

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

ST 12

Inquiry into Supply Teaching

Evidence from : 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?	
<p>In the case of short-term teacher absences of a day or two, we would normally deploy Higher Level Teaching Assistants, mainly for reasons of cost and consistency. The School has invested in two such assistants to ensure service continuity: both have appropriate training and using them serves us well, as they know the organisation and the children well and are respected by them.</p> <p>There are serious problems at times in finding supply teachers for short or long-term reasons who specialise in a particular subject. When this has been planned it is a major problem, but at short notice on the morning of an absence it is often impossible.</p>	
If you believe that this results in problems (for example, for schools, pupils or teachers), how do you think they could be resolved?	
<p>This is a rather thorny question. There is a shortage of teachers to fill permanent positions in certain subjects let alone supply posts. The Assembly, in conjunction with Local Authorities, should devise a distinct system of recruiting, recording and maintaining supply teachers with up-to-date and regularly upgraded lists made available to schools.</p>	
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 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?	
<p>When supply teachers teach their own subject one can trust that the teaching will be of a good standard, but many of these teachers have not had an opportunity to attend training courses for some while and learning and teaching techniques change continually.</p> <p>If they are not subject specialists they are often engaged in teaching of some sort and it therefore stands to reason that standards will decline.</p>	
If you believe there are problems in this area, how do you think they could be resolved?	
As noted above and by holding regular regional courses to retrain supply teachers.	
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 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)?	
If the teachers are not specialists then it stands to reason that standards will fall. Behavioural problems can certainly arise if the	

<p>pupils feel they are not having proper lessons and do not sense an improvement in their knowledge.</p> <p>On the other hand, there are rare examples of excellent supply teachers.</p>	
<p>If you believe there are problems in this area, how do you think they could be resolved?</p>	
<p>This has already been outlined above.</p>	
<p>How significant is this issue? (Please select one option)</p>	
<p><i>1 - This is a key, urgent problem.</i></p>	<p>X</p>
<p><i>2 - This is a problem that needs to be addressed.</i></p>	
<p><i>3 - This is a minor problem</i></p>	
<p><i>4 - Not a problem.</i></p>	
<p>Question 4 – What are your views on the Continuous Professional Development of supply teachers and the potential impact of the National Professional Learning Model?</p>	
<p>It has already been noted above that the Assembly and the Teaching Council need to give this matter their detailed attention.</p>	
<p>If you believe there are problems in this area, how do you think they could be resolved?</p>	
<p>A national scheme that is properly structured and financed.</p>	
<p>How significant is this issue? (Please select one option)</p>	
<p><i>1 - This is a key, urgent problem.</i></p>	<p>X</p>
<p><i>2 - This is a problem that needs to be addressed.</i></p>	
<p><i>3 - This is a minor problem</i></p>	

<i>4 - Not a problem.</i>	
Question 5 – What are your views on performance management arrangements for supply teachers?	
This is currently near impossible if the supply teacher is not at the same school for a fairly lengthy period.	
If you think there are problems in this area, how do you think they could be resolved?	
The need must be met within a new and appropriate structure – perhaps the new Consortia should play a part in this, too.	
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 6 – Do you consider that local authorities and regional consortia have sufficient oversight of the use of supply teachers?	
I think that the local authorities and the consortia have hardly any role in this. Perhaps the authorities maintain lists of supply teachers but mostly, as the teachers work in a number of schools, it is difficult to keep track of them. A better system is needed.	
If you believe there are problems in this area, how do you think they could be resolved?	
This has already been answered.	

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 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?	
Not as such, but often through its own searches and enquiries a school will find someone. It is very often down to luck.	
If you believe there are problems in this area, how do you think they could be resolved?	
See above.	
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 8 – Do you have any views on supply agencies and their quality assurance arrangements?	
I have very few examples of using supply agencies. Unfortunately, those who came to us were not up to scratch and, unless there is some major crisis, we will not contact an agency.	

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

A central, national system without agencies.

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

It is particularly difficult to find Welsh-medium supply teachers, and at times we have to settle for teachers who do not speak Welsh in order to continue a subject. This is completely unacceptable, but how else can one operate when push comes to shove?

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

This must receive attention within a national scheme

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?

Planning has to be much more thorough in order to ensure good, appropriate supply teachers and to ensure a national scheme to promote this as a matter of urgency.

Question 11 – Do you have any other comments or issues you wish to raise that have not been covered by the specific questions?

Nothing specific to add.