

SUPPLY TEACHER SURVEY REPORT

Annual survey of experiences 2024/25



Contents

Introduction	3
Nature of work	4
Access to work	5
Availability of work	7
Experiences of supply teachers when undertaking work in schools during the 2024/25 academic year	9
Experiences with schools, staff, parents and pupils when undertaking assignments assignments during the 2024/25 academic year	12
Provision of key information when undertaking assignments	14
Access to facilities and amenities in schools when undertaking assignments assignments	17
Issues and concerns, including health and safety, for supply teachers during the academic year 2024/25	17
Rates of pay for supply teachers during the academic year 2024/25	18
Financial situation during the academic year 2024/25	21
Pensions	23
Training and behaviour management support	23
Conclusion	26

Introduction

Supply teachers are integral to the education system. Without supply teachers, many pupils would be denied the opportunity to be taught by qualified and dedicated teachers who ensure that schools can continue to provide the education to which children and young people are entitled. Supply teachers make a vital contribution to securing high educational standards for all children and young people.

NASUWT's annual survey of supply teachers in England aims to examine the changing experiences of supply teachers, including issues and trends.

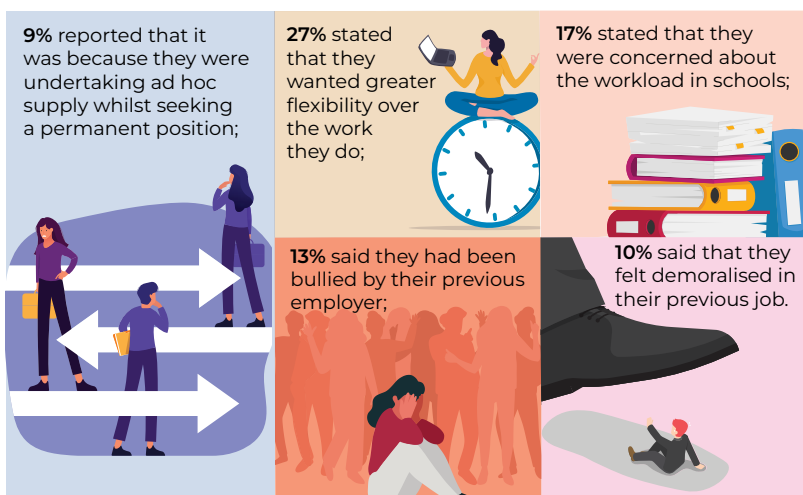
The 2024/25 survey was undertaken between July and September.

A total of 570 supply teachers responded to the survey.

This report provides the findings from the 2024/25 survey of supply teachers and highlights the experiences of supply teachers during the academic year 2024/25.

Nature of work

Supply teachers were asked why they carried out supply teaching work. The top five reasons cited by supply teachers were:



“ Supply gives me flexibility around my family, while also being my ‘stepping stone’ back into life in education and helping me decide if I want to go back part/full time with a fixed or permanent position. ”

When asked what other advantages/disadvantages were associated with being a supply teacher, the top three advantages cited by supply teachers were freedom and flexibility (33%), workload/work-life balance (e.g. no planning/report writing) (27%), and the variety of experiences (e.g. different schools, pupils and subjects) (13%). However, the top three disadvantages cited by supply teachers were poor rates of pay (30%), job insecurity (22%), and lack of respect (from both pupils and staff) (10%).

Supply teachers were asked about the ability to secure work teaching during the academic year 2024/25. Just over half (52%) reported that they had no problems securing work, whereas just under two-fifths (38%) reported that they had some problems securing work. Almost one in ten (9%) supply teachers reported that they had significant problems getting supply work, and 1% stated that they could not secure any supply work.

It appears that schools have taken on TAs to cover lessons that, under normal circumstances, are given by teachers.

I joined 10+ agencies. Very slow to get work and paid less than M1.

The agency I work for are very proactive and were able to consider my needs.

I was with the same agency that I have used for the past seven years. Have never had any difficulty securing daily supply work previously, but this year I was constantly told that there was very little demand from schools.

Access to work

During the academic year 2024/25, 16% of supply teachers reported that they were working for one school, one in ten (10%) reported that they were working for two schools, and just over one in ten (11%) reported that they were working for three schools. Eight per cent reported that they were working for four schools, and 13% reported that they were working for five schools. Just over two-fifths (42%) of supply teachers reported that they were working for more than five schools.

Of those supply teachers who reported that they were able to secure work during the academic year 2024/25, in excess of four-fifths (83%) of supply teachers said that they had secured work through a supply agency, whilst 15% reported that they had secured work directly as a supply teacher by a school, and just 1% stated that they had secured work via a local authority supply pool.

