



**Scottish
Teachers for
Permanence**

SCOTTISH TEACHER EMPLOYMENT SURVEY 2026

What teachers want decision-makers to know

Every written answer to question 32 from respondents who
agreed to be quoted anonymously

A supplement to Scotland's teacher employment gap: evidence for Parliament and the media.

269

WRITTEN ANSWERS, PUBLISHED WITH CONSENT

**Scottish Teacher
Employment Survey 2026**

Supplement to the evidence report
4 October 2026

IN THEIR OWN WORDS

The hardest situations teachers described

Excerpts from the lightly proofread answers. Each gives its answer number so the full account can be read later. The figures below use all 572 survey responses. They show reported impacts since August 2024 to which difficulty obtaining the amount, type or security of teaching work wanted had contributed.

69.4%

ABOUT 7 IN 10



reported a negative effect on their mental health or wellbeing

397 of 572 respondents, Q28

64.3%

MORE THAN 6 IN 10



used savings to cover ordinary living costs

368 of 572 respondents, Q28

54.4%

MORE THAN 5 IN 10



delayed major personal or family decisions

311 of 572 respondents, Q28

MONEY AND DEBT

ANSWER 210

I am in a very serious amount of debt, relying on food banks, welfare grants and universal credit advance payments to survive and keep my young family.

ANSWER 078

I have spent almost £10,000 of my savings on day to day living costs. I expect to have zero savings left by the end of this school year.

ANSWER 104

I have a family and a mortgage. I couldn't cope with the lack of security and the few hours here and there each month. I, therefore, have taken a job working for a charity, a £20000 pay cut and applied for universal credit.

ANSWER 179

...this month I was paid £500 for 3 days supply, this is nearly half my mortgage alone.

FAMILIES PUT ON HOLD

ANSWER 052

I was recently given some bad fertility news which meant I need to start treatment ASAP if I want to have a family and I cannot.

ANSWER 003

I went on maternity leave during my second year during this job and found out 5 months post partum that I would not have a job to return to and would be returning to supply (despite having 5 months left on my contract).

ANSWER 009

I wanted a second child but can't have one because I wouldn't get maternity pay.

ANSWER 123

Me and my wife are pausing having children because the job market just does not exist.



IN THEIR OWN WORDS

Mental health and gaps in employment

What respondents said about their mental health, and about contracts that ended before they could become permanent.

MENTAL HEALTH

ANSWER 193

The impact on our mental health is frightening, having contemplated ending my own life due to lack of work and being in debt.

ANSWER 081

I was signed off sick for a year before having to resign due to my mental health.

ANSWER 125

The continued stress of going through the interview period has had a profound effect on my mental health and led me to being put on anti depressants.

ANSWER 147

My mental health took a massive hit and I couldn't believe that I had applied for over 150 day supply jobs without getting anything.

CONTRACTS ENDED BEFORE PERMANENCY

ANSWER 081

My head teacher continually used temporary contracts and breaks to prevent me being able to qualify for permanency, despite working there for 6 years.

ANSWER 138

I've been a teacher now for 6 years and every single year they cut my contract.

ANSWER 213

I know teachers that have had the same job for 6 years and have had to interview for the job every Easter.

ANSWER 113

...many jobs advertised are until the last day of term before summer to ensure a break and block people from achieving this.

This page includes one respondent's account of thinking about ending their life. If you are affected, Samaritans can be contacted free, day or night, on 116 123.



IN THEIR OWN WORDS

Years of waiting, and leaving

How long respondents have waited for a secure post, and the decisions some have made to leave teaching or Scotland.

YEARS WITHOUT A SECURE POST

ANSWER 009

Yet here I am, 9 years in, and no security.

ANSWER 042

I have spent 5 years on day to day supply unable to make any plans for the future.

ANSWER 125

6 years on and I am still in an unstable position, unable to start a family or have peace of mind.

ANSWER 177

I have completed 5 days of supply in 2 years.

LEAVING TEACHING OR SCOTLAND

ANSWER 217

During my probation year, when I raised concerns about the availability of teaching posts and asked what opportunities might be available after qualifying, I was told that “there were jobs in Dubai”.

ANSWER 123

If I can[not] get a permanent full time job with a decent salary I'll have no choice but to leave teaching and that is devastating.

ANSWER 064

I have had to relocate to England to find work

ANSWER 163

I have decided if it occurs again next year I will be leaving teaching.

What the written answers describe

Each of the 269 answers in this document was read and coded against twelve themes. An answer can have several themes. These figures count themes mentioned in the consented answers, not everyone who had each experience. An unmentioned experience is not necessarily absent. Use the structured survey findings in the evidence report to assess reported impacts.



48%

129 of 269 answers describe at least one of: financial hardship, harm to mental health, life plans on hold, or leaving teaching or Scotland.

67%

34 of the 51 answers that describe financial hardship also describe harm to mental health.

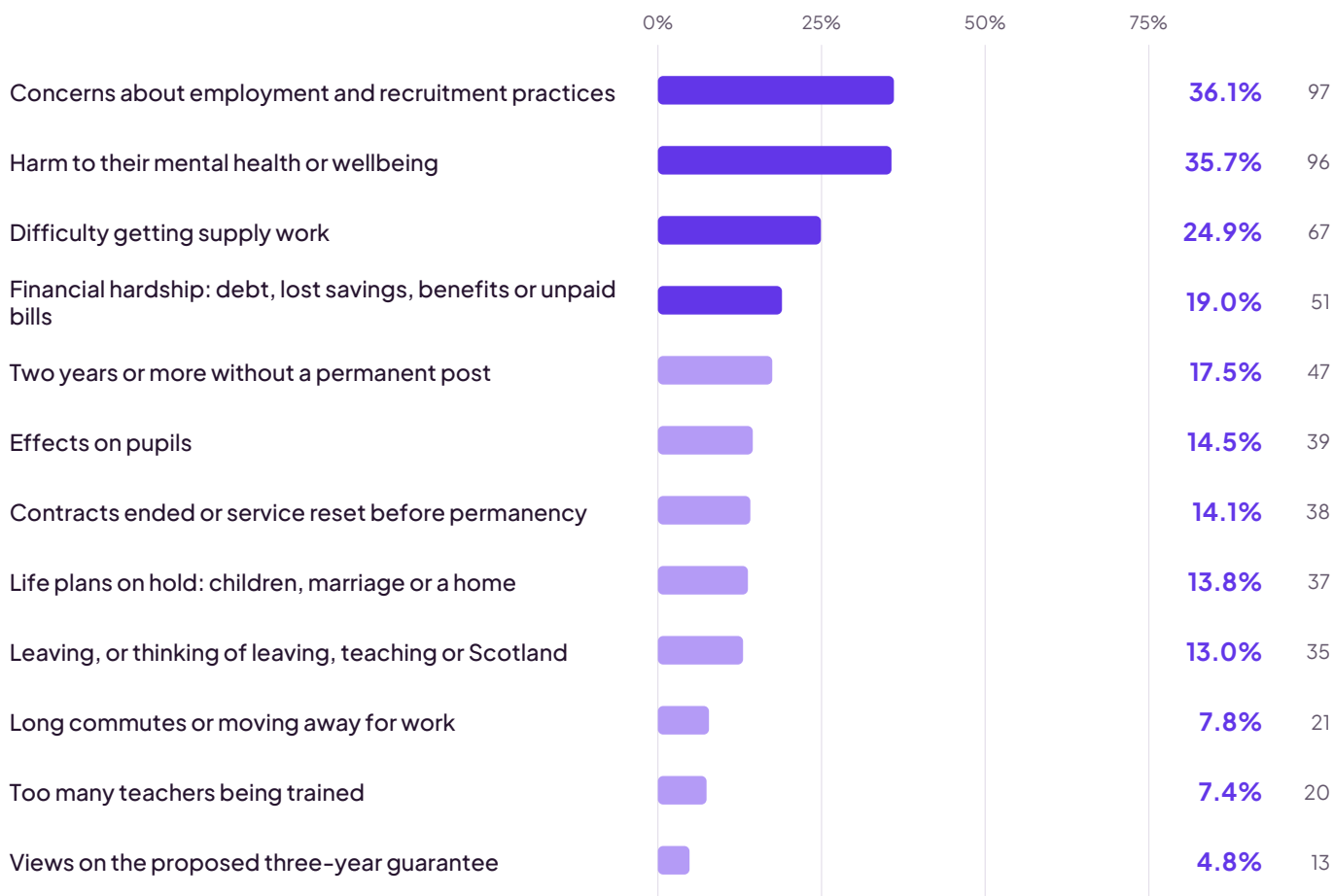
Themes by type of teaching work

Share of each group's written answers that describe the theme. Group sizes are shown; small groups should be read with care.

Teaching work when they answered	Answers	Financial hardship	Mental health	Plans on hold	Leaving
Supply or no post	133	25%	39%	12%	18%
Temporary post	90	10%	30%	13%	9%
Permanent post	33	15%	30%	18%	0%

Every theme in the written answers

Share of the 269 written answers that describe each theme. Answers can describe several themes, so shares add to more than 100%.



How the themes were coded. Each answer was read in full and given every theme it clearly describes. Themes about money, mental health, life plans, leaving and waiting were coded only where respondents describe their own situation. Fears of a future service break are not coded as an actual break. The coding was done with AI assistance.

About these answers

The question respondents answered

32. Is there anything else about finding teaching work, supply teaching, temporary contracts, permanency or job security in Scotland that you think people making decisions about teacher employment need to know?

320

of 572 respondents wrote an answer to question 32

269

agreed to be quoted anonymously: every one of their answers is printed here

51

are not printed: 28 asked to be contacted first, 20 declined and 3 did not say

How the answers are presented

Answers appear in full, in receipt order, with light correction of obvious typing slips. Added words and redacted identifying details appear in [square brackets]. Wording and tone are otherwise retained. Labels show the main teaching sector sought and employment at response; council and cohort are not attached. Selected locations and identifying details are removed or generalised. People who know the circumstances may still recognise a detailed account.

How to use them

These individual accounts do not measure prevalence or independently verify reported decisions. For figures and response bases, use the evidence report. When quoting, cite the answer number: *Answer 57, Scottish Teacher Employment Survey 2026, Scottish Teachers for Permanence*.

Who wrote them

Teaching sector		Teaching work when they answered	
Primary	218	Supply teaching	79
Secondary	35	Temporary post	71
More than one sector	9	On a supply list, no work	37
ASN / special education	7	Permanent post	20
		Temporary part-time, wants more hours	19
		No teaching post or supply work	14
		Permanent part-time, wants more hours	13
		No longer seeking teaching work	8
		Other situation	5
		Seeking supply access	3

Media and parliamentary enquiries: media@teachers4perm.com. Respondents' contact details are never shared.

