

**National Assembly for Wales
Children, Young People and Education Committee**

ST 27

Inquiry into Supply Teaching

Evidence from : Deputy Headteacher – High School

Consultation questions

Question 1 – What are your views on whether there is a prevalence in the use of supply teachers on a planned and unplanned basis?

Supply teachers are used on a day to day basis to cover unplanned absences by staff due to illness or emergency. If an absence is deemed as being longer than 3 days then a supply teacher of quality would be used to cover the absence of a member of staff. This would be on a planned basis.

If you believe that this results in problems (for example, for schools, pupils or teachers), how do you think they could be resolved?

This can present the following problems:

Peak periods of staff illness can be planned for but on occasions where there is an unforeseen spike supply agencies will not have sufficient staff.

It is difficult to get quality supply teachers in some shortage areas such as Science and Maths. This can lead to classroom management issues and also prevent pupils progressing in their learning at the appropriate pace.

Isolated community schools in rural or semi-rural areas find it difficult to get supply staff who are prepared to travel as travel costs reduce their net income which is marginalised by the agency cut.

These problems could be reduced by encouraging more staff from shortage subject areas into teaching.

Providing a coherent approach to training and CPD for supply teachers to ensure they have effective classroom management strategies. Provide a quality assurance system to ensure that standards within the supply agency industry are consistent.

Providing subsidies transport for supply teachers to travel to isolated locations.

How significant is this issue? (Please select one option)

<i>1 - This is a key, urgent problem.</i>	
<i>2 - This is a problem that needs to be addressed.</i>	x
<i>3 - This is a minor problem</i>	
<i>4 - Not a problem.</i>	

Question 2 – What are your views on the circumstances in which supply teachers are used for example, the types of classes they cover; the types of learning activities which take place under the supervision of supply teachers; whether they are qualified to teach relevant subjects?

Supply teachers are used to teach planned lessons in most instances. They are used to cover all ages and abilities across KS3–4. In circumstances where the school is aware that there are difficult characters in a class ‘in – house cover ‘ will be used rather than external supply agency cover. Specialist practical subjects will only take place if an appropriately qualified supply teacher is available.

If you believe there are problems in this area, how do you think they could be resolved?

Supply teachers undertake basic training in practical subjects such as PE.

How significant is this issue? (Please select one option)

<i>1 - This is a key, urgent problem.</i>	
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<i>2 - This is a problem that needs to be addressed.</i>	x
<i>3 - This is a minor problem</i>	
<i>4 - Not a problem.</i>	
Question 3 – What are your views on the impact of the use of supply teachers on the outcomes for pupils (including any impact on pupil behaviour)?	
I feel that in the best situations pupil progress is commensurate with age and ability however in most circumstances pupils progress at a slower rate. Pupils behaviour is adversely affected by supply teachers if the supply teacher does not have good classroom management skills or does not adhere to the schools policies.	
If you believe there are problems in this area, how do you think they could be resolved?	
This can be resolved by ensuring that supply teachers have good classroom management strategies.	
How significant is this issue? (Please select one option)	
<i>1 - This is a key, urgent problem.</i>	x
<i>2 - This is a problem that needs to be addressed.</i>	
<i>3 - This is a minor problem</i>	
<i>4 - Not a problem.</i>	
Question 4 – What are your views on the Continuous Professional Development of supply teachers and the potential impact of the National Professional Learning Model?	
Long term supply teachers access school CPD and this enables them to develop their skills.	

If you believe there are problems in this area, how do you think they could be resolved?

Agency staff should be required to undertake Performance management and the relevant CPD.

How significant is this issue? (Please select one option)

<i>1 - This is a key, urgent problem.</i>	
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<i>2 - This is a problem that needs to be addressed.</i>	x
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<i>3 - This is a minor problem</i>	
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<i>4 - Not a problem.</i>	
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Question 5 – What are your views on performance management arrangements for supply teachers?

Long term supply teachers follow the same pathway as all teachers.

If you think there are problems in this area, how do you think they could be resolved?

How significant is this issue? (Please select one option)

<i>1 - This is a key, urgent problem.</i>	
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<i>2 - This is a problem that needs to be addressed.</i>	
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<i>3 - This is a minor problem</i>	x
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<i>4 - Not a problem.</i>	
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Question 6 – Do you consider that local authorities and regional consortia have sufficient oversight of the use of supply teachers?

The LA used to have a pool of supply teachers that were employed directly this helped in terms of quality assurance. This has been removed and therefore the system is now very ‘hit or miss’ in terms of the quality of the staff provided.

Consortia and LA's should have a role in the process.

If you believe there are problems in this area, how do you think they could be resolved?

Consortia could quality assure in this area to and provide CPD to the agencies to ensure that supply teachers have access to the same support and challenge.

How significant is this issue? (Please select one option)

1 - This is a key, urgent problem.

2 - This is a problem that needs to be addressed.

3 - This is a minor problem

4 - Not a problem.

x

Question 7 – Are you aware of any local and regional variation in the use of supply teachers and if so, are there any reasons for this?

As we require a number of Welsh speaking supply teachers we as a school find it difficult to source these as we are in a predominantly English speaking area.

If you believe there are problems in this area, how do you think they could be resolved?

How significant is this issue? (Please select one option)

1 - This is a key, urgent problem.

2 - This is a problem that needs to be addressed.

3 - This is a minor problem

4 - Not a problem.

x

Question 8 – Do you have any views on supply agencies and their quality assurance arrangements?

We find a great deal of variation in the quality of supply teachers from agencies. This would indicate that their process of signing on is not rigorous and that this area needs significant improvement. In some instances agencies suggest staff that do not qualify for the appropriate sector and it is when checks are made that this comes to light. Due to their business interests many agencies are pushy and constantly harass Senior Staff on a daily basis or via email for business.

If you believe there are problems in this area, how do you think they could be resolved?

There needs to be a gate keeping of the sector to ensure quality and prevent harassment.

How significant is this issue? (Please select one option)

1 - This is a key, urgent problem.

2 - This is a problem that needs to be addressed.

3 - This is a minor problem

4 - Not a problem.

x

Question 9 – Are you aware of any specific issues relating to Welsh medium education? If so, what are they?

It is incredibly difficult to find Welsh Medium teachers in the local area.

If you believe there are problems in this area, how do you think they could be resolved?

How significant is this issue? (Please select one option)	
<i>1 - This is a key, urgent problem.</i>	x
<i>2 - This is a problem that needs to be addressed.</i>	
<i>3 - This is a minor problem</i>	
<i>4 - Not a problem.</i>	
Question 10 – If you had to make one recommendation to the Welsh Government from all the points you have made, what would that recommendation be?	
<p>There needs to be gate keeping within the industry and quality assurance as the standard of supply teachers varies greatly.</p>	
Question 11 – Do you have any other comments or issues you wish to raise that have not been covered by the specific questions?	