For those supply teachers working through an agency during the academic year 2024/25, over half (53%) stated that they were signed up to one agency to secure work, 28% reported that they were signed up to two agencies, just over one in ten (11%) reported that they were signed up to three agencies, and 4% reported that they had signed up to four agencies. Four per cent reported that they were signed up to five agencies.

For those supply teachers working through a local authority during the academic year 2024/25, under three-quarters (72%) reported that they were signed up to one local authority, a quarter (25%) reported that they were signed up to two local authorities, 1% reported that they were signed up to three local authorities, and another 1% reported that they were signed up to four local authorities. A further 1% of supply teachers stated that they were signed up to five local authorities.

For those supply teachers working directly for a school during the academic year 2024/25, two-thirds (66%) reported working for one school during the academic year 2024/25, almost a fifth (19%) stated that they were employed by two schools, one in 20 (5%) stated that they were employed by three schools, and 3% stated that they were employed by four schools. Seven per cent stated that they were employed by five schools.

“

We no longer get work from the local authority.

”

“

Keep a few agencies who are good.

”

Seventeen per cent of supply teachers stated that this was more than during the previous academic year, whereas 15% reported that this was less, and 68% stated that it had stayed the same.

“

In my first two years of supply, I always only had one agency. In the last six months, I've used three agencies to ensure I always had work and try to get a better daily rate.

”

“

Due to lack of work, I kept registering with others to try and find something long term but failed to do so.

”

Over a quarter (28%) of supply teachers reported travelling between 0-10 miles for an assignment, just under a third (31%) reported travelling between 11-20 miles, just over a fifth (22%) reported travelling between 21-30 miles, just over one in ten (11%) reported travelling between 31-40 miles for an assignment, and one in 20 (5%) reported travelling between 41-50 miles. Three per cent of supply teachers reported travelling between 51-60 miles for an assignment.

Just over a fifth (22%) of supply teachers reported that they had to travel further than in previous years in order to secure work.

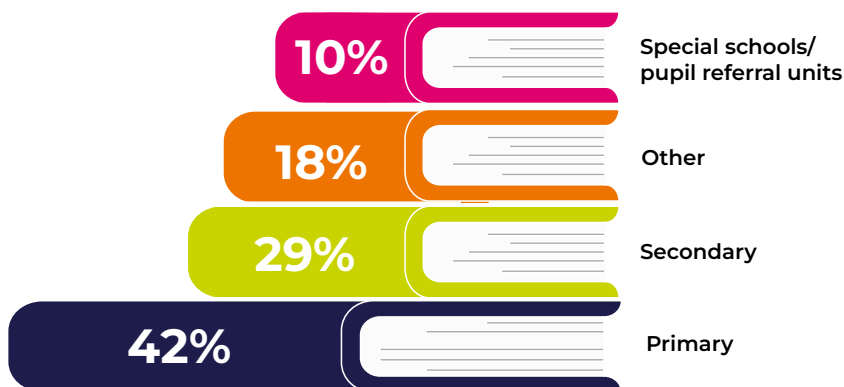
Well in excess of half (56%) of supply teachers stated that the cost-of-living crisis had a detrimental impact on how far they were willing to travel to undertake an assignment.

Availability of work

Supply teachers were asked where they were able to obtain work during the academic year 2024/25.

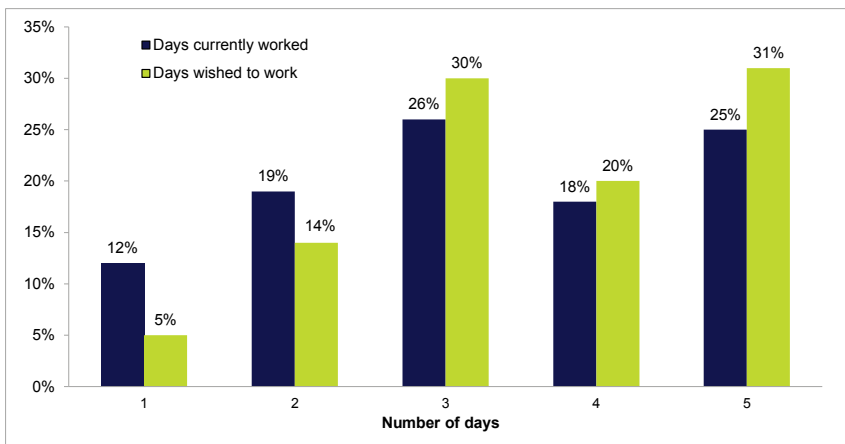
Forty-two per cent who responded to the survey stated that they were able to secure work in primary schools, 29% stated that they were able to secure work in secondary schools, and one on in ten (10%) reported that they were able to secure work in a special school/pupil referral unit (PRU). Just under a fifth (18%) of supply teachers stated that their work was in 'other' settings (e.g. further education college).

