



To: GMB Support Staff Members in Derbyshire Schools

Bulletin Number 1 - December 2012 - Update on Single Status and Job Evaluation - Harmonising Terms and Conditions of Service

Dear Colleague

Further to the October 2012 joint newsletter, the GMB along with other Trade Unions are continuing to negotiate at fortnightly meetings with Derbyshire County Council on the implementation of Single Status and Job Evaluation in schools.

- During October and November groups of Teaching Assistants and Mid-day Supervisors, along with other school based staff have met with the council staff and unions to discuss their jobs as part of a job sampling exercise. These colleagues have completed Job Description Questionnaires giving us and the council information on large a range of jobs across pay scales and job families. These samples were larger than originally planned due to our negotiations and this allows us to have more confidence that the council are aware of the roles you have in school.
- GMB and the other unions have also met with Head Teachers and given them more details about the single status process, the time scales and an update on the current negotiations.
- The negotiations with DCC are at times, difficult. The Authority's position on protection is clearly stated - it will be 2 years, and this protection will only cover changes to actual salary. It will not protect any changes to earnings brought about by changes to how you are paid eg if you are a TA you may end up being paid term time only 38 or 39 weeks plus pro rata holidays and up to a maximum of 32.5 hours per week, instead of 52 weeks at 37 hours (for a full time employee) We continue to argue against these positions but we have also asked that those who are the groups most threatened by these decisions, be evaluated first, so that all negotiators can understand the full impact of all changes, potentially positive and negative. In summary, if there is no movement from the council on these issues some members may expect a worsening in some aspects of their pay.

DCC continue to highlight the following:

- That schools could choose to consider offering to employ 'full time' TAs or other staff on 37 hr contracts, if additional work is expected of an employee, over and above the contact time with the children
- That schools could choose to offer to employ staff for some additional days or weeks in the school holidays where there are suitable tasks
- That job evaluation has yet to take place and this may mean that pay rates could go up - they could also go down or stay the same. That staff will placed on the correct level in the revised framework or grade in appropriate job family.

We expect members and their head teachers to consider these suggestions seriously. From our visits to schools it is apparent that currently staff are not always paid for all the hours worked each week, and that many have been placed on grades below their level of responsibility. These suggestions from the council would help our members to have the work that they do given the true value.

GMB members are also asking us what the likely impact on pensions will be. We are expecting DCC to prepare a fact sheet which will explain any potential impact as well as details of the pension changes which are due to come into force April 2014. We are hoping that this sheet will also contain information about how to protect your final pension if your hours or contract is reduced. We will send this to you as soon as the final wording is agreed.

Negotiations regarding altering the Derbyshire Package so that it is relevant to your pay and conditions are ongoing. We are being offered many arrangements which appear to be generous - there is the possibility of flexi time, time off in lieu, arrangements for booking holidays, however our collective view is that where these offers are in compensation for worsening conditions (for example in 'leave of absence') they are only welcome where there is a realistic opportunity to access the benefits on offer. Heads and Governors will always be able to veto arrangements that disadvantage the school, so in most cases we suspect that these options will not really be available. Our aim is to ensure your conditions of service are not worsened by being transferred to the Derbyshire Package.

The next steps in the process should be:

- Conclude negotiations on the Derbyshire Pack
- Agree pay protection
- Evaluate Teaching Assistant roles using the updated TA framework
- Evaluation of all other job families
- Agree the procedure for Heads and Governors to slot staff onto the new structure
- In the summer term we expect your schools to do the slotting exercise
- Agree an appeals procedure
- January 2014 - implement Job Evaluation and the Derbyshire Package for all school based jobs council

We continue to be concerned about completing these tasks well in the time allowed.

GMB will continue to negotiate for the best outcome for members regardless of what job they do in schools – once we have a final position in the negotiations all GMB members will receive a ballot paper to their home address asking them to accept or reject the final offer.

GMB continues to meet with members and we all welcome your comments. Please stay in touch and contribute to the debate, if you have an email address please let us have it as email is quicker and cheaper than sending information through the post.

On a final note our Senior Rep in DCC Ailsa Cooling is to be given full time release to deal with JE on behalf of our members from 1st January 2013. Please contact Ailsa if you want a visit to school or have any concerns or questions. Ailsa can be contacted on ++++++ Or ++++++

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