



**Dr Chris Llewelyn**

Prif Weithredwr / Chief Executive

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Welsh Local Government Association**

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Ein Cyf / Our Ref: Petitions P-06-1317

Dyddiad / Date: 16 May 2023



Dear Mr Sargeant,

**Petition P-06-1317 Recognise Teaching Assistants as an important asset to schools by raising wage.**

Thank you for your letter of the 26 April regarding questions from the Petitions Committee whilst considering the above petition.

The WLGA understands the important role Teaching Assistants play in helping to educate learners. They play a key role in supporting the learning to ensure that all learners get the maximum benefit from their planned learning activities taking place in and out of the classroom. We also recognise the vital role that Teaching Assistants played during the COVID 19 pandemic in supporting learners and are thankful for their commitment and contributions during the unprecedented challenges of the pandemic.

The WLGA is one of the key partners at the Schools Social Partnership Forum (SSPF) alongside Trade Unions Representative's and Welsh Government and are absolutely committed to the promotion of social partnership.

In January 2021, the Schools Support Staff Task & Finish Group was set up as a subgroup from the SSPF with the aim of reaching a position of parity across Wales for support staff in relation to:

- Pay & Deployment,
- Access to training & professional development; and the
- Standardisation of roles.

Membership of the group includes WLGA officers, LA HR officers, WG colleagues, and representatives from Trade Unions, the Education Workforce Council (EWC), Headteachers and Teaching Assistants. Timely updates are fed back to the SSPF

main meetings at intervals throughout the year and are fed back to the WLGA Executive Board via the Education Spokesperson. The Minister for Education and Welsh Language chairs the SSPF meetings and is very supportive of the continued efforts of the Task & Finish Group.

To date, WG have led on the access to training & professional development priority, and there are now national networks in place which is ensuring equity on the professional learning offer for all teaching assistants across Wales which also includes the development of resources for school leaders and governors on the deployment of teaching assistants. The WLGA is fully supportive of these activities.

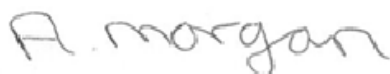
The Task & Finish Group are currently working on the standardisation of roles in developing national job descriptions for teaching assistants to be used within all LAs across Wales. Close engagement with LA HR officers and teaching assistants is essential to ensure the improvement of the working conditions for teaching assistants is secured. The aim is to have draft copies to present to the SSPF by the end of the year. The WLGA is fully supportive of this work and recognises the need for consistency and equity within these roles.

Ongoing discussions are taking place through the Task & Finish Group on how best to improve pay conditions for teaching assistants. The WLGA recognises the need for consistency and equity regarding pay conditions for teaching assistants, as LAs are the employers (and adhere to the National Agreement on Pay and Conditions for Support Staff (The Green Book)), and we recognise that there are different approaches within LA pay structures that reflect local considerations.

However, the WLGA recognises there is a need for a greater discussion with WG on increasing LA budgets to enable LAs to effectively address some of the challenges and complexities surrounding pay conditions for teaching assistants, as well as other staff members of the LA workforce. As you know, LAs are facing huge financial pressures across all services under the current climate with the cost-of-living crisis, and therefore the importance of continued discussions with WG is key in securing increased funding that not only supports workforce priorities and pressures but enhances pay and working conditions for its workforce, which includes teaching assistants.

I hope this is helpful to the Committee's deliberations.

Yours sincerely,



Y Cyng Cllr. Andrew Morgan OBE  
**Arweinydd CLILC**  
WLGA Leader