001 PRIMARY · TEMPORARY POST

[I] want decision makers to understand that for many teachers, finding secure employment is not simply a case of applying for a job and being unsuccessful. It can mean spending years moving between temporary contracts, fixed-term posts and supply work, repeatedly proving yourself in classrooms while still having no meaningful job security.

Teachers can work continuously within the profession, build years of valuable experience and dedicate themselves to pupils, schools and communities, yet still find themselves back at the beginning when a contract ends. Breaks in service, changes between schools or local authorities, and circumstances completely outside a teacher's control can have significant consequences for whether their service is recognised towards permanency.

That is not a sustainable or fair system.

There have already been promises and commitments to improve teacher employment and job security in Scotland. Teachers now need to see those promises translated into meaningful change. If the same problems continue year after year, assurances alone are no longer enough. Decision makers need to examine why experienced teachers are still being trapped in cycles of temporary employment and take action to remove the barriers preventing them from securing permanent posts.

The proposed three year probationer scheme should not be presented as the solution to this problem. Extending the probationary period does nothing to address the fundamental lack of permanent opportunities available to teachers after probation. In fact, there is a real concern that it could make the situation worse by increasing the length of time teachers remain in insecure or transitional employment before they even begin competing for permanent posts.

We cannot solve a crisis of insecure employment by creating a longer route to employment.

The impact of the current system goes far beyond employment status. Living year after year without knowing whether you will have a job, an income or a school to return to after the summer takes a significant personal and professional toll. Scotland also risks losing committed and experienced teachers who eventually decide they can no longer build their lives around temporary contracts and uncertainty.

Government need to listen to teachers experiencing this first hand and examine whether current recruitment practices, continuity of service rules and permanency policies are genuinely fair, transparent and consistent across Scotland.

Teachers are not asking to be handed permanent jobs without merit. They are asking for their experience and accrued service to be properly recognised and for a fair and transparent route to permanent employment.

Promises have already been made. What teachers need now is action.

002 PRIMARY · SUPPLY TEACHING

After working so hard at school to get into university to study my dream career as a Primary teacher, to then studying for 4 years at university, working so hard, getting a first class honours degree, working exceptionally hard during my probation year and completing it. Instead of feeling like I have accomplished my probation year and feeling proud of myself, I feel I am being punished. It is soul destroying.

003 PRIMARY · ON A SUPPLY LIST, NO WORK

I interviewed twice for a role that had been permanent (that the council refused to advertise as permanent after an employee unfortunately passed away). I was successful at interview twice. I went on maternity leave during my second year during this job and found out 5 months post partum that I would not have a job to return to and would be returning to supply (despite having 5 months left on my contract). I totally missed out on having the opportunity to complete KIT days and have job security to return to after having my baby. An absolute shambles of a system.

004 SECONDARY · TEMPORARY POST

From a History point of view, jobs are increasingly looking for dual qualified teachers in both History and Modern Studies. This is often included as 'essential' criteria and so I find applications are quickly rejected. I would be willing to gain the university credits to teach Modern Studies, but can't justify the cost whilst I do not have permanent employment.



ANSWER 078 · PRIMARY · ON A SUPPLY LIST, NO WORK

“I didn't expect that when I finally achieved that dream it would wreck my life.”

This has had such a major impact on my confidence, mental health and financial security.

I have spent almost £10,000 of my savings on day to day living costs. I expect to have zero savings left by the end of this school year.

I applied for jobs outside of teaching but was unsuccessful due to being over qualified and expected to leave if a teaching job came up so I have started tutoring which thankfully I really enjoy. However, with overheads, fuel and travel time between clients, I make a tiny fraction of what I would earn as a teacher and it limits the days I am available for supply to just two days. However, on those days, I then need to try and scramble around to arrange childcare and a dog walker, through family, as it is not feasible for me to have paid child/pet care in place without the guarantee of work. I have been unable to secure work on those days so far this year, through a mix of having no available childcare, no work being available or being rejected for jobs which I have applied for.

I feel completely trapped in this situation. I was in a well paid profession in my 20's and was thankfully able to get a mortgage and build up savings. I did not expect to find myself with no savings and struggling to pay my mortgage in my 40's. It was always my passion to become a teacher. I didn't expect that when I finally achieved that dream it would wreck my life.

Financial hardship

Harm to their mental health or wellbeing

One of 269 written answers published with consent. It also appears in order as answer 78.



005 SECONDARY · SUPPLY TEACHING

When with more than one local authority on supply this means we pay more taxes as it is seen as a secondary job and can result in underpaid taxes from previous years as it's unpredictable how long or what local authority will be the primary income.

By centralising supply staff and allocating them to schools for schools to utilise the staff however they see best would remove this issue not only solve every issue in schools. I suggested this and it would save £75 million in providing local authorities with funding for staff and the response was "that would be too much work to convene with all parties". I have been successful twice for permanent position only to be told later that afternoon that the position would be cancelled and an NQT would fill the position. Local authorities are abusing the NQT system and by extending it by three years would be catastrophic for the entire system.

006 PRIMARY · TEMPORARY POST

As a teacher currently on a fixed term contract, I am worrying almost every day about my life, the stresses of having my own house and what I'd do if the council cancels my contract when I'm no longer needed. I can not drop a wage when owning a home. My life feels like it is currently on hold until I am able to have the security of a permanent job. I still live with my parents and I am too worried to buy a house in case I can't keep up with mortgage payments. I want to have children and with the uncertainty of a job, how can I know I will be able to support a family. I want to work. I want to do well to teach our children and young people. But I also want to live without the constant worry and roadblocks.

007 PRIMARY · TEMPORARY POST

On year 4 (and know of many others who have been doing this for longer) and still have no security. We had held off extending our family in the vain hope that I would eventually get a permanent post, but we ultimately decided that we couldn't wait any longer. This meant that last session I started a fixed term contract in a new local authority in August and finished on maternity leave in January, with only maternity allowance and no job to go back to as the fixed term ended in June. As a result, I spent the majority of my leave anxious about employment and finances, and

unable to just enjoy our new baby. I interviewed for my local authority "block" interviews at 6 weeks postpartum exactly. Miraculously I was offered a fixed term post from this interview. The start date was August and I returned to work when my baby was just 6 months old. I have not felt ready to be back at work, yet I was in no position to turn down any offer of work as I had no other income or job security.

It is so easy for government to blame local authorities, and vice versa, but this is people's lives. Their wellbeing is affected, their families are affected. Personally, I believe the government should be doing more to support teachers who are unemployed, or stuck on temporary contracts, achieve permanency. At the end of the day, the government directly fund the training and so are responsible for how many teachers go through the university process and TIS. It is immoral to support the training of thousands of new teachers when there are thousands without secure work. It is illogical that teachers must reapply and re-interview every year, and be subject to inconsistent recruitment approaches, when they have already proven themselves via completion of probation year. My proposal would be that once you have achieved a successful interview, you are added to a list and allocated a permanent position when you reach the top of the list and a post is available. A national supply register would also be beneficial to support those who were allocated a 3rd, 4th, 5th choice in local authority for probation. Most councils mainly offer internal recruitment so many are stuck in authorities far away from home because of a random selection for probation. It is not reasonable to expect that everyone can move across the country for a job (which are few and far between, and come with their own challenges such as suitable accommodation in the area etc).

The entire system is broken and nobody is willing to stand up and take responsibility, or at least take action. The government, local authorities and unions should be collaborating to resolve this. The lives of teachers, pupils and families are all being impacted and something has to change.

**008** PRIMARY · SUPPLY TEACHING

As a supply teacher at the top of the pay scale I feel this can adversely affect chances of being selected. I feel supply funding should be centralised so individual school budgets are not a factor when choosing supply. The information given on Teacher Booker makes it obvious through years of service how far up the scale you may be.

009 MORE THAN ONE SECTOR · TEMPORARY POST

I have been teaching 9 years this year (including probation). I have paid uni fees myself to become qualified in different subjects to try secure work but still have no perm post. I am mentally and physically exhausted. The SNP do not listen when we say what their policies are doing to teachers. They blame councils and say it is up to them who they recruit but I left a secure career to become a teacher because the SNP were advertising for STEM qualified teachers with industry experience. Yet here I am, 9 years in, and no security. My life has been on hold. I wanted a second child but can't have one because I wouldn't get maternity pay. I'm now approaching 40 so probably cannot have one now as I still don't have security. I feel changing career due to advertisements from SNP has stolen my chance at having another child. I want security. I feel worthless.

010 SECONDARY · SUPPLY TEACHING

They say in interview about experience however where and when am I going to get this experience when I am in the constant cycle of doing supply work.

011 PRIMARY · SUPPLY TEACHING

The current employment crisis in teaching is having a massive detrimental impact on Scottish pupils, teachers and people's mental health. Schools are short staffed and crying out for extra teachers, teachers are unemployed and crying out for work. The education system in Scotland is going to continue to decline unless something is done about it and employing teachers on a permanent basis, who want to work, who want to make a difference and who want nothing more than to teach would be an excellent start, reducing class sizes, increasing the amount of support learners are receiving in class. I personally want to do no other job than teach, but the insecurity, the impact it's having on the future plans of my young family, I'm unsure how long I can go on like this before I am going to have to seek permanent, secure employment elsewhere. Scotland are losing excellent teachers by the day because of this to other jobs and other countries. It's diabolical really.

012 PRIMARY · SUPPLY TEACHING

Many councils are deliberately breaking service to not allow us to be able to apply for permanence through service length by stopping supply availability at certain points of year. Different councils have different rules on what breaks service length some as small as 5 consecutive working days which can make it almost impossible to gain permanence.



ANSWER 252 · PRIMARY · SUPPLY TEACHING / 1 OF 2

“No employee should feel that they must tolerate being physically assaulted in order to protect their employment status.”

I am a single person living alone and currently work as a supply teacher in [council removed]. I am passionate about teaching and genuinely enjoy my profession; however, the current conditions surrounding supply teaching have left me feeling increasingly vulnerable, insecure and unsupported.

Despite being very successful in my probationary year I have been required to interview again for what is ultimately a zero-hour contract. The prospect of having to repeatedly interview for a position that provides no guarantee of work, despite having already demonstrated my competence and commitment, is extremely disheartening.