Where supply teachers undertook the majority of their work during the academic year 2024/25



For those supply teachers who reported that they were able to secure work during the academic year 2024/25, well in excess of half (56%) reported that the majority of their supply teaching was ad hoc/daily work, 7% said that this was weekly assignments, and 3% stated that this was monthly assignments. Just over one in ten (11%) supply teachers reported that the majority of their work was termly assignments, and over a fifth (23%) stated that the majority of their teaching was on longer term assignments in excess of a term.

When supply teachers were asked how many days on average they were able to obtain work during the academic year 2024/25, over one in ten (12%) said they obtained work one day a week, almost a fifth (19%) two days a week, and just over a quarter (26%) three days a week. Eighteen per cent of supply teachers in the survey said they were able to obtain work four days a week, and a quarter (25%) stated that they were able to obtain work five days a week. However, just over four-fifths (81%) said that they wanted to work between three to five days a week.



Almost two-fifths (39%) of supply teachers stated that the amount of supply work had decreased during the academic year 2024/25 compared to the previous academic year, whereas just over one in ten (12%) stated that the amount of supply work had increased. Almost half (49%) of respondents stated that the amount of supply work they were able to secure had stayed the same.

Experiences of supply teachers when undertaking work in schools during the 2024/25 academic year

Supply teachers were asked about their experiences when working during the academic year 2024/25.

Despite it being a legal requirement since April 2020, just under two-fifths (38%) of supply teachers who obtained work through a new supply agency reported that they had been provided with a Key Information Document (KID), detailing how they would be paid and associated deductions, as well as other key details, and another 38% stated that they did not know whether or not they had been provided with a KID by the agency.

“

I have worked with the same agency for four years and have never been given or shown the KID.

”

“

I was not informed of how umbrella agencies work and did not know how many deductions would be taken off from my quoted daily rate. I don't think my agent understood either.

”

One in ten (10%) supply teachers stated that they had been asked to undertake a 'free trial' by an agency at a school prior to undertaking paid work.

“

It was a horrible experience. I knew I was being used, but I was scared to say anything as I did in the past and it cost me my job.

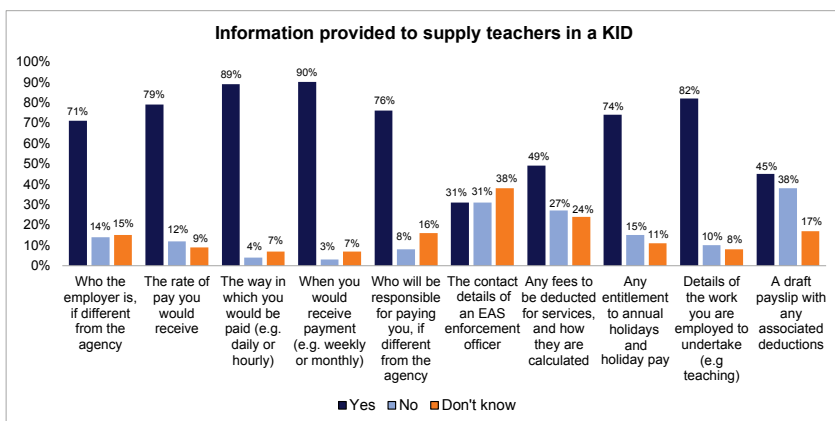
”

“

Ribble Recruitment asked me to complete an unpaid morning session in which I would be left with a Year 5 class and would be responsible for registration, lessons and the SLT would 'drop in' to observe me throughout the morning.

”

Sixteen per cent of supply teachers stated that work had been cancelled on specific longer term assignments at, or approaching, the 12 weeks' qualification period for the Agency Workers Regulations (AWR).



Almost half (49%) of supply teachers reported that an agency had suddenly and unexpectedly terminated a booking in the last 12 months. Of those, 49% stated that this had occurred once by one agency, and just over one in 20 (7%) stated that this had occurred once by multiple agencies. However, just over a third (34%) reported that this had occurred more than once by one agency, and one in ten (10%) reported that this had occurred more than once multiple agencies.

“When I completed a trial for two days, I was told that I was not needed and told that I would not be paid. I tried to argue, but the answer was no.”

