

NASUWT Concerns

The NASUWT has a number of concerns about the unregulated nature of private supply agencies and the fact that they have replaced the previous employment models.

a. Pay – The Union is concerned that many supply agencies effectively force teachers, often as a result of their need to find work, to work for a lower rate of pay than they are entitled to, given their skills and experiences within the classroom.

b. Conditions – The NASUWT is concerned that some supply teachers are deployed outwith the School Teachers’ Pay and Conditions Document (STPCD), meaning that they are required to work without adequate breaks, that there is no overall regard to their working hours (if they are deployed in more than one school) and that they do not receive recompense for holiday pay.

c. Access to CPD - The Union is concerned that the majority of supply teachers do not have access to high-quality CPD on a regular basis, appropriate to their needs. For some supply teachers, this may mean that they cannot gain the updates necessary to allow them to gain permanent work or to follow their desired progression route.

d. Pension provision – The NASUWT is concerned that many supply teachers are not able to gain access to the TPS and that many supply agencies do not make the appropriate contributions as their employers.

e. Deployment – The Union is concerned that supply teachers are deployed on an ad hoc basis, often without consideration for their specialism or age-range training. This may also include deployment to schools that are unsuitable for their levels of experience, particularly for newly qualified teachers.

f. Lack of redress – The NASUWT is concerned that many supply teachers do not receive support or appropriate information from supply agencies if a school chooses to no longer use them.

The NASUWT will continue to campaign on all of the key issues highlighted above to ensure that policy makers are made aware of the specific concerns of supply teachers across the UK.

The union is lobbying MPs, calling for greater regulation of umbrella companies, which some supply agencies are using to exploit supply teachers and avoid paying tax and National Insurance.

They believe that introducing a kite mark for supply agencies may also help to tackle some of the problems.

A recent NASUWT survey of 1,500 supply teachers found that 65% had been asked to sign contracts with offshore umbrella companies, which deny supply teachers their basic legal rights and entitlements.

NASUWT general secretary Chris Keates said:

“Supply teaching is, by its very nature, often an isolating job but these figures show a worrying rise in stress and drop in morale.”

“Supply teachers provide a vital resource to schools but all too often they are being exploited, often by unscrupulous supply agencies.”

“Supply teachers are often unable to speak out about their treatment by some of these unscrupulous supply agencies due to threats of 'blacklisting'.”