The requirement to have no more than 4 days without work in order to maintain continuous service is particularly concerning. For someone reliant on supply work as their primary income, this creates an enormous amount of financial and emotional pressure. It means that periods when I am not contacted for work can have consequences far beyond simply losing a few days' pay. Knowing I am competing with over 300 people for just one council for even 1 days supply is awful.

This has become even more difficult due to circumstances beyond my control. I have been physically assaulted on numerous occasions while working (bitten, punched, spat on, kicked). Despite this, I have been informed by HR that leaving my supply position will result in my continuous service being broken. This has left me feeling that I have no genuine choice but to continue working in circumstances where my personal safety has already been compromised. No employee should feel that they must tolerate being physically assaulted in order to protect their employment status.

I have also recently experienced the death of a close family member. Despite the significant emotional impact of this bereavement, I have felt unable to take time away from work because doing so would mean losing income and breaking my 2 years continuous service. Having to prioritise maintaining employment status and financial stability over properly grieving and dealing with the loss of a close family member has been extremely distressing.

Financial hardship

Harm to their mental health or wellbeing

Life plans on hold

Respondent account; reported decisions are not independently verified.



ANSWER 252 · PRIMARY · SUPPLY TEACHING / 2 OF 2

“I want to teach. I want to work.”

The financial insecurity associated with supply teaching is also having a significant impact on my ability to secure stable housing. My current landlord is selling my property, meaning that I need to find alternative accommodation. However, because my income is not guaranteed and I do not have a conventional permanent contract, I am struggling to demonstrate financial stability.

I have subsequently been rejected by 15 mortgage lenders. The feedback I have received is that my employment circumstances are considered too risky, with the terms of supply teaching described as not providing lenders with sufficient confidence. This is particularly frustrating because I am working with find employment but so are thousands of teachers in Scotland and I have successfully completed my probation. Yet the structure of my employment prevents me from being viewed as financially secure.

I therefore find myself in a situation where I am working within the education system, contributing to schools and supporting pupils, while simultaneously being denied the stability and security that most people would reasonably expect from sustained employment. I am trying to build a secure future for myself, but the nature of my employment is making it increasingly difficult to obtain housing, secure a mortgage and plan financially.

I want to make clear that I love teaching. I want to continue working in education and contributing to the pupils and schools I serve. However, I feel that the current system of supply teaching is leaving people like me in an extremely vulnerable position.

I believe that there needs to be greater recognition of the impact that insecure supply arrangements have on teachers' financial security, mental wellbeing, housing prospects and personal safety. Teachers should not be placed in a position where they feel they must continue working despite experiencing physical assaults, bereavement or significant personal difficulties simply to avoid losing their employment status.

I am asking for these concerns to be taken seriously and for consideration to be given to whether the current arrangements provide supply teachers with the fairness, dignity, security and protection that they deserve.

I want to teach. I want to work. I simply want the opportunity to do so with a reasonable degree of security, safety and respect.

Financial hardship

Harm to their mental health or wellbeing

Life plans on hold

Respondent account; reported decisions are not independently verified.

**013** PRIMARY · TEMPORARY PART-TIME, WANTS MORE HOURS

Unfair and inconsistent employment approaches between councils – I scored full marks in my perm supply interview for GCC but was left without a job. Friends of mine had been offered or rejected from the job advert back in June, yet when I phoned in July to enquire about my application status I was told that my application had not been looked at yet. How can they offer and reject some people from a job with limited posts while some people's documents haven't been looked at? For all I know my documents were never actually looked at.

Likewise, some of my peers from my probation year have been lucky and had headteachers who have managed to bend rules and keep them after fixed term contracts or supply work, while others like myself have just been fighting for supply on teacher Booker despite headteachers requesting me. This is completely unfair and should be a blanket approach for all.

014 PRIMARY · ON A SUPPLY LIST, NO WORK

Finding supply work is incredibly hard despite being an individual who is willing to travel. I have bills and a mortgage and I've had to put off having children and seek benefits to continue working in this industry. I've had to pursue additional jobs just to cover the cost of my bills every month.

Mobility within the central belt and beyond is also difficult. Despite being from North Lanarkshire and selecting this as my first choice, I was placed in my fifth choice and was unable to change this. Ever since I have had to travel almost 700 miles a week just to get to work. I even relocated for 2–3 years to pursue teaching which had a negative effect on my mental wellbeing and social life.

I have never been able to gain work in the council I am currently living in and pay taxes in as they only open to "internal" applicants. This has been incredibly demoralising and affected my interpersonal relationships, financial stability and mental health.

015 PRIMARY · OTHER SITUATION

I am in my 5th year of seeking a permanent contract. I spent my nqt year and 2 consecutive years at one school. Following that the council deliberately broke my service and made me ineligible for a permanent position. Last year I was offered temporary area cover on 16th Sept but this did not start until late November. This year I am still waiting on being offered a post despite being successful at interview. Those of us in this position haven't even been added to the supply list in the mean time. The council are actively stopping many of us from working to save money. It is a huge strain on finances and my mental health and coming into teaching was supposed to bring stability into my life as a single parent but it has been anything but. The whole situation is utterly demoralising.

016 PRIMARY · ON A SUPPLY LIST, NO WORK

There is no security right now in the job. It all seems to come down to "who you know" or being lucky enough to be in a school when a position comes available but even then there are still no guarantees.

017 PRIMARY · SUPPLY TEACHING

I completed my probation year in [council removed]. They had assured us we would all have the opportunity to apply and be interviewed for the permanent pool, in January they called us to a meeting to tell us this would not be happening and that we should still be grateful that they gave us the opportunity of our probation year and they could not guarantee supply interviews. In May they falsely advertised for the temporary pool, it was actually for Raising Attainment Teacher roles which we only found out about at the interview. I had a colleague who had qualified 5 years ago who had interviewed for this role and discovered during the interview that they were applying for their current job and had not yet been told their contract was ending, they did not have a successful interview they contacted HR who told them "tough luck".

I got on supply there but have had to move back to my parents in [another area] as I could not afford to rent on supply. The work in [that area] is much more frequent and supportive and there have been more temporary and permanent roles coming up with more schools providing interview opportunities.



ANSWER 003 · PRIMARY · ON A SUPPLY LIST, NO WORK

“found out 5 months post partum that I would not have a job to return to”

I interviewed twice for a role that had been permanent (that the council refused to advertise as permanent after an employee unfortunately passed away). I was successful at interview twice. I went on maternity leave during my second year during this job and found out 5 months post partum that I would not have a job to return to and would be returning to supply (despite having 5 months left on my contract). I totally missed out on having the opportunity to complete KIT days and have job security to return to after having my baby. An absolute shambles of a system.

Life plans on hold

Contracts ended or service reset before permanency

One of 269 written answers published with consent. It also appears in order as answer 3.

**018** PRIMARY · NO TEACHING POST OR SUPPLY WORK

I am currently awaiting notification of employment following a successful interview I completed in March 2026 for this years [council's internal recruitment campaign; identifying details removed] in which I was told I was successful on the 1st of May 2026. It is now the 14th of August 2026 with teachers and pupils having returned to school and myself and many others now finding ourselves unemployed. I have a first-class honours degree and a masters in education from the [university removed] and yet I have heard nothing post September weekend in which this campaign officially closes, I am going to have to apply for Job Seekers Allowance (JSA) and am currently in the process of treating job hunting like a 9-5 job due to this. Furthermore I would like to add I have been working in [the same council] for 2 years having completed my probation year in the academic year of 2024-25 and having come to the end of a fixed term one year contract in the academic year of 2025-26. I worked hard at school and university and I feel that I have been let down by a failing system.

019 PRIMARY · TEMPORARY PART-TIME, WANTS MORE HOURS

Reduce the number of PGDE spaces, unfair that people that have done four years, (5 in my case as I did the MEDUC), can't find jobs. We were told in 2020 at the start of my degree that there was lots of jobs, by the time we were in second year that was no longer the case. Despite this PGDE courses continued to have a large amount of students. This was frustrating and many in my year wondered what was the point of doing 5 years as there was no job.

Additionally, in my council there was only 2 jobs advertised in June for the 2026/27 session. I have managed to get a job 2 days a week at a school however it is 40 minutes away from where I stay. The rise in fuel costs is a concern.

On teacher booker there has been very few opportunities, especially when compared to my peers in other councils.

020 PRIMARY · ON A SUPPLY LIST, NO WORK

My struggles with mental health are unimaginable. Without a job or routine, I wish not to wake up most days.

021 PRIMARY · SUPPLY TEACHING

For me it's the mental toll that it has taken on me. I left a secure job in a well paying industry on the promise of long term employment in teaching.

I have spent years now deeply regretting ever training to be a teacher. I have wasted most of my 30's trying to gain full time employment in teaching.

022 SECONDARY · SUPPLY TEACHING

This situation has destroyed my life.

023 PRIMARY · TEMPORARY POST

My concern is the children! I interviewed in April before the Easter holidays. I was told [the evening before] that I was to start [the next day; dates removed] in a school I didn't know. I got given a stage I have never taught and no support from SLT. It has been shocking. The strain on my MH has been immense. I had no grasp on the children I was going to be teaching and this has had a huge impact on them over the first few weeks. I think [it] is a disgrace that it takes a L.A nearly 5 months to recruit and place teachers.

024 PRIMARY · SUPPLY TEACHING

My only supply days I have been offered is for the census. I was just asked to cover for this and was put in to classes for 1 period at a time barely getting to know the children. I also heard teachers within the school talking about how 'getting the census supply in is such a waste of time and money' making me feel small and silly for trying to earn some money

025 SECONDARY · ON A SUPPLY LIST, NO WORK

If you want a stable career, specifically in the central belt, I would advise them to completely avoid doing so unless they are a home economics or maths teacher.

**026** PRIMARY · ON A SUPPLY LIST, NO WORK

In West Lothian supply jobs come out through emails and it's a process of "fastest finger first". Often jobs are gone within a few minutes but rarely is another email sent out to let people know the job has gone. This must result in many people phoning a school unnecessarily.

027 ASN / SPECIAL EDUCATION · TEMPORARY POST

It is more difficult for teachers who do not already work in the school to have a chance to progress to the interview stage, external employees typically struggle more for job opportunities. Schools are also hiring probationers rather than more experienced teachers to save costs.

028 PRIMARY · TEMPORARY POST

The most rewarding but unrewarding job at the same time. Lots of work, then having to leave again. No consistency in schools anymore, constant staff change, head teachers don't have any autonomy over their staffing.

