

## Supply Teacher Seminar March 2022 – Forum Q&A

- What are you doing about STs being allowed to pay into teacher's pension scheme?

As you will no doubt be aware, the Union continues to campaign for a better deal for supply and substitute teachers, including access to better rates of pay and the Teachers' Pension Scheme (TPS), specifically for those working as a supply teacher in England and/or Wales.

This includes the evidence submitted by the NASUWT to the independent pay review bodies in England and Wales, as well as numerous consultation responses and meetings with relevant government departments.

In addition, the Union continues to highlight and promote alternative models that would enable access to the TPS, such as direct employment or the use of local authority pooled supply arrangements.

Furthermore, in England, the Union continues to argue for multi-academy trusts to establish their own bank of directly employed supply teachers which would enable supply teachers working for them to access the TPS.

However, it should be noted that access to the TPS is not in the gift of the Union.

Nevertheless, this is a key issue for the Union and we will continue to make the case for all supply teachers to access the TPS.

- What exactly is NASUWT doing to support supply/substitute teachers?

As you will be aware, the Union continues to campaign on behalf of supply/substitute teachers.

During the COVID-19 pandemic, the Union worked to secure the right of teachers to job protection under the Coronavirus Job Retention Scheme (furlough). The Union fought to secure access to furlough for supply teachers and many supply teachers benefited.

In addition, the Union continued to highlight how the pandemic had exposed the fundamental failure of the market in supply teachers.

Throughout the pandemic, we engaged and worked with our sister unions on highlighting the precarious employment situation for our supply teacher members and we also joined forces with other unions on lobbying governments for stronger workplace protections on health, safety and wellbeing of workers, including supply and substitute teachers.

Throughout 2020, we repeatedly warned governments that there would be an enduring crisis in supply teaching at the end of the pandemic as a result of further

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mistreatment of supply teachers, who been dealt a double blow of a lack of employment opportunities and access to furlough pay.

The Better Deal for Supply Teachers and Supply Justice Campaigns called on the government to end the daily mistreatment of supply teachers, who face a race-to-the-bottom on pay, exploitation and poor working conditions.

The NASUWT highlighted how this mistreatment, which disproportionately affects black teachers, women and disabled supply teachers, results in systemic and institutional discrimination as a result of teachers with particular protected characteristics being more likely to be employed on less favourable conditions.

The Union had remained resolute on the need for government to end the exploitative market in teacher supply, as we continue to oppose the use of unethical supply agencies and fight for a national pay and conditions framework for all supply teachers, with guaranteed access to continuing professional development, sick pay and redundancy and automatic rights to enrol in the Teachers' Pension Scheme.

Furthermore, as referenced above, the Union has continued to highlight and campaign for supply teachers' remuneration in submissions to relevant pay review bodies.

The Union has continued to press local authorities and academy trusts in England to establish direct supply teacher workforces who would be employed in accordance with national, or academy trust, terms and conditions (overwhelmingly the School Teachers' Pay and Conditions Document (STPCD)).

In Northern Ireland, the Union was able to secure an agreement that teachers on long-term supply would not be treated differently to full-time staff and would receive pay for the period they were engaged to work – even if the school had to close.

In Wales, the NASUWT has been involved in authoring a Wales TUC letter calling for all supply teachers to be brought under the terms of the School Teachers' Pay and Conditions (Wales) Document (STPC(WD)).

Following the work of the NASUWT and others, the Co-operation Agreement for the Welsh Government specifically references the situation for supply teachers.

In addition, the Union has called for strengthening of the National Procurement Service (NPS) framework, particularly when the current one expires, to provide better terms and conditions for supply teachers working in Wales.

In Scotland, the NASUWT has campaigned for the Scottish Government to better support supply teachers, including reinstating the SNCT Supply Teachers Job

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Retention Scheme, as well as issuing further advice and guidance to employers for the utilisation of supply teachers.

In response, the Deputy First Minister confirmed his expectation that all teachers available, including supply teachers, should be in the process of being employed to support education recovery, something that has been reinforced to the Convention of Scottish Local Authorities (COSLA).

Finally, the Union also continues to provide advice and guidance, as well as support, to supply and substitute teachers through individual casework, including, where necessary, financial support through benevolence casework.

- What are you doing about the finders fees charged by agencies deterring schools from employing us when our long term post becomes available as a member of staff at their school. I've lost out on 5 jobs now!

The Union continues to spotlight the issue of excessive finder's fees and how these prevent some supply teachers from being permanently employed at a school or college when undertaking an assignment.

It is important to note that school leaders also have a part to play in ensuring they read the small print when procuring supply teachers in order to drill down the costs of procuring supply teachers through employment agencies.

The NASUWT maintains that school leaders should be looking at both commission and finder's fees on a regular basis, including with school governors, where appropriate.

The Union would also support such issues forming part of an agenda item at local meetings with local authorities and/or academy trust schools, including those related to school funding.

- A question about the Supply Teachers Pay Scale. Please advise with the most updated pay scale for 2021 to 2022. I noticed that there was a difference in figures. I wish to approach my agency with the most updated figures. Do you mind sharing the link?

The most up-to-date pay scales for supply teachers working in England and/or Wales can be found at:

- <https://www.nasuw.org.uk/advice/supply-teacher/supply-teachers-pay/supply-teachers-pay-england.html>;
- <https://www.nasuw.org.uk/advice/supply-teacher/supply-teachers-pay/supply-teachers-pay-wales.html>.

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- What specific action has being taken by our union to ensure supply Teachers Pay is also increased?

As noted above, the Union continues to highlight the precarious situation in respect of pay for supply teachers. The pay and terms and conditions of supply teachers are incorporated into the submissions the Union makes to the relevant pay review bodies.

The Union is advocating for:

- supply teachers who work in state-funded schools, including agency teachers contracted by schools, to be remunerated at rates of pay commensurate with all other teachers, with pay rates that reflect experience in the job;
- a significant above-RPI inflation increase in salary values over a sustained period to restore supply teachers' salaries to a level commensurate with other teachers and based on their skills and experience;
- the introduction of mechanisms to enable supply teachers to access higher levels of pay.

In addition, the Union has produced a number of campaign materials which highlight the situation for supply teachers when compared to permanent teachers working in schools.

What are the dates for the September conference?

The date for the September event is 10 September at the Crowne Plaza, Stratford-Upon-Avon.

I am sure supply teachers will be pleased to note that this is a physical rather than virtual event.

More details can be found at:

<https://www.nasuwt.org.uk/event/SUP02HOE22.html>.