

GMB

YOUR UNION IN
SCHOOLS

THE NEW NATIONAL NEGOTIATING BODY FOR
**SCHOOL SUPPORT
STAFF**



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THE SSSNB IN NUMBERS

- The number of support staff in England rose by 70% between 2001 and 2009.
- There are now 338,000 full-time-equivalent school support staff posts—perhaps 450,000 individuals.
- The SSSNB covers 22,300 maintained schools, educating 7.5m pupils.
- The average nursery/primary school has 235 pupils, 12 teachers and 11 support staff.
- The average secondary school has 975 pupils, 65 teachers and 36 support staff.
- Over 50% of support staff are classroom-based. Of the rest, nearly 20% work in site, facilities and services, 17% in administration, 9% in specialist and technical support, and 3% in pastoral and functional support.
- The total pay bill for support staff covered by the SSSNB is £6.65bn.

It's been a long, hard slog but finally GMB has persuaded Government that school support staff need to be treated with the same respect as teachers and that means having their own national pay and conditions framework. The new statutory negotiating body, the SSSNB, has the power to do this. It is a great opportunity.

Brian Strutton, GMB National Secretary

Our support staff are also vital to our schools and I want to make sure they are properly recognised and rewarded for the vital role they carry out in school. I want them to be able to make the maximum contribution in the classroom and behind the scenes—and their pay and conditions must reflect the contribution they make.

Ed Balls, Secretary of State for Children, Schools and Families

1 INTRODUCTION

A new national negotiating body for school support staff has been set out in legislation, due to come into effect on 12 January 2010. The Government has allowed the body to get on with its work immediately.

The first meeting of the School Support Staff Negotiating Body (SSSNB) took place on 7 July 2009, heralding in a new era for school support staff. The SSSNB is the first national bargaining machinery to be established for many years.

The SSSNB will design a national pay and conditions framework for school support staff, to apply with statutory force in all maintained schools in England.

The new body covers all support staff employed to work in a maintained school in England, except those whose pay arrangements are determined by the Youth and Community Workers Joint National Council, the Craft Joint National Council, or the Soulbury Committee. This amounts to 338,000 full-time-equivalent support staff posts in 22,000 schools, with an annual pay bill of over £6.5 billion.

The SSSNB is made up of three trade unions (GMB, Unison and Unite), four employer groups (local government, foundation schools and two church groups); two government agencies (the Department for Children, Schools and Families, and the Training and Development Agency), an independent Chair, and a separate independent secretariat provided by the Office of Manpower Economics.

GMB is represented on the SSSNB by three lay members of our National Schools Committee: Alyson Bryan, Christine Footer and Barbara Plant, together with GMB National Secretary Brian Strutton, who is Joint Secretary of the new body.

This GMB briefing tells you all about the SSSNB, and how it affects you. If you would like to know more, please visit www.gmb.org.uk/schoolworkforce. GMB members can contact their local GMB representative or National Secretary Brian Strutton (brian.strutton@gmb.org.uk).



GMB National Schools Committee

School administrative staff often do not figure in education policy debates, yet without their dedication and goodwill, schools would simply not be able to function. GMB is pushing for urgent action on pay, on working time, and on sustainable staffing structures. We are determined to ensure that school administrative staff get their due recognition and reward.

The Way Our Schools Work, a GMB national survey of school administrative staff

2 GMB IN SCHOOLS

GMB is the union for school support staff, with over 100,000 teaching assistants, school meals staff, secretaries, cleaners, caretakers, and many more already in membership. GMB Workplace Organisers, backed by a network of full-time GMB Officers and specialists, provide expert advice and support to members on a whole range of school issues, including:

- Essential information on issues such as the administration of medication, accusations, and accidents such as slips and trips.
- Free legal advice for members who have been assaulted at work, or had allegations made against them.
- Help and support with problems around working time, pay, grading and pensions.
- Representation in disciplinary and grievance hearings.
- Support in cases of discrimination, bullying and harassment.
- A collective voice in your school.
- A collective voice with the national employers and Government.

You are safer and more secure in GMB. We have a long-running campaign for fair, consistent treatment of support staff in schools. GMB is about winning you the recognition, status and pay you deserve.

Teaching assistants and nursery nurses are education's hidden professionals. Their roles and responsibilities are growing ever more demanding. And study after study confirms their value in raising educational standards. Yet this contribution is rarely acknowledged and pay and working conditions remain pitifully poor. GMB is determined to win a new deal for the school workforce, delivering proper recognition, reward and career opportunities for all.

Education's Hidden Professionals, a GMB national survey of teaching assistants and nursery nurses

A new deal for school support staff

Since the 2003 National Agreement on school remodelling, support staff have taken on many new duties and responsibilities. We have also seen new positions created, such as Cover Supervisors, Bursar/School Business Managers, and Higher Level Teaching Assistants. However, as far as school support staff pay and conditions are concerned, the National Agreement was only a starting point.

GMB has been fighting on two fronts for improvements. We have negotiated with employers, and we have lobbied Government for a new negotiating system fit for the expanded support staff workforce.

We have conducted national surveys of our growing membership, to get a better picture about the working lives and aspirations of support staff in schools. Our surveys have exposed the wrongs that many support staff encounter. They have made clear that schools would not be able to function without the dedication and goodwill of the wider school workforce. We have put this evidence to Government and employers to bolster our campaign for a new deal for school support staff.