029 PRIMARY · ON A SUPPLY LIST, NO WORK

I have completed my probation in 2024 but have never been offered a fixed-term or permanent contract and continue to rely on day-to-day supply work. This is financially insecure, as there is no guarantee of work or income from one day to the next. There should be clearer pathways for qualified and experienced supply teachers to move into temporary or permanent positions and have greater job security.

030 PRIMARY · TEMPORARY PART-TIME, WANTS MORE HOURS

I have been lucky enough to qualify for permanency through jnc20 this year, however, I am still not permanent to council, although I have more job security than previously as a supply teacher. I have suffered huge mental health issues over the past five years bringing up a family when I am basically out of work and unpaid between the end of June and October/November each year. Luckily my council do not insist on consecutive service but on a set amount of weeks over 3 years, so I was still able to qualify for jnc20. This is the first year I can say I have worked since August. The inconsistencies in teacher employment,

where some people get long term supply and some don't, regardless of ability, it [is] shocking, and the inconsistencies in council policies in qualifying for permanency and the underhand methods they use to stop people qualifying is an absolute travesty, and I fear the promise of a three year probation period will simply exacerbate the problem hugely as councils look for any way to save a buck. The government or the unions really need to step in and codify the employment conditions for permanency/employment for teachers, as the current passing the buck and refusal to accept any kind of responsibility between Westminster, Holyrood and the council offices results in everybody losing out, children most of all.

031 PRIMARY · TEMPORARY POST

It is the councils we need to target - the way they mess about teachers and change posts is outrageous. Posts being advertised and then pulled, filling them elsewhere so they don't have to advertise, paying newly qualified teachers because they are cheaper. I think the way they spend money should be looked at closer.

032 SECONDARY · PERMANENT PART-TIME, WANTS MORE HOURS

I went part time when returning from maternity leave in 2023, I had to do this as a permanent contract change. I have been wanting to return to full time since 2025, my school have not been able to increase my contract as we keep getting probationers in my subject, so there is no increased need for me. I have applied for other full time jobs as a teacher of 10 years plus SQA/QS marker and item writer and not been successful and sometimes not even had an interview, there have been over 100 applicants for a post at times. I am unhappy in my school but I am trapped as I can't find another teaching job elsewhere. Being part time has also impacted my ability to expand my family as I can't afford maternity leave on a part time salary. I am also worried about my pension in the future since I am contributing less.



ANSWER 125 · PRIMARY · SUPPLY TEACHING

“There has been one permanent class teacher role in my authority in 6 years.”

6 years on and I am still in an unstable position, unable to start a family or have peace of mind. The continued stress of going through the interview period has had a profound effect on my mental health and led me to being put on anti depressants. There has been one permanent class teacher role in my authority in 6 years.

125

Two years or more without a permanent post

Life plans on hold

One of 269 written answers published with consent. It also appears in order as answer 125.

**033** SECONDARY · PERMANENT POST

I took a maternity cover to start straight after my probation ended quite far away from my home. I thought that after a few years I would be able to get a job closer to home. I was unwilling to leave teaching after probation after dedicating 6 years of my life to becoming a teacher. Now 6 years on I am still commuting an hour and twenty minutes to and from work everyday because there are no jobs for Modern Studies teachers closer to my home. I am newly married and now cannot start a family because of my time commitment to driving to work. I am unable to look for work outside of teaching as I am salary trapped. I feel helpless and don't know what to do. I got into teaching to make a positive difference and it is ruining my life and happiness.

034 PRIMARY · TEMPORARY POST

Teachers choose the job because they WANT to do it. Schools are under funded and professionals are required to support the system. We need teachers permanently in schools to build up positive relationships with staff, parents, children and the wider community. Temporary contracts and supply work does not support this at all.

035 PRIMARY · SUPPLY TEACHING

They need to stop the large amount of students at universities studying teaching. Why is the government paying people to go through the course for there to be no jobs at the other end. The councils and the government need to work together rather than blaming each other about who's in charge of hiring teachers. I also feel more council/parliament members needs to go into schools for long periods and see what teachers are putting up with and why we need more teachers within schools.

036 PRIMARY · PERMANENT PART-TIME, WANTS MORE HOURS

I was made redundant after 4 years. Then taken straight back. The council entrust you with highly sensitive information that you safeguard & nurture only to be dropped the minute you are due permanency. Soul destroying.

037 PRIMARY · PERMANENT PART-TIME, WANTS MORE HOURS

I have been trying to get a job in central belt for over 2 years now so I can live with my long term partner. I have had 9 interviews and have not been successful in any due to not being known in these councils. I am in three supply lists but have not received a single day supply. My mental health has suffered massively, my life plans have had to change and slow down, my finances are poor, I have to travel 100's of miles a week for work.

038 PRIMARY · TEMPORARY POST

It is just so disheartening every year not knowing what is going to happen and have months of worry from fixed term applications opening up in February and then still not knowing by the summer holidays what is happening or if you will get offered a job to then not even be able to enjoy the summer holidays and have to think yet again about leaving teaching and working in another sector and how many more years you could be in this same position for all over again. I was lucky this year that I got kept on at the school I had a fixed term in from March until summer but this is the first time I have ever had the opportunity to stay in school where I have built relationships.

039 PRIMARY · SUPPLY TEACHING

I am 60. I have been a teacher for 33 years. I hold a headteachers certificate am still, able and up to date in the classroom. All courses completed. I had to sign on this year. Mental health suffering. Employment practices very interesting! If I could afford to retire on a full pension I would!!

040 PRIMARY · ON A SUPPLY LIST, NO WORK

The impact it has had on my life is unreal. I have delayed having a 2nd child, experiencing mental health issues as I have now got into debt. The worry of when I will be next working is unbelievable. When visiting old schools I have previously done supply in I leave upset as the children always ask why can't you stay. You feel like you're not a real teacher going from a to b and always used but never appreciated like you should be.

**041** PRIMARY · ON A SUPPLY LIST, NO WORK

Feedback from interviews do not always help in future applications or interviews. The recruitment process is too generic, I've often been told that schools are looking for certain skills/knowledge that are not included in the application descriptions

042 PRIMARY · ON A SUPPLY LIST, NO WORK

It is soul destroying that after 5 years of teaching I still don't have a permanent job. I have spent 5 years on day to day supply unable to make any plans for the future. Now I'm in the position of not only fighting for supply with the retired teachers supplementing their pension but also with newly qualified teachers who are cheaper. My LA also appears to give priority to teachers who did their probation year with them when permanent positions come up.

043 PRIMARY · SUPPLY TEACHING

It is so difficult to find any sort of contracted job right now in Scotland. No one I know who completed their probation year 25/26 has secured permanent work. At most, one person I know has secured a year long temporary contract, everyone else is either doing maternity cover, part time temporary work or is on the supply list which is highly competitive. I feel as though I cannot easily move to a different council being a teacher as being on supply means I am working towards permanency for a certain number of years, but if I decide I want to move to a different council, that work would reset to 0 years of continuous service. I feel as though I am not in a position to properly start my life as I don't have any job or income security. It is nearly impossible to build meaningful relationships with a school community when you are sometimes only there for 1 day. I feel I am missing out on essential training and information- with the new curriculum reform approaching I already feel disadvantaged using it with not being in the same school consistently.

044 PRIMARY · ON A SUPPLY LIST, NO WORK

One of the reasons most of my work has been in the same council has been because it is even more difficult applying outwith your usual council e.g due to not knowing the specific wording of policies used in another councils schools in an interview or application even though the principles are the same as another council. There are so few jobs (permanent, fixed/temporary, and even supply) advertised across the central belt particularly during August-October periods that every job, even 1 day of supply, is extremely competitive. For example if an email is sent out offering supply work in West Lothian, the job is gone even if you call the school a minute later than the email being received.

045 SECONDARY · SUPPLY TEACHING

I have grovelled and contacted schools directly every time for supply work. I was fortunate and got work but I know thousands who are in the same position that did not get lucky

046 PRIMARY · SUPPLY TEACHING

It just feels demoralising, I sometimes feel like I'm wasting time applying for jobs, which is a job in itself, as the competition is so fierce. I've recently had to cancel a supply shift due to my car breaking down and not having the funds to repair it, I live rurally so public transport is not available to me.

047 PRIMARY · ON A SUPPLY LIST, NO WORK

As a newly qualified teacher I feel that I am last in line for any supply work, the current system in North Lanarkshire is that schools are meant to email all those on the supply list and it is meant to be first come first served, however this is not the case. Schools can email people they know or who have previously worked on supply at their school. There is a lack of supply work when schools initially go back this means I have had to rely on savings to cover bills, and there is a real lack of financial security and unable to plan long-term or even near future. North Lanarkshire has also opened the supply to external applicants recently which make it more difficult to get supply work. Many other councils keep their supply closed. While applying for jobs, I noticed that some council areas only take applications from teachers who are



ANSWER 154 · PRIMARY · TEMPORARY POST

“If anyone in HR or even an MSP or the Director of Education got sacked every 23 months there would be a huge outcry.”

Yes.

Scrap the cutting of contracts to stop the person gaining permanent status.

It's unethical.

If someone has been paid by a council for 23 months. They have passed all Learning Visits. Been told they are valued.

What? Sack them and give them their P45 only to re-employ them in 2 weeks time.

It's wrong.

It's not right.

If anyone in HR or even an MSP or the Director of Education got sacked every 23 months there would be a huge outcry.

But it's ok for them to do it to us.

It's not right to get sacked and not know how much money you have coming in (they wouldn't tell me what I was getting for holiday pay)

I didn't know I'd be back so was in a panic about trying to find work.

I've been interviewed for perm posts. But not been able to get them as I'm so nervous.

There seems to be NO route to become perm supply. Which I don't understand.

Surely if I'm good enough to have been employed since 2021 why can't they make me perm supply.

Do I need to get pregnant before my current fixed term contract gets cut and go on mat leave so they can't give me my P45 to become perm????

That's mental to even think like that.

Contracts ended or service reset before permanency

One of 269 written answers published with consent. It also appears in order as answer 154.

within that council. Further, each council has a different system, some use a booking system for supply, while others use a supply list/email. Since schools returned in August I have not had any work. Further to get onto a permanent supply you have to have 2 years continuous service, this seems impossible when not getting any work at all.

The school I was in for probation apparently had no way to keep me on for even a day, however a teacher who had previously been a deputy head, was starting full-time as a class teacher when the schools returned.

