

**GMB****UNION**

THE UNION FOR SCHOOL SUPPORT STAFF

Bulletin #6

gmb.org.uk

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SSSNB MUST DELIVER ON LABOUR'S PROMISE TO SCHOOL SUPPORT STAFF

For more than a year, GMB has been campaigning to ensure that the return of the School Support Staff Negotiating Body (SSSNB) delivers what school support staff were promised: meaningful national pay, terms and conditions.

When Labour committed to restoring the SSSNB, many school workers hoped it would finally end the fragmentation that has left support staff on different contracts, different rates of pay and different conditions depending on who employs them.

Unfortunately, the proposals currently being considered fall far short of that promise. At the heart of GMB's concerns is the government's decision to pursue a "floors and no ceilings" model. While this would set minimum standards, it would still allow employers to establish their own pay rates and employment conditions above those minimums.

In practice, that means academy trusts and other employers could continue to operate different approaches to pay and conditions, leaving school support staff facing a postcode lottery depending on where they work or who they work for.

GMB believes national negotiations should deliver genuine national standards, underpinned by agreed national job role profiles and a job evaluation scheme that ensures fairness and equality across the workforce. Instead, we are concerned that the voices of employer bodies, including the Confederation of School Trusts, are carrying greater influence than those of the workforce the SSSNB was established to support.

Read more, and find out how you can get involved in the campaign, inside...



INSIDE: GMB FIGHTS FOR FAIR & EQUAL PAY FOR SCHOOL STAFF



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These concerns are compounded by the Government's proposals in the White Paper, Every Child Achieving and Thriving, which sets out an ambition for all schools to join or form academy trusts. GMB has consistently opposed further academisation, arguing that it has led to fragmented employment practices, inconsistent contracts and terms and conditions that can fall below nationally negotiated standards.

In March, GMB wrote directly to Bridget Phillipson expressing grave concerns about both the direction of the SSSNB and the continued push towards academisation. The union warned that school support staff remain undervalued, underpaid and overworked, and that policies which further fragment the workforce are not the answer to improving education or working conditions.

School support staff made those frustrations known loud and clear at GMB Congress this year, where members led a major rally calling for fair national pay, terms and conditions.

The campaign has also attracted national media attention, helping to raise awareness of the challenges facing support staff across England.

GMB is clear: school support staff deserve nationally agreed pay, terms and conditions, a fair and transparent pay framework, protection of existing nationally negotiated arrangements, and a meaningful voice in decisions that affect their livelihoods.

We will continue to campaign for a system that delivers fairness, consistency and respect for every school support staff member, wherever they work.

Join the GMB campaign today, sign the below petition to ensure the voices of school support staff are heard loud and clear.



SCAN TO BECOME A GMB SSSNB CHAMPION FOR YOUR SCHOOL
Sign up to give a voice to your school and to join our regular campaign meetings



EQUAL WORK, EQUAL WEIGHTING, EQUAL RESPECT

School staff in Greenwich and Merton strike for equality with teachers

School support staff in Greenwich and Merton are continuing their fight for fair pay after years of being paid a lower London Weighting rate than teachers working in the very same schools.

While teachers receive Inner London Weighting, many support staff are still paid the lower Outer London rate, leaving some workers more than £1,000 a year worse off.

GMB members have said enough is enough.

Staff who play a vital role in supporting children and keeping schools running believe they should be treated equally and receive the same London Weighting as their teaching colleagues.

Following years of unsuccessful discussions, members have taken industrial action to demand an end to this historic pay inequality and secure the fair deal they deserve.

Kim Marshall, GMB Education Convener in Merton, said “What happened in Merton in May wasn’t just a strike over London Weighting – it was a message.

“We will not be overlooked, and we will not be silenced”



“PAY UP, LEEDS” – THE FIGHT FOR EVERY PENNY OWED

Equal pay remains one of GMB’s most important campaigns. Across the country, the union continues to challenge employers where women have been undervalued and underpaid, helping members secure millions of pounds in compensation and driving long-overdue workplace change.

In Leeds, GMB is currently leading a major equal pay campaign on behalf of workers employed by Leeds City Council. The dispute centres on long-standing pay practices that GMB believes have left employees in female-dominated roles at a disadvantage compared with those working in male-dominated areas of the council.



Thousands of workers have already joined the campaign, and negotiations have been ongoing with the council. However, GMB has strongly criticised the council after it offered only a fraction of what members believe they are owed and failed to deliver a promised summer settlement. The union has made clear that it will continue fighting for a fair outcome and is encouraging members to get involved in the campaign.

GMB Assistant Organiser Rachel Robertson said “Equal pay is not a bonus, a favour or an aspiration. It is a legal right, and workers deserve every penny they are owed, and we are determined to ensure that they do”.

THE ORCHARD SCHOOL DISPUTE

Sandwell school staff show the power of standing together

Following four days of determined strike action, GMB Midlands members at The Orchard School have agreed to pause industrial action after securing significant wins through collective action, solidarity and workplace organisation.

This dispute has shown the real power of school support staff standing together. Through pressure, courage and a strong workplace campaign, members have achieved:

- A halt to the proposed restructure
- A pause on the intake of additional children
- Health and safety committees being established
- Waste disposal issues being addressed
- Healthcare Assistants being regraded
- Cover supervision work being reviewed and remunerated
- Reimbursement for staff who had paid for materials themselves
- Significant growth in GMB Midlands membership
- Wider publicity across the Black Country, raising the profile of GMB Midlands as the union fighting for school support staff

The campaign has also received fantastic support from parents, councillors and the wider community, helping to build pressure and shine a light on the wider issues facing school support staff across the sector.

The Orchard dispute has strengthened GMB Midlands' wider campaigning work across Sandwell schools, particularly around job evaluation, SEND provision, health and safety, and fair recognition for support staff.

This campaign is a major step forward. It has shown what is possible when members are organised, visible and united, and it gives us a strong platform to continue building membership, challenging unfair treatment and fighting for the respect school support staff deserve.

The message is clear: when school support staff stand together with GMB, they can win.



GET IN TOUCH WITH GMB UNION

Want to get involved in campaigns to make work better for school support staff?

Need to speak to a GMB representative?

Find your local GMB office by scanning the QR code.

