

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

ST 22

Inquiry into Supply Teaching

Evidence from : Supply Teacher

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>I have worked as a Supply Teacher for the last seven years and previously work as a HOD. There is prevalence when you take into account the use of Supply Teachers and Cover Supervisors.</p>	
<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>	
<p>How significant is this issue? (Please select one option)</p>	
<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?	
<p>The use of Cover Supervisors has become more widespread and should also be taken account of in this consultation. Their deployment in recent years has become more widespread. Problems often attributed to supply teachers are sometimes caused by Cover Supervisors. They are used on an ‘ad hoc’ short notice basis for short</p>	

and occasionally longer term issues. No planning is carried out for lessons and children are baby sat. There were five cover supervisors being used daily in the last Cardiff School I was deployed in. Supply Teachers receive their lesson list on their arrival at school and are usually used in all five periods that day. Again there is no time for planning, as well as operating in unfamiliar surroundings and using new procedures and systems. Cover work is not always left and sometimes the work set is not appropriate to the class. On some occasions you get the feeling that the work is set in such a way as to cause problems. When illness is prevalent during the school year, there can be insufficient supply teachers to go around all the schools. This is evident from the number of enquiries I receive from agencies at peak demand times when they have, Quote 'run out of teachers'. Supply Teachers and Cover Supervisors are often asked to teach out of their specialist areas and cover all subject areas (Cover supervisors do not have any specialist subject or teacher training). For example you might be asked to cover one Welsh lesson, two French lessons and two ITC lessons during the day. I assume this is to save costs and not have to buy in three teachers to cover three different subject areas. How can students be enthused by Supply Teachers and Cover Supervisors without any specialist knowledge? I have regularly been booked by the same school on the same day each week because the teacher is away. Usually it becomes apparent that difficult students or groups are timetabled that day.

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

High numbers of cover supervisors or unqualified people must impact on learning. Reduce numbers or train in specific areas.

If cover work is not left allow photocopying of worksheets for lessons by the supply teacher that they bring with them each day. Keep a bank of resources that can be easily used and accessed.

Monitoring of staff absentee patterns.

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 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)?	
<p>In some schools and with some classes the students and staff have a different attitude towards Supply Teachers and Cover Supervisors. Children switch off or misbehave because they know the supply teacher is not supported by the school and any problems reported by them are not always followed up on. The students also feel that any work undertaken will not count for anything. School staff can be dismissive of Supply Teachers and Cover Supervisors and undermine their role.</p>	
If you believe there are problems in this area, how do you think they could be resolved?	
Be more supportive of Supply Teachers.	
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 4 – What are your views on the Continuous Professional Development of supply teachers and the potential impact of the National Professional Learning Model?	
Supply teachers like their job and the challenges it brings. They must feel equal to and valued by those they work with. If this happens within the NPLM, there will be significant impact on the aspirations and achievements of young people today.	
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>	
<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 5 – What are your views on performance management arrangements for supply teachers?	
Poor. I have only rarely been given limited professional development in schools. Whilst inset is not available to supply teachers in schools some is available through agencies. Costs are sometimes too high for supply teachers to attend inset training. Inset is often overlooked by schools because they do not wish to pay the Supply Teacher to be in school on that day. Lessons are rarely observed on long term supply placements.	
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>	
<i>2 - This is a problem that needs to be addressed.</i>	
<i>3 - This is a minor problem</i>	X
<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?	
No.	
If you believe there are problems in this area, how do you think they could be resolved?	
The Local Authority or consortia could maintain its own Supply Pool.	
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 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?	
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>	
<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?	
None	
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>	
<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?	
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>	
<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?

Pay parity for supply teachers in long term placements with other teaching staff.

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

In general when undertaking long term supply duties the biggest stumbling block to motivating supply teachers is their pay and conditions. Head teachers and other school staff ask Supply Teachers to carry out the same duties as they would any of their contracted staff. However, the Supply Teacher generally receives half the pay. How do you think this makes them feel? Would you commit yourself to a teaching role for half the pay of your colleagues?

Supply teachers just want to stay in work. This can lead to them being exploited by schools and agencies. They will just wish to say yes to all they are asked to do. They wish to do right by the children and they are professionals after all is said. I recently asked for payment for attending parents evening and twilight inset at the request of the school. The reply was that ‘the schools policy is not to pay for parents evening’. This attitude leads to Supply Teachers feeling undervalued and a second class citizen in the school.

Supply Teachers are kept with the agencies for over long periods. I currently work with a colleague who has been kept with an agency in the same school for two and a half years. Is this morally right?

Does it motivate the supply teacher?

Supply Teachers are sometimes used for flexibility in the timetable. Last term I worked in a school and had two whole time table changes and have experienced the same in school this academic year. This is a disruption to the students learning and progress.

Where supply teachers are used longer term, agency fees prevent the supply teacher being given a short term contract or paid a full daily rate. Get rid of agency fees.

