The role and experience of support staff in schools

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Government
Social Research

Contents

List of figures

Technical appendix

Quantitative survey - Methodology

These roles classifications were tested and informed by the cognitive interviews. Table 1 in the technical appendix provides a detailed comparison between the survey's job roles and those found in the SWFC.

All eight main support staff roles (listed in section 2.3.1 in the main report) were shown to respondents. Those who selected one of the first seven, except midday supervisors and school business professionals, were then asked about their specific role within that category. For example, those who selected administrative and finance staff could choose more granular roles such as receptionist, office support, bursar, HR support, among others. Respondents who selected multiple roles were first asked to select their main one (i.e. the most time-consuming one) before specifying their role. Respondents who selected "other support staff" were shown the full list of specific roles to select from. This methodology was designed to ensure that even less common roles were accurately documented. This enabled respondents to identify their specific roles even if their initial self-classification was inaccurate, ensuring a more precise data capture of job functions in varied contexts.

The more granular roles were asked to more precisely evaluate support staff responsibilities, which were informed by NJC role profiles. Respondents were able to provide an 'other' response if their work wasn't represented by their role-specific responsibility question.

During the questionnaire design phase, 29 cognitive interviews were conducted with school support staff to ensure the clarity and relevance of survey questions tailored to each subgroup. Ethical guidelines were adhered to throughout the process, ensuring informed consent was obtained from all participants.

The final questionnaire consisted of 55 pre-coded questions, including a recontact and data linkage question[1].

This research used a multi-stage contact strategy to ensure broad participation from school support staff across England. Initial engagement began with a warm-up email sent by DfE to all participating schools. This communication from DfE was to emphasise the importance of the research for policy development and encourage school leadership to support staff participation.

Survey packs were then sent to schools which included information posters, leaflets, and clear instructions for how invites should be disseminated to support staff. Both the poster

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[1] Participants were asked for their consent to allow the DfE to link their information from the School Workforce Census to their survey data.

and the leaflets included a QR code and a short survey link, which support staff could use to access the survey. The packs also contained an email template for headteachers to share the link with the support staff within their school. This email template also included both the QR code and the survey link.

The online survey was delivered through an open link format, eligible support staff were able to easily access and complete the questionnaire on any device (laptop, tablet, or smartphone) without requiring individual authentication codes.

Email reminders were sent at intervals throughout the five-week fieldwork period. The content of these emails was tailored to encourage participation from underrepresented staff groups. These were followed by telephone reminders to schools with lower completion numbers, enabling direct engagement with school administrators to address any barriers to participation, and to send electronic copies of the materials if requested.

The fieldwork concluded with a final email reminder from DfE, encouraging any remaining eligible participants to share their experiences before the survey closed.

Fieldwork ran from 17th June until the 22nd of July 2025, which was generally considered to be the end of the summer term for many schools. In total, 9,626 support staff responded to the survey.

Tables

Table 1: Support staff roles

Survey Classification	SWFC classification
Teaching assistant	Bilingual Support Assistant
Teaching assistant	Careers Advisor
Teaching assistant	Cover Supervisor
Teaching assistant	Higher Level Teaching Assistant
Teaching assistant	Instructor (including Sports coach)
Teaching assistant	Learning Manager
Teaching assistant	Learning Support Assistant (for SEN pupils)
Teaching assistant	Literacy Worker
Teaching assistant	Nursery Officer/Assistant
Teaching assistant	SEN Co-ordinator
Teaching assistant	Teaching Assistant
Administrative and finance staff	Administrator/Clerk
Administrative and finance staff	Bursar
Administrative and finance staff	Data Manager/Analyst
Administrative and finance staff	Examinations Officer
Administrative and finance staff	Exams Invigilator
Administrative and finance staff	Extended Schools Manager/Support
Administrative and finance staff	Finance Officer
Administrative and finance staff	Office Manager
Administrative and finance staff	Other School Admin
Administrative and finance staff	Personal Assistant to Headteacher
Administrative and finance staff	Receptionist
School business professional + Leadership non-teacher	Business Manager
Midday supervisors/ assistants	Midday Assistant
Midday supervisors/ assistants	Midday Supervisor
Other support staff	Other support staff
Site and Catering staff	Caretaker
Site and Catering staff	Cleaner
Site and Catering staff	Cook

Survey Classification	SWFC classification
Site and Catering staff	Other Catering Staff
Site and Catering staff	Other Premises Staff
Site and Catering staff	Premises Manager
Technician	Art and/or Design Technician
Technician	Creative Arts Specialist
Technician	Escort
Technician	ICT Network Manager
Technician	ICT Technician
Technician	Librarian
Technician	Music Specialist
Technician	Music Tuition (including Peripatetic)
Technician	Other ICT Support Staff
Technician	Other Technician
Technician	Reprographics Technician
Technician	Science Technician
Technician	Technology Technician
Pastoral, Health and Welfare staff	Attendance Officer
Pastoral, Health and Welfare staff	Behaviour Manager/Specialist
Pastoral, Health and Welfare staff	Childcare Officer
Pastoral, Health and Welfare staff	Educational Psychologist
Pastoral, Health and Welfare staff	Educational Welfare Officer
Pastoral, Health and Welfare staff	Language Support
Pastoral, Health and Welfare staff	Learning Mentor
Pastoral, Health and Welfare staff	Minority Ethnic Support
Pastoral, Health and Welfare staff	Nurse
Pastoral, Health and Welfare staff	Nursery Nurse
Pastoral, Health and Welfare staff	Other Pupil Support
Pastoral, Health and Welfare staff	Other Pupil Welfare
Pastoral, Health and Welfare staff	Pastoral Support
Pastoral, Health and Welfare staff	Therapist
Pastoral, Health and Welfare staff	Traveller Support
Pastoral, Health and Welfare staff	Welfare Assistant

Table 2: Schools invited and schools that took part by region

Region	Schools invited	Schools that took part	Participation rate
East Midlands	440	135	31%
East of England	553	225	41%
London	593	162	27%
North East	247	89	36%
North West	677	212	21%
South East	735	304	41%
South West	499	199	40%
West Midlands	536	153	29%
Yorkshire and the Humber	470	148	31%
Total	4,750	1,627	34%

Table 3: Schools invited and schools that took part by school phase

Phase	Schools invited	Schools that took part	Participation rate
Primary	2,750	845	31%
Secondary	1,250	528	42%
Special	750	254	34%
Total	4,750	1,627	34%

Table 4: Number of support staff selected for the targeted sampling approach

Support staff role	Number of support staff selected
Administrative staff	42
Leadership non teacher	13
School business professional	322
Technical role	652
Total	1,029

Table 5: Sample profile in Primary schools after weighting

Primary school staff profile	SWFC Headcount	% sample within phase	% of overall sample across all phases
Teaching assistant and learning support	243,737	50.7%	32.7%
Administrative staff	40,438	8.4%	5.4%
Leadership non-teacher and School business professional	17,875	3.7%	2.4%
Other support staff	2,651	0.6%	0.4%
Site and catering staff	42,917	8.9%	5.8%
Technical role	1,832	0.4%	0.2%
Pastoral, Health and Welfare staff	131,649	27.4%	17.7%
Total	481,099	100%	64.5%

Table 6: Sample profile in Secondary schools after weighting

Secondary school staff profile	SWFC Headcount	% sample within phase	% of overall sample across all phases
Teaching assistant and learning support	49,284	25.8%	6.6%
Administrative staff	36,423	19.1%	4.9%
Leadership non-teacher and School business professional	9,072	4.7%	1.2%
Other support staff	2,527	1.3%	0.3%
Site and catering staff	30,378	15.9%	4.1%
Technical role	22,128	11.6%	3.0%
Pastoral, Health and Welfare staff	41,246	21.6%	5.5%
Total	191,058	100	25.6%

