

School support staff negotiating body gets royal assent

The School Support Staff Negotiating Body (SSSNB) (England) gained legal status on 12 November 2009. All support staff in schools (only academy and private company staff excepted) will now be covered by any new pay and grading framework agreed by the SSSNB.

UNISON has eight of the 15 seats on the trade union side giving us a voting majority. Of our eight negotiators one is a full-time UNISON official: Christina McAnea, national secretary for education. The other seven members are from schools or an education background: Anne Donnelly, nursery nurse; Frances Lee, technician; Pam Howard, administrator; Denise Knutsen, teaching assistant; Michelle McKenna, pupil link officer; Rosemary Plummer, teaching



assistant; and Jonathan Sedgebeer, branch secretary and formerly of the youth service.

You can get more info on the SSSNB on the UNISON website:

unison.org.uk/education/schools/sssnb.asp

Message from UNISON's general secretary

This is no ordinary year for school support staff. UNISON has experienced a fair amount of frustration in the bid for fairer pay and conditions in schools. Getting the School Support Staff Negotiating Body (SSSNB) off the ground was a start-stop affair with hurdles on the way. But on 12 November 2009, with royal assent to the education bill, the SSSNB became a legal reality with hope for a radical overhaul of school staff pay and conditions.



Dave Prentis, UNISON general secretary

Developing new role profiles, a national grading system, a handbook of conditions and matching staff to them will be no mean feat. The

intention is to agree as much as we can by April/May with a view to the process of change beginning in the autumn term. When the package is agreed, it will be put to members in a ballot to authorise the change of bargaining arrangements.

There is much to do before then and UNISON negotiators will be working flat out to get the best possible deal. This is against a background of financial stringency and costs will be uppermost in school minds. But there is everything to play for and UNISON is completely committed to achieving clear, consistent and fair pay and conditions for our members who work as support and professional staff in schools in England.

I know too that UNISON in Cymru/Wales is in talks with the Welsh Assembly Government about a possible new structure for school staff in Wales – so watch this space.



Contact

Telephone
0845 355 0845

Email
education@unison.co.uk

UNISON SCHOOLS

Dawn's got it covered

UNISON rep Dawn Taylor explains how she uses UNISON's support to get a better deal for staff.



Before I became UNISON representative for my school, I did not understand about professional development, workforce reform, cover supervision, specified work and so on. I would cover for a class because I know the pupils and I wanted to help them and the school. I had gained HLTA status, but was not paid as such because the school could not afford it.

I became a UNISON rep when we were going through redundancies and needed a spokesperson; becoming health and safety rep and steward. As I gained confidence I learned to use UNISON guidance materials and to extend my knowledge.

Last September, as I read UNISON's branch advice rarely cover, I thought "hang on, we cover in our school now but are only paid as level 2 teaching assistants, special needs". We decided to appeal against our grade and to try for a level 3/4, using the UNISON guidance as ammunition.

I now feel that I can call myself a UNISON activist. I sit on the local WAMG social partnership and am on UNISON's national schools committee, representing my region. This does not mean I am a trouble-maker, but that the knowledge and

training I have gained through UNISON helps me to stand up for myself and others.

Until I was a UNISON rep, I did not know how involved UNISON is in education at every level. I would not have known about government guidance for schools and how local authorities must abide by it. I would not have known about 'rarely cover' and the impact this will have.

We have a voice as school staff within UNISON and should use our branches, regional and national machinery to gain our rights. I used to think that UNISON didn't do much, but I could not have been more wrong. We work alongside other unions, government departments and many organisations and have our fingers in so many pies. I can assure you that UNISON is looking after school staff and will in the future.

- UNISON's advice on 'rarely cover' arrangements is available to members through our online catalogue at: unison.org.uk/resources/index.asp
- Please take part in our short survey to find out what cover arrangements exist in your school at: surveymonkey.com/s/schoolrarelycover

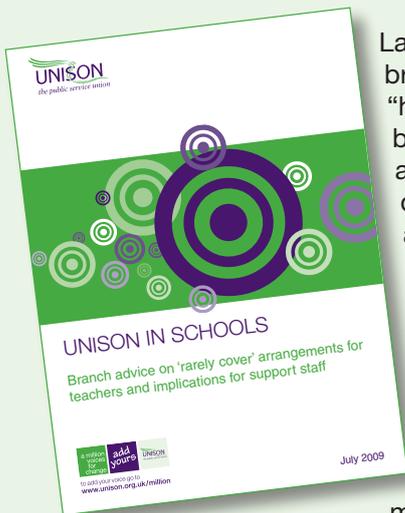
Caretakers survey – results

At the end of 2009, 356 catering and premises staff responded to a UNISON survey on their terms and conditions of service. They reveal a job that has transformed since local management, delegated budgets, extended schools and other changes. There is now a mix of traditional duties but much broader responsibilities.

