

## Medicines and medical support Shocking survey results

A survey on the impact on support staff conducted by UNISON of increased medical needs in schools has revealed some shocking practice.

Of the 334 responses, the vast majority (85%) said that medical support was part of their or support staff colleagues' jobs and 70% were expected to administer medicines. Despite government guidelines:

- 50% of respondents were unaware that these duties are voluntary
- 33% were not familiar with the school's medical policy
- 25% were not comfortable or confident about this responsibility.

There was a wide range of medical support given. First Aid at Work was the most commonly taken formal course, while most training was informally delivered in the workplace by health professionals.

Christina McAnea, UNISON's head of education and children's services, interviewed for TV and radio said: "This evidence shows a chronic lack of training and support for school staff who are expected to provide a wide range of medical support to pupils. Many reported feeling 'emotionally blackmailed' into performing these tasks and were worried about the potential risks to children."

The government is reconsidering its guidelines and UNISON will submit its findings to the review.

*UNISON is publishing new guidance for support staff in the autumn.*

### YOUR UNION NEEDS YOU — as a rep

UNISON wants to double the number of reps in schools during the next year, with at least one in every school. Representing your colleagues with full support can be rewarding, even life-changing.

The role involves listening to UNISON members, raising concerns with school management and communicating with your branch as necessary. Full training is provided and no one is expected to progress without confidence. Contact your branch to discuss taking on the role of local rep – the most important job in the union.

a million  
voices  
for  
change



Marcus Rose

### Add your voice to our campaign to create a fairer society

We want to see changes that put people before profit and public interest before private greed. We are calling for:

**social justice – good jobs – quality public services**

To add your voice to our million voices for change go to:  
[www.unison.org.uk/million](http://www.unison.org.uk/million)

To find out more or to join UNISON call 0845 355 0845.

**UNISON**  
Education Services

Contact

Telephone  
0845 355 0845

Email  
[education@unison.co.uk](mailto:education@unison.co.uk)

# School seminar success

UNISON's annual schools seminar for members has become so popular we are searching for a bigger venue than this year's university conference centre in Manchester.

It was a lively day, and despite the mountain to climb in terms of workforce issues, everyone enjoyed being together and swapping their school experiences.

Christina McAnea, UNISON's national secretary for education and children's services, opened the programme with an update on national developments. This included a report on the establishment of the School Support Staff Negotiating Body (SSSNB) and negotiations on pay, grading and working time. In the first workshop members looked at particular school jobs and how they would fit into groups and be evaluated.

In her speech the parliamentary under secretary for schools and learners, Sarah McCarthy-Fry, emphasised the importance of the growing number of school support staff and their developing roles. She also answered many questions from delegates.

Other events included a presentation on community cohesion and the role of the union

by Frank Hont, UNISON's North West regional secretary, and a six-minute film on pensions' governance followed by a discussion.

Afternoon sessions included speakers from the Training and Development Agency for Schools who talked about the changing workforce and meeting their needs. Workshops on safeguarding, SEN, activist training and local WAMGs/social partnerships followed.

In the final session, UNISON organisers from Kent and the North West region made two positive presentations about their organising in schools initiatives. This was a good way to finish the day, with the important conclusion that our most pressing challenge is to increase membership in schools and representation through recruitment of school-based contacts and stewards.

Anyone who wants to know about becoming more active in the union should contact their branch or look on the UNISON website ([www.unison.org.uk](http://www.unison.org.uk)) for details.

**...STOP PRESS!...  
...STOP PRESS!...  
...STOP PRESS!...**

The first meeting of the interim School Support Staff Negotiating Body (SSSNB) will be held on 7 July. It will begin the challenging task of determining a pay and conditions package for school support staff, which will be put to members in a ballot when agreed. It will be backed by law once the Apprenticeships, Skills, Children and Learning Bill becomes an Act in the autumn. Meanwhile, work continues on the details, such as job profiles, job evaluation and working time. As the largest union for school support staff UNISON will be leading the negotiations. We have eight out of 15 trade union seats (GMB has four and UNITE has three).

**UNISON**  
the public service union

## A manifesto for education libraries

UNISON represents more than 20,000 library staff in a wide variety of settings. Our members work in libraries and learning resource centres in schools, colleges and universities across the UK, as well as in the more visible public library service.

UNISON knows that libraries are at the heart of learning, but this isn't widely felt or fully appreciated by decision-makers.

The best of educational settings place a high value on their library and information service. They understand it to be a hallmark of their excellence. But too often, short-sighted decision-makers are closing and cutting services and shaming on-staff and staff. This is usually driven by financial expediency and an ignorance of the impact of their actions.

