

Date: 7 January 2021

Our Ref: 210107/Williams K/PR/TF

Telephone: 0121 453 6150

Tel/Ffôn: 029 2054 6080

E-mail/E-bost: nasuwt@mail.nasuwt.org.uk
Website/Gwefan: www.nasuwt.org.uk

Kirsty Williams MS
Minister for Education
Welsh Government
Cardiff Bay
Cardiff
CF99 1NA

General Secretary/Ysgrifennydd Cyffredinol: Dr Patrick Roach

Dear Kirsty

Urgent clarification regarding income protection for supply teachers

I am writing to you regarding the financial provisions for supply teachers during the national lockdown and the closure of schools in Wales to the vast majority of pupils until 18 January 18 in order to curb the spread of COVID-19, specifically the new COVID-19 variant.

Whilst recognising the importance of the measures imposed to curtail the spread of the disease, it cannot go unnoticed that an inevitable consequence is that there will now be large numbers of supply teachers unable to work, had work cancelled, or who are now only able to obtain drastically reduced employment opportunities. The NASUWT is seriously concerned at the situation for hardworking and dedicated supply teachers and the increased financial uncertainty they face.

We trust that you recognise and appreciate the vital service supply teachers provide to schools and colleges and hope you recognise the need to support them at this uncertain time to cover the loss of pay and to support their access to training and professional development during periods when they do not have access to paid work.

The NASUWT appreciates that the extension of the Coronavirus Job Retention Scheme (CJRS) until April 2020 should provide some level of financial assistance to supply teachers, but the Union is aware that the increased employers' costs towards the scheme (e.g. National Insurance and pension contributions) have resulted in supply agencies stating that they cannot place supply teachers on furlough, coupled with the associated loss of earnings.

This situation has been compounded by the lack of advice and guidance from the Welsh Government in anticipation of the aforementioned school closures. Previously, the Welsh Government referenced Cabinet Office/Crown Commercial Services (CCS) advice and guidance on the use of contingent labour in the public sector to assist schools when making decisions in respect of supply teachers. Under this separate scheme, contingent labour working in the public sector who are long-term or have an assignment which naturally ends in the future, should have 80% of their

salary paid for up to a maximum of £2,500 per month. Disappointingly, in respect of the CCS advice and guidance this came to an end in autumn 2020.

Furthermore, previous advice and guidance from the WLGA in this respect stated that supply teachers on a live assignment should continue to be paid from the existing budget of the school, with those supply teachers who had their assignments terminated earlier than the original terms reinstated on the original terms of their contract.

In addition, the WLGA issued guidance regarding the payment of ad hoc or casual supply teachers at 80% of typical pay, based on a retrospective audit of the average days or hours worked.

We are acutely aware of the demands being made of you and the Welsh Government at this time. We would ask, however, that serious consideration is given by the Welsh Government to further financial protections to be available to teachers and other groups of workers whose incomes and livelihoods will be seriously impacted as a consequence of the further extension of Coronavirus emergency restrictions announced by the both the Welsh and Westminster Governments.

The NASUWT would welcome particular consideration is given to how the Welsh Government is able to support these teachers, and would welcome an assurance from you that this will be looked into as a matter of urgency and raised with colleagues in the Welsh Government, the Treasury and Her Majesty's Revenue and Customs (HMRC).

I look forward to your positive response on these very important matters.

Yours sincerely



Dr Patrick Roach
General Secretary

