



THE CHURCH  
OF ENGLAND



### School Support Staff Pay and Conditions

Support staff have a crucial part to play in helping maintain the momentum of school reform. Changes to teachers' contracts helping them to focus on teaching have made a difference to their workload. These changes have largely been achieved by deploying more support staff in schools, developing new roles and broadening their range of responsibilities. In recognition of their key role, support staff deserve to have fair and more consistent pay and conditions of employment.

The recently published Children's Plan reaffirmed the ministerial commitment to establish a new Negotiating Body that will set up a National pay and conditions framework for those support staff employed in all maintained schools in England. To meet local needs the framework will have sufficient inbuilt flexibility, so it is practical for governing bodies and local authorities to use when determining pay and conditions.

So what is happening and what will change for support staff and employers of support staff? Since last September, when ministers announced their intention to introduce the Body, ministers and members of the Support Staff Working Group (SSWG) - those representing support staff trade unions, local government employers, self governing schools and government - have been working on the foundations and mechanics of the Body. A draft constitution is now in place and the DCSF will shortly advertise for and recruit a Chairperson to lead the Negotiating Body's activity through the design stage, developmental phases and finally in supporting the implementation of the new pay and conditions framework.

Those invited to make up the voting membership of the Body are organisations recognised as negotiators for employees and the employers of school support staff - Support Staff Unions (UNISON, GMB, Unite), Employers (Local Government Employers, Foundation and Aided Schools National Association, Church of England Board of Education, Catholic Education Service for England and Wales), ensuring that decisions taken are fully representative of both employers and employees. In addition, the views of the wider Social Partnership will be taken into account throughout the Body's deliberations, so that the framework is compatible with, and complementary to, wider workforce issues.

Over the next few months the SSWG will be looking carefully at what changes need to be made. Although the Body will be formally launched in September 2008, it is very clear that there is some way to go before employers and employees will need to make any adjustments to their current practices. In the meanwhile, any questions you may have can be directed to your representative organisation.