Table 7: Sample profile in Special schools after weighting

Special school staff profile	SWFC Headcount	% sample within phase	% of overall sample across all phases
Teaching assistant and learning support	49,433	67.1%	6.6%
Administrative staff	4,757	6.5%	0.6%
Leadership non-teacher and School business professional	1,750	2.4%	0.2%
Other support staff	1,158	1.6%	0.2%
Site and catering staff	4,006	5.4%	0.5%
Technical role	584	0.8%	0.1%
Pastoral, Health and Welfare staff	12,006	16.3%	1.6%
Total	73,694	100%	9.9%

Table 8: Sample profile in Primary schools before and after weighting

Primary school staff profile	Unweighted count	Unweighted percentage	Weighted count
Administrative and finance staff	472	16%	621
Midday supervisor/assistant	409	14%	1,332
Health, pastoral and welfare staff	202	7%	1,020
School business professional	174	6%	257
Site and catering staff	180	6%	638
Teaching assistant and learning support	1,853	63%	3,365
Technical role	120	4%	93
Other support staff	178	6%	237

Table 9: Sample profile in Secondary schools before and after weighting

Secondary school staff profile	Unweighted count	Unweighted percentage	Weighted count
Administrative and finance staff	1,343	27%	514
Midday supervisor/assistant	77	2%	46
Health, pastoral and welfare staff	898	18%	558
School business professional	215	4%	125
Site and catering staff	300	6%	395
Teaching assistant and learning support	1,299	26%	667
Technical role	834	17%	303
Other support staff	444	9%	75

Table 10: Sample profile in Special schools before and after weighting

Special school staff profile	Unweighted count	Unweighted percentage	Weighted count
Administrative and finance staff	247	14%	66
Midday supervisor/assistant	52	3%	42
Health, pastoral and welfare staff	150	9%	134
School business professional	81	5%	24
Site and catering staff	87	5%	54
Teaching assistant and learning support	1,047	61%	650
Technical role	50	3%	13
Other support staff	95	6%	28

Table 11: General tasks by support staff role

	Budget management	Selecting or ordering equipment	Selecting or ordering supplies	Supervising or managing staff
Administrative and finance staff	27%	54%	65%	33%
Midday supervisor/assistant	-	7%	4%	13%
Health, pastoral and welfare staff	7%	24%	30%	25%
School business professional	90%	85%	83%	91%
Site and catering staff	30%	57%	67%	50%
Teaching assistant and learning support	2%	18%	22%	15%
Technical role	54%	87%	84%	29%
Other support staff role	-	-	41%	-

	Supervising activities	Safeguarding	Risk assessment	Liaising with senior staff	None of these
Administrative and finance staff	24%	56%	26%	77%	7%
Midday supervisor/assistant	66%	68%	27%	37%	14%
Health, pastoral and welfare staff	51%	88%	33%	86%	3%
School business professional	56%	68%	81%	98%	-
Site and catering staff	36%	54%	59%	60%	16%
Teaching assistant and learning support	70%	67%	27%	46%	16%
Technical role	60%	63%	64%	55%	-
Other support staff role	56%	65%	42%	65%	-

Source: Thinking generally, are you involved or responsible for any of the following tasks? This may include assisting, supporting or managing.. Base: All respondents: 9,626; Administrative and finance staff: 1,912, Midday supervisor/assistant: 170, Health, pastoral and welfare staff: 1,068, School business professional: 425, Site and catering staff: 531, Teaching assistant and learning support: 4,064, Technical role: 926, Other support staff role: 530

Survey questionnaire

INTRODUCTION

Page 1

What is the survey about?

The Department for Education is conducting a survey amongst support staff working in primary, secondary and special schools. The survey will ask questions about your day-to-day activities, your working arrangements, roles and responsibilities, as well as training and career opportunities.

This is an important opportunity to have your voice heard. The information from the survey will be used by the Department for Education and the School Support Staff Negotiating Body (SSSNB) to inform work on school support staff pay, terms and conditions, and enable a greater understanding of support staff views and experiences.

Page 2

Completing the questionnaire

The survey should take about 15 minutes to complete. Taking part in this questionnaire is voluntary and your answers will be treated in confidence.

This questionnaire is being undertaken by Ipsos (an independent research company) in accordance with the MRS Code of Conduct, on behalf of the Department for Education. For more information about this survey and how we will use your data, please click on the link below to view the privacy notice.

Instruction: Privacy policy link

Questions or help?

If you have any queries about the questionnaire, please call our helpline number 0800 1577 810 or email UK-PA-DfESupportStaff@ipsos.com

Please click the 'Next' button to move on. If you would like to go back to an earlier question, use the "Back" button at the bottom of the screen. Do not use the back button on your browser.

You can stop the survey at any time, but you will not be able to resume at a later date. Even if you don't complete the survey, any answers you give will be stored securely.

Some screens will be longer than others and you may need to scroll down to see all the questions, and the 'Next' button at the bottom of the screen.

Are you willing to take part? By selecting 'yes', you consent to participate in this survey and to share your responses with Ipsos UK. Your data will be securely stored by Ipsos UK in data centres and servers within the United Kingdom and EEA.

1. Yes
2. No (Close)

YOUR ROLE AND WORKPLACE

Routing instruction: ask all – single code

Instruction: Drop down menu – Local Authority

1. Please select the Local Authority of the school you work for from the following list
- 'Don't know' option

Routing instruction: ask if 'don't know' selected – open ended

Please type in the name of your school.

Routing instruction: ask if any la selected – drop down menu - schools

2. Please select the school you work for from the following list.

Routing instruction: ask all - single code

2A. Which of the following best describes your employment status?

1. Employed directly by a school, trust, or Local Authority (LA)
2. Employed through an agency
3. Employed by a governing body
4. Other
5. Don't know

2B. Do you work in one school or across multiple schools?

1. One school
2. Multiple schools
3. Don't know

Routing instruction: ask all - multi-code

3. What type of contract are you employed on?

1. Permanent
2. Temporary or fixed term
3. Ad hoc contract, hours as required
4. Other
5. Don't know

ROLE AND PROFILE

Routing instruction: ask all – multi-code

4. Which type of support staff role best describes your current position? Please select all that apply.

1. Administrative and finance staff (e.g. administrator, receptionist, finance support, etc.)
2. Midday supervisor/assistant
3. Pastoral and welfare staff (e.g. behaviour manager, welfare assistant, attendance support, learning mentor, etc.)
4. Health staff (e.g. nurse, therapist, educational psychologist, etc.)
5. School business professional
6. Site and catering staff (e.g. caretaker, cleaner, cook, premises manager, etc.)
7. Teaching assistant and learning support (e.g. teaching assistant, HLTA, cover supervisor, etc.)
8. Technical role (e.g. science, ICT, technology technician, librarian, etc.)
9. Other support staff role

Routing instruction: ask if two or more codes selected in Q4 – single code

5. Of these, please select your main role/the role you spend the most time working in?

1. [Routing instruction: code selected in previous question]

2. [Routing instruction: code selected in previous question]

3. …

6A. In the previous question, you said that [Routing instruction: piped broad support staff type] closest matched your support staff position.[2]

Which of the following more specific role options best describe your current support staff position? Please select all that apply.

