

Voice

UNISON LODGE EQUAL PAY CLAIMS FOR STAFF IN SCHOOLS



“UNISON has lodged grievances about equal pay with your employer on your behalf. We have to do this before you can make an Employment Tribunal claim. There are ongoing discussions with your employer about the implementation of Single Status. The Single Status Agreement is a national agreement between the unions and the employers. It is to harmonise terms for manual and other staff and to ensure equal pay is in place for all posts in the local authority where you work. The time limits for equal pay claims are strict. Claims have to be made within 6 months of the end of a contract of employment or a series of contracts if you are in the same job. Employers often say that new terms start the time limit period. They are wrong but to

protect your position we are putting in a grievance on your behalf now. This is the first step to making an Employment Tribunal claim.

Equal pay claims are where there are differences in pay between people who do different jobs that are worth the same and where the difference is because of sex discrimination. A common example of this is where a bonus or extra payment was given only to certain jobs. You may or may not have a claim; our lawyers will advise those of you that fill in case forms.

If you want to make a claim or get advice please fill in a case form. We will be in touch and keep you updated. You can get a case form by either contacting your regional office on **020 7535 6643** or UNISONDirect on **0845 355 0845**”.

Barnet UNISON Schools Conference 2009

Tuesday 27 October

National Terms & Conditions, Cover, Health & Safety, Training opportunities

Make sure you come along

Book Your Seat Now! Call 0208 359 2088 to book your seat NOW!



Louis speaks out for schools staff !

Pay: local government staff have been offered 0.5% pay increase.

What a scandal. Is this good enough? no it's not. Put the offer to members in a consultative ballot, accept or reject. The rejection will be overwhelming and can only improve the unions negotiating position.

Term-Time contracts v 52 weeks.

In the discussions on the proposed national terms & conditions agreement we must campaign for 52 weeks for all. This campaign would be very popular as a poll or ballot of TA members via branches might prove this. If I am wrong (I'm not) then a lot of scope exists to establish a national agreement on weeks paid.

Non-pay conditions

The comparison here is the Teacher's terms and conditions. It appears strange to be seeking a new national agreement for non-teacher's terms and conditions when we already have in existence an established set of terms and conditions for teachers which could cover all staff in all school and provide an opportunity for harmonizing. Things such as maternity leave, paternity rights time off for religious holidays and moving house.

Extended schools

As Schools offer more and more facilities for students which is a good thing, the staff situation is less clear. From my position we need clear union advice on what a good contract? What the correct pay rate is? My experience is that either people are on 2/3 or more contracts at different rates of pay but working with the same students or are paid casual / "as and when" rates for jobs that are permanent and as such they miss sick pay or holiday pay. This is a big problem and needs addressing in the discussions on common national terms and conditions.

Payment of additional responsibilities (above generic grade job description)

In my own school we have staff that are Team Teachh tutors, Makaton tutors, Pecs tutors and additional payments for these need sorting out and a national allowance or rate agreed.

Special Needs allowance

I would be shot by my colleagues if I did not raise this, we had it, now it's gone, and we want it back! Clearly Specials Schools are different and special arrangements are made for all aspects of working in such establishments except the recognition of UNISON members. The best solution is pay the same allowance that teachers receive. What is the justification of the teaching assistant not getting an allowance for working in such a school when the teacher is receiving this extra allowance

The task ahead.

It is accepted that these are not easy positions. It will be a tough job, but be positive the potential is amazing and although no quick fixes exist, the benefits will be lasting and a positive legacy for the future. My experience is that school-based staff are amazing, gifted, dedicated and talented people. I fully support the idea of having our own Schools Conference. Make sure your school sends members along!



(Louis Smyth is a special needs TA and UNISON rep in a Barnet School)

Nursery Nurses 52 weeks v Term Time Pay

Nursery Nurses have been remarkably patient waiting for their work to be re-graded.



The Council agreed to re-grade but wanted it to be Term Time only not 52 weeks. After several months of negotiations a compromise has been agreed after we carried out a consultative ballot of our members. The new Term Time formula is an improvement on the current term time pay but clearly not as good as 52 weeks. The proposed new national terms and conditions will be seeking 52 week contracts for staff so this is an issue which will be back on the agenda sometime in the future.

Barnet Schools Conference 27 October

'Rarely Cover'

To be implemented from 1 September 2009



What is it designed to do?

"is designed to raise standards by freeing teachers and headteachers from tasks which do not require their professional skills and expertise, and enabling them to focus on their core function of teaching and leading and managing teaching and learning." (Rarely Cover Implementation Process Guidance)

Whilst the guidance says there should be no contractual implications for support staff experience suggests our members are going to be asked to take on more work.

It is important that our members pass on information to the branch if you are being asked to cover classes. We need to ensure you are on the right grade for the job you do but we can't help if we don't know.

You can contact the branch by phone 0208 359 2088/2090 or email us at contactus@barnetunison.org.uk

You can download official guidance here at <http://www.unison.org.uk/file/A8764a.pdf>

HEALTH & SAFETY—'STAY SAFE AT SCHOOL'

Anyone working in school needs to stay safe. Here is a short guide on things you can watch out for. Your line managers have a responsibility to act on any concerns you raise.

FLOORS

Ensure that your floors are level with no uneven floorboards, no curling carpets or lino and outdoors, no broken and uneven tarmac.

ELECTRICITY

Take care that all sockets are secure and report any damage immediately. Make sure that there are no loose cables or bare wires. Ensure that there are no trailing cables that can be tripped on or snagged. Also, make sure they are not exposed to moisture from weather or things like kettles! Make sure that all of your electrical equipment has a safety certificate (there should be a sticker on every piece more than a year old). Also ensure that all your electrical equipment is in a well-ventilated place, especially laser printers, photocopiers etc. Avoid prolonged use of PC's or projectors. Give your eyes a break every 15-20 minutes. If you are a regular user of PC's, get your eyes checked once a year. You should NOT have to pay for eye tests. This is the employers responsibility. Make sure that you can sit comfortably at your desk and have easy access to your work-station.

CHEMICALS OR MACHINERY

Make sure you have had training before using a piece of machinery or chemicals AND that you are comfortable using it. Ensure that there is safe storage and that everything is locked away safely after use. Clutter is dangerous so ensure that your workspace is tidy.

FINALLY

Make sure you know your fire and other emergency procedures. Take extra care with visitors and children who may not be aware of these.

ABOVE ALL, ENJOY A HAPPY AND SAFE WORKPLACE!

Barnet UNISON Contact details

If you have a work problem or query, get in touch with your UNISON workplace representative. Alternatively, you can ring: UNISONdirect on 0845 355 0845 If you have a membership or any other query, please contact the Barnet UNISON office at:

Building 4, NLBP, Oakleigh Road South, London, N11 1NP
Email: contactus@barnetunison.org.uk
Telephone: (020) 8359 2088, or(020) 8359 2090.
Fax: (020) 8368 5985

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The views expressed in this publication are not necessarily those of Barnet UNISON.