“I was told at 6pm on a Thursday that they had just had a call from XXXXXXXX Primary School that I was no longer needed the next day or at any point in the future. The next week would've been 12 weeks.”

“Ghost bookings are very frequent, particularly on a Friday and on weekend days for the following Monday.”

Experiences with schools, staff, parents and pupils when undertaking assignments during the 2024/25 academic year

Just over a third (34%) of supply teachers reported that they are made to feel welcome by the school, and 57% stated that they are often made to feel welcome by the school. However, almost one in ten (9%) said that they are rarely made to feel welcome by the school.

When asked how welcome they are made to feel by the teaching staff in schools, 31% of supply teachers reported that they are always made to feel welcome, and almost three-fifths (59%) reported that they are often made to feel welcome by the teaching staff in schools. However, just one in ten (10%) supply teachers stated that they are rarely made to feel welcome by the teaching staff in schools.

When asked how welcome they are made to feel by the support assistants in schools, over a third (35%) of supply teachers reported that they are always made to feel welcome, and well in excess of half (55%) reported that they are often made to feel welcome by the support assistants in schools. However, almost one in ten (9%) supply teachers stated that they are rarely made to feel welcome by support assistants in schools, and 1% stated that they are never made to be feel welcome by support assistants in schools.

When asked how welcome they are made to feel by the administrative staff in schools, two-fifths (40%) of supply teachers reported that they are always made to feel welcome, and over half (53%) reported that they are often made to feel welcome by the administrative staff in schools. However, just over one in 20 (7%) reported that they are rarely made to feel welcome by the administrative staff in schools.

When asked how welcome they are made to feel by the pupils in schools, a fifth (20%) of supply teachers reported that they are always made to feel welcome, and just over three-fifths (61%) reported that they are often made to feel welcome by pupils in schools. However, 17% of supply teachers reported that they are rarely made to feel welcome by the pupils, and just 2% stated that they are never made to feel welcome by the pupils.

In respect of being made to feel welcome by the parents, just under a fifth (18%) of supply teachers stated that they are always made to feel welcome and over half (53%) stated that they are often made to feel welcome by the parents. However, over a fifth (23%) stated that they are rarely made to feel welcome by

the parents, and just over one in 20 (6%) stated that they are never made to feel welcome by the parents.

Twenty-nine per cent of supply teachers reported that they had experienced physical abuse or violence from pupils when undertaking an assignment, and just under two-thirds (64%) stated that they had experienced verbal abuse or violence from pupils when undertaking an assignment.

Just under nine out of ten (87%) supply teachers indicated that they had reported the incident/s to someone in the school; however, of those who did report the incident, 17% stated that no action was taken against the pupil, and just over two-fifths (41%) stated that they didn't know or were not informed whether or not any action was taken.

“

SLT arrived and dealt with the situation. The student was isolated and I was asked to write a statement about the incident.

”

“

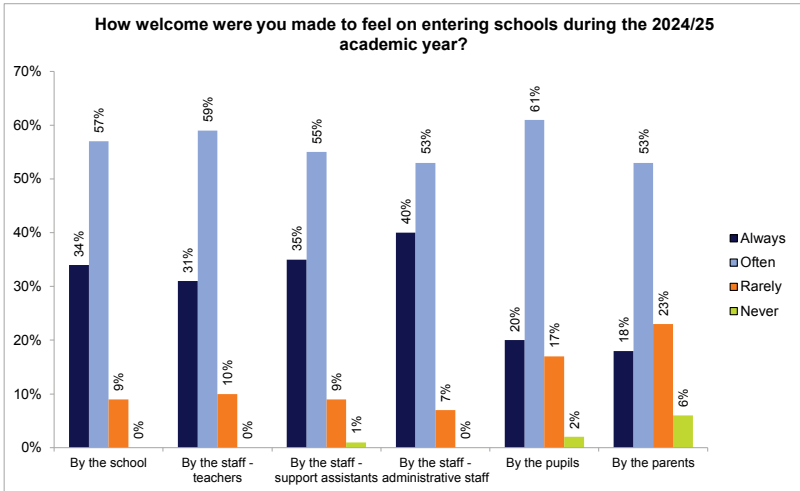
Minimal effort was made with action towards the pupil. I was verbally, emotionally and physically challenged.

”

“

I was concerned it would impact on my future work.

”



Provision of key information when undertaking assignments

Supply teachers who were able to secure work were asked about the provision of key information when undertaking supply teaching during the 2024/25 academic year.

