

P-05-805 Fair Deal for Supply Teachers, Correspondence – Recruit 2 Schools to Committee, 10.09.19

Please find our response to the Fair Deal for Supply Teachers petition, as requested:

1. It is widely accepted now that schools need to use supply agencies to cover their staff absences including sickness, training courses and maternity cover. LEAs no longer offer this service directly to schools and therefore rely on agencies to 'vet' staff and carry out full compliance checks including Safeguarding, DBS, EWC, identification, right to work, qualifications and references. The reliance is also on the agency to deal with any performance, behaviour management and safeguarding issues that may arise, taking away the responsibility from the school. Agencies have a responsibility to provide appropriately trained, high quality staff to schools to ensure that pupils have the opportunity to have as much continuity as possible and a good standard of education during permanent staff absence.
2. It is important for supply teachers to be offered CPD training as they do not have the same opportunities as their colleagues who have secured permanent roles in schools. As well as mandatory training such as safeguarding, first aid, manual handling and behaviour management, we strive to offer other training sessions that staff request. We have plans to provide mindfulness/mental health sessions for staff shortly, which we feel is important. If our staff request specific training, then we will strive to meet their needs. We have recently recruited a retired deputy head, who was also an external NQT verifier. We have a programme in place to provide NQTS with support and training whilst carrying out supply work for us, which is already proving to be invaluable. We also try to support staff welfare also, as working as a supply teacher can leave you feeling very lonely and isolated.
3. The Framework is a move in the right direction for all stakeholders. It provides transparency in terms of pay, charges and margins and also ensures that successful agencies are meeting the required standards and also obtain the necessary accreditations. However, as it is not mandated there is the opportunity for agencies not on the Framework to undercut those that are, and supply to schools. Whilst supply teachers deserve and want to work for a minimum of MPS1, if there are offered regular work at a lower rate then, then may take it in order to guarantee an income. If LEAs are fully supportive of the Framework and discourage schools from working off it then it will allow agencies to continue to provide fair pay and transparency to all stakeholders.
4. As an agency, we are fully supportive of paying supply teachers at MPS 1. We pride ourselves on providing teachers that go above and beyond during placements and it's good to be able to provide some recognition of this in their pay. In an ideal world, teachers should always be paid to scale but unfortunately, most school budgets cannot accommodate this. Prior to the introduction of the new Framework pay rates, we visited all Headteachers at using schools and all were supportive of the

rates, including the increased charge rates. It would certainly be a different matter for schools though if they were required to pay all teachers, according to MPS, for all day to day bookings. We have, however, always implemented the AWR and ensured that teachers are paid to scale after 12 weeks. This will still apply. It is a very transparent process and increased pay and charge rates are discussed with both parties around week 3 /4 of the assignment and amended terms provided to both the school and teacher. We never use unqualified teachers for any teacher assignment. We attempt to work as ethically as possible and as we are a small family agency, we have much lower margins than most of the larger agencies.