Have your voice heard in school

In recent years, many thousands of support staff have joined GMB to be part of our campaign. GMB Officers are visiting schools in every local authority, and lay members from every GMB Region attend our National Schools

Committee, bringing together support staff from across the country.

Relentless campaigning by GMB, backed by our growing membership, has finally delivered a promise from Government to give you the respect and recognition you deserve. In 2005, Government accepted the need for "a more standardised approach" to the pay and conditions of support staff. A year later, it announced its intention to seek greater consistency by establishing a national negotiating structure.

The School Support Staff Negotiating Body (SSSNB) is now up and running. It brings us a step closer to ensuring fair and consistent treatment for all school support staff. It's both the greatest opportunity and the greatest challenge we've ever had. We urge all school support staff to join GMB and play their part. **Every non-union member in a school in the UK undermines our case for respect and recognition.**

For more information about GMB in schools, visit www.gmb.org.uk/schoolworkforce. GMB members can contact their local GMB representative, or email National Secretary Brian Strutton at brian.strutton@gmb.org.uk.

If you or your colleagues would like to arrange for a GMB Officer to visit your school, email avril.chambers@gmb.org.uk and we will make the necessary arrangements for you.

3 JOINT CIRCULAR ABOUT THE SSSNB

From 2006 to early 2009, a working group of employers and unions developed detailed proposals for a national school support staff negotiating structure. The working group then issued a joint circular summarising the outcome of its negotiations.

The circular explains that the SSSNB is enshrined in law under the Apprenticeships, Skills, Children and Learning Bill, which received royal assent in November 2009 and comes into effect on 12 January 2010.

Agreements reached by the new body will, subject to ratification by the Secretary of State, apply in all maintained schools in England: that includes support staff in community and voluntary controlled schools, maintained nursery schools and pupil referral units, plus foundation and voluntary aided schools.

The circular gives an indication of the SSSNB's upcoming work: the development of a common core contract of employment, national role profiles, and a national pay framework for school support staff. It states that the new framework could be ready "some time during 2010".

The signatories to the circular pledge to make any transition from existing local pay arrangements to a new pay framework "as smooth as possible".

The text of the circular is reproduced here.

To: Chief Executives in England
Directors of Children's Services/Chief Education Officers in England
Diocesan Directors of Education
Directors of HR
Chairs of Governing Bodies of all Maintained Schools in England
Head Teachers of all Maintained Schools in England
Trade Union National Secretaries

JOINT CIRCULAR FROM THE SUPPORT STAFF WORKING GROUP

SCHOOL SUPPORT STAFF NEGOTIATING BODY

We are writing to update you on the latest developments in the establishment of new national negotiating machinery for school support staff.

The Government's decision to establish a new Body was announced formally in September 2007 and a further announcement was made in September 2008. This can be found at:

http://www.dcsf.gov.uk/pns/DisplayPN.cgi?pn_id=2008_0210

The Body will be set up under statutory provisions contained in the Apprenticeships, Skills, Children and Learning Bill (ASCL Bill) which was announced in the Queen's Speech on 3 December. The legislative timetable for the Bill is:

First reading 4 February 2009
Second reading 23 February 2009
Third reading 5 May 2009
Royal Assent November 2009

What follows reflects the relevant clauses in the ASCL Bill in relation to the establishment and workings of the School Support Staff Negotiating Body as introduced at First Reading. These provisions will be subject to the normal Parliamentary scrutiny before they become law and could, as a result, be subject to change.

The new Body will be known as the School Support Staff

Negotiating Body (SSSNB) and its agreements on pay and conditions will, subject to ratification by the Secretary of State, apply to all maintained schools in England. The Welsh Assembly is currently considering the appropriate arrangements for school support staff in Wales.

Which support staff will be covered by the SSSNB?

Under the terms of the bill the SSSNB will cover:

Any person employed under a contract of employment:

(a) by the governing body of a school maintained by a local authority in England; or

[intended to cover support staff in foundation and voluntary aided schools where the governing body is the employer]

(b) by a local authority in England to work wholly in a school or schools maintained by a local authority in England.

[intended to cover all community and voluntary controlled schools, maintained nursery schools, and pupil referral units (short stay schools)]

Teachers will not be covered, nor will support staff employed under contracts incorporating the agreements of any of the following: the JNC for Youth and Community Workers, the Soulbury Committee and the JNC for Local Authority Craft and Associated Employees. Any other employee whose contract of employment provides for them to work wholly in schools, including those employed by the local authority's DSO/DLO, could be affected. There will be a facility for local partners to refer to the SSSNB any questions or differences of interpretation concerning the inclusion or otherwise of particular employees.

How might the SSSNB operate and who will be represented?

The SSSNB will be a Negotiating Body and a Non Departmental Public Body. The Employers' Side will comprise representatives from the Local Government Employers, the Foundation and Aided Schools National Association (FASNA), the Church of England Education Division and the Catholic Education Service for England and Wales. The recognised Trade Unions will be UNISON,

GMB and Unite. The Department for Children, Schools and Families (DCSF) and the Training and Development Agency (TDA) will also be members of the SSSNB in a non-voting capacity. The SSSNB will have an Independent Chair. Philip Ashmore, who has considerable experience of industrial relations and is a member of the NHS Pay Review Body, has recently been appointed to this position. His role will be to receive and manage delivery of the matters referred to the SSSNB by the Secretary of State, chair meetings of the SSSNB, facilitate formal and informal discussions between the parties, act as a conduit to the Secretary of State, and ensure that the SSSNB will have regard to government policy and considerations of the wider social partnership.

