in sixth form colleges.

Following careful consideration of the pay claim, the outcome of the SFCA's pay consultation of NJC colleges and discussions within the NJC, we wish to make the following offer with a view to reaching a pay settlement:

From 1 September 2026

- A 3.5% across the board pay increase for all teachers including those on the leadership scale
- A 3.5% increase on all relevant allowances, including London and fringe allowances
- An additional 6.5% increase on the current rate of London and fringe allowances
- Joint NJC discussions on teacher workload and working time (class sizes and contact hours)

Colleges continue to work to ensure that pay in NJC employer colleges remains attractive and competitive with the rest of the public sector. We hope this pay offer can, without any delay, form the basis of an agreement between the two sides and we are keen to work towards teachers receiving this increase as soon as possible.

Registered Office: Sixth Form Colleges Association, c/o Blake Morgan
Kings Court, Tollgate, Chandler's Ford, Eastleigh, Hampshire SO53 3LG
Company No. 2736405 **VAT No.** 599621191

Funding

As stated at the recent NJC meeting, this pay offer matches the school teachers' settlement for 2026/27, even though our colleges are not funded in the same way as schools. Independent research, from the Institute of Fiscal Studies (IFS), shows that funding for sixth form colleges is now 23% lower than funding for secondary schools.

Also, as you know this year the DfE confirmed that for 2026/27 the national funding rate for students in sixth form colleges would rise by only 0.5% (without the additional targeted recruitment and retention funding), well below the rate of inflation. There is also a number of economic and financial uncertainties facing the college sector over the coming year. Another key issue for the sector is VAT, sixth form colleges are not able to reclaim VAT, therefore further adding to college spending, whereas schools are able to claim these costs back. Despite this, the 3.5% pay offer ensures NJC teachers on pay point 1 and at pay point 9 (where the majority of main scale teachers are paid) will receive higher pay than their school teacher equivalents on the DfE main and upper pay scales.

London Pay

NJC teachers working in London and fringe area colleges receive an additional allowance on top of their basic pay. The Employers' Side approach has been to ensure the London and fringe payments have been increased annually in line with the NJC teachers' basic pay award. We do not support the approach taken in schools of including these payments within base salary rather than as distinct allowances. London and fringe sixth form colleges continue to show no evidence of teacher recruitment or retention issues, with some having no vacancies at all. However, on an exceptional basis this year, following careful consideration of discussions within the NJC and in response to the Staff Side's claim we can agree the below additional increases to allowances for teachers based in London and the fringe area as follows, effective from 1st September 2026:

Allowance	Current	NJC Pay Award 3.5%	Additional 6.5%	New allowance
Inner London	£5,074	+£177.59	+£329.81	**£5,581**
Outer London	£3,382	+£118.37	+£219.83	**£3,720**
Fringe	£1,341	+£46.94	+£87.17	**£1,475**

Workload and Working Time

Following last week's NJC discussions, and further Employer Side consideration of the additional elements of the Staff Side claim, the NJC Employers' Side is keen to fully engage with the Staff Side's concerns about teacher workload and working time and to explore further the points made in the claim. Discussions within the NJC are underway and arrangements have been made for the NJC working party to meet again during November, with further meetings to be planned, to consider these issues in more detail and to further consider the current situation in sixth form colleges.

As discussed at the 12th October working party meeting, college principals remain of the view that national prescription on contact hours would undermine local arrangements and the discretion of the principal to plan and set timetables to meet the individual needs of teachers, local circumstances and different demands. However,

we are working with Staff Side to explore best practice guidance to encourage college principals to ensure that colleges carefully consider teacher workload and working time when planning timetables. The Employers are also keen to work with the unions to explore supporting colleges to maintain average class sizes across the sector. The Employers are also keen to ensure that health and safety requirements are always carefully considered when determining class sizes.

The NJC successfully concluded a number of workload and working time agreements earlier this year. The SFCA continues to encourage colleges to ensure they keep teacher and college support staff workload issues under review. In response to the Staff Side claim for 2026/27 and as confirmed during discussions at the NJC workload and working time working party meeting, held on the 12th October, the Employers' Side remains keen to continue discussions on the Staff Side's concerns on the issue of class sizes and teacher contact hours.

I am of course available to discuss the content of this offer in more detail and I encourage you to put this pay offer to your members for consultation. We are keen to conclude a collective agreement on teachers' pay for 2026/27 at the earliest opportunity to ensure college teachers receive their pay increase as soon as possible.

Yours sincerely,



Graham Baird
Employer Side Secretary