



# School workforce news

...nursery nurses, secretaries, bursars, learning support practitioners, sitekeepers, school meals staff, teaching assistants, learning mentors, administrators, midday supervisors, librarians, cleaners, personal care assistants, technicians ...

**GMB your union in school**

## Issue 29, October 2009:

This is the twenty-ninth in a series of bulletins for GMB reps and members working in schools. Our bulletins will keep you up-to-date on national policy developments and other news affecting the school workforce.

## Negotiating body latest: Ed Balls sets agenda for national pay framework

The task of designing a national pay framework and core contract of employment for school support staff has received official Government go-ahead.

Children's Secretary Ed Balls has written to the new School Support Staff Negotiating Body (SSSNB) outlining what he would like it to do over the coming months. The full letter can be found at:

[www.gmb.org.uk/schoolworkforce](http://www.gmb.org.uk/schoolworkforce).

The letter welcomes the beginning of work on a national pay and conditions framework. Balls says the SSSNB must take into account "the need to recruit and retain sufficient numbers of high-quality support staff", among other factors. He gives the body until 28 May 2010 to submit an agreement.

Under the SSSNB's constitution, the Secretary of State can submit issues to the body for its consideration. This

is the first such "referral letter" since the SSSNB was launched in July.

*"In order to meet the commitment I made in the Children's Plan, to establish a national pay and conditions framework for all school support staff in maintained schools, I require the SSSNB to initially focus on...the following matters:*

- ☐ The production of a core contract of employment to cover remuneration, duties and working time;*
- ☐ The design of national job role profiles to cover core school support staff roles;*
- ☐ The development and production of a method for converting those job role profiles into a salary structure."*

*Extract from Ed Balls's letter to the SSSNB*

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## Meanwhile, the SSSNB's working groups push on

The Core Contract Working Group is continuing its line-by-line discussion of a contract of employment covering the core terms and conditions of school support staff.

The group has held lengthy debates on the thorny issue of how to define the working year. GMB believes that support staff should be salaried like teachers, without use of term-time formulas, and we will carry on making this case to the employers.

The other working group is preparing the way for a national pay structure. It has agreed on the need to procure outside experts to develop national job profiles for the main support staff roles, and a tailored job-evaluation scheme to evaluate the national job profiles and any roles falling outside them.

Government has confirmed that it will fund the costs of designing this national pay framework.

Government has also acknowledged that there will be implementation costs with any new pay framework, as well as future paybill costs, although at what level is still up for debate.

GMB is represented in all parts of the SSSNB by lay members of our National Schools Committee, with the negotiations led by National Secretary Brian Strutton.

GMB members can find out more about the new negotiating body by contacting their local office or emailing [brian.strutton@gmb.org.uk](mailto:brian.strutton@gmb.org.uk).

If you are not a GMB member, sign up today! Simply complete the form on the back page and return it to the freepost address.

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## New Government guidance on "Rarely Cover"

"Rarely cover" for teachers started this September. Teachers are now only rarely expected to cover for absent colleagues.

This does not, in itself, change the contracts or job descriptions of school support staff. But it is having an impact, with schools wanting support staff to fill the breach.

GMB has argued that support staff must be fully consulted and fairly treated during the implementation of rarely cover. Now Government has reinforced this message.

New statutory guidance, issued last month to accompany the School Teachers' Pay and Conditions Document for 2009, states that:

- Cover supervisors and higher level teaching assistants should be deployed for short-term absences only and should not be used as the remedy for the medium or long-term absence of a teacher.
- The head teacher needs to ensure that any persons used to provide cover supervision have been appropriately trained,

particularly in pupil behaviour management.

- While HLTAs may be used for short-term cover, their deployment in this way should be balanced against the educational desirability of regularly removing them from planned activities with the teachers to whom they are normally assigned.
- In considering issues related to the deployment of support staff for cover supervision, schools should have regard to Annex A of the WAMG “Rarely Cover Implementation Process Guidance” issued in April.

WAMG is the Workforce Agreement Monitoring Group, otherwise known as the Social Partnership. WAMG’s “Rarely Cover Implementation Process Guidance” contains a lot more advice about support staff and rarely cover. It specifies that headteachers:

- cannot unilaterally impose changes
- must consult the staff and their union representatives
- must consider any grading or pay implications of any agreed changes and if necessary consult the local authority for guidance on re-evaluating jobs, and the correct pay and grading for new roles and responsibilities.

WAMG adds that headteachers must:

- have regard to the suitability of the task to the member of staff’s current role

- have regard to the impact on their workload and whether sufficient time is available, or could be freed up
- consider any additional training needs
- ensure that if additional paid working hours are required, this is agreed with the member of staff
- ensure that job descriptions are revised to reflect agreed changes and additional responsibilities.

