

SUPPLY TEACHERS' BULLETIN

Guidance on supply staff mandate

NASUWT is aware that the Department for Education (DfE) has recently published its [Guidance on supply staff](#) mandate that makes it clear that all single and multi-academy trusts will have to procure supply staff, including supply teachers, through the Government Commercial Agency (GCA) from September 2026.

The mandate will be published in the 2026 Academy Trusts Handbook and aims to provide 'better value for money' through a DfE-led negotiated deal that will place a cap on the level of fee (commission) that an employment agency can charge to a school when procuring staff through the GCA.

The fee that an employment agency can charge for its operating costs and profits is capped at a maximum of £45 for a STEM teacher, £40 for a non-STEM teacher and £55 for senior leadership roles.

Single and multi-academy trusts must use the GCA framework unless they can prove that they have been able to secure an alternative framework or contract arrangement with lower employment agency fees, provided this complies with the Procurement Act 2023 for public procurement and employment agency fees do not exceed those in the new GCA framework.

Whilst it specifically references single and multi-academy trusts, local authority schools can also use the framework, though there is no compunction for them to do so.

However, the Guidance on supply staff mandate makes it clear that independent schools cannot access the GCA framework.

The initiative recognises what NASUWT has been stating for years, namely that supply agencies have profited excessively from the fees charged to schools and colleges, and that placing a cap on the profiteering of supply agencies in the sector could see schools and trusts save money on the procurement of supply teachers.

In addition, the GCA framework is helpfully clear and unequivocal that the mandate applies to agency profit only and not the pay of hard-working and dedicated supply teachers. Indeed, the pay and conditions of supply teachers should be unaffected.

NASUWT welcomes this clarification, as the Union is adamant that any changes to the profits of supply agencies should not come at the expense of the remuneration of hard-working and dedicated supply teachers who already suffer a significant pay disparity in comparison to their permanent counterparts.

Indeed, the DfE has provided an [email address](#) that should be used immediately if you are aware of an agency claiming it must pay supply teachers less because of the mandate.

Alternatively, if you have concerns that your employment agency is claiming it must pay you less, you should initially contact your local NASUWT Representative or, alternatively, you can [contact the NASUWT](#) for further advice.

Whilst this may be seen as a small step in the right direction, NASUWT contends that the GCA framework fails to address the issue of supply teachers' pay and the way in which it is depressed, whilst supply agencies and umbrella companies make vast profits.

The GCA framework omits any references to pay ranges for supply teachers. Supply teachers' pay already lags substantially behind the pay of teachers employed by schools in substantive posts.

As such, NASUWT is disappointed that the DfE has not sought to bring the provision of supply teachers within public sector control through local authority supply pools or similar, thereby ensuring that the pay and conditions of supply teachers are consistent with those for all teachers working across state-funded schools in England.

TUC Meeting with Minister Ward

On 20 May, NASUWT, along with a number of other trade unions from across education and the wider public services, met with Minister Ward to discuss the ongoing concerns over outsourcing and how this undermines pay, conditions, job security and service quality.

The Union knows that outsourcing often creates a two-tier workforce, where staff doing vital work can face lower pay, fewer protections and less stability than directly employed colleagues, such as supply teachers who are now almost exclusively outsourced to supply agencies to secure work.

Oscar Nyoni, a supply teacher from the North West, made a compelling case on behalf of NASUWT for a better deal for supply teachers and you can make your case too by adding your name to the [TUC's Record of Support](#).

Statutory Sick Pay

Following changes brought in from 6 April as part of the Employment Rights Act 2025, the Union has updated its advice and guidance for supply teachers to reflect the fact that SSP is now payable from the first full day of sickness absence for eligible employees rather than after three days, commonly referred to as 'waiting days'.

Other key changes include the fact that statutory sick pay (SSP) will be available to all eligible employees regardless of their earnings and that the rate of SSP for all eligible employees will be calculated at 80% of their average weekly earnings or the flat weekly rate of £123.25, whichever is lower.

The updated advice and guidance can be found at:

[NASUWT | Statutory Sick Pay for Supply Teachers \(England\)](#)

Annual Leave and Holiday Pay

Following changes brought in from 6 April as part of the Employment Rights Act 2025, the Union has updated its advice and guidance for supply teachers to reflect the fact that under [Regulation 3 \(8\)](#), section 35, there is now a requirement for all employers, including supply agencies and/or umbrella companies, to keep records relating to annual leave.

The updated advice and guidance can be found at:

[NASUWT | Supply Teachers' Holidays and Holiday Pay \(England and Wales\)](#)