The Apprenticeships, Skills, Children and Learning Bill

Under the terms of the ASCL Bill, matters may be referred to the SSSNB by the Secretary of State for consideration and the SSSNB itself may raise matters. It is proposed that if agreement is reached, those agreements will be submitted to the Secretary of State. Where agreement has not been reached or the agreement reached does not satisfy the Secretary of State he may ask the body to consider matters further and ultimately when it is considered to be a matter of urgency enforce his own determination.

What is the anticipated timetable now?

Detailed preparatory work is currently being undertaken in the Support Staff Working Group (SSWG), a sub-group of the national Workforce Agreement Monitoring Group (WAMG). The Bill was introduced to Parliament on 4 February and the Secretary of State will now use prerogative powers to establish the SSSNB on a non-statutory basis in the interim. The SSSNB could then start negotiations on a new pay and conditions framework for support staff. Any agreements reached by the SSSNB whilst it is operating on a non-statutory basis will be provisional until Royal Assent, which is expected in November 2009. It is likely that the first agreements will take effect some time during 2010 and staff contracts could be amended to reflect the new negotiating arrangements. Further details on transitional arrangements will be communicated at a later stage.

What will the SSSNB actually be negotiating?

In 2006 the Secretary of State commissioned the SSWG to work on a number of workstreams covering:

- National negotiating arrangements for support staff
- A pay and conditions framework

National negotiating arrangements for support staff

The workstream on negotiating arrangements is now nearing completion with the impending establishment of the SSSNB.

Pay and conditions framework

The Government is expected to ask the SSSNB to negotiate a new pay and conditions framework for support staff that combines the twin objectives of national consistency and local flexibility. The SSSNB is looking at developing:

- A common core contract and conditions of service including a method of calculating pay
- National role profiles for core role and a national pay framework
- A process for assimilating school support staff to the pay framework

DCSF has commissioned consultants to examine current practice in schools then present options and, where appropriate, recommendations for a new pay and conditions framework. These options and recommendations will provide the basis for substantive negotiations in the SSSNB starting in 2009.

It is not intended in pursuit of the general objective of achieving consistency across the maintained sector within a national framework to restrict the flexibilities that allow organisation structures and jobs to be designed to meet local needs.

Areas of Interest

Career progression and development pathways

TDA has responsibilities for the professional development of the children's workforce in schools, including establishing and maintaining frameworks

for occupational and professional standards and qualifications. TDA will continue to work in this area; setting strategic direction for professional development; supporting regional and local CPD leadership; and providing practical support and guidance to enable effective development of the workforce. SSSNB will work with TDA so that pay and conditions frameworks complement effective practice in professional development and career progression.

What needs to happen now at local level in preparation for implementation?

There is no need to do anything at this stage but in the meantime we would encourage you to communicate fully with your support staff on developments. We will continue to keep you informed as things progress. However, there will eventually be a number of actions required ahead of final implementation. One such action is that affected employees may need to be given the necessary notice of variation in their contracts, with respect to the responsibility for national negotiations on certain terms and conditions of service moving from the NJC for Local Government Staff to the SSSNB. This action will follow appropriate consultation.

As far as community schools are concerned, local authorities will no doubt want to consider whether they should continue to include school support staff in local pay and grading reviews. The advice of the SSWG and the NJC is that support staff should continue to be included until advised otherwise. It is the intention of all parties involved in the forthcoming national negotiations to make the transition from existing local pay arrangements to the new pay and conditions framework as smooth as possible. We shall continue to keep you in touch with developments and ensure that you get adequate notice of everything you need to do locally in preparing for implementation.

4 CONSTITUTION AND PROCEDURAL ARRANGEMENTS

The constitution of the School Support Staff Negotiating Body specifies the most important features of the new body—including its functions, scope, membership and decision-making process.

In brief, the functions of the SSSNB are: to consider and try to reach agreement about any matter within its remit, to submit agreements to the Secretary of State, and to issue guidance and advice in support of its agreements. The Secretary of State can refer matters to the SSSNB for its consideration. The body can also consider matters which have not been referred to it, provided they are within its remit.

SSSNB agreements need to be ratified by the Secretary of State. They then have statutory force in maintained schools across England. The **remit** of the SSSNB covers remuneration, and conditions of employment relating to duties or working time.

The SSSNB's **scope** is "School Support Staff", i.e. persons employed by a local authority in England or the governing body of a school maintained by a local authority in England, under a contract of employment to work wholly at a school (or schools) maintained by a local authority in England. This excludes teachers and anyone covered by the JNC for Youth & Community Workers, the Soulbury Committee or the Craft JNC.

The SSSNB has two sides which must negotiate to endeavour to reach agreement. The **trade union side** is made up of the three recognised unions for school support staff: GMB, Unison and Unite. The **employer side** includes local government employers, faith school employers and foundation school employers.