The WAMG guidance can be found at: [www.gmb.org.uk/schoolworkforce](http://www.gmb.org.uk/schoolworkforce) while the statutory guidance accompanying the 2009 School Teachers’ Pay and Conditions Document is available at: <http://www.teachernet.gov.uk/docbank/index.cfm?id=14150> (see the part about “2004 and 2009 changes” in Section 4).

All these documents lend weight to GMB’s campaign for **fair and proper treatment** of school support staff.

The new issue of our GMB@School newsletter contains a form you can use to make sure that your school puts any cover request in writing.

If you are a GMB member and haven’t yet received GMB@School, contact [avril.chambers@gmb.org.uk](mailto:avril.chambers@gmb.org.uk).

Are you being consulted about rarely cover? Tell your GMB rep or Officer, or email National Secretary Brian Strutton: [brian.strutton@gmb.org.uk](mailto:brian.strutton@gmb.org.uk).

If you aren’t already a GMB member, now is the time to join.

**SAY YES TO SECURITY AT WORK**

As a GMB member you are much more **secure** at work because you are part of an **effective** union of 700,000 members, Whether you work full-time or part-time - whatever job you do - the GMB can **help** you.



**WHERE DO I SEND MY COMPLETED FORM?**

Just fill in parts 1, 2 and 3 or 4 below and post it to:

Freepost RRRS-KSGH-REKT  
GMB  
Cavendish House  
369 Burnt Oak Broadway  
EDGWARE  
HA8 5AW

Or hand the form below to your local GMB representative

**FOR UNION USE ONLY** Section    Branch No       Membership No           Date of joining

**PLEASE USE BLOCK CAPITALS WHEN COMPLETING FORM**

**1 TELL US ABOUT YOU**

Surname	<input type="text"/>	First Name	<input type="text"/>	Title	<input type="text"/>	Date of Birth	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>
Home Address	<input type="text"/>	Postcode	Home Tel	<input type="text"/>	I agree to abide by GMB Rules Signature				
			Mobile	<input type="text"/>					
			Date	<input type="text"/>					
We ask for your ethnic origins as part of our equal opportunities policy of improving services to all members					Email <input type="text"/>				
Bangladeshi	<input type="text"/>	Black African	<input type="text"/>	Black Caribbean	<input type="text"/>	Black British	<input type="text"/>	Chinese	<input type="text"/>
Indian	<input type="text"/>	Irish	<input type="text"/>	Pakistani	<input type="text"/>	White	<input type="text"/>	Other	<input type="text"/>

**2 TELL US ABOUT YOUR JOB**

Employer	<input type="text"/>	Your job	<input type="text"/>	
School where you work	<input type="text"/>	Postcode	How many hours a week do you work?	<input type="text"/>
			Pay No	<input type="text"/>
			Work Tel	<input type="text"/>
			Pay Date	<input type="text"/>

**3 CHOOSE EITHER AUTHORISATION OF DEDUCTION OF YOUR TRADE UNION CONTRIBUTIONS FROM YOUR PAY**

Section 68, Trade Union and Labour Relations (Consolidated) Act 1992 as amended  I authorise my employer to deduct from my pay each week/month the sum of  <input type="text"/> £  or other amounts as may be fixed by the GMB from time to time	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Please start the deductions immediately and pay the amounts to the GMB</li> <li>I note that this agreement may be cancelled by one month's notice in writing</li> <li>I give permission to my employer to notify the GMB of any future change of address</li> </ul>	<b>Cash</b> <input type="text"/>
	Signed: <input type="text"/>  Date: <input type="text"/>	

**4 OR INSTRUCTION TO YOUR BANK OR BUILDING SOCIETY TO PAY BY DIRECT DEBIT**

Please fill in the form and send to: Freepost RRRS-KSGH-REKT, GMB, Cavendish House, 369 Burnt Oak Broadway, EDGWARE, HA8 5AW						Originator's Identification Number					
Name and full postal address of your Bank or Building Society branch						9	7	4	3	3	0
To the Manager of	<input type="text"/>					For GMB official use only. This is not part of the instruction to your Bank/Building Society.  If your A/C number is not available fill in your address below					
Address	<input type="text"/>										
	Postcode <input type="text"/>										
Name(s) of account holder(s)						<b>Instructions to your Bank or Building Society</b>					
						Please pay GMB Direct Debits from the account detailed in this Instruction subject to the safeguards assured by the Direct Debit Guarantee. I understand that this Instruction may remain with GMB and, if so, details will be passed electronically to my Bank/Building Society					
Bank/Building Society Account Number						Signature(s)					
<input type="text"/>						Date					
Bank/Building Society Sort Code						Reference number (office use only)					
<input type="text"/>						<input type="text"/>					

Bank or Building Societies may not accept Direct Debit instructions for some types of accounts