Administrative and finance staff [Routing instruction: show if code 1 selected in Q5 or in Q4 if q5 does not apply]

1. Receptionist [Administrative staff]

2. Office support [Administrative staff]

3. Personal assistant to Head Teacher [Administrative staff]

4. Finance support [Finance-related responsibilities]

5. Bursar [Finance-related responsibilities]

6. Admissions support [Admissions support + Administrative staff]

7. HR support (e.g. recruitment and staffing) [HR support + Administrative staff]

8. Examinations support [Examination related responsibilities]

9. Other (please specify)

Pastoral and welfare staff [Routing instruction: show if code 3 selected in Q5 or in Q4 if Q5 does not apply]

1. Pupil welfare support [Pupil wellbeing management support]

2. Pastoral support [Pupil wellbeing management support]

3. Attendance support [School attendance and family support]

4. Educational welfare support [Pupil wellbeing management support]

5. Childcare support [Early years]

6. Behaviour support/specialist [Behaviour management]

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[2] In the last two weeks of fieldwork, the following route was introduced: Routing instruction: do not ask if Q4 = 2 – multicode

7. Traveller support [Routing instruction: this code is not routed to Q16]

8. Mental health support [Pupil wellbeing management support]

9. Learning mentor [Learning mentor]

10. Designated safeguarding lead [Routing instruction: this code is not routed to Q16]

11. Other (please specify)

Health/medical [Routing instruction: show if code 4 selected in Q5 or in Q4 if Q5 does not apply]

1. Assistant physiotherapist [Assistant physiotherapist + Physiotherapist]

2. Physiotherapist [Assistant physiotherapist + Physiotherapist]

3. Assistant occupational therapist [Assistant occupational therapist + Occupational therapist]

4. Occupational therapist [Assistant occupational therapist + Occupational therapist]

5. Nurse [Nurse]

6. Assistant speech and language therapist [Assistant speech and language therapist + Speech and language therapist]

7. Speech and language therapist [Assistant speech and language therapist + Speech and language therapist]

8. Assistant therapist [Assistant physiotherapist + Physiotherapist + Assistant occupational therapist + Occupational therapist + Assistant speech and language therapist + Speech and language therapist]

9. Therapist [Assistant physiotherapist + Physiotherapist + Assistant occupational therapist + Occupational therapist + Assistant speech and language therapist + Speech and language therapist]

10. Assistant Educational Psychologist [Assistant educational psychologist + Educational psychologist]

11. Educational psychologist [Assistant educational psychologist + Educational psychologist]

12. Other (please specify)

Site and catering staff [Routing instruction: show if code 6 selected in Q5 or in Q4 if Q5 does not apply]

1. Caretaker [Site staff]

2. Premises manager [Site staff]

3. Cleaner [Site staff]

4. Other premises staff [Site staff]

5. Cook [Catering staff]

6. General catering assistant [Catering staff]

7. Other catering staff [Catering staff]

Teaching assistant and learning support [Routing instruction: show if code 7 selected in Q5 or in Q4 if Q5 does not apply]

1. Teaching assistant [TA/additional needs support assistant]

2. Higher Level Teaching Assistant (HLTA) [TA/additional needs support assistant]

3. Advisory teacher [TA/additional needs support assistant]

4. Cover supervisor [Cover Supervisor]

5. Additional Support Needs Assistant (ASNA) [TA/additional needs support assistant]

6. Nursery support [Early years]

7. Other (please specify) [TA/additional needs support assistant]

Technician [Routing instruction: show if code 8 selected in Q5 or in Q4 if Q5 does not apply]

1. IT technician/support [IT Technician]

2. Science technician/support [Technician (food, science, art and design)]

3. Design and technology technician/support [Technician (food, science, art and design)]

4. Performing arts technician/support [Technician (food, science, art and design)]

5. Librarian [Librarian]

6. Escort/provides school transport for individual pupils [Routing instruction: this code is not routed to Q16.2]

7. Other (please specify)

Routing instruction: ask if Q4 = 9

6B – Does your support staff role fall into any of these categories?

Routing instruction: full list from 6A

Routing instruction: do not route these respondents to Q16 (regardless of what they answer in Q6B).

Other support staff (please specify)

Routing instruction: ask all - single code. if 'other support staff' selected in 6B, adapt question to "How long have you been working in your role"?

7. How long have you been working in a [Routing instruction: piped support staff type from Q5 or Q4 if only 1 code selected] role? Please think about the total time you have spent in this role, including any time spent working in this role at other schools.[3]

1. Under 1 year

2. 1 year, up to 2 years

3. 2 years, up to 3 years

4. 3 years, up to 5 years

5. 5 years, up to 10 years

6. 10 years, up to 15 years

7. 15 years, up to 20 years

8. 20 years or more

9. Don't know

PAY, CONTRACT AND FLEXIBLE WORKING

You said your broader role is [Routing instruction: piped broad support staff type in Q5 or Q4 if only 1 code selected]. Please answer the following questions with this role in mind.[4] Routing instruction: show in a separate screen

The next few questions are about your pay, contract and working arrangements.

Routing instruction: ask all – single code

Routing instruction: please display message at the top of the screen

8. Are you employed on a term time only contract?

1. Yes

2. No

3. Don't know

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[3] In the last two weeks of fieldwork, the following route was introduced: Routing instruction: if Q4 = 2, adapt question to "How long have you been working in a Midday supervisor/assistant role? Please think about the total time you have spent in this role, including any time spent working in this role at other schools".

[4] In the last two weeks of fieldwork, the following routing was introduced: IF Q5 populated and Q4 = 2 amend intro to "You previously told us that you have multiple roles. We are particularly interested in your experiences as a midday supervisor. Please answer the following questions with this in mind"

9. How many hours are you contracted to work per week? Please enter the time to the nearest hour. [Instruction: info button]: If you are working on a term time only contract, please answer this question about a term time working week.

Hours per week _____

Don't know

10A. Thinking of your most recent working week in your school, how many hours did you work that week? Please enter the time to the nearest hour.

Hours per week _____

Don't know

10B. Thinking about your most recent working week, would you say you worked….

1. A lot more than usual
2. A little more than usual
3. About the same as usual
4. A little less than usual
5. A lot less than usual
6. Don't know

11a. How, if at all, are you compensated for overtime? Please select all that apply.

1. I can claim or receive additional money for hours worked above contracted hours
2. I can claim or receive time off in lieu (TOIL, i.e. paid time off, flexible working e.g. starting later)
3. Other

4. I am not compensated for the overtime in my role (Routing instruction: single code)

5. I do not work overtime in my role (Routing instruction: single code)

11b. Spinal Column Points (SCPs) are salary levels forming the national pay spine negotiated by the National Joint Council (NJC). Employers use these levels for local pay grades/scales, which can vary by local authority.

Before now, were you aware of the NJC spinal column points?

1. Yes

2. No

3. Don't know

Routing instruction: ask if Q11b= 1 (routed to those who say yes)

Instruction: this question is not compulsory

11c. What spinal column point (SCP) are you on?

Instruction: enter number

I am on a different pay scale to that negotiated by the NJC

I don't know

Routing instruction: ask all – single code

12. To what extent do you agree or disagree with the following statement: 'I am satisfied with the salary I receive for the work I do'?

