

THE UNION FOR SCHOOL SUPPORT STAFF

16/10/26

Dear Ark Member,

Re: Ark Schools – Academy Support Staff Pay Offer 2026/27

Ark Schools have issued a full and final offer for Academy Support Staff pay for 2026. GMB will now be balloting all eligible GMB members. GMB regions will be coordinating the ballots across Ark academies.

This offer is for those members directly employed on an Ark contract. If you are on a TUPE contract this offer does not apply to you.

The 2026/27 Ark Support Staff Annual Pay offer is for one year and is as follows:

- **With effect from 1st September 2026**, a **3.3% increase** on all support staff salaries.

The Trust also responded to the other parts of the pay claim as follows:

Union Claim	Employer Response
A minimum pay rate of £15 an hour.	**Rejected.** Given the current financial position of the network, implementation of a £15 per hour minimum rate is not affordable at this time. Ark will continue to review market competitiveness as part of future pay reviews.
A 2-hour reduction in the working week with no detriment.	**Rejected.** A 2 hrs reduction in the working week with the same pay is not financially viable and cannot be supported as the



	support staff who are on TTO contracts currently work 36 hrs per week.
The trust to agree to become a Living Wage accredited employer and put measures to ensure that all contracted out workers at Ark are paid at least the Foundation Living Wage.	**Rejected.** Ark will continue to review its position regarding Real Living Wage accreditation and consider future reapplication where financially sustainable.
A review of job roles and descriptions.	**Rejected.** A network-wide review of job descriptions is not proposed at this stage without clearer evidence of a systemic issue.
A move to year-round contracts for all support staff who want one.	**Rejected.** Annualised contracts are already available where operationally appropriate. A universal move to year-round contracts is not considered necessary.
A SEND allowance for those support staff working in a SEND school or unit or in a mainstream setting but working wholly or mainly with children with SEND.	**Rejected.** A separate SEND allowance was considered however where a support staff role carries substantial SEND responsibilities, these are reflected through the grading and remuneration of the role.
Trust issued laptops for all staff.	**Rejected.** Schools should continue to ensure that support staff are provided with appropriate devices where required to



	undertake their role effectively. Existing arrangements already support this.

GMB have been presented with a full and final offer, and we now need to put this offer direct to members.

This ballot offers a chance to ensure all our **members *have a say on their pay*** and notify GMB of their position. It's now time to get the vote out.

GMB PAY BALLOT DETAILS

The ballot opens **Monday 19th October** and closes on **Thursday 12th November at midday.**

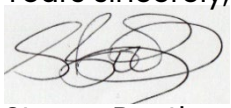
Please ensure your ballot paper is completed and returned to us by this time. Ballot papers received after this time will not be counted.

Our strength is in our numbers. If your work colleague is not a union member, ask them to join the GMB. If you are currently a GMB contact and are interested in becoming a GMB rep, then please contact your local GMB branch or schools@gmb.org.uk.

BALLOT RESULT AND NEXT STEPS

The ballot closes at midday on Thursday 12th November. Once the ballot is closed all the results will be collated and GMB will issue a member communication announcing the result of the pay ballot.

Yours sincerely,



Stacey Booth
National Officer