048 PRIMARY · NO TEACHING POST OR SUPPLY WORK

During my probation year, I was successful in the local authority's probationer pool interview, yet I was never allocated a teaching position. Shortly after, I applied for the only permanent ASN teaching post advertised in [council removed]. Out of 44 applicants, I was shortlisted as one of just five candidates selected for an interview. Despite demonstrating strong specialist knowledge, I was ultimately unsuccessful due to a perceived lack of relative experience, with the post going to an established teacher who was already in full employment.

This experience highlights a glaring structural flaw in teacher recruitment: early career teachers are validated by central panels as interview-ready, only to be left without placements and forced to compete for scarce open posts against experienced staff who already hold contract security. It creates an impossible catch-22 for post-probationers, who are deemed fully qualified by the council on paper, but blocked from gaining the very long-term experience required to secure a stable job.

049 MORE THAN ONE SECTOR · TEMPORARY POST

The lack of permanent jobs and funding for councils to enable schools to make temporary posts that are re-advertised every year permanent, is massively impacting on people making plans for starting families, buying property or even a vehicle or pets

050 PRIMARY · ON A SUPPLY LIST, NO WORK

I had to move abroad for a few years due to a lack of teaching jobs in Scotland. I returned this year and the situation has not improved. I am thinking of leaving again because I am relying on family. The application process is often not transparent, therefore it is unclear why I am not getting a job in Scotland but easily find work abroad.

051 PRIMARY · TEMPORARY POST

I had to relocate after being allocated my fifth-choice local authority for probation. Despite appealing due to a change in circumstances, my appeal was rejected. Since then, I have relied on this council for employment as most Central Belt authorities do not advertise vacancies to external applicants. I see no realistic way to return to my hometown, where my family and friends are, without giving up teaching.

Since completing probation in 2022, I have interviewed for city-wide recruitment every year, securing one-year contracts and being retained in schools where positions are available. Why must teachers repeatedly prove their suitability for jobs they are already doing successfully? One bad interview could leave an experienced teacher without work for the entire following school year.

There is also inconsistency in whether probationary service counts towards continuous service across local authorities. This should be standardised, particularly in relation to the four-year fixed-term employment legislation, to ensure teachers are treated fairly and have a clear route to permanent employment.



ANSWER 263 · PRIMARY · PERMANENT POST

“only took 2 days off due to fears of taking any longer off and that being put as a break in service.”

I had worked at the exact same council in the exact same school from my probation year in [year removed] and was bounced between supply and temporary contracts until the union were able to fight my case and I earned a permanent contract in [year removed]. During the period before my contract remortgaging was difficult because while I was earning full time pay mortgage companies did not want to accept me because I was not permanent. I also had my Mum die in [year removed] and only took 2 days off due to fears of taking any longer off and that being put as a break in service.

Two years or more without a permanent post

One of 269 written answers published with consent. It also appears in order as answer 263.

**052 SECONDARY · SUPPLY TEACHING**

I excelled during probation [assessment and council details removed]. I have a first class degree. I genuinely am good at my job. There has not been a single job come up within an hour commute of me. My only option so far has been supply.

I was recently given some bad fertility news which meant I need to start treatment ASAP if I want to have a family and I cannot. Without having a stable job/ income to secure a mortgage or having the ability to take paid maternity leave, I am having to keep pursuing teaching and putting fertility and house buying on hold.

Before you even say 'just look elsewhere' ... I have applied for so many jobs outside of teaching and haven't even gotten an interview. It has actually taken a real toll on my relationships with family and friends as I am so stressed all of the time and I just avoid seeing them so they don't ask about work.

053 PRIMARY · PERMANENT POST

Many teachers are taking jobs in un preferred sectors to gain employment, in my case ASN. This has many implications for pupils, as staff are taking roles they don't necessarily want or are suitably trained to do.

054 PRIMARY · SUPPLY TEACHING

Applying to different council areas has involved me requesting 4 different head teacher references which has slowed my application process time. Could there not be a standard reference filled in at the end of a contract which could be used across all LA's?

The process of getting onto East Renfrewshire's supply list has taken me 3 months. HR staff continually gave me wrong information and were extremely slow to respond when I needed help. Due to the lack of supply work I applied for job seekers allowance as I wasn't eligible for Universal credit.

My whole experience since successfully completing my probation period has been soul destroying. I have a young family and I need to work to support them. I just don't think supply is financially viable for me and I feel it will ultimately have a detrimental effect on my mental health.

055 PRIMARY · TEMPORARY POST

1. Working in two councils impacts childcare when holidays don't match.
2. Working in 2 councils impacts routes to permanence.
3. Infertility and family planning is hugely impacted by lack of permanent post.
4. I see absolutely zero benefits to children or teachers in relation to a new 3 year probation, I think it's misguided, ill informed, all round awful, and will only exacerbate many of the issues in teacher wellbeing, pupil wellbeing, attainment, especially if teachers must remain at the same school for 3 years.
5. Class size reduction should be a priority to employ teachers, not considering average class sizes, but reducing:

Max multi-composite to 15.

Max composite to 18.

Max p1 to 18.

Max p2-4 to 20.

Max p4-7 to 22.

Education needs a huge shake up. Including more support staff in schools, especially if class sizes are to remain at the levels they are with the demands on teachers.

056 PRIMARY · SUPPLY TEACHING

Head teachers/senior management should have more say in individual teacher recruitment, especially in terms of teachers known to a school who have built enduring relationships with children and colleagues. It is unreasonable to expect an experienced teacher to participate in the performative and rigged annual central recruitment process - default applications should be directly to the schools for specific posts.

057 PRIMARY · PERMANENT POST

Head teachers are requesting staff but the local authority say no and replace staff with new people a lot.

058 MORE THAN ONE SECTOR · PERMANENT PART-TIME, WANTS MORE HOURS

Our council told us during our probationary year that it would take 2 years of continuous work to secure a guaranteed permanent post. 12 months later, I was doing a supply shift and was told in the staffroom that they had changed the permanency eligibility. The council now required people to build up their 2 years of continuous work and then interview to be put on the list of people waiting for permanent posts. Why was this not communicated via official channels? This led me to seek out a permanent post in ASN instead of mainstream primary as I couldn't bring myself to put my life on hold if permanency was no longer guaranteed after 2 years as I may have not passed the interview.

059 PRIMARY · TEMPORARY POST

I have been actively seeking permanent part-time employment for the past ten years. Due to caring responsibilities and family commitments, part-time employment is the only feasible option for me at this stage in my life.

Over the past number of years, I have been re-employed on several occasions at the same school. I absolutely love the school, the pupils and the wider school community, and I have always been committed to the role. The Head Teacher has also expressed a desire to retain me on a permanent basis. However, due to the way my employment has been structured and the breaks in service identified by the council, I have not been eligible for permanency.

This situation has become increasingly difficult and, honestly, soul-destroying. It is incredibly frustrating to repeatedly find myself in a position where I am valued by the school and want to remain there, but cannot secure the permanent part-time position that would provide the stability I need.

I have always viewed teaching as a vocation rather than simply a job. I care deeply about the pupils I work with and take great pride in making a difference to their lives. However, the lack of suitable permanent part-time opportunities has made my situation increasingly unsustainable.

As a result, I am now actively exploring opportunities outside of teaching. This is not a decision I have taken lightly, as education has been such an important part of my professional life. However, I also need to find

employment that provides the stability, flexibility and security that fits with my family commitments.

060 PRIMARY · PERMANENT POST

I have a permanent part time post but as an ASN teacher not a primary teacher. Training should reflect the needs of the three areas, secondary, primary, ASN.

Numbers entering university need to reflect the available job vacancies after graduation.

A three year job commitment would just delay the problem not change the fact that too many teachers are being trained. There still wouldn't be jobs to move into after 3 years.

061 PRIMARY · TEMPORARY POST

For my probation year I was allocated Aberdeenshire through the teacher induction scheme after being based in Aberdeen city and completing all of my uni placements there. Aberdeen city give their probationers an opportunity to interview and allocate either permanent, fixed term, supply or not successful through the interview. This puts me at a major disadvantage as I did not have that opportunity purely because I was based in the shire through no choice of my own. Jobs are advertised internally which I can't access as I don't work in Aberdeen city and I have had the opportunity to apply for 3 jobs this year based in Aberdeen city. It is completely unfair and needs to be addressed ASAP as [it] is having a negative impact on so many qualified teachers wellbeing and is driving educators out of the sector due to the lack of access to jobs and financial security. This 3 year guarantee proposal is a great idea but will it help the people who are already qualified and stuck without work? - they should be the priority!!

062 PRIMARY · PERMANENT POST

Many applying for teaching places at university have no idea about the current lack of employment prospects and should be properly informed prior to embarking on university courses. I had a colleague who had no idea about the lack of jobs, left a secure job to enter teaching and then had to sell his house after his probationary year as he couldn't find employment. He then later uprooted his family and moved to England to find work.



ANSWER 257 · PRIMARY · ON A SUPPLY LIST, NO WORK

“I have now had to take a job in a care home for elderly doing night shifts”

I have spent 8 years studying to become a teacher in Scotland- 6 of these still working full time in another job. I have given up a lot of time with my own children at nights to achieve my dream job. I complete a masters at [university removed] and was told this would help my case in the awful job situation currently in Scotland for teachers. Since qualifying it has been nothing short of draining and depressing trying to obtain work. This year, since August, has been particularly difficult and has had a serious impact on my mental health. So far I have not managed to obtain ONE day of work as supply and with the current crisis, unfortunately I cannot afford not to work (coming from a home with two incomes). I have now had to take a job in a care home for elderly doing night shifts- which again is taking me away from my own children and reducing my availability for supply- however this is not stopping me from trying every day. When the statistics are shown on how many teachers leave the profession in the first 5 years is it really that surprising when this is how ‘professionals’ are being treated after committing such a huge part of their lives to become qualified.

Harm to their mental health or wellbeing

Financial hardship

One of 269 written answers published with consent. It also appears in order as answer 257.



Those making decisions should not underestimate the impact of temporary or insecure employment on your life. I have delayed a lot of life decisions and have been extremely anxious about my financial position for the past 3 years because of uncertainty over when I could secure a permanent contract. I am extremely fortunate that I secured a permanent contract just this week and the weight that has come off my shoulders has been massive. I can finally buy a new car, I can start family planning and just reduce the general anxiety I have held for 3 years.

I also entered into £8000 of student debt to do a masters in Inclusive Education to make myself more employable and move into ASN. This has paid off as I secured a permanent contract a year after the masters but this was only possible because I have a partner who supported me during the masters degree. I will now pay this debt off plus interest for years to come.