1. Strongly agree

2. Tend to agree

3. Neither agree nor disagree

4. Tend to disagree

5. Strongly disagree

6. Don't know

7. Prefer not to say

Routing instruction: ask all – single code

13. Are you currently paying into your workplace pension scheme?

   1. Yes

   2. No, I have opted out of the scheme

   3. Prefer not to say

Routing instruction: ask if "no" in q13 – multi-code

14. Why are you not paying into your workplace pension scheme? Please select all that apply.

   1. Could not afford the contributions on my salary

   2. Did not see the value in joining

   3. Temporarily opted out (e.g. during maternity leave, etc.)

   4. Other

   5. Prefer not to say (Routing instruction: single code)

Routing instruction: ask all - multicode

15a. Do you currently work in the following ways? Please select all that apply

   1. Part-time within my role

   2. Job share

   3. Annualised hours (total hours spread across a year, e.g. more hours spent working in busy weeks than quiet weeks)

   4. Staggered hours (different start and finish times for staff, e.g. some may work 9am-5pm, some may work 8am-4pm, etc.)

   5. Phased retirement (gradual reduction in hours before retirement, e.g. moving from a 5-day week to a 4-day week, etc.)

   6. Compressed hours (contracted hours worked in fewer days, e.g. 37.5 hours worked over 4 days instead of 5).

   7. None of the above (Routing instruction: single code)

   8. Don't know (Routing instruction: single code)

15b. And do you currently work in any of these ways? Please select all that apply

1. Ability to start late or finish early on request

2. Ability to take time off during term time on request (e.g., for a funeral, a wedding or an emergency)

3. Flexibility to work from home on request

4. Flexibility to complete specific tasks off school site (e.g. preparing resources at home, etc.)

5. Take a wellbeing day (a designated day that an employee can take off to aid their wellbeing)

6. None of the above (Routing instruction: single code)

7. Don't know (Routing instruction: single code)

WORK RESPONSIBILITIES

The next few questions are about the tasks you may be responsible for or undertake within your role. It will start with a general question about responsibilities before moving to the specifics of your role.

Routing instruction: ask all – multi-code

16.1. Thinking generally, are you involved or responsible for any of the following tasks? This may include assisting, supporting or managing. Please select all that apply

1. Budget management

2. Selecting or ordering equipment

3. Selecting or ordering supplies

4. Supervising or managing staff

5. Supervising activities

6. Safeguarding

7. Risk assessment

8. Liaising with senior leadership

9. None of these

16.2 Please answer the question below thinking about the tasks you carry out in your working day.

Which of the following tasks specific to your role are you involved in or responsible for? This may include assisting, supporting or managing? [Instruction: please rotate options]

a. Administrative staff

1. General administration: Photocopying, filing, email, record keeping etc.

2. Communications management: Email, telephone, in-person interactions etc.

3. Clerical support: Word processing, document processing, IT tasks, equipment use etc.

4. Data management: Organising/analysing data, information systems, school attendance, etc.

5. Staff support: Assisting all staff levels.

6. Finance management: maintaining school accounting systems, overseeing financial transactions, manage petty cash and school bank accounts, etc.

7. School marketing/communications: Promotional materials, website/social media, job postings, etc.

8. Reception duties: Point of contact for visitors, communicating with pupils and parents/carers, staff and external agencies, etc.

9. Other (specify)

b. Midday supervisors (Routing instruction: show if code 2 selected in Q5 or in Q4 if Q5 does not apply)

1. Midday supervision of pupils or playground supervision

2. Responding to challenging behaviour and reporting incidents

3. Liaising with colleagues on how to meet individual pupil needs (e.g. SEN)

4. Encouraging pupils to select and eat healthy balanced meals

5. Planning and organising recreational and physical activities during the midday break

6. General lunchtime support (e.g. operating tills, cleaning tables)

7. Providing support before/after school

8. Other (specify)

c. Behaviour management

1. Leading on managing pupil behaviour
2. Assessing pupil needs
3. Working with individual pupils to improve behaviour
4. Liaising with external agencies on pupil behaviour
5. Managing supervision of pupils excluded from school
6. Liaising with parents
7. Supporting transition of pupils
8. Training other staff on behaviour management
9. Supervising pupils during out of school activities
10. Other (specify)

d. Learning mentor

1. Providing support to targeted pupils, identifying and assessing those requiring additional support.
2. Working with families and carers
3. Supporting pupils to access out of school facilities/ study support and supporting partnerships with external agencies.
4. Recording pupil achievement and attendance, monitoring plans, reporting on progress, and maintaining records.
5. Undertaking home visits.
6. Supporting out of school activities.
7. Supporting transition of pupils between phases.
8. Supporting reintegration of pupils excluded from schools or following an alternative timetable
9. Managing other staff
10. Helping improve the learning mentor service and school plans
11. Other (specify)

e. School business professionals (Routing instruction: show if code 5 selected in Q5 or in Q4 if Q5 does not apply)

1. Business and financial management of school resources

2. Managing the schools support function (e.g. monitoring support systems and procedures including finance, HR, facilities management, etc.)

3. Developing training programmes/learning opportunities and mentoring for sup-port staff.

4. School marketing and communications (e.g. creating promotional material, running the school website/social media).

5. Communicating information (e.g. written reports) to senior management team, the Governing Body and external agencies.

6. Facilities, including premises, maintenance, lettings, and contractors.

7. Income generation including activities and submitting bids for funding

8. Health and safety within the school

9. Developing policies and procedures relating to child protection, health and safety, security, confidentiality and data protection

10. Line management of school support staff

11. Negotiating, managing, and monitoring contracts, licences, and insurance agreements.

12. Other (specify)

f. Site staff

1. Cleaning duties across the school site (including specialist cleaning and maintaining cleaning supplies and materials)

2. Operate or oversee the use of domestic and industrial equipment and materials.

3. Security checks, maintaining records, and locking/unlocking buildings.

4. Maintain the general upkeep of the school (including minor repairs, moving equipment/furniture, etc.)

5. Ensuring compliance with health and safety standards, conducting checks, and undertaking risk assessments.

6. Working with and overseeing external contractors for maintenance work

7. Financial management of the school premises budget, arranging tenders, and obtaining quotes

8. Communicating with staff/departments regarding premises issues.

9. Facilitating lettings and associated tasks.

10. Other (specify)

g. Catering staff

1. Food preparation, cooking, serving, and quality checks from suppliers.

2. Planning balanced menus while considering dietary needs (cultural/religious, allergies, etc.), budget constraints, and special needs (sensory sensitivity).

3. Cleaning up the kitchen and school dining areas

4. Performing cashier duties

5. Ordering supplies/stock control

6. Undertaking risk assessments in the kitchen/health and safety

7. Other (specify)

h. Teaching assistant and additional support needs assistant

1. General teaching and learning support in the classroom.

2. One to one assistance or small group support within the classroom.

3. One to one assistance or small group support outside the classroom.

4. Supporting teachers in monitoring, assessing and recording pupil progress/activities

5. Supporting the personal, social and emotional well-being of pupils

6. Developing individualized learning plans

7. Administrative tasks (e.g. emails, record keeping etc.)

8. Supervising pupils during lunch or breaktimes

9. Support with basic care needs (e.g. eating, dressing, hygiene).

10. Working with other classroom staff and volunteers.

11. Liaising with families and external agencies.

12. Supervising classes in the teacher's absence.

13. Working with pupils with SEND.

14. Supervising exams (e.g. invigilation)

15. Other (specify)

i. IT Technician

1. Resolving technical issues and managing support requests.

2. Maintaining hardware, software, network, and user accounts.

3. ICT training (formal or informal) for staff and pupils.

4. Procurement and changes to IT software/hardware.

5. Compliance with ICT policies, including safeguarding and internet usage.

6. Managing and securing data, including processing, storage, and backups.

7. Other (specify)

j. Technician (food, science, art and design)