The SSSNB has an independent Chair, Philip Ashmore, and it is also attended—in a non-voting capacity—by representatives of the Department for Children, Schools and Families, and the Training and Development Agency.

In brief, the functions of the SSSNB are: to consider and try to reach agreement about any matter within its remit, to submit agreements to the Secretary of State, and to issue guidance and advice in support of its agreements.

The SSSNB constitution allows the body to sort out its own additional procedural arrangements. These cover matters such as minutes, meeting schedules and working groups.

Both the constitution and the additional procedural arrangements are reproduced overleaf.

THE SCHOOL SUPPORT STAFF NEGOTIATING BODY (NON-STATUTORY) CONSTITUTIONAL ARRANGEMENTS

(As legislation currently stands - First Reading Stage in the House of Lords)

Title

1. This Body is a non-statutory unincorporated body established by the Secretary of State for Children, Schools and Families (“the Secretary of State”).
2. It is called the School Support Staff Negotiating Body (“the SSSNB”).

Functions of the SSSNB

3. The functions of the SSSNB are:

- a) to consider, with a view to reaching an agreement about-
 - any matter within its remit which has been referred to it by the Secretary of State, having regard to any factors specified by the Secretary of State;
 - any other matter within its remit which has not been so referred;
- b) to submit any agreement reached to the Secretary of State, about any matter referred to it, by any date specified by the Secretary of State or, if it has been unable to reach agreement, notify the Secretary of State of that;
- c) at its discretion, to submit any agreement reached about any matter within its remit which has not been referred to it;
- d) to reconsider any agreement referred back to it by the Secretary of State, having regard to any factors specified by the Secretary of State;
- e) to submit a revised agreement or resubmit the existing agreement where it is unable to agree revisions, by any date specified by the Secretary of State.
- f) to issue guidance, with the approval of the Secretary of State, in relation to any agreement submitted which the Secretary of State ratifies by order or requires

persons to have regard by order.

Scope

4. The matters within the SSSNB’s remit are matters relating to:

- a) the remuneration of school support staff; or
- b) conditions of employment relating to the duties or working time of school support staff.

“School support staff” are persons who are employed by a local education authority (“LEA”) in England or the governing body of a school maintained by a LEA in England, under a contract of employment to work wholly at a school or schools maintained by a LEA in England, excluding school teachers and any person whose contract of employment incorporates the provisions of agreements reached by any of the Bodies listed in the Annex attached.

Membership

5. The SSSNB’s membership consists of persons who represent the interests of:

- a) the school support staff organisations named in paragraph 6;
 - b) the school support staff employer organisations named in paragraph 7;
 - c) the Secretary of State;
 - d) the Training and Development Agency for Schools (“the TDA”);
- and an Independent Chair.

6. The organisations that represent the interests of school support staff are GMB, UNISON and Unite the Union (“the Trade Union Side”).

7. The organisations that represent the interests of school support staff employers are the Local Government Association (LGA), the Foundation and Aided Schools National Association (FASNA), the Church of England Education Division (CoE) and the Catholic Education Service for England and Wales (CESEW) (“the Employer Side”).

8. These organisations are to be represented on the SSSNB by individuals appointed by the relevant organisation. The Trade Union Side and the Employer Side will each agree the number of individuals that will represent their respective organisations. There must be no more than 15 representatives of each Side.

9. The interests of the Secretary of State are to be represented on the SSSNB by at least one official of the Department for Children, Schools and Families (“the DCSF”).

10. The interests of the TDA are to be represented on the SSSNB by one of its officers.

11. Only those individuals who represent the interests of the Trade Union Side or the Employer Side are entitled to vote in any proceedings of the SSSNB.

Independent chair

12. There will be an Independent Chair (“the Chair”) appointed by the Secretary of State, in accordance with The Office of the Commissioner for Public Appointments (OCPA) guidelines, for a term of no more than three years.

13. The Secretary of State may re-appoint the same person to be the Chair for a second term of no more than three years.

14. The person appointed to be the Chair must be a person who, in the opinion of the Secretary of State, does not represent the interests of a school support staff organisation, a school support staff employer organisation, the Secretary of State or any other person or organisation represented on the SSSNB.

15. The Chair’s functions are:

- a) to ensure that all proceedings are properly conducted and in a timely fashion, having regard to any dates by which agreements must be submitted to the Secretary of State;
- b) to advise the Secretary of State of the progress being made in relation to matters referred to the SSSNB for consideration; and

c) to facilitate the reaching of agreement by voting members, including by informal conciliation.

16. The Chair is not entitled to vote in any proceedings of the SSSNB.

Substitutes

17. Where the appointed representative of any of the organisations on the Trade Union Side or the Employer Side is unable to attend any meeting that organisation may send a substitute in that person’s place and that substitute shall be entitled to speak and vote in any proceedings.

18. Where any of the appointed representatives of the Secretary of State or the appointed representative of the TDA is unable to attend any meeting, the Secretary of State or TDA (as the case may be) may send a substitute in that person’s place and that substitute shall be entitled to speak but not to vote in any proceedings.

Other invitees

19. The Chair or any member of the SSSNB may request that a person or a representative of an organisation be invited to attend a specific meeting for the purposes of contributing to the discussion on a specific issue. Where the SSSNB agrees to such a request, an invitation may be issued to that person or organisation.