One response said that they could be cleaning in the morning and managing a £100,000 project in the afternoon. Pay and conditions vary enormously but a culture of long hours and work-life balance issues were reported frequently. A typical response said:

"We are all working for the good of the school and school users, but I believe, along the line, certain anomalies have been taken for granted ... the gratitude you receive cannot be spent."

Thank you to all who replied, this invaluable information will be used to help develop role profiles for this group. A full report of the survey can be found on the school page at: unison.org.uk/education



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New professional development strategy for the children's workforce in schools

A three-year professional development strategy for the children's workforce in schools has been developed by UNISON, the TDA (Training and Development Agency for Schools) and other partner organisations.

The strategy sets out a vision to "embed a learning culture within, and across, all schools that maximises the potential of the workforce and enables children and young people to achieve the best outcomes possible".

Continuing professional development (CPD) leaders play a key role in embedding a learning culture in their schools. TDA and the National College have developed a new national training and development programme for CPD leadership aimed at existing and aspiring CPD leaders in schools. The programme is designed to help them make the links between professional development, performance review and school improvement priorities. Also, the TDA has launched the first ever online national CPD database in England. Piloted last year, this innovative new service will give CPD leaders, support staff and teachers access to a huge database of thousands of learning opportunities. It is designed as a first port of call for anyone interested in training and development.

You can read more about the strategy, the CPD leadership programme and new national CPD database at the TDA's CPD Zone: tda.gov.uk/cpd

DIARY DATE

26

APRIL 2010

National school seminar

The national school seminar is on 26 April in London. The seminar will provide an opportunity to discuss a wide range of issues affecting school members. To find out more contact your local UNISON branch.



A Million Voices and the GPF

The Million Voices for Public Services campaign is supported by the UNISON's general political fund, which allows UNISON to mount political campaigns. To find out more about the fund visit: unison.org.uk/gpf



School libraries campaign 2010

UNISON is working with Campaign for the Book, CILIP, the School Library Association and the Association for Senior Children's and Education Librarians to push for statutory status for school libraries.

CILIP is drafting a school libraries manifesto, which all campaign partners will support. After the general election, the government will be asked to participate in a national seminar and a lobby of parliament is planned for the autumn term. These items and other library campaign issues are reported in Campaign for the Book newsletter and the blog at: alangibbons.net

Points of view

- Do you want to share your experience with other members in schools?
- Raise issues?
- Share your local organising successes?

Send in your stories (not more than 200 words, and they may be edited). If your piece is published you will receive a UNISON schools goodie bag.

Email: education@unison.co.uk

Good practice for social networking sites in schools

Some employers have imposed blanket bans on accessing social networking sites like Facebook in the belief that this will reduce “time-wasting” and avoid misuse. Employers do have the legal right to ban access to particular sites or limit personal use, however, when managers and union reps communicate IT agreements actively, staff are more aware of acceptable levels of personal use.

But some sites have been set up to co-ordinate work-related issues and help staff share ideas and best practice. UNISON believes that the best way forward is to have a balanced and clearly understood IT usage agreement.

Agreements should include a commitment by the employer not to intercept or monitor emails and internet use, unless there is evidence of misuse. Email traffic to trade union addresses should also be secure and IT firewalls that filter words such as lesbian, gay or bisexual are not acceptable.

There have been cases where staff have been disciplined or dismissed for interaction with pupils or posting photos or comments on colleagues. UNISON recommends that members do not accept invitations from pupils to be a “friend” and are cautious about work-related postings as these are in the public domain.



