UNISON members in schools and councils have voted to take industrial action to seek an improvement on the national NJC employers’ 1% pay offer.

The lowest paid have been offered slightly more than 1%, but this is to keep pay levels just above the National Minimum Wage.

UNISON doesn’t think this pay offer is anywhere near enough – it doesn’t keep pace with price increases and will have a negative impact on your pension. It is an insulting offer to you and other school workers who work hard day in, day out to support our children’s education.

Taking strike action is never easy, especially if it is your first time. However, we urge you to take part in sending a strong message to the NJC employers that they need to increase their offer. We have been forced to take action as a last resort, after all attempts to negotiate and reason with the NJC employers have failed.

Strike action will show the NJC employers that we are prepared to defend our pay. It will send a message to the government that enough is enough and that they can’t keep cutting services, jobs and pay unchallenged. If you face hardship from taking strike action, you can seek help from UNISON.

School support staff are worth it
Three reasons why you should strike for fair pay

1. The value of your pay has fallen 20% since 2010
   For most school and council workers, the offer leaves your pay worth almost 20% less than it was in 2010, because of pay freezes and increasing prices. This means a real fall in living standards – and if you are in the Local Government Pension Scheme, falling pay also means a loss of hundreds of pounds from your pension every year right through your retirement.

2. You are worth fair pay
   Pay and conditions for school and council workers are the worst in the public sector. Average pay rises in comparable not-for-profit and private sector organisations are currently between 2% and 2.5%. This is well above the 1% offer from the NJC employers. While your work supports the vital education of young people, you have been hit by pay freezes and below-inflation increases.

3. Our pay claim is affordable
   Our claim for an increase of a minimum of £1 an hour is affordable. Councils are banking savings made from cuts to jobs and pay and the government claims it has protected school budgets. Better pay makes sense. Better-paid workers pay more money into the government through tax, national insurance and reduced in-work benefits, and also support the local economy.

You need to make a stand
   A well-supported strike is vital to get the NJC employers to listen to reason. We regret the potential disruption caused to the school community, but the NJC employers can prevent disruption by returning to the negotiating table with a better offer.

Join us
   Three simple ways to join UNISON today and get essential cover wherever you work

- Join online at joinunison.org
- Call us free on 0800 171 2193
- Ask your UNISON rep for an application form

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