Well in excess of half (55%) of supply teachers stated that they were not given the school's overall risk assessment, and 14% stated that they were not sure.

Almost a third (32%) of supply teachers stated that they were not given the arrangements in place for supply teachers to report safely to the workplace, and one in ten (10%) reported that they were not given the details of who and where to report to each day, including details of the signing in process.

Almost two-thirds (65%) of supply teachers stated that they were not provided with the details regarding access to, and availability of, hand sanitiser, and just over three-fifths (61%) reported that they were not provided with the details in place to ensure classrooms and work areas were well ventilated.

A fifth (20%) of supply teachers stated that they were not provided with the details of any designated contact(s) for any questions, problems or emergencies.

A third (33%) of supply teachers reported that they were not provided with the details of how to raise any concerns about health and safety, and just under two-fifths (38%) reported that they were not provided with the details of how to call for assistance, including first aid. Furthermore, just over three-fifths (62%) of supply teachers reported that they were not provided with the details of the nearest first aid room or appropriate area.

In regards to the school's fire evacuation plans, including routes and procedures, 36% of supply teachers reported that this was not provided to them when undertaking assignments in schools during the 2024/25 academic year.

“

Register is usually set up and work slides on computers, and some have work sheets printed and trimmed.

”

Just over a third (35%) of respondents stated that they had not been given a tour of the school site, including identifying where they would be teaching when undertaking assignments in schools.

In respect to the timetable, including breaks and lunch periods, as well as expectations on staff during such times, just over a fifth (22%) of supply teachers reported that this information not been provided to them when undertaking assignments in schools.

Just over a quarter (27%) of respondents reported that they had not been provided with the details of the registration process and expectations for the appropriate movement of pupils around the school site between lessons, at breaks, and at lunchtimes, and at the end of the school day when undertaking assignments during the 2024/25 academic year.

In regards to teaching, just over a third (34%) of supply teachers reported that they were not provided with details of how to access relevant information on schemes of work for the subjects they were expected to teach, and 28% reported that they had not been provided with access to relevant teaching materials.

In addition, 17% of supply teachers stated that they were not provided with the details regarding access to computers, with log-in details and what to do at the end of the school day, and just over half (52%) reported that they were not provided with the details of any resources they might reasonably be expected to provide to students, such as pens.

Almost two-fifths (39%) of respondents stated that they were not provided with a list of the pupils in the class(es) they would be teaching, including details of any medical conditions, behavioural issues or special educational needs and disabilities (SEND), and well in excess of half (55%) stated that they had not been provided with the details of any pupils known to be potentially violent, and how this should be managed.

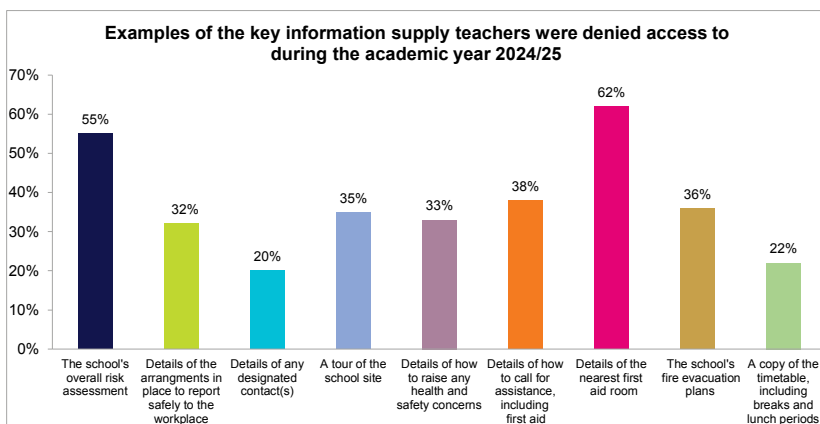
Furthermore, almost a third (32%) of supply teachers reported that they had not been provided with the behaviour management policy when undertaking assignments in schools, including who to contact.

Just under two-fifths (38%) of supply teachers reported that they had not been provided with the details of any events, meetings or specific activities taking place, and 57% stated that they had not been provided with the arrangements for school transport, as appropriate, when undertaking assignments during the 2024/25 academic year.

“

Often not told the protocol for first aid or who the SEND children are. Rarely get a class list and often don't get a detailed timetable.

”



Access to facilities and amenities in schools when undertaking assignments

When asked about their most recent assignment, a third (33%) of supply teachers stated that they do not always have access to staff rooms where they were available, just over three-fifths (62%) stated that they do not always have access to staff food and drink facilities, and 18% said that they do not always have access to toilet/washroom facilities. Well in excess of 55% of supply teachers reported that they do not always have access to car parking.