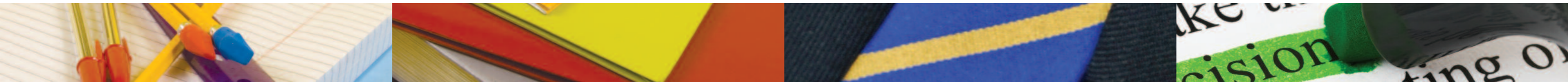
20. Invitees shall not be entitled to vote in any proceedings.

Working groups

21. The SSSNB may establish one or more working groups for the purposes of facilitating the performance by the SSSNB of its functions. The terms of reference and composition of any such working group shall be determined by the SSSNB.

Independent secretariat

22. An Independent Secretariat, appointed by the Secretary of State, shall provide administrative support to the SSSNB and its working groups, including the preparation and circulation of agendas for meetings and minutes of meetings.



Fees and expenses

23. The DCSF will bear the costs of:

- a) recruiting and appointing the Chair;
- b) recruiting and appointing the Independent Secretariat;
- c) the fees payable to the Chair, as specified in the contract between the Secretary of State and the person appointed;
- d) the ongoing costs of the services provided by the Independent Secretariat to the SSSNB in accordance with these arrangements.

24. The DCSF will pay SSSNB expenses where it has given its prior approval. All requests for such approval must be supported by a robust business case.

Annual reports

25. The SSSNB shall prepare a report, in respect of each successive period of 12 months beginning on the day it is established, about the performance of its functions in that period and present that report to the Secretary of State.

Amendment of constitution

26. The Secretary of State may, after consulting the Trade Union Side and the Employer Side revise these constitutional arrangements.

Procedural arrangements

Quorum

27. A meeting of the SSSNB shall be quorate if at least one third of the Trade Union Side representatives and one third of the Employer Side representatives are present, provided those present represent the interests of at least two of the organisations on the Trade Union Side and at least two of the organisations on the Employer Side.

Decision-making

28. Resolutions for determination may be put forward by the Chair, or any representative of the Trade Union Side or the Employer Side. The representatives of each Side will determine their own procedure for putting forward resolutions and arriving at decisions. A resolution will

only be carried if it is supported by the representatives of both Sides.

29. The SSSNB may determine the rest of its own procedural arrangements.

SCHOOL SUPPORT STAFF NEGOTIATING BODY (NON-STATUTORY) ADDITIONAL PROCEDURAL ARRANGEMENTS

Introduction

1. These additional procedural arrangements for the non-statutory School Support Staff Negotiating Body (SSSNB) accompany its constitution established using the Secretary of State's prerogative powers. The constitution covers SSSNB's functions, scope, membership, Independent Chair, Independent Secretariat, fees and expenses, annual reports and specified procedural arrangements. It also provides for the SSSNB to determine the rest of its procedural arrangements.

Meetings

2. The SSSNB will meet as appropriate to consider matters within its remit and reach agreements either as directed by the Secretary of State's referral letter or as raised by member organisations. The SSSNB will meet a minimum of quarterly each year. All meetings will be called by or on behalf of the Independent Chair. In the absence of the Independent Chair, meetings will be chaired by a senior member of the Independent Secretariat. The sides representing school support staff (Trade Union Side) and school support staff employers (Employer Side) will each appoint a Joint Secretary or Secretaries.

Working groups

3. The SSSNB will determine the requirement for working groups according to the business of the body. The establishment, composition, terms of reference and lifespan of any working group will be agreed by the SSSNB. Subject to their terms of reference and the SSSNB constitution, these groups may determine their own procedures. They will be chaired by either the Independent Chair or a nominated member or the Independent Secretariat. Working groups may invite

individuals to contribute to discussions on a specific issue.

Minutes

4. Minutes shall be taken for each full meeting of the SSSNB by the Independent Secretariat as set out in the SSSNB constitution. Draft minutes will be circulated to the Joint Secretaries to co-ordinate and propose any amendments for the Trade Union and Employer Sides. Amended minutes will be circulated to each member of the body as soon as possible and within a minimum of ten working days following the meeting.

Freedom of Information

5. The SSSNB will be covered by the publication scheme for the Office of Manpower Economics and the bodies it services. The scheme will specify the classes of information SSSNB will publish.

Role of the Independent Secretariat

6. The Independent Secretariat will report to and be answerable to the Independent Chair. It will be responsible for:

- Supporting and advising the Independent Chair on SSSNB business and monitoring progress on action points;
- Liaison with members and contributing to informal discussions on SSSNB business;
- Preparation of first drafts of agreements, guidance and submissions to the Secretary of State, and the SSSNB's annual reports;
- Preparation and distribution of meeting minutes, briefing and meeting documents;
- Co-ordination of statistical, economic and research information where it is considered practical, effective and relevant and in consultation with the Independent Chair and members. However, for the purposes of arriving at negotiated agreements, the prime responsibility for producing supporting evidence and documentation lies with member organisations. The Secretariat will discuss available funding for commissioned research, data collection and expert advice with DCSF and other members

subject to a robust business case;

- Facilitating full SSSNB, Executive Group and Working Group meetings; and
- Administrative functions including arranging meetings, maintaining SSSNB budgets, maintaining the website, and records and information management.