Useful links

- TUC briefing Facing up to Facebook tuc.org.uk/extras/facinguptofacebook.pdf
- ACAS advice on email and internet policies acas.org.uk/index.aspx?articleid=808
- Information commissioner ico.gov.uk
- Government advice on cyber bullying <http://yp.direct.gov.uk/cyberbullying/>

Report confirms – school meals staff working flat out

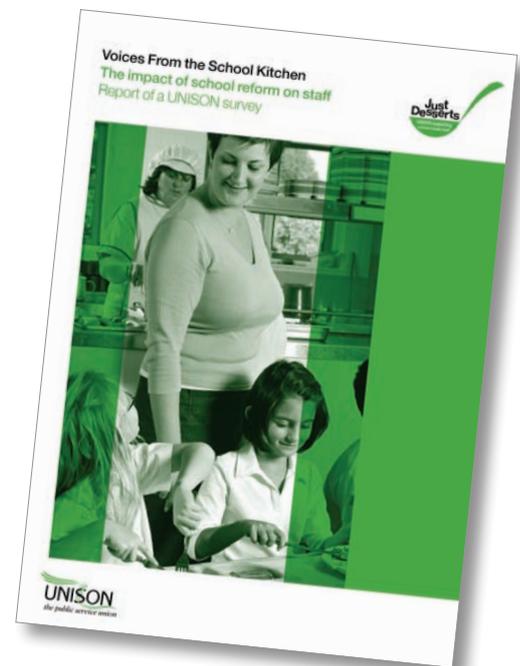
The Association of Public Service Excellence (APSE) has published a report on a time and motion study of school meals staff, commissioned by UNISON.

The report follows *Voices from the School Kitchen* a report of a UNISON survey, which suggested heavy workloads in the school kitchen. APSE’s findings, based on observation in schools in Sunderland, Washington, Scottish Borders and Swansea, were consistent with UNISON’s own.



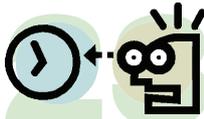
Olympic athlete and champion for the School Food Trust
Colin Jackson with UNISON national officer Christine Lewis.

The study compares productive and non-productive time and found: “Without exception, each of the six teams work very hard”. Some schools had employed additional staff, but this was not widespread. Workload was affected by equipment, varying menus and dining room layout. The report has been sent to the School Food Trust, LACA and UNISON local government branches.



Play the support staff challenge game

– you will need dice, a thick skin, grit and determination and an ability to deal with ‘challenging’ headteachers!

<p>You are ‘volunteered’ to administer medicines with no training <i>go back 5 spaces</i></p>		<p>You are expected to prepare work at home <i>go back 7 spaces</i></p>	<p>Threatened by intruder <i>go back 5 spaces</i></p>	<p>FINISH! you made it, now tell UNISON how you did it!</p>
<p>No risk assessments for school trip <i>go back 4 spaces</i></p>	28	<p>Staff ‘restructure’ <i>go back 5 spaces</i></p>	<p>School cleaning and catering ‘outsourced’ <i>go back 8 spaces</i></p>	25
	<p>New national schools negotiating body set up <i>go ahead 6 spaces</i></p>	22	<p>Bullied and stressed  <i>go back 6 spaces</i></p>	<p>Head will only pay HLTA grade during ppa time <i>go back 4 spaces</i></p>
<p>School becomes academy <i>go back to START</i></p>	18	17	<p>Achieve HLTA status! <i>go ahead 6 spaces</i></p>	<p>Become UNISON steward <i>go ahead 10 spaces</i></p>
	<p>UNISON wins equal pay claim for you <i>go ahead 6 spaces</i></p>	<p>No money in school budget for training <i>go back 4 spaces</i></p>	<p>Million voices for public services <i>go ahead 10 spaces</i></p>	<p>School ‘can’t afford your upgrade’ <i>go back 4 spaces</i></p>
<p>Downgraded after job evaluation <i>go back 4 spaces</i></p>	8	<p>You are not in UNISON <i>go back to START</i></p>	<p>Get on training course <i>go ahead 4 spaces</i></p>	5
<p>START →</p>	<p>Dumped on at the last minute <i>go back to START</i></p>	2	<p>Join UNISON  <i>go ahead 10 spaces</i></p>	<p>Expected to cover classes on level 1 grade <i>go back 2 spaces</i></p>

Join UNISON — your friend at work

PLEASE FILL IN THIS FORM IN BLOCK CAPITALS USING BLACK INK AND GIVE IT TO YOUR UNISON REP OR SEND TO THE ADDRESS BELOW

UNISON, EDUCATION WORKFORCE UNIT, FREEPOST WC5652, LONDON WC1H 9BR

1. YOUR PERSONAL DETAILS

Please tick or fill in the boxes below

Mrs Ms Miss Mr Other

First name Other initial(s)

Surname/Family name Date of birth / /

Home address

Postcode

National insurance number (from your payslip)

How would you describe your ethnic origin?