When asked about the assignments undertaken during the academic year 2024/25, just over half (52%) of supply teachers reported that they had access to a designated contact person all of the time, whereas over a quarter (28%) reported having access to a designated contact person some of the time. A fifth (20%) of supply teachers reported that they did not have access to a designated contact person.

Issues and concerns, including health and safety, for supply teachers during the academic year 2024/25

Just over a quarter (27%) of supply teachers stated that they do not feel that any issues and concerns they have raised are taken seriously, and almost a quarter (24%) stated that they didn't know.

Two-fifths (40%) of supply teachers who secured work during the academic year 2024/25 stated that they were concerned about their health and safety when in schools, and one in ten (10%) stated that they may have been penalised or had work cancelled for disclosing personal information about their health and safety (e.g. pregnant).

“

The school will normally terminate the contract rather than deal with the issue. It seems supply teachers are expendable.

”

“

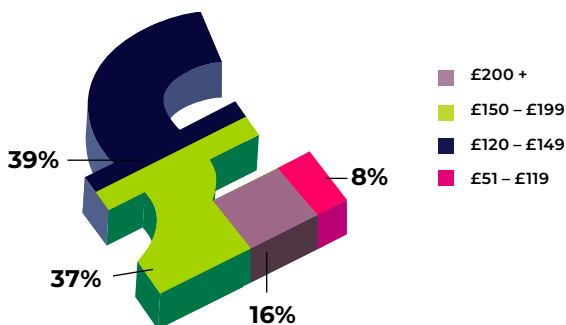
Some schools have cancelled assignments with the reason of they don't have a risk assessment in place for pregnant teachers.

”

Rates of pay for supply teachers during the academic year 2024/25

Supply teachers were asked about the rates of pay they were able to secure for assignments undertaken during the academic year 2024/25.

Just under one in ten (8%) supply teachers stated that they were paid between £51 and £119 per day for assignments, almost two-fifths (39%) stated that they were paid between £120 and £149 per day for assignments, and 37% stated that they were paid at between £150 and £199 a day for assignments. Sixteen per cent said that they were paid £200 or more per day for assignments.



“£130 per day. No pay rise for four years now.”

“£150 with agency. £223 working for LA.”

Over half (53%) of supply teachers indicated that the rates of pay received during the academic year 2024/25 were the same as those they were able to earn in the previous academic year, whereas 16% reported that the rates of pay received were less than those they were able to earn in the previous academic year. Just under a third (31%) said that the rates of pay received had increased compared to those they were able to earn in the previous academic year.

I've earned £150 a day for over ten years now.

Much less, to the point that I can't financially work as a supply teacher next school year unless something changes.

I asked the agencies to pay the same as the one that was paying the most and they upped my daily rate.

Just under half (48%) of supply teachers reported earning less than the minimum of the Main Pay Range, irrespective of their experience and expertise.

When asked if the agency/agencies where they undertook work during the academic year 2024/25 operated a ceiling in respect of their remuneration, well in excess of half (54%) of supply teachers reported that the agency/agencies did.

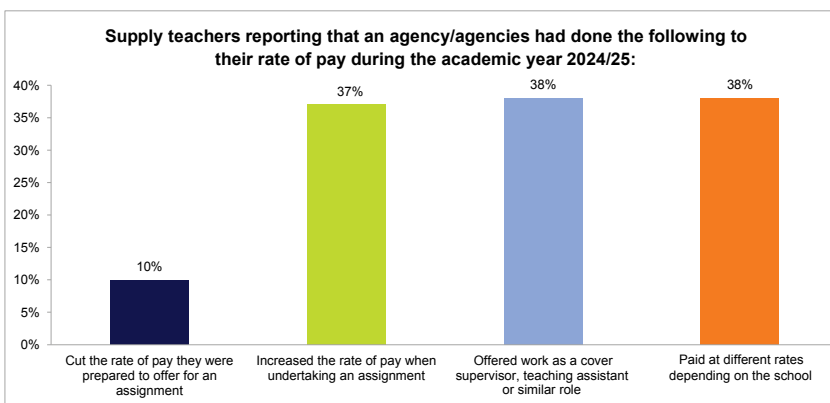
Daily rate is set and they won't increase it except for long-term roles.

Flat rate of £130 per day for short-term work. No change for experience, qualifications etc.

Less than a fifth (17%) of supply teachers stated that they were able to secure more money when working through a local authority or directly with a school in comparison to supply work through an agency.