7. The Independent Secretariat will, where resources are available and consistent with their independent status, provide any other appropriate assistance requested by members.

Finance

8. The organisations represented on SSSNB shall be responsible for and bear the cost of:

- Attendance of its own members and representatives;
- Consultation with their executives; and
- Notifying the details of agreements reached to those they represent.

9. Costs incurred by other invitees to meetings shall be met by their own organisation. Organisations represented on SSSNB can choose to contribute to any additional research or other work relevant to the work of SSSNB as deemed appropriate.

Review and revision

10. The SSSNB will review these procedural arrangements annually. An initial review will be required when SSSNB gains statutory status.

5 SECRETARY OF STATE REFERRAL LETTER

In July 2009, Secretary of State Ed Balls wrote to the SSSNB setting out what he would like the body to do over the coming months. The letter gives the SSSNB a broad mandate to design a national pay and conditions framework for all school support staff in maintained schools in England. This is great news—it is exactly what GMB has wanted to get started on.

Ed Balls also lists a number of factors for the SSSNB to take into account during its work. These include “the need to recruit and retain sufficient numbers of high quality support staff in our schools” and “the need to ensure that all support staff within a school are deployed effectively and in a way that enables them to be fairly rewarded, develop their skills and progress in their careers”.

The Secretary of State reminds the SSSNB to ensure that its work complements the Social Partnership (otherwise known as the Workforce Agreement Monitoring Group, or WAMG for short). The Social Partnership brings together support staff unions (including GMB), teachers’ unions, Government and employers to discuss a variety of school workforce issues.

Ed Balls sets the SSSNB a deadline of 28 May 2010 for submitting its proposals.

His letter to SSSNB Independent Chair Philip Ashmore is reproduced here.

I am very pleased to confirm that the School Support Staff Negotiating Body (SSSNB) was established by the Secretary of State under the prerogative powers on 7 July 2009. The statutory SSSNB will not be established until the relevant provisions of the Apprenticeships, Skills, Children and Learning Bill are brought into force later this year. In the meantime, I want the non-statutory body to begin the work that will fall within the statutory body’s remit when it is established.

I am writing to set out those matters that I am referring to the SSSNB for its consideration.

In order to meet the commitment I made in the Children’s Plan, to establish a national pay and conditions framework for all school support staff in maintained schools, I require the SSSNB to initially focus on considering, with a view to reaching agreement on, the following matters:

- The production of a core contract of employment to cover remuneration, duties and working time;
- The design of national job role profiles to cover core school support staff roles;
- The development and production of a method for converting those job role profiles into a salary structure,
- A strategy that will effectively implement the national pay and conditions’ framework in all schools maintained by local authorities in England including a methodology to manage both transition and steady state.

In considering all of these matters, the SSSNB must have regard to the following factors:

- a. The need for the process for determining the pay and conditions, relating to the duties and working time, of support staff pay to be practical to implement in all maintained schools.
- b. The need to minimise any additional administrative burdens and cost implications of the framework’s introduction.

- c. The need to ensure that all agreements: are affordable in the context of the public expenditure settlement for schools; are consistent with the achievement of the Government’s inflation target; have regard to government policy on public sector pay settlements and wider economic and labour market conditions.

- d. The need to ensure that in reaching agreements, due consideration is given to equality and diversity issues and that best practice is adhered to.

- e. The importance of achieving a consistent and coherent pay and conditions structure that brings about national consistency and local flexibility.

- f. The need to recruit and retain sufficient numbers of high quality support staff in our schools.

- g. That the pay and conditions framework must contribute to the effective deployment of a workforce that supports the vision for a 21st century school.

- h. The need to ensure that all support staff within a school are deployed effectively and in a way that enables them to be fairly rewarded, develop their skills and progress in their careers.

- i. The need to ensure that all activity to develop the new framework complements work being done by the Social Partnership and the Training and Development Agency in support of the remodelling agenda and the development of the wider children’s workforce.

- j. The need to ensure that in reaching agreements, due consideration is given to the information relating to the pay and conditions of work of school support staff, commissioned by the Department and provided as a tool to help inform SSSNB discussions.

- k. The necessity for the new framework to cater for those persons who are engaged as apprentices in support staff roles.

Having had regard to these factors, and given full consideration to the matters referred, the SSSNB

must then submit to me any agreements that it has reached by 28 May 2010. If the SSSNB has not reached agreement on any of the matters referred, it must advise me that it has been unable to do so by that date. I hope that this later date will provide re-assurance to the trade union and employer representatives on the SSSNB who have written to me to express concern about how realistic it would be for the SSSNB to have reached agreement by February 2010. In the meantime, I ask the SSSNB to provide me with a general update on its progress in dealing with these matters by 30 November 2009 through the Independent Chair.

In accordance with its constitution, the SSSNB must prepare an annual report about the performance of its functions. The first annual report must cover the period 7 July 2009 to 6 July 2010 and a hard copy of that report should be submitted to me by 6 August 2010.

Yours sincerely

ED BALLS MP

6 HOW IT WILL WORK

The SSSNB has so far created two working groups. One is developing a national core contract of employment, while the other is devising a national pay structure and procuring outside experts to do detailed preparatory work.