1. Preparing and setting up resources, materials and equipment for lessons

2. Ordering, maintaining, storing, cleaning or disposal of supplies and equipment for lessons

3. Performing duties in line with health and safety regulations and responding to and reporting on hazards

4. Performing duties in line with allergy requirements

5. Keeping and updating records

6. Supporting practical learning activities, contributing to lesson plans and advising teachers on technical support

7. Planning and developing policies and procedures

8. Assessing pupils' work on using equipment/conducting experiments

9. Other (specify)

k. Examination-related responsibilities

1. Exam administration duties (e.g. updating to school management information and disseminating information to pupils and parents)

2. Coordinating exam logistics (e.g. venue setup, equipment, checking papers, etc.)

3. Communicating with pupils and parents about exam queries

4. Supervising exams (e.g. exam invigilating)

5. Providing data and analysis on aspects of exams (e.g. entries, results, etc.).

6. Other (specify)

l. Cover supervisor

1. Supervising pre-planned activities and self-directed learning.

2. Preparing the classroom and resources for lessons, ensuring resources are available, and cleaning up afterward.

3. Collecting completed work and returning it to the appropriate teacher.

4. Reporting on pupil behaviour during supervised lessons.

5. Other (specify)

m. Early years

1. Planning, leading, and delivering play, care, and learning activities.

2. Contributing to the design of learning activities and individual educational plans.

3. Supporting the behaviour management and development of children

4. Setting up and clearing away displays and activities

5. Monitoring child progress (e.g. observation, assessments, reports etc)

6. Supporting children's personal needs (e.g. helping with mealtimes and toileting etc)

7. Communicating with parents/carers or external agencies (such as speech and language therapy services).

8. Design of individual development plans (IDPs) for children with special educational needs

9. Administrative tasks (e.g. updating children's records, photocopying etc.)

10. Developing, reviewing, and maintaining compliance with policies relating to child protection, health and safety, security, and confidentiality.

11. Undertake home visits for pupils.

12. Leading/arranging early years staff development and training.

13. Other (specify)

n. Finance-related responsibilities

1. General financial administrative support (e.g. handling orders, invoices, payments, stock, free school meal records, etc.).

2. Managing school financial procedures and systems (e.g. maintaining school accounting systems, supporting the draft annual budget and financial plans, etc.)

3. Providing financial information and analyses to senior leadership and relevant authorities.

4. Managing funding and procurement processes (e.g. contracts management and compliance, funding opportunities, etc.)

5. Other (specify)

o. Library/resource centre-related responsibilities

   1. Supervising pupils using the library or supporting with library research and learning
   2. Supporting with library technology including ICT and photocopiers
   3. Cataloguing library resources and indexing learning materials
   4. Updating and maintaining data and other information
   5. Overseeing the use of books and library resources
   6. Library promotions, displays, and activities
   7. Procuring library resources
   8. Other (specify)

p. School attendance and family support

   1. Communicating with parents and carers
   2. Providing advice and guidance to families
   3. Family support services
   4. Strategies to improve pupil attendance and/or behaviour
   5. Working with external agencies
   6. Maintaining pupil records and case files
   7. Liaising with other staff on persistent absences
   8. Identifying pupils with poor attendance or at risk of developing it
   9. Identifying alternative provision for pupils with persistent absence
   10. Developing and delivering programme of family-related activities
   11. Developing links with pupils transferring into the school
   12. Other (specify)

q. Pupil wellbeing management

   1. Providing support and advice to pupils
   2. Assisting in resolving relationship issues between pupils
   3. Working with families/carers of pupils in need of additional support
   4. Providing support packages for pupils after period of exclusion/absence
   5. Supervising excluded pupils or those with irregular schedules.
   6. Liaising with external agencies (e.g. social services, parental support services, etc.)

7. Developing/monitoring individual action plans

8. Supporting the delivery of PHSE lessons

9. Liaising with other support staff

10. Other (specify)

r. Administrative staff + Admissions support (Admissions and Administrative Staff)

1. Receiving, processing and coordinating admission applications

2. Liaising with parents/carers throughout the school admission process

3. Liaising with local authorities regarding admissions

4. Managing admission appeals and in-year admissions

5. Other (specify)

s. Administrative staff + HR Support (HR and Administrative Staff)

1. Staff recruitment

2. Onboarding new staff

3. Employee relations (e.g. handling employee grievances, etc.)

4. Support with staff appraisals and pay

5. Ensuring the school acts in compliance with regulations

6. Other (specify)

t. Educational Psychologist + Assistant Educational Psychologist (Educational psychologist + Assistant Educational Psychologist (AsEPs)) (Educational Psychology)

1. Supporting the learning, development and inclusion of pupils identified as vulnerable or who have SEND

2. Delivering specific interventions

3. Liaising with parents, carers, schools, or other children's services

4. Advising and making recommendations on educational policies

5. Keeping records of pupil treatments and progress

6. Researching ways of helping vulnerable young people consult with multi-agency teams to support learning and development

7. Delivering training, mentoring and coaching

8. Completing administrative tasks, relevant to the educational psychology service

9. Other (specify)

u. (Occupational Therapy)

1. Supporting treatment programmes for pupils (including assessments and advice)

2. Supporting therapeutic activities programmes

3. Providing on-site support, educational input and developmental activities for staff

4. Implementing and evaluating occupational therapy interventions for pupils

5. Keeping records of pupil treatments and progress

6. Supporting other occupational therapy staff

7. Conducting audits to ensure the environment meets the needs of pupils (e.g. wheelchair accessibility, sensory appropriateness, etc.)

8. Other (specify)

v. (Speech and Language Therapy)

1. Evaluating pupils to identify speech, language and communication difficulties

2. Developing and implementing treatment plans to address identified issues

3. Working closely with parents, carers and other school staff

4. Providing education and support to staff to help them understand speech, language and communication difficulties.

5. Maintaining accurate records of child's progress and therapy sessions.

6. Providing support and encouragement to the pupil's during therapy sessions.

7. Other (specify)

w. (Physiotherapy)

1. Conducting physical assessments with pupils (e.g. assessing joint and movement problems)

2. Supporting treatment programmes for pupils (including assessments advice)

3. Implementing and evaluating physiotherapy interventions for pupils

4. Keeping records of pupil treatments and progress

5. Supporting other physiotherapy staff

6. Liaising with parents, carers, schools, or other children's services

7. Other (specify)

x. Nurse

1. Providing first aid to pupils

2. Supporting pupils with medical needs (e.g. asthma, diabetes, epilepsy, etc.)

3. Providing mental health support to pupils with mental health issues

4. Carrying out health assessments to identify risk-taking behaviours and support children to keep safe

5. Promoting healthy living (e.g. sex and health education, etc.)

6. Training teachers on healthcare issues and advise on school health policy

7. Other (specify)

Routing instruction: ask all – single code

17. In your most recent working week, approximately how much time did you spend directly working with or supporting pupils in your role?

1. All of the time

2. Most of the time

3. Some of the time

4. Rarely

5. Never

6. Don't know

Routing instruction: ask all – single code

18. To what extent do you agree with the following statement: 'I am able to manage my current workload'.

1. Strongly agree

2. Tend to agree

3. Neither agree nor disagree

4. Tend to disagree

5. Strongly disagree

6. Don't know

7. Prefer not to say

19. How often, if at all, do you carry out tasks that you to believe to be outside your support staff role job description?