Senior leaders in schools should be more empathetic to the situation of supply teachers and be kinder. Not having a permanent job takes a toll on you.

063 SECONDARY · PERMANENT POST

If people refuse to move for work they should not complain there are no opportunities

064 PRIMARY · SUPPLY TEACHING

I think I would inform anyone not to go into teaching I have had to relocate to England to find work and I wouldn't recommend anyone wasting their time.

065 PRIMARY · TEMPORARY PART-TIME, WANTS MORE HOURS

Contracts broken every 2 years. Even though schools want and need me. Out of work 3 weeks at a time and start again with employment rights even though HT request me. Council never admit that's what they do.

066 SECONDARY · SUPPLY TEACHING

What is going to happen to funding for the extra jobs needed to cover the 90 min reduction in class contact time.

The rules for supply teaching are not commonly known while the route to permanency seems to change.

067 PRIMARY · SUPPLY TEACHING

At this point I feel it is pointless even sharing experiences. I am struggling to make ends meet, struggling to cope with the pressures of finding supply. This situation is not only rough on MY mental health, but is beginning to impact those around me. My relationship of 7 years is struggling as we cannot move on in life as I can't get any sort of long term or permanent work in teaching.

I recently took up supply in a school I was in for THREE YEARS. The supply was for one week then 2 days the following week. I then found out they had taken another person to work the supply job I was already working. This new person had previously been at the school for a year probation, then took up a job in the nursery. They let that person give up their nursery contract to take on a supply post, that could be short term or long term. No one mentioned anything to me. The same HT also took on another probationer from another school, after letting 4 members of staff go, as "a favour". What chance have we got when HTs have no loyalty. We are just pawns in this horrific game

068 PRIMARY · SUPPLY TEACHING

I had to move council due to [my partner's work] it meant leaving a 8 year permanent teaching post I loved while pregnant. I lost my maternity entitlement causing financial

Implications to my family as I couldn't move my family 500 miles with two young children in less than a week following [their employer's] timelines. Councils need to take into consideration the break in service times. If I was moving a few towns it would have been achievable but a long-distance move cannot be done in 1 week.

I have been shocked at how difficult it is to get work in Scotland at all. I have been teaching 8 years and have a young family and financial responsibilities. I had to sell my home in [area removed] as there was no way to even get on the supply lists there as they were closed for two years. Moving there would have meant having family to support our young family.

[My partner's work] moved us to [another area] where the work situation sounded better but it's not. All that is available is 1 day temporary contracts and a few maternity covers. I am frustrated after completing a short time in a [local] school I was appalled at the way schools seem to be run, the lack of progression and



ANSWER 210 · PRIMARY · SUPPLY TEACHING

“I am in a very serious amount of debt, relying on food banks, welfare grants and universal credit advance payments to survive and keep my young family.”

I am in a very serious amount of debt, relying on food banks, welfare grants and universal credit advance payments to survive and keep my young family. I believed that teaching was a lifelong career, and this was never suggested otherwise during my application for university or during my studies. The way that supply teachers are paid a full month in arrears makes for unstable living conditions that don't meet the demands of the cost of living. There is also no additional financial support for supply teachers should they fall ill, require planned or emergency surgery or treatments, on maternity/paternity, caring for children or dependents, that permanent teachers benefit from. Being a supply teacher feels like a thankless and far under appreciated job.

Financial hardship

One of 269 written answers published with consent. It also appears in order as answer 210.



behaviour. Attainment is terrible and I worry about sending my own children to schools like this.

069 ASN / SPECIAL EDUCATION · SUPPLY TEACHING

Having 8 year previous experience in schools and then leaving a permanent job to re train as a teacher thinking I would get treated with respect has been a shock to the system. I have friends in social work who have done the 4 year degree finished in the May and been on 3 interviews and the been offered a permanent job but the Oct. So a short period of unemployment. However, someone like myself with the experience then completing probation and working for a year. (in my 11th year working with children in different school settings). Has more experience than a social work coming straight from a degree. Though that profession is treating people with the dignity and professionalism expected. I don't understand why this can't be the same in teaching. Also the financial

uncertainty. I'm currently working supply and am on till 2nd Oct but then have no idea what comes next. I may get kept on I may not. Explaining this to family for borrowing money is mentally draining.

070 SECONDARY · TEMPORARY POST

I have no desire to have a permanent contract or full time work. I have suffered greatly with stress during my 26 years of teaching and now just want a few days supply per week. Luckily I live in an authority where work is available, though I often find it hard to get any work in January and May. I would like there to be some guaranteed hours for people like me.

071 PRIMARY · TEMPORARY POST

My service is reset every year to 0 which means I can't build up to obtain permanency. Last year I switched to north Lanarkshire and built up 16 months of the two years needed and my contract was ended putting me back to zero.

072 PRIMARY · NO LONGER SEEKING TEACHING WORK

The demands on teachers in schools are incredibly difficult.

073 PRIMARY · NO TEACHING POST OR SUPPLY WORK

It is destroying my mental health and I am unable to support myself financially taking a huge cut in wages. I often rely on my parents for help. This is why I have taken a side step away from teaching but desperately want to get back to the classroom. It is not feasible studying for years and years to have no employment in the field you love and I would not recommend it to anyone. In fact, I resent the choices I made and I feel I have wasted so many years of my life chasing something I would never have.

074 PRIMARY · TEMPORARY POST

The uncertainty year on year is an awful situation for anyone to be in. There is no thought about the relationships built with pupils and schools - with a new face put in place rather than keeping the continuity.

075 MORE THAN ONE SECTOR · SUPPLY TEACHING

Having been a successful freelance artist for several years, I re-trained as a teacher during the pandemic (around same time as having a child) thinking this was a vocation that would avoid the hustle, provide steady employment and secure environment for raising a family.

I have a good relationship with pupils and management in schools across the City. I still pickup odd days Supply but it's a patchwork, usually coming in on the day, therefore challenging to accept teaching work and accommodate childcare responsibilities & school pickups. After interviews for permanent or short term contracts, I'm told of the number and quality of applicants and don't see the situation changing anytime soon. 6 years on, I'm back freelancing, doing the hustle, juggling with single parenting and doubting the conviction of my decisions.

076 PRIMARY · SEEKING SUPPLY ACCESS

The education sector in Scotland is on its knees. The government has completely failed trainee teachers, teachers and pupils.

077 PRIMARY · TEMPORARY POST

It's a disaster I have been from one contract to another no security at all

078 PRIMARY · ON A SUPPLY LIST, NO WORK

This has had such a major impact on my confidence, mental health and financial security.

I have spent almost £10,000 of my savings on day to day living costs. I expect to have zero savings left by the end of this school year.

I applied for jobs outside of teaching but was unsuccessful due to being over qualified and expected to leave if a teaching job came up so I have started tutoring which thankfully I really enjoy. However, with overheads, fuel and travel time between clients, I make a tiny fraction of what I would earn as a teacher and it limits the days I am available for supply to just two days. However, on those days, I then need to try and scramble around to arrange childcare and a dog walker, through family, as it is not feasible for me to have paid child/pet care in place without the guarantee of work. I have been unable to secure work on those days so far this year, through a mix of having no available childcare, no work being available or being rejected for jobs which I have applied for.

I feel completely trapped in this situation. I was in a well paid profession in my 20's and was thankfully able to get a mortgage and build up savings. I did not expect to find myself with no savings and struggling to pay my mortgage in my 40's. It was always my passion to become a teacher. I didn't expect that when I finally achieved that dream it would wreck my life.

079 PRIMARY · SUPPLY TEACHING

Teachers move house and move city. Moving between councils means starting again.

I move frequently as my husband [relocates for work]. It has been almost impossible to find work in Edinburgh, even getting on the supply list (Which has taken 6 months) (Midlothian longer!)

The situation is dire. Schools employ regular faces for cover and therefore teacher booker can be rigged.

080 PRIMARY · PERMANENT PART-TIME, WANTS MORE HOURS

After my 4 years full time continuous service with the same council, mostly in the same school through various supply and temporary posts I have been given 3 days permanent (peripatetic) contract with the council and they have had to give me 2 days temporary this year as a full time teacher is needed. As of August 2026 in [council removed].

081 PRIMARY · NO LONGER SEEKING TEACHING WORK

I was signed off sick for a year before having to resign due to my mental health. My head teacher continually used temporary contracts and breaks to prevent me being able to qualify for permanency, despite working there for 6 years. I gained 0.5 permanency 2 years after completing probation but then had temporary contracts or supply work on a regular, long term basis which meant I worked very close to full-time hours the entire time I was employed there but "breaks in service" meant I did not qualify for the additional permanency to give me a full-time position.

082 PRIMARY · SUPPLY TEACHING

Living on temporary contracts, so not getting fully paid over the summer, starting supply in August then getting paid in arrears. We have been in Scotland for 6 years and my lack of job security has been incredibly stressful.

083 PRIMARY · TEMPORARY PART-TIME, WANTS MORE HOURS

I currently work in North Lanarkshire Council and have luckily been given a part time (3 day) fixed term contract. I have been openly looking for 2 days of supply which I haven't always been able to obtain. It has come to my knowledge that North Lanarkshire Council has reopened their supply list externally despite there being existing people on the supply list who have not been able to obtain work.

084 SECONDARY · SUPPLY TEACHING

I wish more part-time, permanent work was available. It is almost non-existent in my council area and due to my circumstances it is difficult for me to work full-time.



ANSWER 009 · MORE THAN ONE SECTOR · TEMPORARY POST

“I want security. I feel worthless.”

I have been teaching 9 years this year (including probation). I have paid uni fees myself to become qualified in different subjects to try secure work but still have no perm post. I am mentally and physically exhausted. The SNP do not listen when we say what their policies are doing to teachers. They blame councils and say it is up to them who they recruit but I left a secure career to become a teacher because the SNP were advertising for STEM qualified teachers with industry experience. Yet here I am, 9 years in, and no security. My life has been on hold. I wanted a second child but can't have one because I wouldn't get maternity pay. I'm now approaching 40 so probably cannot have one now as I still don't have security. I feel changing career due to advertisements from SNP has stolen my chance at having another child. I want security. I feel worthless.

Two years or more without a permanent post

Life plans on hold

One of 269 written answers published with consent. It also appears in order as answer 9.

085 PRIMARY · ON A SUPPLY LIST, NO WORK

While some supply requests are being sent out by some schools during the current session, the large number of teachers on the supply list makes it very difficult to actually get a post. Posts are often being filled in under 3 minutes!

The fact that short term supply does not count towards continuous service for permanency is extremely frustrating.

