

# save our schools

Many schools could apply to become academies and this could mean loss of pay for school support staff

## Tell the government your views

If you're concerned about schools becoming academies contact the government and tell them using this email address that they gave to headteachers but didn't want you to have.

**N**o matter what the status of your school GMB's job is to protect your job, your pay and your hours at work. The government might change the education system or the head teacher may change the type of school but the school's job will remain the same. And so should your pay and conditions. Here's what to do if changes are being made at your school.

Academies can set their own pay and terms and conditions, leaving all staff vulnerable to attack. Academies are not covered by the School Support Staff

Negotiating Body, so instead of fairness, consistency and transparency, we will have more secrecy and massive divergence in terms and conditions for school support staff.

### Protect your pay

The academy system means that school support staff's pay and hours could change radically. The way the children are taught and what they are taught may change and all of this may well be funded by companies who are simply seeking to make a profit out of children's education.

### Profit before pupils

Academies are not democratic. Unlike schools, with local authority oversight, they are not accountable to the local community. Academies are allowed to work almost entirely without scrutiny. The governors of academy schools are appointed, not elected.



## School support staff act now

Protect your GMB membership; fill in the personalised form inserted in our magazine and switch to direct debit.

Academies bring more secrecy and less local democracy - Education Secretary Michael Gove has even said he has 'no ideological objection' to companies making profits from academy schools.

Initially the academy system was set up to help poorer secondary schools improve their standards, but now any school is able to apply, including primary and special schools. This effectively means that we will have a two-tier education system where children's education will be put at risk and the emphasis will be on profit not pupils.

Because of this GMB has created a National Academy Pack to give advice and guidance, which you can access at [www.gmb.org.uk](http://www.gmb.org.uk) GMB has a four-point plan telling you what you need to do to find out if your school is becoming an academy. GMB's swift response to these plans is at both a local and national level so get in touch with your workplace organiser. ■

## GMB's four-point plan

The main thing is for members to meet and find out whether the governing body has applied to become an academy

- 1 Meet the staff**  
Meet all the support staff, whether they are GMB members or not. At this meeting, organise a delegation to the governing body. Ask all non-members to join GMB to ensure they can be represented by GMB.
- 2 Meet the governing body**  
Choose a group of you to meet the governing body and find out whether they have applied for your school to become an academy. If they have, ask when TUPE consultation with GMB will start.
- 3 Meet GMB**  
If your governing body explains that they have applied to become an academy then set up a meeting with your GMB workplace organiser or GMB officer. They can advise you on what you should do next.
- 4 Meet the governors**  
Find out the governors' intentions for staff pay and terms and conditions once they gain academy status. All GMB members should change their subscriptions arrangements to direct debit immediately to ensure they remain members once transferred.

## CONTACT GMB

Get in touch with your GMB lead organiser

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Write to the government now and tell them your views:  
[feedbacktoministers@education.gsi.gov.uk](mailto:feedbacktoministers@education.gsi.gov.uk)



## St Mark's School



Hi Jane.

Hi Janet. Have you heard about these new academy schools? How do we find out if our head has applied to be one?

Really why?

Well first we should set up a meeting with all the support staff and talk about going to see the head.



Well, they can do this without talking to anyone. If we become an academy she can set the curriculum, decide which kids get in and which don't. She can even cut our members' pay and conditions without consulting us or anyone else.

Some of the support staff aren't GMB members. Should they come to the meeting?



I'll set a meeting for next week for all the support staff.

Do it this week. We need to get on with this and let everyone know what this means. We'll hold a meeting and take a delegation to the head.

Yes we need to tell them that if they aren't in GMB they can't stop the school cutting their rights or jobs. They should sign up to be safer. Also members who pay their subs by check-off should change to Direct Debit to ensure the head doesn't stop their membership without them knowing.



I don't think any of the parents know about this, should we involve them?

Not for the staff meeting but after that yes. Many will not know how this will affect their local school and their children's education.

The end