

NEU Strikes in Schools

The NEU teachers' union are taking strike action for a better 2022/23 pay deal than the one imposed.

Whilst UNISON members voted to accept the 2022/23 pay offer made to school support staff and council workers, it is important not to undermine any industrial action by a sister trade union.

The advice below is from our national office. In short, you should continue to work as normal and **NOT** undertake any additional duties or tasks to cover for teachers' taking strike action.

UNISON Advice

UNISON respects the rights of other trade unions to take industrial action and supports the other unions' strike action. We urge members to support legal protests and rallies organised by NEU that take place outside your contracted hours of work.

However, UNISON members in schools and sixth form colleges have not been balloted for strike action or action short of strike action on this occasion and are therefore advised to continue with their normal duties and responsibilities. UNISON members should not take on any additional responsibilities being given to them directly as a result of other unions' industrial action.

*Support staff should **not** be expected to provide cover for, or take classes, where this would normally be done by teachers who are taking action. Staff should not be moved from the duties they would normally have carried out in order to cover work and frustrate the industrial action of colleagues. This includes any staff employed as either HLTAs or Cover Supervisors. Members who are under pressure to provide cover for striking colleagues should contact their UNISON rep, branch or region for further advice and support.*

Members are reminded that due to industrial relations legislation only those employees who have been involved in a legal ballot are allowed to take industrial action.

HLTAs and Cover Supervisors

Higher Level Teaching Assistants (HLTAs) should only do 'Specified Work' with the support and/or supervision of a Qualified Teacher. Cover Supervisors supervise students who are working to a lesson prepared by a Qualified Teacher, usually a classroom teacher. If you are in either of these roles you should not be expected to take whole classes on the day of a strike if the teacher that normally supervises, supports or prepares your work is on strike.

For your NJC pay 2023/24 come to [Sandwell UNISON AGM Tuesday 7th March – Sandwell General UNISON Branch](#)

Any queries, please call either Louise Harrisen-Powis – 07527829123 or Marie Taylor – 07849839514

Improved Mileage and Subsistence Rates Negotiated

Given spiralling costs UNISON has been negotiating for better mileage and subsistence rates.

UNISON is pleased to inform that all staff working for Sandwell MBC and Sandwell Children's Trust will from 1st January 2023 be on improved rates. Mileage rates will now be paid at 55p per mile (up from 45p per mile) and subsistence rates have been dramatically improved so that they now bear some resemblance to reality.

For full details please check out [New Mileage and Subsistence Rates Negotiated – Sandwell General UNISON Branch \(sandwellunison.co.uk\)](#)

Extra Bank Holiday for 2023

There is an extra bank holiday on Monday 8 May for the King's coronation. It has been negotiated that all staff covered by the NJC will receive the extra day.

Liverpool Trip

Fancy a day out with colleagues on Saturday 11th March? The branch has organised a coach trip to Liverpool. For details to book check [Social – Sandwell General UNISON Branch \(sandwellunison.co.uk\)](#)

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