1. Always

2. Most of the time

3. Some of the time

4. Never

5. Don't know

20. To what extent, if at all, do you like completing tasks outside your support staff role?

1. To a great extent

2. Somewhat

3. A little

4. Not at all

5. Don't know

21. Which, if any, of the following activities do you assist with in your support staff role? Please select all that apply.

1. After-school clubs

2. Breakfast clubs

3. Homework assistance sessions

4. School events (e.g. school performances, school fairs, sports events, etc)

5. School trips

6. Parent's evenings

7. Other

8. None of the above (Routing instruction: single code)

9. Don't know (Routing instruction: single code)

WORKING WITH PUPILS WITH SEND

Routing instruction: ask if codes 1, 2 or 3 selected in Q17 - single code

22. In your most recent working week, approximately how much time did you spend directly supporting pupils with SEND (Special Educational Needs and Disability) in your role?

Please consider both pupils that have and do not have Education, Health and Care (EHC) plans.

1. All of the time [Routing instruction: show if code 1 selected in Q17]

2. Most of the time

3. Some of the time

4. Rarely

5. Never

6. Don't know

7. Not applicable

Routing instruction: ask if codes 1, 2 or 3 selected in Q22 – single code

23. To what extent do you agree or disagree that you personally feel you have enough information and training to support pupils with SEND (Special Educational Needs and Disability), including those with an Education, Health and Care (EHC) plan?

1. Strongly agree

2. Tend to agree

3. Neither agree nor disagree

4. Tend to disagree

5. Strongly disagree

6. Don't know

7. Prefer not to say

8. Not applicable

Routing instruction: ask if codes 1-4 selected in Q22 – multicode

24. Which of the following, if any, are currently barriers to you effectively providing support for pupils with SEND (Special Educational Needs and Disability)? Please select all that apply.

1. I do not have enough time to provide additional support to these pupils
2. There are an increased number of pupils with differing needs compared with the last academic year
3. I do not have the right expertise to support these pupils
4. I do not have sufficient training to support these pupils
5. I do not have sufficient access to other specialist services or professionals
6. Lack of funding for appropriate resources/staff
7. Lack of support from other staff
8. Other (please specify)
9. No current barriers (Routing instruction: single code)
10. Don't know (Routing instruction: single code)
11. Not applicable (Routing instruction: single code)

Routing instruction: ask if codes 1-4 selected in Q22 – multicode

25. Which of the following do you think would most improve your ability to work effectively with pupils with SEND? Please select all that apply.

1. Greater access to specialist training
2. Greater access to relevant resources (e.g. assistive technology, visual aids, etc.)
3. Greater access to development resources
4. More opportunities for mentorship from staff in higher roles
5. More opportunities for feedback
6. Job rotation and/or role shadowing programmes
7. Having a smaller workload
8. Better/more support from other staff
9. Other (please specify)
10. Nothing (Routing instruction: single code)
11. Don't know (Routing instruction: single code)

TRAINING AND CAREER PROGRESSION

Section intro

The next section is about the training you may have received and your career progression.

Routing instruction: ask all – single code

26. Have you received training on supporting pupils with SEND in your role within the last 3 years?

1. Yes
2. No
3. Don't know

Routing instruction: ask all – multicode

27. Since starting your current role, what types of formal training have you been provided from your school? Please select all that apply.

1. Training specific to my day-to-day role
2. Training specific to my personal development (e.g. skills or knowledge to help achieve personal goals)
3. General all staff training (e.g. safeguarding, autism training, etc)
4. Other
5. No training (Routing instruction: single code)
6. Don't know (Routing instruction: single code)

Routing instruction: ask all – single code

28. To what extent are you satisfied or dissatisfied with any training and development opportunities available to you?

1. Very satisfied
2. Fairly satisfied
3. Neither satisfied nor unsatisfied
4. Fairly unsatisfied
5. Very unsatisfied
6. Don't know

7. Prefer not to say

29. Which of the following, if any, are currently barriers to you undertaking training in your support staff role? Please select all that apply.

    1. I do not have enough time to undertake training

    2. There are limited training opportunities relevant to my role

    3. The quality of some of the available training is poor

    4. Lack of adequate funding to undertake training

    5. Training is not provided to support staff at my school

    6. Training is not prioritised for support staff at my school

    7. Other (please specify)

    8. No current barriers

    9. Don't know

30. How interested, if at all, would you be in undertaking more training directly related to your role?

    1. Very interested

    2. Fairly interested

    3. Not very interested

    4. Not at all interested

    5. Don't know

    1. 31. How interested, if at all, would you be in undertaking training to become a qualified teacher?

    2. Very interested

    3. Fairly interested

    4. Not very interested

    5. Not at all interested

6. Don't know

32A. Which of the following, if any, do you think would be barriers to you training to become a qualified teacher? Please select all that apply.

1. Length of the training programme

2. Cost of the training programme

3. Workload required to undertake training

4. Lack of understanding about the application process (e.g. entry/qualification requirements, etc.)

5. Lack of understanding about training routes available

6. Lack of confidence in my ability to complete the training programme

7. Not sure if my school would not support me to undertake the training programme

8. Other barriers

9. There are no barriers to me becoming a qualified teacher

10. Don't know

Q32B. Which of the following, if any, do you think would make it easier for you to participate in teacher training? Please select all that apply.

1. More tailored information for support staff wanting to move into teaching

2. Clearer information on the potential teaching pathways available

3. Greater access to financial support to undertake training

4. Being able to remain in my current school when training

5. Greater networking opportunities and peer support while training

6. A specific learning route that combines my current role with teacher training

7. Other

8. None of these

9. Don't know

Routing instruction: ask all – multi code

33. Have you received a promotion (i.e. moved to a role with higher pay and/or greater responsibility) within your school? Please select all that apply.

1. Yes – promoted to a higher level role within my support staff role

2. Yes – promoted to a different support staff role on a higher pay-scale

3. No [Routing instruction: exclusive]

4. Don't know [Routing instruction: exclusive]

Routing instruction: if code 2 selected in Q33 – single code

34. What type of role best matches the previous role you held in your school?

1. Administrative and finance staff (e.g. administrator, receptionist, finance sup-port, etc.)

2. Midday supervisors/assistant

3. Pastoral and welfare staff (e.g. behaviour manager, welfare assistant, attendance support, etc.)

4. Health staff (e.g. nurse, physiotherapist, therapist, etc.)

5. School business professional

6. Site and catering staff (e.g. caretaker, cleaner, cook, etc.)

7. Teaching assistant and learning support (e.g. teaching assistant, learning support staff, HLTA, cover supervisors, etc.)

8. Technician (e.g. science, ICT, technology technicians, etc.)

9. Volunteer (doing unpaid work at a school e.g. reading to pupils)

10. Other (please specify)

Routing instruction: ask all – single code

35. To what extent do you agree with the following statement: There are opportunities for me to progress my career….

within my school and/or trust?

1. Strongly agree

2. Tend to agree

3. Neither agree nor disagree

4. Tend to disagree

5. Strongly disagree

6. Don't know

Routing instruction: ask all – single code

36. To what extent do you agree with the following statement: There are opportunities for me to progress my career….

as a school support staff member outside my school/trust?