It has also established an Executive Group to coordinate matters—GMB is represented by National Secretary Brian Strutton and National Schools Committee member Barbara Plant.

The working groups have at their disposal some preliminary work commissioned by the Department for Children, Schools and Families. But there is still a lot to be done.

Core Contract Working Group

The Core Contract Working Group will produce proposals for a national contract of employment covering the core terms and conditions of all support staff within the SSSNB's scope. The core contract will need to include:

- clarity of employer for all staff
- job title
- place(s) of work
- standard weeks/hours of work
- pay and how it is calculated
- holiday entitlements
- sickness and other benefits
- reference to procedures, e.g. disciplinary and grievance

GMB believes that support staff should be salaried like teachers, without the use of term-time formulas, and we will be arguing our case in the negotiations ahead. GMB is represented on this working group by National Secretary Brian Strutton and National Schools Committee member Christine Footer.

Role Profiles and Job Measurement Working Group

Designing a new pay structure will be taken forward by the Role Profiles and Job Measurement Working Group. It will require procuring outside experts to develop national job profiles for the main support staff roles, and a tailored job-evaluation scheme to evaluate the national job profiles and any roles falling outside them.

Great as our achievement is in establishing the negotiating body, the real work is about to start. The opportunity is there. GMB will take that opportunity and lead the way in establishing national pay and conditions for school support staff and deliver the justice they so richly deserve.

Statement by the Central Executive Committee ratified by GMB Congress 2009

The group will negotiate national pay scales for the national job profiles, including how to facilitate progression and career development. It will also devise a method by which staff could be assimilated to the new framework.

The Government has acknowledged that there will be implementation costs with any new pay and conditions framework, as well as future paybill costs, although at what level is still up for debate.

GMB is represented on this working group by National Secretary Brian Strutton and National Schools Committee member Alyson Bryan.

Looking ahead

The legislation that enshrines the SSSNB in law comes into effect on 12 January 2010.

The SSSNB will meanwhile procure job-evaluation specialists to develop national job profiles and a tailored job-evaluation scheme. These will need testing before

being finalized for a national scheme, and the SSSNB hopes to run a pilot by the end of 2009. This is all essential preparatory work for a national pay framework.

Work will also continue on proposals for a national core contract of employment.

Through our democratic structures and active communications, GMB will keep our members fully informed of progress in these negotiations. GMB members will have a vote on any proposals prior to any change to their pay or conditions.

The SSSNB must endeavour to come to an agreement and make its submission to the Secretary of State by 28 May 2010.

A challenging programme of work lies ahead. It has taken years of campaigning by GMB and others to get a national body for school support staff established. We now have the opportunity to create new conditions for support staff that are consistent, transparent and fair. So let's not rest on our laurels; the SSSNB is a great achievement but the real work starts now.

GMB's National Schools Committee, Regional committees, activists and Officers will be doing everything they can. But we also need our members in schools to play their part. Talk to your colleagues about the SSSNB; help us make sure that they're all in GMB; get active and involved.

GMB is proud already to represent over 100,000 school support staff members. It's for them that we now have to deliver.

For more information about the SSSNB, visit www.gmb.org.uk/schoolworkforce. GMB members can contact their local GMB representative or National Secretary Brian Strutton (brian.strutton@gmb.org.uk).

7 FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

Why has the School Support Staff Negotiating Body been set up?

The current terms and conditions of school support staff vary enormously. In many cases, they don't reflect the massive increase in roles and responsibilities since school workforce reform began in 2003. School support staff need to be treated with the same respect as teachers and this means having their own national pay and conditions framework. The new statutory negotiating body, the SSSNB, has the power to do this.

Who is covered by the new negotiating body?

You are covered by the SSSNB if:

- you are employed by a local authority in England or by the governing body of a school maintained by a local authority in England,
- and have a contract of employment to work wholly at a school (or schools) maintained by a local authority in England,
- unless you are a teacher, or your pay arrangements are determined by the JNC for Youth & Community workers, the Soulbury Committee or the Craft JNC.

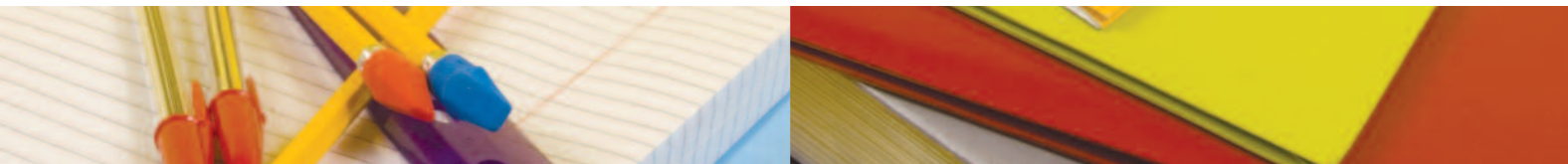
"Maintained schools" are community, voluntary aided, voluntary controlled or foundation schools.

Who has a seat round the negotiating table?

The SSSNB is made up of the three recognised trade unions for school support staff—GMB, Unison and Unite—plus four employer groups: local government, foundation schools and two church groups. There is an independent Chair and an independent secretariat. Officials from the Department for Children, Schools and Families, as well as the Training and Development Agency, attend in a non-voting capacity.

