

# NUT charter for supply teachers

**This NUT Charter for Supply Teachers sets out the Union's aspirations for its supply teacher members and the steps which the Union believes necessary to achieve them.**

Supply teachers play a crucial role in the functioning of schools. They provide qualified teaching for students in the absence of permanent teachers, often in unfamiliar surroundings and sometimes in challenging circumstances. Whether they are employed on a short term or longer term basis, they ensure the continuation of students' education in a way which other arrangements for covering absence such as cover supervisors cannot.

The NUT believes that supply teachers should receive full recognition of their qualifications and experience and of the challenges involved in supply teaching. Instead, the growing dominance of supply agencies means that supply teachers find themselves forced to seek work via such agencies, paid well below their former pay levels and denied access to the Teachers' Pension Scheme.

**The NUT is therefore calling for supply teachers to be entitled to:**

- **access to the national pay arrangements for school teachers on the same basis as teachers in permanent employment;**
- **equal access to the Teachers' Pension Scheme and other statutory and contractual entitlements for school teachers**
- **access to models of employment that do not require the involvement of employment agencies or other commercial intermediaries; and**
- **access to permanent employment after successful temporary placements without the barriers of "finders' fees" currently imposed by agencies.**

The first rationale behind these principles is that all teachers, whether employed temporarily or permanently, are qualified professionals who should be treated fairly and equally. The second is that school budgets should be spent on students' education, not paid to commercial employment agencies which profit at the expense of supply teachers and schools.

The adoption of these principles, and the achievement of the key objectives set out below, will be good for students and schools as well as for teachers.

**This Charter defines "supply teachers" as qualified teachers who are not permanently employed in a school but are employed temporarily to teach in the absence of a permanent teacher, whether due to illness, vacancy or some other reason, and irrespective of the duration of the placement. Whether hired directly by a school or LA or via an agency or intermediary, the role of the supply teacher is to teach to the same standard as a permanent teacher.**



Join the NUT at  
[www.teachers.org.uk/join](http://www.teachers.org.uk/join)

# The Union's objectives

## The Department for Education should:

- Extend the coverage of the national school teachers' pay arrangements and the Teachers Pension Scheme to all teachers working in state funded schools, including supply teachers working in local authority maintained schools and academies
- Investigate and support the development of register-based systems for engaging day to day and long term supply teachers which allow direct employment by hiring schools without the mediation of commercial supply teacher agencies
- Pending the achievement of these first two objectives, publish guidance which advises hiring schools and agencies to pay supply teachers on the same basis as teachers in regular employment and to conform to the same employment standards in all other respects when employing supply teachers.

## Agencies should:

- Ensure that all supply teachers are paid at rates which are consistent with the national pay arrangements and reflect their qualifications and experience
- Allow all teachers a free choice to be paid either by the agency on a PAYE basis or through umbrella company arrangements without penalty
- Ensure that hiring schools and supply teachers are aware of the provisions of the Agency Workers Regulations and that all supply teachers receive the appropriate pay entitlements after the 12 week qualifying period
- Provide free professional development and training on matters such as safeguarding and on curricular/subject/key stage issues
- Pay supply teachers at their normal pay rate when attending professional development and training, whether provided by the agency or the hiring school
- Provide a confidential and impartial complaints procedure about poor or unequal treatment by hiring schools or agency staff
- Reduce to a minimum the "finders' fees" applying when schools wish to employ a supply teacher on a permanent basis

## Schools hiring supply teachers should:

- Adopt as a policy that classes whose permanent teachers are absent will be covered by qualified teachers
- Use alternatives wherever possible to commercial agencies when seeking external supply teachers
- Adopt a written pay policy which ensures equal treatment for supply teachers and teachers in regular employment at the school
- Ensure that supply teachers are greeted on arrival and provided with a welcome and support pack containing all the information which they need to become familiar with the practices and ethos of the school and ensure effective teaching and classroom management (see the Annex to this Charter for a model support pack).

## Supply teachers should:

- Be prompt in responding to schools, professional in their conduct and punctual as far as the time of bookings allows
- Prioritise student safety and wellbeing at all times
- Become familiar with the practices and ethos of each hiring school.

# Support for supply teachers – the school support pack

Schools should ensure that supply teachers are always greeted on arrival and given a welcome and support pack which should include:

- a map of the school with location of classrooms, staff room, toilets etc.;
- details of main contact person(s) eg name and contact number for Head of Department/Key Stage, name and contact number for senior staff member to contact if problems arise;
- school timetable with times of lesson change, breaks and lunch period;
- information on lessons to be taught and details/location of any lesson plans or other work to be set and teaching resources to be used;
- information on classes to be taught, including class registers, brief notes on seating plans and ability levels, and specific information on known behavioural issues and any special needs, safeguarding or medical issues of which the teacher will need to be aware;
- emergency contacts and telephone numbers;
- registration procedures and arrangements for first aid, fire drills and security (including door codes);
- photocopier codes, ICT passwords and access to technical support;
- summary information on school policies on uniform, codes of conduct, sanctions and rewards, pupils leaving the classroom etc;
- information about staff duties, scheduled meetings/parents' evenings/training days etc and expectations re participation in these; and
- the name of the NUT rep.

Read more about the NUT's campaign for supply teachers at  
**[www.teachers.org.uk/supply](http://www.teachers.org.uk/supply)**



Join the NUT at  
**[www.teachers.org.uk/join](http://www.teachers.org.uk/join)**