Bangladeshi Asian Other Black UK Black Other
 Chinese Black African White UK
 Indian Black White Other
 Pakistani Caribbean Irish
 Asian UK White Other

Please tick this box if you require materials in a different format (eg large print or Braille) – be sure to supply contact details below

Please give a telephone number/voice/text/email address for UNISON to contact you – indicate if work or home

Contact tel/voice/text/email

2. YOUR EMPLOYMENT DETAILS

Employer's name

Your job title/occupation

Department/section

Workplace name and address

Postcode

Payroll number (from your payslip)

3. WHAT YOU WILL PAY – FROM 1 October 2003

Please tick the appropriate box for your earnings before deductions.

Weekly pay	Annual pay	YOUR SUBSCRIPTION—WHAT YOU PAY		Band
		per week	per month	
Up to £38.47	Up to £2,000	£0.30	£1.30	A
£38.48–£96.16	£2,001–£5,000	£0.81	£3.50	B
£96.17–£153.84	£5,001–£8,000	£1.22	£5.30	C
£153.85–£211.53	£8,001–£11,000	£1.52	£6.60	D
£211.54–£269.23	£11,001–£14,000	£1.81	£7.85	E
£269.24–£326.92	£14,001–£17,000	£2.24	£9.70	F
£326.93–£384.61	£17,001–£20,000	£2.65	£11.50	G
£384.62–£480.76	£20,001–£25,000	£3.23	£14.00	H
£480.77–£576.92	£25,001–£30,000	£3.98	£17.25	I
£576.93–£673.08	£30,001–£35,000	£4.68	£20.30	J
£673.08+	over £35,000	£5.19	£22.50	K

Please tick the appropriate box to indicate how often you are paid

Weekly
 Fortnightly
 Four Weekly
 Monthly

Please tick this box if you are a student member in full-time education (including student nurses or Modern Apprentices). Your subscription is £10 per year.

4. POLITICAL FUND

UNISON's Affiliated Political Fund (APF) is used to campaign for and promote UNISON policy and the need for quality public services within the Labour Party, locally and nationally, in Parliament and Europe. UNISON APF affiliates to the Labour Party.

UNISON's General Political Fund (GPF) is used to pay for campaigning at branch, regional and National levels of the union and for research and lobbying in Parliament and Europe. It is independent of support for any political party.

It is important that you indicate a choice of fund by ticking one of the boxes below.

Your subscription shown above includes a political fund payment so you do not pay any more by being in one of the funds.

5. YOUR AUTHORISATION

- I wish to join UNISON and accept its rules and constitution.
- I authorise deduction of UNISON subscriptions from my salary/wages at the rate determined by UNISON in accordance with its rules to be paid over to them on my behalf and I authorise my employer to provide information to UNISON to keep my records up to date
- I authorise deduction of the following Political Fund payment as part of my subscription: Tick one box only

Affiliated Political Fund General Political Fund

Now please sign and date below

Signature

Date

OTHER WAYS TO PAY

direct debit cheque
(please tick if appropriate)

If you have been a member of a trade union before, please state which one:

DATA PROTECTION

UNISON will process your membership information together with other information for administration, statistical analysis, conducting ballots and other statutory requirement purposes.

We may also send you newsletters, journals and surveys and let you know about educational and campaigning matters. We will disclose your information to our service providers and agents for these purposes.

If you do not want any mailings from UNISON besides those required by statute as shown in bold above, please tick this box.

We may share your information with organisations with whom we have a business relationship for your benefit. We, or they, may contact you by mail, telephone, SMS, fax or e-mail to let you know about goods, services or promotions which we think may be of interest to you.

If you do not wish to receive such information please tick this box.