

School Visits Not in Vain

Over the last 2 years UNISON North West has invested a lot of time and effort visiting schools to explain to support staff the work of the SSSNB. The project was made possible by a number of front line school support staff volunteers who were seconded from their jobs to visit schools in their area. The secondees had detailed knowledge of how schools operated. Although some were existing UNISON stewards, others volunteered for the role as they were clearly interested in how SSSNB could improve the conditions for support staff working in schools and wanted the opportunity of meeting support staff in other schools to see whether their issues were the same as the ones experienced by them.

The secondees were taken aback by the following issues being brought up in virtually every school.

- **Providing medical aid:** Some of the medicines administered to children should only be administered by qualified staff such as nurses and certainly not by untrained support staff. UNISON has since produced a useful guide on what support staff are required to do as well as what training should be provided in the first instance.
- **Personal care:** In some schools staff were putting themselves at risk by leaving

themselves open to allegations due to the lack of policies.

- **Unpaid overtime:** Many staff arrive early, leave late and do not have a proper break. From a contractual point of view staff need only work their contracted hours and if they are required to work additional hours they should be paid. Headteachers turning a blind eye to unpaid overtime is not the answer particularly when some of them earn 10 times as much!
- **Temporary Contracts:** We all acknowledge the need to employ someone on a temporary contract to cover staff on maternity leave, but 19 years on a temporary contract is a bit excessive.
- **Job Evaluation:** The people carrying this out on behalf of the Local Authority had very little knowledge and experience of work undertaken in schools, which resulted in some bizarre scores. You just can't compare the role of someone working in a school to other jobs in the Town Hall. As a consequence there was chaos as support staff, supported by UNISON, appealed in droves against their original scores.

Over 2,000 new members

Since the project started over 2 years ago we've seen a surge in UNISON membership. Over 2,000 new members have been recruited as part of the project and this is in addition to the numbers that would have ordinarily joined.

If you are reading this newsletter and you are not already a member of UNISON and wish to join, please complete the application form on the back.

There are now over 2,000 school contacts in the North West whose role is to cascade information around the school and inform

the local UNISON branch of any issues that may need to be resolved.

These roles are crucial as it's virtually impossible for UNISON to visit schools on a regular basis due to the sheer numbers in each Local Education Authority.

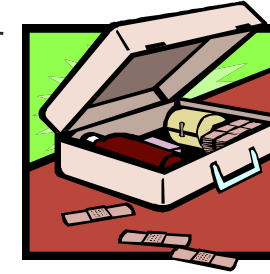
If your school hasn't got a contact, or you are unsure who it is, please contact your local branch or UNISON Direct on 0845355 0845.

Please help us by being our eyes and ears and in return we will try to help you resolve issues in your school.

Other News

Administration of Medicines

UNISON has produced advice on this subject for school support staff. We believe the demand has increased and as demand has grown, so has the pressure on support staff. There is a wide range of medicine in school, administered in different ways, as well as help required, for example, with peg-feeding, breathing, restricted mobility and continence.



A lot of support staff are providing medical care, without suitable policy in place or adequate training. UNISON does not underestimate the challenges in supporting children. But there should be nationally prescribed safeguards, standards and a recognised clear line between needs that can be met by school staff in carefully controlled circumstances and those that require the intervention of health personnel.

UNISON believes there should be a policy, risk assessment should be on a voluntary basis and with adequate training.

We have updated our advice and stressed the need to avoid risk to children and our members.

A copy of the new report is available from your Branch.

Cuts to Support Staff

UNISON is becoming increasingly concerned that there are hidden cuts and school support services are suffering. School budgets are not protected and the imminent spending cuts are about to hit schools.

This will hit support staff and frontline education provision.

We need to defend our Schools from these vicious attacks.



Academies – a divisive policy

Once again we see a government wanting to brick up the state education system and to make it private and selective.



UNISON is at the forefront of the campaign to oppose the establishment of academies. School and community campaigns must be supported like those in Cumbria, Lancashire and Manchester so far.

Working closely with Teacher Unions, parents, governors, local people and in particular Anti Academy Alliance.

Academies are not linked to the democratically constituted local authorities they are not bound by national pay and conditions, state-funded private schools whose public assets being handed over to the control of individual organisations.

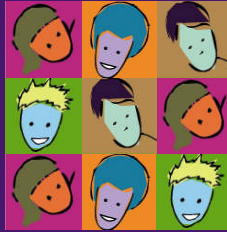
Becoming Private will incur increased costs long term – financial uncertainty and there is no additional funding available. UNISON has experience of pay and conditions of service worsening.

UNISON believes in state education, we must challenge new academies working with governors, parents, teacher unions, the public and all those who believe in state education.

UNISON is working with other education unions through the North West TUC to provide briefings and training for our members who are experiencing the aftermath of their school becoming an academy. This work focuses on providing practical help to members who now find themselves in a very different employment relationship. The first TUC briefing event is being trialed in East Cheshire in November. Though we oppose academies we are committed to supporting our members in academies.

When it comes to supporting and representing professional staff in schools, UNISON is top of the class because we:

- are the largest union in education with more stewards, officers and branches than any other
- are the union that leads negotiations for schools staff
- provide unrivalled protection and representation at work, help with your pay and conditions problems using our expert stewards and officers
- run a helpline on 0845 355 0845



Please fill in this application form form in BLOCK CAPITALS and send it to the address shown below.

