

The true facts about CoSLA's 'Offer'

Why Nursery Nurses are still in dispute.

Scotland's Nursery Nurses regret having been forced into striking to pursue a fair and just review of our jobs. We have been trying for two years to resolve this through discussions with our employers but have failed to make progress.

We were in talks with the Scottish employers who then told us we should raise the issues with our local employers. We did that and were then told it would have to be resolved at a Scottish level. Again, we did that only to be told we cannot have national talks and that we would have to resolve it with our local employers.

What we cannot understand is why we cannot get the same wage for a Nursery Nurse in Edinburgh as a Nursery Nurse in Highland, or a Nursery Nurse in South Lanarkshire. A Nursery Nurse is a Nursery Nurse no matter where they work and their value to a child's education is exactly the same no matter which part of the country they work in. Wage parity will not be achieved through local bargaining which is why we lodged a national claim.



WHY ARE NURSERY NURSES TAKING ACTION?

- The job of Nursery Nurse has not been reviewed since 1988.
- Since then the job has gained significant new and increased responsibilities. Numerous policies and responsibilities have been introduced by the Scottish Executive and by local councils.
- Between January 2002 and January 2003 the number of local authority preschool places increased by 4 % yet staffing dropped by 13 %.
This simple statistic underlines the increasing workloads and demands placed on Nursery Nurses.

For too long the qualifications and experience required to undertake the job are not reflected by the low pay which they take home. Scotland's 5,000 Nursery nurses have lost patience and voted overwhelmingly for industrial action.

WHAT IS OUR CLAIM?

- A new job description which reflects what a Nursery Nurse's job is now, not what it was in 1988.
- A clear career structure

- A 35 hour working week
- Full employment status including protecting all staff's pension rights
- To put Nursery Nurses on the local government pay range £17340 to £21732. For most Nursery Nurses working term time this would equate to £18500.

WHAT IS ON 'OFFER'?

- Pay to be considered through a Job Evaluation scheme which does not exist
- No official offer has been made. The Scottish employers have made recommendations to their constituent councils which might be implemented or ignored
- The employers state they are prepared to offer a salary of £18,000 per year. This does not apply to most Nursery Nurses! In fact only some 'specialist' nursery nurses would achieve this - at the whim of the employer.
- The figure will be reduced to equate to the term-time period and would only result in a figure of just under £15,000.
- The truth is that the vast majority of qualified nursery nurses are being offered **nothing**. The so-called £900 increase doesn't even cover the additional working hours also included in the offer at the current hourly rate! Indeed it works out at a reduction of 8p per hour! No wonder nursery nurses are so angry.
- There is no career structure. Heads and Deputies of Nursery provisions have been ignored.

WHAT CAN YOU DO?

- Demand your local councillor calls for a national resolution to the dispute, framed round a fair deal for Nursery Nurses. You can find out who your councillor is by phoning your local UNISON branch or your local council.
- Lobby your MP and MSP to use whatever influence they have to force the employers into meaningful dialogue.
- Write to the papers and use your local talkshow on the radio to highlight your support for Nursery Nurses. We regret having to go on strike for a fair deal but with your support our dispute can be resolved without the need for further disruption.

Nursery Nurses — Quality Childcare



Join the union that fights for quality services and for the people that provide them Contact Joe Di Paola, UNISON, 60 Belford Road, Edinburgh, EH4 3UQ or Carol Ball, Glasgow City Branch, 18 Albion Street, Glasgow G1 1LH



www.unison-scotland.org.uk