Who represents GMB members on the SSSNB?

GMB is represented on the SSSNB by three lay members of the GMB National Schools Committee: Alyson Bryan, Christine Footer and Barbara Plant, together with the GMB National Secretary for Public Services Brian Strutton, who is Joint Secretary of the new body.



What happens next?

The legislation that enshrines the SSSNB in law comes into effect on 12 January 2010.

The SSSNB will meanwhile procure job-evaluation specialists to develop national job profiles and a tailored job-evaluation scheme. The SSSNB hopes to run a pilot by the end of 2009. Work will also continue on a national core contract of employment.

GMB members will have a vote on any proposals prior to any change to their pay or conditions.

The SSSNB must endeavour to come to an agreement and make its submission to the Secretary of State by 28 May 2010.

What will the new core contract, and pay framework, actually look like?

We don't yet know, because the negotiations are only just starting. What we do know is that the SSSNB will come up with proposals for a national pay and conditions framework for all school support staff in maintained schools, because that's what Secretary of State Ed Balls has asked it to do. There will be national job profiles, a national core contract of employment and a national pay structure. How much local flexibility this pay structure allows is up for grabs, just one reason why it's important that all support staff have their say in the negotiations through GMB membership.

Is there any new money available for the new pay framework?

The Government has acknowledged that there will be implementation costs with any new pay and conditions framework, as well as future paybill costs, although at what level is still up for debate.

Is this going to be like Single Status all over again?

If the SSSNB does reach agreement on a new national pay structure, it will mean a process of transition from existing pay arrangements. All organizations involved in the negotiations have committed to making a transition as smooth as possible. If Single Status hasn't yet been implemented where you are, local authorities are being advised to continue to include school support staff in local pay reviews until instructed otherwise.

How can I get involved?

If you're not already a GMB member, join today! There is a membership form you can photocopy in this booklet, or you can join online: www.gmb.org.uk.

GMB members, why not get in touch with your local GMB rep, your GMB branch, and your GMB Organiser. Every GMB region has its own representative structure for school support staff members, and these give you a direct line to our National Schools Committee. You can also contact GMB National Secretary Brian Strutton at brian.strutton@gmb.org.uk. We want to hear from you!

Where can I get more information?

GMB School Workforce News has regular updates about the SSSNB, and can be found at www.gmb.org.uk/schoolworkforce.

GMB members can also contact their local GMB representative, or email National Secretary Brian Strutton at brian.strutton@gmb.org.uk.

SAY YES TO SECURITY AT WORK

As a GMB member you are much more **secure** at work because you are part of an **effective** union of 610,000 members. Whether you work full-time or part-time—whatever job you do—GMB can **help** you.

GMB

YOUR UNION IN SCHOOLS

Join online at www.gmb.org.uk/join

or fill in parts 1, 2 and 3 or 4 of the form below and post it to GMB, FREEPOST (WC2268), London SW19 4YY (you do not need a stamp).

If you have any questions call GMB on
020 8947 3131

or email info@gmb.org.uk or visit our website www.gmb.org.uk

FOR UNION USE ONLY Section Branch No Membership No Date of joining

GMB membership application form PLEASE USE BLOCK CAPITALS

1 TELL US ABOUT YOU

Surname First name Title Mrs/Miss/Ms/Mr Date of birth

Home address Home Tel Email

Postcode Mobile I agree to abide by GMB rules Signature

Date We ask for your ethnic origins as part of our equal opportunities policy of improving services to all members
Bangladeshi Black African Black Caribbean Black British Chinese Indian Irish Pakistani White Other:

2 TELL US ABOUT YOUR JOB

Employer Your job

Address where you work Postcode How many hours a week do you work? Pay No

Work Tel Pay Date

3 CHOOSE EITHER AUTHORISATION OF DEDUCTION OF YOUR TRADE UNION CONTRIBUTIONS FROM YOUR PAY

Section 68, Trade Union and Labour Relations (Consolidated) Act 1992 as amended

I authorise my employer to deduct from my pay each week/month the sum of £ or other amounts as may be fixed by the GMB from time to time.

Please start the deductions immediately and pay the amounts to the GMB. Cash

I note that this agreement may be cancelled by one month's notice in writing.

I give permission to my employer to notify the GMB of any future change of address.

Signed Date

4 OR INSTRUCTION TO YOUR BANK OR BUILDING SOCIETY TO PAY BY DIRECT DEBIT

Please fill in the form and send to **GMB**, 22–24 Worpole Road, London SW19 4DD

Name and full postal address of your Bank or Building Society branch

To the Manager of Bank/Building Society

Address Postcode

Name(s) of account holder(s)

Bank/Building Society Account Number

Bank/Building Society Sort Code

Reference number (Office use only)

Originator's Identification Number

For GMB official use only. This is not part of the instruction to your Bank/Building Society. If your A/C number is not available fill in your address below.

Instructions to your Bank or Building Society.
Please pay GMB Direct Debits from the account detailed in this Instruction subject to the safeguards assured by the Direct Debit Guarantee. I understand that this Instruction may remain with GMB and, if so, details will be passed electronically to my Bank/Building Society.

Signature(s)

Date

Banks or Building Societies may not accept Direct Debit instructions for some types of account

GMB

YOUR UNION IN
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