1. YOUR PERSONAL DETAILS

| | | |
|--|------------|-------------------|
| Mr/Ms/Miss/Mrs/Other | First Name | Other Initial |
| Surname | | Date of Birth / / |
| Home address | | |
| Postcode | | |
| National Insurance No. (from your payslip) | | |

How would you describe your ethnic origin?

- | | | |
|--------------------------------------|--|--------------------------------------|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Bangladeshi | <input type="checkbox"/> Asian Other | <input type="checkbox"/> Black Other |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Chinese | <input type="checkbox"/> Black African | <input type="checkbox"/> White UK |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Indian | <input type="checkbox"/> Black Caribbean | <input type="checkbox"/> Irish |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Pakistani | <input type="checkbox"/> Black UK | <input type="checkbox"/> White Other |

Please tick this box if you require materials in a different format (e.g. 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

2. YOUR EMPLOYMENT DETAILS

| |
|----------------------|
| Employers Name |
| Job Title/Occupation |
| Department/Section |
| Workplace Address |
| Postcode |
| Payroll No. |

When completed please send to:
UNISON NW Regional Centre,
Freeport (MR9713), Arena Point,
1 Hunts Bank, Manchester, M3 9PD

3. WHAT YOU WILL PAY FROM 1 OCTOBER 2003

Please tick your earnings before stoppages

| Weekly Pay | Annual Pay | Band | Per Week | Per Month |
|-----------------|-----------------|------|----------|-----------|
| Up to £38.47 | Up to £2,000 | A | £0.30 | £1.30 |
| £38.48-£96.16 | £2,001-£5,000 | B | £0.81 | £3.50 |
| £96.17-£153.84 | £5,001-£8,000 | C | £1.22 | £5.30 |
| £153.85-£211.53 | £8,001-£11,000 | D | £1.52 | £6.60 |
| £211.54-£269.23 | £11,001-£14,000 | E | £1.81 | £7.85 |
| £269.24-£326.92 | £14,001-£17,000 | F | £2.24 | £9.70 |
| £326.93-£384.61 | £17,001-£20,000 | G | £2.65 | £11.50 |
| £384.62-£480.76 | £20,001-£25,000 | H | £3.23 | £14.00 |
| £480.77-£576.92 | £25,000-£30,000 | I | £3.98 | £17.25 |
| £576.93-£673.08 | £30,001-£35,000 | J | £4.68 | £20.30 |
| £673.08 + | Over £35,000 | K | £5.19 | £22.50 |

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 to UNISON information to keep my records up to date.
- I authorise deduction of the following political fund payment as part of my subscriptions: **Tick one box only**

- Affiliated Political Fund
General Political Fund

Now please sign and date below.

Signature

Date

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

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 to receive 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.

If you tick either of these boxes then you will be removed from the appropriate mailing lists as quickly as possible but for administrative reasons this may take a couple of months.

Code SPT09

Schools News Winter 2010

Like you I am extremely angry at the abolition of the School Staff Negotiating Body (SSSNB). For years we have been lobbying successive governments over the need to introduce a national framework for support staff which would have introduced core contracts and fair pay, no matter what job or school you worked in throughout the country. This would have standardised pay across the country, removing anomalies and tackling the thorny issue of term time pay.



Over the last 2 years we've had very productive meetings with employers and politicians from all the parties, representatives from all the different types of schools. Significant progress was made and we were on course for a roll out early next year.

It was disappointing therefore that the Government pulled the plug on what would have led to a significant improvement to staff employed in schools.

This government hates national pay bargaining, as much as staff being organised and having a voice. We now have 2,000 school contacts in the North West, so our message to the Government is clear. "We are not going to roll over."

Keith Bradley, UNISON NW Lead Officer for schools



UNISON North West negotiating for you

UNISON speaking up for school staff

GOVERNMENT ABOLISH SCHOOL NEGOTIATING BODY

The SSSNB has been abolished by the Con-Dem government. Although this decision was expected, it will still be a huge disappointment for many UNISON members.

The decision to abolish it was in a leaked document from the Cabinet Office in August and it was only after this was made public that Michael Gove decided to consult the unions and employers. UNISON submitted evidence to him on 22 October and less than a week later he announced the abolition of the SSSNB. It was clear he had already made his decision.

UNISON issued the following press release in response to the statement: "UNISON TO CONSULT ON INDUSTRIAL ACTION OVER ABOLITION OF SCHOOL SUPPORT STAFF PAY BODY UNISON, the UK's leading public sector trade union, today said it would be consulting members on taking industrial action over the abolition of the School Support Staff Negotiating Body (SSSNB). The body, which was years in the making, was set up to develop consistency in pay, conditions and job roles for schools support staff including teaching assistants, special needs staff, nursery nurses, school secretaries, caretakers, technicians and schools meals staff. Christina McAnea, UNISON Head of Education, said: "This is a bitter blow to the mainly women, overwhelmingly low paid, hard working and loyal support staff in schools. UNISON will be consulting our members on taking industrial action as a matter of urgency." "The coalition's consultation process was a sham. It was obvious the government had made up its mind, right from the beginning, that schools support staff are not worthy of national pay and conditions. "We are calling for an immediate equality impact assessment, as it is likely this move will hit women hard. The government must also explain how it intends to deliver George Osborne's headline grabbing, £250 boost for the lowest paid. It is a disgrace that they have so far refused to guarantee this pledge for schools support staff."



To join or get involved
call 0845 355 0845