I am beginning to feel deskilled and disconnected from teaching.

086 PRIMARY · TEMPORARY POST

I only secured one of the only four full time temporary primary teaching posts available in my council area at the end of my probation year because I was able to stay late at school one evening and apply online to an internal applicants only advertisement. This is not a fair or equitable way to recruit professionals.

087 PRIMARY · PERMANENT POST

I'm not sure the questions illustrate that after almost 5 years I have finally achieved a permanent supply post. I fulfilled the requirements over a year ago, but there were no posts available at that time.

I had relocated and had left a permanent post in Aberdeenshire at the end of 2021.

Moving between temp contracts means any routes to promotion are closed. You cannot illustrate leadership skills when moving around and constantly learning new routines/apps/planning expectations etc. Even CPD has been denied as a temporary teacher "isn't worth the council spending money on" quote from my manager of almost 2 years whilst working concurrent fixed term contracts ranging from 9 months to 6 weeks. These often ended with little notice and were reinstated after verbal agreement but the renewal contract was missing for weeks.

088 PRIMARY · SUPPLY TEACHING

No

089 PRIMARY · TEMPORARY POST

Now retraining as secondary

090 PRIMARY · ON A SUPPLY LIST, NO WORK

The impact on the children is often overlooked. I have built positive relationships with children and families only for my role as a supply teacher to be removed quickly (and replaced with area cover), so children are then back to square one building a relationship up again mid-term with a new teacher. It must have a big and negative impact on their trust, wellbeing and academia.

091 PRIMARY · TEMPORARY POST

I was lucky to gain a permanent contract after my probation year and stayed at that school for ~7 years. Then when I relocated, I took a 1-year fixed term contract. Once that finished I have applied for numerous teaching jobs, including my council's internal recruitment process, but been unsuccessful. I have then bounced between short-term contracts and supply teaching. Finally, this June I have secured another 1-year fixed term post. It seems insane to me that my decade of experience and glowing references seem to count for nothing in this current job market.

092 PRIMARY · TEMPORARY PART-TIME, WANTS MORE HOURS

The price we pay for being new, all the time, is something that doesn't get talked about but in my view is huge. Even within the same local authority, every school I have so far worked in since probation has been so different, and so every year (or part year long term supply contract) I have had was a new learning curve, required significantly longer than usual (and certainly longer than contracted) hours to be able to be "a good enough teacher", and every time I leave a school it is an emotional price, and waste, again. This is all due to not being able to secure a permanent contract. My decision has been that if I can't by the end of this year, which would be my fifth year of teaching, I will need to leave this career altogether.



ANSWER 147 · PRIMARY · TEMPORARY POST

“I couldn’t believe that I had applied for over 150 day supply jobs without getting anything.”

I managed to secure a fixed term contract after being on the supply list for two weeks. I know I am extremely lucky. Those two weeks were absolute hell. My mental health took a massive hit and I couldn’t believe that I had applied for over 150 day supply jobs without getting anything. Nothing prepares you for this. The council leads sugar coat it and tell you they had the same thing happen to them and they got a permanent contract super quickly and they bought a house straight out of probation year. None of it is realistic. They tell you not to worry about it, and if you ask a question you get berated like a pupil in trouble. It’s humiliating to go through all the training and then an intense probation year to then go out and say, no job yet. I’m hopeful that we can change this.

Difficulty getting supply work

Harm to their mental health or wellbeing

One of 269 written answers published with consent. It also appears in order as answer 147.

**093** PRIMARY · SUPPLY TEACHING

Working as a supply teacher provides uncertainty, financial hardship, stress and loss of confidence.

Supply work, makes you reflect on whether the career is worth the hardships. It's a job that requires 100% yet truly lets supply teachers down in terms of opportunities for them to look after their health and wellbeing.

When you have a family to support, the stress is magnified, and does make you question if supply is an option.

I personally, have put a date on when I need to walk away and secure permanent employment outwith teaching.

094 PRIMARY · ON A SUPPLY LIST, NO WORK

The toll it takes on you. I've had relationships break down, I've been homeless because of this situation

095 PRIMARY · PERMANENT POST

Councils don't care. You are a number to them. It took me a very long time to get permanency and even then I had to fight through the union to get it.

096 PRIMARY · SUPPLY TEACHING

Teacherbooker has tended to be a stressful experience for most teachers. Being on supply for a while I have also noticed the impact on funding cuts on supply work when schools need to cover internally usually with management or support for learning due to lack of funds.

097 PRIMARY · TEMPORARY POST

I have been teaching since 2022 and still cannot obtain a permanent job. I was working in East Lothian initially then had to take a job in another council area as I was left without a job. It was never made clear that working in another council area would break my credit to build for a permanent job. I have now been working for East Lothian council again and hoping when I have reached 2 years continuous service I will be entitled to a permanent position. I love what I do and it is so disheartening when others with less experience than me are getting jobs over me at this point. I was always told in previous interviews that I just don't have the

experience but now I can see that isn't the case and still wondering why I can't seem to have a permanent job when I have been a fully qualified teacher for 5 years now. We all want the best for everyone but it can't be fair to leave people like myself without jobs and those with less experience taking the available positions.

098 PRIMARY · SUPPLY TEACHING

City of Edinburgh conduct central recruitment, which I understand for financial purposes - interview everyone once, job done - however it leaves headteachers unable to select their own team, and one bad interview/day can be the end of your time in the council.

I worked at the same school for five years (inc probation) and did not secure a post through central recruitment this year. My HT was shocked I didn't secure a post and would have loved to have kept me however has openly said we were a 'tick box school' and was unwilling to bend any rules to keep me.

I think it is unfair that I had to reinterview every year for the same position, and end up in a worse position than the year before as I did not interview as well this year - a 'positive marking' scheme whereby you can only improve your score at interview would be beneficial for teachers with more experience who are missing out on jobs to probationers who are constantly surrounded by the buzzwords and jargon that score points in interviews to secure jobs.

Since August 2026 I have submitted 29 job applications for a range of permanent/temporary/full/part time teaching roles in Edinburgh & the Lothians and although I have secured interviews (on average 1 per week for the last nine weeks), I am not getting any further than interview, and the odd 'but we'd be happy to have you on supply!' comment.

099 PRIMARY · ON A SUPPLY LIST, NO WORK

I have been qualified as a teacher for almost 7 years. In that time I have worked in a long term temporary post in various schools across Stirling council, often working in classes that have proved too much for the class teacher to deal with. I have demonstrated I am not just on the supply list to supplement my income, but because I want to secure long term, permanent employment. I have submitted countless applications and attended the same amount of interviews, but if I am honest the more interviews I do, the worse I get at them because my stress levels are so great it causes me great mental anxiety. I am at the point where I think it would be better to give up and do something else. It's kind of heart breaking that I have spent so much time giving everything of myself to the job, but have so little to show for it.

100 SECONDARY · TEMPORARY PART-TIME, WANTS MORE HOURS

I know many people in the same position as myself - I am due to get married next year, a decision I had put off until I decided not to let insecurity hold back the continuation of my life. However, as a woman I still feel unable to start a family without the security of a permanent post. It should not be like this, no person should have to spend significant time, money and investment into a career or profession which does so little to support its employees. How can pupils be expected to achieve and excel when they have a revolving door of teacher who they get to know, build relationships with and then never see again?

101 PRIMARY · TEMPORARY POST

There is an increasing need for extra teaching support in classes. One teacher in a class does not work in most areas anymore.

102 PRIMARY · SUPPLY TEACHING

Lack of permanent positions. Classes are too big. Not enough ASN support. Not enough PSA time. Teachers on temporary contracts always being thrown back out on supply in favour of a probationer teacher.

103 PRIMARY · NO TEACHING POST OR SUPPLY WORK

Having successfully completed my probationary year, I expected to be beginning my career with some degree of stability. Instead, I have found myself without a teaching post and relying on supply work, while also having to return to other employment to maintain a reliable income.

The uncertainty is difficult. Supply teaching provides valuable experience, but there is no guarantee of regular work, and it can be challenging to develop professionally or feel established within a school community when moving between different schools and classes. Temporary posts can offer more consistency, but they still leave teachers unsure about what will happen when the contract ends.

After investing significant time, effort and money in retraining and successfully completing probation, it is disheartening to be qualified and keen to teach but unable to secure a permanent position. There is also a risk that newly qualified teachers will leave the profession, not because they do not want to teach, but because they cannot manage the financial insecurity of waiting for a permanent opportunity.

I think greater transparency around likely employment prospects, more secure opportunities for newly qualified teachers, and clearer pathways from supply and temporary work into permanent employment would make a significant difference.

104 PRIMARY · NO LONGER SEEKING TEACHING WORK

Seeking teaching posts is exhausting and time consuming. I have completed over 100 applications and attended many of interviews across 6 local authorities. The interviews have often felt like a farce. In some instances, schools have already known which internal candidate they will use for the post and have simply advertised because they have to which is a waste of everybody's time.

The scoring system for interviews is too rigid and a complete guessing game. One head gave me feedback and said that I hadn't mentioned assessment in an answer. I pushed back, politely, and said I had given examples in question 1 and she said, "oh we can't count that because it wasn't given as an answer for question 3". So, each interview you have to guess when to use the exact buzz words and phrases to score the most points. And it changes across local authorities.



ANSWER 266 · PRIMARY · ON A SUPPLY LIST, NO WORK

“This severely limits my options and forces me to stick to supply jobs, without the possibility of long term work or permanency.”

The biggest and most frustrating issue I've had is that when applying for jobs a head teacher report is needed, unfortunately it is very difficult to get one while only completing short term supply. This severely limits my options and forces me to stick to supply jobs, without the possibility of long term work or permanency.

As a parent of teenagers, I'm constantly struggling to make ends meet and it's creating anxiety and stress.

Concerns about employment and recruitment practices

Difficulty getting supply work

One of 269 written answers published with consent. It also appears in order as answer 266.



The reasons for me not getting a role have been laughable. I have been criticised for not starting an interview with an outline of my career to date (is this not what the application form is for?) and then at the next interview when I did this, I was told to basically get to the point and answer the question!!

I have had such great feedback from interviews, "we know the kids would love you", -you're clearly professional and very experienced etc. But, always, we are going with someone else.

I've asked, during feedback, what should I do differently? And nothing concrete has ever been said. One head told me, in a school I was doing supply in, that HR just process the applications.. He only gets a shortlist. How is HR the right dept to choose what might be the best fit for that school? Apart from seeing that I'm not the cheapest option? Do they compare applicants with all school improvement plans? Of course not. But a head would see something that would bring value and may well choose a very different list of candidates to interview.