**Libraries at the heart of learning**

**UNISON's pledge**  
UNISON will take every opportunity to keep libraries at the heart of learning. We will:

- Promote** the role of library staff in teaching and learning, encouraging their inclusion in strategic, team, and management structures.
- Emphasise** that information literacy is a vital skill in learning, working and life and needs to be taught under a whole school, college and university policy.
- Campaign** against closures, cuts in book stock, staff and services.
- Press** government to ensure that schools, colleges and universities have a professional run library and information service, central to the delivery of teaching and learning.
- Lobby** for the far-purposive library facilities to be required in capital programmes, such as Building Schools for the Future, Building Colleges for the Future and the academies programme, and consult library staff on their design.
- Participate** in the library panel of the sector skills council, LLUK and on the professional development group of the Training and Development Agency for Schools working towards a qualifications framework that offers career progression and appropriate professional development.
- Partner** with professional organisations to advance the interests of library staff.
- Engage** parents, students, governors, boards and other unions in promoting the library and information service.
- Co-ordinate** campaign activity across education sectors and UNISON service groups.

## Libraries at the Heart of Learning

### Sublime...

"At the moment that we persuade a child, any child, to cross that threshold, that magic threshold into the library, we change their lives forever, for the better."

*Barack Obama*

### Ridiculous...

"You see, I don't believe that libraries should be drab places where people sit in silence and that's been the main reason for our policy of employing wild animals as librarians."

*Monty Python*

Inspired by UNISON's Libraries at the Heart of Learning seminar, a manifesto for education libraries has been produced. It features a pledge to library staff, which includes promoting their role in teaching and learning and fighting cuts and closures. Branches have been sent a copy, it can be downloaded from the UNISON education web pages ([www.unison.org.uk/schools](http://www.unison.org.uk/schools)), or ordered from the UNISON online catalogue (stock number 2777). UNISON is also working with Campaign for the Book to lobby government to make school libraries a statutory requirement. There is an open letter and e-petition, which can be signed at: <http://petitions.number10.gov.uk/literacy>.



# UNISON's local government conference

UNISON's annual local government conference in June saw strong debates on schools and agreed to develop tough advice to schools on the deployment of support staff when teachers are relieved of cover duties ('except rarely') in September.

The conference was clear that headteachers' strategies for plugging the teaching gap should not include exploitation of support staff and that guidance to curb bad practice should be strictly enforced.

Developing union strength at school level is a priority and special recruitment materials, advice on getting time off for trade union activity and tailored steward courses for school staff will be developed.

During the conference the media were keen to hear from Christina McAnea, UNISON's national secretary for education and children's services and Michelle McKenna, a school worker from Durham on the administration of medicine and medical support (see the front page for more on the administration of medicine).

## Seeking professional advice

UNISON is developing its organisation and services on professional issues in schools. Whether you are based in a classroom, provide specialist support like librarians and technicians, site staff, or are in admin and management, we want to help improve the quality of your working life.

Over the coming months we will be looking at job profiles for new pay and grading options and keeping members fully informed and consulted. We value your input and will use occupational email lists to help us. If you would like to join a list contact us at [education@unison.co.uk](mailto:education@unison.co.uk) giving your occupational role and membership number.

## The future of the newsletter

Future editions of *UNISON in Schools* will be sent to UNISON local government branches, which will distribute them to schools in their area. It can be downloaded from [www.unison.org.uk/education](http://www.unison.org.uk/education) or ordered through the online catalogue (stock number 2166).

Email [education@unison.co.uk](mailto:education@unison.co.uk) with your suggestions for articles, or to send us your stories and pictures.

## What's in a Name?

You may remember that views were sought on an improved collective name for school support staff. The responses reflected strong feelings of being underestimated and undervalued for the wide range of skills needed in the school setting.

Some suggested names were: education professionals; education support professionals; professional support staff; school essential staff. Other replies condemned the use of the word "support", but offered no alternative.

We received some imaginative suggestions: UNISON (Utterly Needed in School Obeying Nobly); MUSHROOM (Multiple Use Super Human Resilient Over Occupied Muppet); MUSCLES (Mostly Undervalued Supportive Curricular Local Education Slaves) and AYDA – "are you doing anything?", frequently asked when in the middle of working.

It has been really difficult to judge but the prize goes to Susan Herring from Gateshead for suggesting:

### SCHOOL SAVIORS

**S**uper skilled  
**A**ble to do anything (just about)  
**V**ersatile and very nice  
**I**nventive and Innovative  
**O**verworked  
**U**nderpaid  
**R**esourceful and reliable  
**S**ensitive, shoulder to cry on, sounding boards etc.

Susan's flowers and champagne will be winging their way to her – sounds like she deserves them!

# 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, FREEPOST WC5652, LONDON WC1H 9BR**

Please tick or fill in the boxes below

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Mrs  Ms  Miss  Mr  Other

First name  Other initial(s)

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### How would you describe your ethnic origin?

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

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## 2. YOUR EMPLOYMENT DETAILS

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Department/section

Workplace name and address

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Up to £38.47	Up to £2,000	£0.30	£1.30	A	<input type="checkbox"/> Weekly <input type="checkbox"/> Fortnightly <input type="checkbox"/> Four Weekly <input type="checkbox"/> Monthly
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£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	

## 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.

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Signature   
 Date

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

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