1. Strongly agree

2. Tend to agree

3. Neither agree nor disagree

4. Tend to disagree

5. Strongly disagree

6. Don't know

Routing instruction: ask all – multi code

37. Which of the following, if any, are currently barriers to progressing your career? Please select all that apply.

1. Lack of clear career progression routes available

2. Limited training opportunities for support staff

3. Lack of adequate funding to undertake career progression courses

4. Increases in workload

5. Lack of flexibility due to my other personal commitments

6. Lack of flexibility due to my other professional commitments

7. Lack of support from line management or senior leadership team

8. School structure limiting progression opportunities

9. Other

10. No current barriers (Routing instruction: single code)

11. Don't know (Routing instruction: single code)

Routing instruction: ask all – multi code

38. In your opinion, what could be done to better support you to progress your career? Please select all that apply.

1. More career progression routes made available

2. Greater clarity about existing progression routes

3. More training opportunities for support staff

4. Greater access to development resources

5. More opportunities for mentorship from staff in higher roles

6. More opportunities for feedback

7. Job rotation and/or role shadowing programmes

8. Leadership development programmes

9. Greater networking opportunities

10. Availability of funding (e.g. accessible bursaries)

11. Other

12. None of these

13. Don't know

Routing instruction: ask all – multi code

39. In the next 12 months, are you considering any of the following? Please select any/all of those you are considering, even if you haven't taken any concrete steps towards it just yet.

1. Moving to a different support staff role

2. Moving to another state school

3. Leaving the state school sector (excluding retirement)

4. Retirement

5. None of the above (Routing instruction: single code)

Routing instruction: ask if code 3 selected Q39 - multi-code

40. Why are you considering leaving the state school sector? Please select all that apply.

1. High workload

2. Personal reasons (e.g. moving)

3. Dissatisfaction with pay

4. Poor mental and/or physical health

5. Unable to amend my working pattern (e.g. reduce or increase hours)

6. Government initiatives / policy changes

7. Dealing with pupils' parents/carers

8. Lack of support from my superiors

9. Pupil behaviour

10. Lack of opportunities for progression

11. Other

12. None of the above

13. Don't know

SCHOOL SUPPORT STAFF PERCEPTIONS

Routing instruction: ask all – single code

41A. To what extent do you agree or disagree with the following statement: "I feel valued by teachers at my school for the work I do"

1. Strongly agree

2. Tend to agree

3. Neither agree nor disagree

4. Tend to disagree

5. Strongly disagree

6. Don't know

7. Prefer not to say

Routing instruction: ask all – single code

41B. To what extent do you agree or disagree with the following statement: "I feel valued by senior leaders at my school for the work I do"

1. Strongly agree

2. Tend to agree

3. Neither agree nor disagree

4. Tend to disagree

5. Strongly disagree

6. Don't know

7. Prefer not to say

Routing instruction: ask all – single code

42. To what extent do you agree or disagree with the following statement: "I feel valued by parents and carers for the work I do"

1. Strongly agree

2. Tend to agree

3. Neither agree nor disagree

4. Tend to disagree

5. Strongly disagree

6. Don't know

7. Prefer not to say

Routing instruction: ask all – single code

43. To what extent do you agree or disagree with the following statement: "I feel valued by policy makers (i.e. the government) for the work I do"

1. Strongly agree

2. Tend to agree

3. Neither agree nor disagree

4. Tend to disagree

5. Strongly disagree

6. Don't know

7. Prefer not to say

JOB SATISFACTION AND WELLBEING

Routing instruction: ask all – single code

44. Overall, how satisfied or dissatisfied are you with your present job?

1. Very satisfied

2. Fairly satisfied

3. Neither satisfied nor dissatisfied

4. Fairly dissatisfied

5. Very dissatisfied

6. Don't know

7. Prefer not to say

Routing instruction: ask all – single code

45. How satisfied or dissatisfied are you with your contract and conditions of employment?

When answering this question, please think about how you feel about the hours you work, how often you work additional hours and whether you are paid for this.

1. Very satisfied

2. Fairly satisfied

3. Neither satisfied nor dissatisfied

4. Fairly dissatisfied

5. Very dissatisfied

6. Don't know

7. Prefer not to say

Routing instruction: ask all – single code

46. How satisfied or dissatisfied are you with the working arrangements for your post?

When answering this question, please think about whether you have a job description, any supervision arrangements, and if you had an appraisal in the last year.

1. Very satisfied

2. Fairly satisfied

3. Neither satisfied nor dissatisfied

4. Fairly dissatisfied

5. Very dissatisfied

6. Don't know

7. Prefer not to say

Routing instruction: ask all – single code

47. What forms of wellbeing support can you access in your current role?

1. An employee assistance programme or equivalent
2. Professional supervision
3. Mental health support (including counselling)
4. Staff wellbeing groups and activities
5. Other
6. None of these
7. Don't know

ABOUT YOU

Finally, there are a few questions we would like to ask you to help us understand how the experiences of support staff varies by different characteristics. Everything you say is confidential, will be used for research purposes only and you can decline to answer individual questions if you wish.

Routing instruction: ask all – multi-code

48. Why did you decide to become part of the school support staff workforce? Please select all that apply.

1. I wanted to work with young people
2. I wanted to work in a school
3. The role offered flexibility around my other personal commitments
4. The role offered flexibility around my other professional commitments
5. I have a child attending the school
6. The salary was attractive
7. I had previously been a teacher at a school
8. I had previously been a volunteer at the school
9. I wanted to work in a role tied to the local community
10. The opportunities provided for career progression
11. I wanted to explore my interest in a future teaching career

12. I wanted to have time off over the school holidays

13. Other

14. None of these

15. Don't know

16. Prefer not to say

Routing instruction: ask all – single code

49. How old are you?

1. Aged under 25

2. Aged 25-29

3. Aged 30-39

4. Aged 40-49

5. Aged 50-59

6. Aged 60 and over

7. Prefer not to say

Routing instruction: ask all – single code

50. Which of the following best describes your gender?

1. Male

2. Female

3. I identify in another way

4. Prefer not to say

Routing instruction: ask all – single code

51. What is the highest level of education that you have completed?

1. GCSEs / O Levels / equivalent

2. A Levels / BTECs / Level 3 apprenticeship / equivalent

3. Foundational degree / Level 4, 5 or 6 apprenticeship / equivalent

4. Undergraduate degree or equivalent (e.g. BEd, BSc, BA etc)

5. Postgraduate degree (masters) or equivalent/(not including initial teacher training)/PhD (doctoral degree) or equivalent

6. Initial Teacher Training (ITT) e.g. Postgraduate Certification in Education (PGCE)

7. None of the above (Routing instruction: single code)

8. Prefer not to say (Routing instruction: single code)

52. Data linking

The Department for Education would like your permission to link information held by the School Workforce Census about you to this survey data. All data will be held securely by Department for Education.

Instruction: Help screen: To add information from the School Work Force Census, we will use your name and school name to identify the relevant administration data. After the information has been linked to this dataset, your name will be securely deleted from the survey data.

Do you give permission for the Department for Education to do this?

1. Yes – Please type in your full name

2. No

54. Would you be willing for the Department for Education, or an organisation working on their behalf, to contact you again within the next 18 months to invite you to take part in further research about this subject?

If you are willing to be recontacted, your contact details will be linked to your survey answers and securely sent to DfE for them to invite you to take part in the future research. This may involve asking for more information which will be added to the answers you provided in this survey.

You do not have to take part if invited.

1. Yes

2. No

53. Would you be willing for Ipsos to contact you again within the next 18 months to invite you to take part in further research on the role and responsibilities of school support staff?

This may involve asking for more information which will be added to the answers you provided in this survey.

You do not have to take part if invited.

