

Durham Local Government UNISON Bulletin

21 April 2017

Schools Edition

Now that the Easter Holidays are coming to an end, we're writing to our UNISON Teaching Assistants to provide a further update on what we have been working on during half term.

Negotiations are entering an especially crucial phase. You will have received a joint communication from DCC and recognised Trade Unions prior to Easter. This describes the next steps following the completion of the job evaluation process.

A program of meetings with Head Teachers will soon be rolled out in order to test the new grading structure and understand what it means for Teaching Assistants on an individual basis. This will be a significant undertaking given the number of schools in Durham; nevertheless, UNISON continue to press the need for an urgent resolution, and therefore, the agreed timeline for this exercise is between the Easter and May half terms. A UNISON representative will be present at every meeting in addition to representatives from HR.

It is important to remember that the new grading structure alone will not resolve the dispute and we are continuing negotiations with DCC around weeks and hours. The purpose of aligning Teaching Assistants to a new grading structure is to reflect the feedback provided by UNISON Teaching Assistants around your duties and responsibilities — the need for which has been clear since our first consultation meetings with members. This then provides a more accurate base to ensure the weeks and hours worked also reflect your actual experience of carrying out the role.

Again, the complete package will not be agreed or implemented without a ballot of UNISON members.

As you are aware, a series of cluster meetings have been arranged for next week. It is important that you attend one of these meetings in order to receive the latest updates from UNISON and take the opportunity to discuss any queries or concerns you may have.



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