Working directly through school I get the full supply fee equivalent to my experience of UPS3, which is a huge difference to agency rates.

Generally £50-£80 more per day.



Just under a third (32%) of supply teachers stated that they had been able to negotiate or secure an increase in their daily rate with an agency/agencies during the academic year 2024/25.

I can negotiate petrol money. Sometimes if I'm offered something and I say I'm not keen on the school/distance, the agency will offer me more.

Negotiated higher pay due to work demands.

Just under one in ten (8%) supply teachers stated that the closure of the National Tutoring Programme (NTP) at the start of the academic year had had a detrimental impact on the amount of work they were able to secure.

Financial situation during the academic year 2024/25

Supply teachers were asked about their financial situation during the academic year 2024/25.

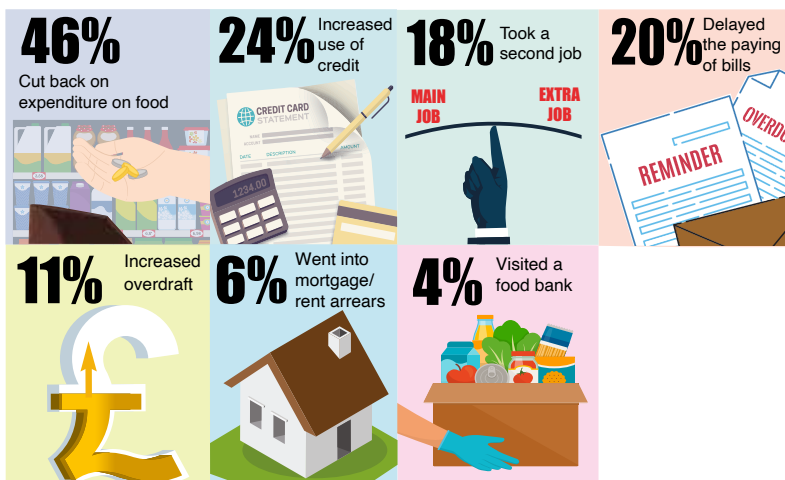
Well over a quarter (28%) of supply teachers reported that they had sourced work elsewhere other than teaching during the academic year 2024/25. Of those, in excess of four-fifths (84%) stated that the work sourced elsewhere other than teaching failed to provide the same level of financial income that they would have obtained had they been able to secure work teaching.

Just over one in ten (12%) supply teachers reported having to claim some form of state benefit during the academic year 2024/25 (e.g. Universal Credit), and well in excess of two-fifths of respondents (46%) stated that they had experienced financial hardship as a supply teacher over the same period.

46% stated that they had experienced financial hardship as a supply teacher.

“ Monitor usage of electricity, car fuel, ability to go out with friends as can't afford to go due to anxiety of not having enough money. Delayed haircuts by another two to three weeks each time due to cost. ”

“ Need support from my family. ”



Just over two-thirds (68%) of supply teachers who responded stated that undertaking supply work and the inability to secure a permanent post had affected their ability to make significant life decisions.

Pensions

Whilst the legislation prevents supply teachers working for a supply agency from paying into the Teachers' Pension Scheme (TPS), three-quarters (75%) stated that they are still members of the TPS. Of these, just over a fifth (21%) reported that they were active members, just over a quarter (26%) reported that they were deferred members, and 28% reported that they were drawing a pension.

Of those supply teachers who indicated that they were not members of the TPS, almost a third (32%) reported that they did not have any alternative pension scheme provision, and just over one in ten (11%) reported that they were unsure.

Enrolled in two pension schemes provided by two supply agencies, but the rates are low. No access to the TPS.

Exceptionally poor pension rate. Basically just a really low amount paid in, ideally want to be in the TPS.

Not happy that supply teachers have no access to the TPS. Are we really second-class citizens or considered 'not really proper teachers'?

Training and behaviour management support

Just over two-fifths (41%) of supply teachers stated that they had not been given access to continuing professional development (CPD) in the last 12 months.

For those supply teachers who had access to CPD, the primary sources of training were obtained via a supply agency (71%), the schools at which they worked (28%), from their trade union (15%), or funded personally (13%).

41% of supply teachers stated that they had not been given access to CPD.

In regards to participating in in-service training (INSET) days provided by schools during the 2024/25 academic year, just one in ten (10%) supply teachers reported that they were asked to participate in all the INSET days in schools where they undertook assignments, whereas almost one in 20 (4%) reported that the majority of schools asked them to participate in INSET days, and 8% stated that a few schools asked them to participate in INSET days.