1. Yes

2. No

Q55. Thank you for saying you're willing to be recontacted by Ipsos and/or Department for Education [Routing instruction: show only "Ipsos" if yes only at Q54, only DfE if yes only at Q53, and "Ipsos and DfE" if yes in both Q53 AND Q54].

[Instruction: add standard question for name, address and mobile number]

Interview questions

Introduction – purpose, consent and reporting plans (3 mins)

Thank you so much for taking time to speak with us. This interview should take around 45 minutes but if you need to finish early (for whatever reason) please let us know.

We work in the teaching workforce directorate in the Department of Education where we are currently undertaking a project exploring the profiles, roles and responsibilities of school support staff. For this research, support staff are defined as individuals who are employed at a school to provide non-teaching support ser-vices, such as Pastoral, Health and Welfare staff, Administrative staff, Teaching Assistants, School Business Professionals, Technicians, cooks, cleaners, care-takers, etc.

The aim of the work is to deepen our current understanding of the school support staff landscape by collecting data from the situation on the ground, to inform future decisions taken by the School Support Staff Negotiating Body (SSSNB). The SSSNB is a newly established arms-length body reinstated by the Government which aims to provide a voice for support staff and establish nationally agreed consistency for support staff pay, conditions, duties, and training.

In this interview, we want to explore the school leader perspective on support staff, with an emphasis on your experience of recruiting, retaining and deploying support staff. We are also interested in the type of personnel employed as/or ap-plying to be support staff, in addition to the opportunities provided by schools to help support staff to take training courses and progress their career.

The findings will be analysed and written up as part of a report. The findings from this research will also be used to inform SSSNB decision making on aspects such as support staff pay, conditions, role responsibilities and opportunities for career progression. All contributions that are featured in the report and shared with the SSSNB will be anonymous.

We do not collect personal data during the interviews. We will know the name of your trust or school and some of its characteristics as part of this interview. However, the information will be used for analytical purposes only. The information will be deleted shortly after the analysis is undertaken and will not be kept on DfE records or shared more widely.

I just want to confirm that we will be transcribing the discussion on Teams but we are not recording the interview itself. This is so we can go back and check parts of the discussions for analysis purposes. We will also be taking notes.

Do you consent to take part in this interview and for it to be transcribed? [Instruction: hit transcribe]

Thank you. Before we begin, I want to remind you that even though you've given your consent to participate, you are free to leave the interview at any time.

Do you have any questions before we begin?

Ice breaker (3-5 mins)

- Can you give us an overview of the support staff roles you have in your school and how your school decided on this structure?

- What factors do you consider when making decisions about how many support staff to employ in your school?

  - [Instruction: Probe on numbers of pupils on the roll, meeting additional needs (e.g. SEND, safeguarding), reducing workload, budget.

  - How involved are MATs/LAs in these decisions?

- In the past three years, are there any support staff roles that you reduced or increased in your school?

  - [Routing instruction: if yes] – which support staff positions have you increased/decreased?

  - What has driven the increase/decrease in [mentioned support staff positions]?

  - [Routing instruction: if not already indicated] – Have you seen a reduction/increase in overall support staff numbers?

  - [Routing instruction: if reduction] – What adaptations, if any, has your school made to manage this reduction?

1. Recruitment and retention – Experience of support staff recruitment, profiles and quality

- Can you tell us a bit about what your experience of recruiting support staff has been like over the last 12 months?

  - [Routing instruction: if more difficult] – What would you say is the main reason why recruiting support staff has been difficult?

  - [Routing instruction: if more difficult] – Have you experienced that some support staff positions have been more difficult to recruit for? If so, which?

  - [Routing instruction: if more difficult] – has recruitment of support staff been historically difficult, or is this difficulty something you have encountered more recently?

  - [Routing instruction: if more difficult] – In response to this challenge, have you used any strategies to improve support staff recruitment?

  - [Routing instruction: if more easy] – Have you experienced that some support staff positions have been easier to recruit for? If so, which?

	- [Routing instruction: if more easy] – has recruitment of support staff been historically quite easy, or is this due to something you have done more recently to help the process? • How would you describe the quality of candidates you have been getting when recruiting for support staff? - [Routing instruction: if low quality]– Are there particular support staff roles that you have found it difficult to get good quality candidates for? - [Routing instruction: if low quality] - Are there any particular skills that you are finding it difficult to find when recruiting support staff?
2.	Recruitment and retention – main challenges of support staff retention • Moving from recruitment to retention, have you had any difficulty in retaining particular types of support staff? - [Routing instruction: if any roles no difficulty] – Why do you think that your school has successfully retained support staff? - [Routing instruction: if any roles no difficulty] – Are there any particular support staff that are easier to retain? - [Routing instruction: if any roles difficulty] – What do you think was the main reason why individuals in [insert specific support staff types mentioned] left their role?
3.	Deployment and work responsibilities. • Can you please tell us about how you deploy different support staff in your school? (in terms of the work done by different support staff in the school) • Have the roles and responsibilities of support staff changed over the past few years? If so, how? - [Routing instruction: if yes] – Probe which support staff types they have changed for. • What processes, if any, are in place to review and adapt the deployment of different support staff based on changing school needs throughout the academic year? • Do you have any future plans to reduce or increase the number of tasks given to certain support staff? - [Routing instruction: if yes] – Which tasks are you looking to reduce/increase, and why? - [Routing instruction: if yes] – Which support staff typically undertake these tasks?
Routing instruction: only ask this topic if not covered in previous section	

4. Role flexibility – are schools more rigid or more flexible in their use of support staff

- Would you say that certain support staff roles are more flexible (i.e. broad-er) in the work they are expected to do than others?

  - [Routing instruction: if yes] - Which roles would you say are more flexible?
  - [Routing instruction: if yes] - Has this flexibility always been associated with the role, or has it more recently developed?
  - [Routing instruction: if yes] – From your experience, would you say that your school has benefited from this role flexibility, and if so, how?

5. Pay and flexible working arrangements

- What do you use to set pay for support staff? Probe on National Joint Council (NJC), Academy setting pay, etc.

  - Are any support staff positions in your school paid more than that set out in the NJC pay-scales?
  - Does your school deviate on any (other) aspects of the NJC framework for support staff pay, terms and conditions?

- What flexible working arrangements, if any, are available to support staff? And does this differ at all for different types of support staff?

  - [Routing instruction: if yes] – What flexible working arrangements are most adopted by sup-port staff?
  - [Routing instruction: if no] – What are the main reasons why flexible working arrangements are not available to support staff at your school?

6. Training

- Does your school offer training opportunities for support staff?

  - [Routing instruction: if yes] – Which support staff are offered this training?
  - [Routing instruction: if yes] – What type of training is offered to these staff members? Is it role specific?
  - [Routing instruction: if no] – Why does your school not offer training opportunities to sup-port staff?

- Which support staff do you think would benefit the most from more training opportunities?

  - What type of training would this be?

7. Career progression

- What pathways, if any, exist at your school for school support staff to progress their career?

- [Routing instruction: if pathway] – How frequently is/are this/these pathway(s) pursued by support staff?

- [Routing instruction: if pathway] – From your experience, are certain types of support staff more likely to take up career progression opportunities than others?

- Routing instruction: probe why certain support staff take pathways

- Have you considered offering (more) career progression pathways for different types of support staff into your workforce framework?

- Routing instruction: if not - Why not?

Summary (2 mins)

As you know, the Government is introducing the School Support Staff Negotiating Body (SSSNB).

What are you most concerned about the SSSNB doing?

If the SSSNB was going to do one thing in relation to support staff, what would the most beneficial thing for your school be?

Department
for Education