Schools do not provide training or CPD for supply teachers. Training providers DO NOT want to admit teachers who are not employees of schools.

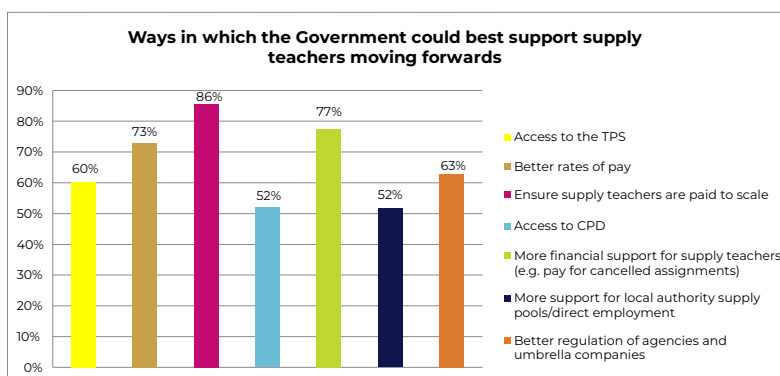
Just over a third (34%) of supply teachers stated that they did not feel they are treated with respect and dignity.

Sometimes I feel I am treated with respect, whereas other times I feel very looked down upon seen as a second-rate teacher.

I was surprised by how little credibility I had with both staff and students. No-one seems interested in or values the experience I have brought to the role after 30 years (20 of which as a HOD).

Not all of the time. This includes treatment from staff and pupils, even staff in front pupils. Referred to as 'THE SUPPLY' when I am stood there, by staff talking to pupils!

Based on their experiences as a supply teacher during the academic year 2024/25, two-fifths (40%) of supply teachers reported that they were looking for work outside of teaching.



“Supply teaching is stressful – often left waiting by the phone, ready to go, and inevitably no work was available.”

“This year has been very difficult financially, despite loving the work when I get into a classroom.”

“I have had enough of supply work, the lack of respect from other staff, the senior management, the expectations, the lack of pay increase. I would not recommend it to anyone else.”

Conclusion

The survey of supply teachers emphasises the continuing critical role that supply teachers have played in maintaining educational provision in schools in England during the 2024/25 academic year.

However, the survey suggests that the experiences of supply teachers throughout the 2024/25 academic year have been varied, with a notable increase in those supply teachers reporting some or significant problems securing work, and more being offered alternative roles, such as cover supervisors instead (more often than not on lower rates of pay).

The availability and nature of the work supply teachers in England have been able to access has also altered, with an increase in those undertaking short-term ad-hoc daily assignments in more schools, as opposed to longer term assignments.

Given this, it is not unsurprising to note that there has been an increase in those supply teachers who report signing up with more agencies or schools and local authorities to secure work, as well as an increase in those having to travel further afield to undertake assignments as a supply teacher.

On the critical issue of pay, whilst there has been an uptick in those supply teachers who are able to access more as a daily rate, it is still the case that the vast majority of supply teachers have seen little or no movement on the rates of pay received when undertaking an assignment.

Indeed, more supply teachers reporting less ability to negotiate increases in pay in comparison to previous years and there has been a significant decrease those who report being able to access increases in their daily rate when working through a local authority or directly for a school.

As a consequence, it remains the case that a significant proportion of supply teachers are paid at rates that are not commensurate with their level of experience and expertise. Indeed, many experienced and qualified teachers find themselves on rates of pay that have not changed in years, with some daily rates received when undertaking supply work being lower than the rates of pay for an unqualified teacher.

Given this, it is disappointing to note that some supply teachers still find themselves in the position of having to make tough decisions about their expenditure, including the increased use of credit and even food banks to make ends meet.

It is pleasing to note that the 2024/25 survey indicates that many school communities are far more welcoming to supply teachers, with a marked decline in those reporting that they are rarely or never to feel welcome by the school, the staff, and particularly by the pupils and parents.

However, the 2024/25 survey indicates that there are serious concerns over the provision of key information to supply teachers when undertaking assignments, with an increase in those schools who are routinely failing to provide key information, such as details of who to call for assistance, including first aid.

It therefore comes as no surprise that there has been a decline in the number of supply teachers stating that they are treated with respect and dignity.

There are concerns that these disparities in treatment are impacting disproportionately on women, Black and minority ethnic (BME) groups and disabled teachers, who are more likely to be employed as supply teachers.

In this context, the results from the 2024/25 survey substantiate the pressing need for a Better Deal for Supply Teachers that addresses the systematic flaws in the current system and recognises and values the important and significant contribution they make to the education system in England.