I qualified in Scotland, taught for a few years and then taught in England for a few years before moving back to Scotland. One head told me that my experience in England worked against me.. Despite my taking on leadership roles, embracing new curricula and schemes of work during that time. Many other industries would see time taken to do the role in a different environment as a positive!

One of the biggest difficulties in applying for teaching work now is my lack of a reference. Some local authorities require a heads reference up front, with the application. I have missed deadlines because a head hasn't sent it through on time and, due to the many supply contracts I have done, it is now years since I was in a school long enough for a head to see me teach and to actually be able and willing to complete a reference.

I spent 4 years on supply and the longest contract I had was an 8 month maternity cover.

I have a family and a mortgage. I couldn't cope with the lack of security and the few hours here and there each month. I, therefore, have taken a job working for a charity, a £20000 pay cut and applied for universal credit. I am qualified, experienced and willing to work in a number of local authorities yet find myself in my 40s applying for UC and wondering what I can sell on ebay this month to make ends meet.

Why are we still training teachers and promising them a year of permanent work when there are literally thousands of trained teachers on zero hour contracts praying for the phone to ring? I see the damage this revolving door of teachers is doing in my daughters school.. Constantly new faces, not just one each year but up to 3 every year because they are probationers and have to have a placement. Where is the staff loyalty to a school? The longevity of staff and pupil relationships if, every 9 months, you're replacing a bunch of them and sending them to the supply list of doom?

105 SECONDARY · PERMANENT PART-TIME, WANTS MORE HOURS

It feels like quite often we go for interviews only to be overlooked in favour of an internal candidate. This feels like a waste of time as the school has already decided prior to interview in most occasions.

The number of applicants for some roles makes it feel impossible. I know that in some instances there has been over 100 applications received for some History jobs. It feels like getting a job in this situation is impossible.

106 PRIMARY · ON A SUPPLY LIST, NO WORK

In West Lothian probationers are not supernumerary and in fact each year since my probation ended I have been replaced by another. Each school I have worked in have had a two out and two in approach.

107 SECONDARY · TEMPORARY POST

Cause poor mental health, stress and anxiety

108 PRIMARY · TEMPORARY POST

Continuity and consistency for the children.

People study between 4-6 years to become a teacher and are receiving no work at the end of it.

109 PRIMARY · ON A SUPPLY LIST, NO WORK

I come from a family of teachers, I'm 3rd generation. From our combined experience we feel that schools have never been in such a difficult place - greater need and fewer teachers.

My local school has historically been dual stream but this year has 12 classes instead of 14, which means classes are full. The falling birth rate should have meant smaller class sizes, which would have benefitted everyone.

110 PRIMARY · SUPPLY TEACHING

I had a critical illness in 2023 and registered disabled but trying to get my career back. The current circumstances make it extremely difficult to work.

Childcare is also another crippling factor to consider.

I pay for childcare to work - but may not get the hours. If I cancel the childcare then I can't work. 2 days childcare is £480ish per month. It's very stressful.

We know schools need more staffing. The cut backs have been terrible for all. Staff morale is low. Pupils require far more support than what is available.

111 PRIMARY · TEMPORARY POST

People need to know about the effect on people's mental health when they have been working on supply in the same school for years to then be moved on when a compulsory transfer comes in or someone else gets the job over you even though you have been doing the job for years. If we're good enough to work on supply, especially for years in the same school, why do we need to interview to be permanent.

112 PRIMARY · NO TEACHING POST OR SUPPLY WORK

The odd day or week of supply is not enough to sustain a comfortable lifestyle. Battling the first come first serve system our council uses to seek supply.

113 PRIMARY · TEMPORARY POST

As someone who recently completed probation job prospects are slim. I applied for over 60 posts before the summer and received 1 interview. This is soul crushing. There are so many teachers with more experience that are seeking secure employment that I don't stand a chance yet am still expected to look after my children and pay my mortgage.

In Falkirk Council you need 4 years qualifying service (excluding probation) to even qualify for permanency through supply, but many jobs advertised are until the last day of term before summer to ensure a break and block people from achieving this.

My employment from August is not illustrative of the norm, Falkirk council were running a project to support primary 1s between August- October 26 and offered this role to last years probationers. This has been great for the short term but now we are approaching the holidays with no future prospects and the role we were employed for since August being filled by EYO's after the October holiday.

114 PRIMARY · PERMANENT POST

I am trapped in a local authority after being given my fifth choice for probation. It should be easier to move councils, qualified, experienced teachers should be able to apply for jobs in their chosen authority.

115 PRIMARY · OTHER SITUATION

In Aberdeenshire I had built up to 2 years continuous service. They refused my application for permanency. If continuous service is one of the main ways for teachers to become permanent then it should not be at the councils discretion whether or not it is honoured. It is very stressful trying to find work in order to maintain continuous, and for it not to be honoured in the end is extremely disheartening.



ANSWER 081 · PRIMARY · NO LONGER SEEKING TEACHING WORK

“I was signed off sick for a year before having to resign due to my mental health.”

I was signed off sick for a year before having to resign due to my mental health. My head teacher continually used temporary contracts and breaks to prevent me being able to qualify for permanency, despite working there for 6 years. I gained 0.5 permanency 2 years after completing probation but then had temporary contracts or supply work on a regular, long term basis which meant I worked very close to full-time hours the entire time I was employed there but "breaks in service" meant I did not qualify for the additional permanency to give me a full-time position.

Harm to their mental health or wellbeing

One of 269 written answers published with consent. It also appears in order as answer 81.

116 PRIMARY · PERMANENT PART-TIME, WANTS MORE HOURS

It is not a fair system. It is extremely difficult to get “in” to certain councils even if you live within that LA. I was recommended for permanency in one LA but didn’t even get offered a fixed term post. Then by the end of the year staffing dept seemed annoyed when they called to ask if you were available and you dared to say no: Experienced teachers are being overlooked because they’re seen as “too expensive”. Councils are creating loopholes to get out of making teachers permanent even after 4 years. Children need experienced, permanent teachers who they can build relationships with.

117 PRIMARY · TEMPORARY POST

I have attended around 20 interviews in the past 2 years. Very regularly would be given an interview and only once received a job offer from this from a school I had been employed in recently. A lot of time and stress goes into preparing for these interviews when most likely an internal candidate is hired each time.

118 PRIMARY · SUPPLY TEACHING

It is not GIRFEC!

Was 1 week away from permanency and my continuous service was broken. How is this fair on an employee mental health.

My (almost) continuous employment for 4 years post probation proves there is a need for more staff yet no positions to apply for.

119 PRIMARY · SUPPLY TEACHING

Not having a secure or permanent job in teaching is making me feel like my life is on hold. I don’t feel able to move out, get married or start a family because I don’t have that stability behind me. It’s having a major impact on my mental health and I’m finding it really difficult.

When I do get work, I feel like I have to say yes to absolutely everything because I’m constantly worried that if I don’t, I won’t be brought back or considered for work again. I just want some security and to feel like I can actually start moving forward with my life.

120 PRIMARY · SUPPLY TEACHING

After completing my probation year and 2 fixed term contracts with the same council, I participated in the block interviews for permanent/fixed term posts and I found out I was successful in May 2026. In June 2026, I was offered a permanent post via email however, after contacting the HT I discovered there was an error on the councils end of a “human error” where I received someone else’s offer under my name and employee number. I received an apology for this error of receiving the wrong offer and was given reassurance that my name was “still on the list” and still being considered for posts until September weekend. After this distressing incident, I had 0 contact from recruitment except a generic email about beginning the process for the supply register at the end of September. I first received job-seeker allowance in hopes it would only be a short period of time I would be waiting for work. Currently, I am working casual work to get by. The impact of this whole process has led to looking for alternative work to pay bills etc and for more security for my future. I absolutely love teaching but this current situation has left me doubting whether teaching is a sensible choice in terms of financial security and wanting to start a family.

121 SECONDARY · SUPPLY TEACHING

The current system is completely unsuitable. There are far too many qualified teachers currently who cannot obtain jobs and no support in dual qualification for subjects that are struggling. Even with dual qualification people are still being left without permanent work after spending more money to get necessary university credits to dual qualify. There needs to be a pause on training of new teachers and a bigger drive to get more of us who are already qualified into permanent positions as this has a positive impact on both teachers and pupils.



ANSWER 246 · PRIMARY · NO TEACHING POST OR SUPPLY WORK

“I have no idea when I will next see my partner or whether he will be able to return to Scotland.”

I moved abroad to teach because I was unable to secure consistent, full-time employment in Scotland. I have since returned home for family reasons, but my partner has had to remain abroad because he has been unable to secure work in Scotland and was not even able to get onto a supply list.

I am currently unemployed and receiving benefits. Despite actively applying for work, attending successful interviews and making every effort to secure employment, I have not yet been offered a position, and I have received no work through the supply list I am on.

I am actively seeking work and want to work. The current situation has been incredibly difficult and uncertain, particularly as I have no idea when I will next see my partner or whether he will be able to return to Scotland. I am continuing to apply for any suitable opportunities and am willing to travel for work.

Financial hardship

Life plans on hold

One of 269 written answers published with consent. It also appears in order as answer 246.

122 SECONDARY · PERMANENT PART-TIME, WANTS MORE HOURS

In South Lanarkshire, some of us are “lucky” to have permanent posts which they call Area Cover; other councils have similar arrangements. This means we do have a guaranteed income and permanency but otherwise it is a raw deal and is making the staffing situation worse and worse. We are now often being used for general short term supply instead of covering longer absences in our subjects. Anyone wanting part time basically has no chance as any gaps are “plugged” with area cover or NQTs. Our careers are at a dead end.

The overall solution to permanency NEEDS to look at these loopholes that councils are finding. If not, teachers’ financial security might improve but their careers are still at a dead end and the staffing situation and consistency for the pupils does not change.

123 SECONDARY · NO TEACHING POST OR SUPPLY WORK

Supply in my area doesn't really exist now. There have been 3 advertised posts so far this year and they have all been for subject specific cases. So have been unable to get anything. ELC have been pursuing a redundancy plan in its schools for the last few years now which has not made things great either. If I can[not] get a permanent full time job with a decent salary I'll have no choice but to leave teaching and that is devastating. Me and my wife are pausing having children because the job market just does not exist.

124 PRIMARY · SUPPLY TEACHING

Supply teaching is lonely. The lack of opportunities is demoralising and sitting at home waiting for an email is painful. The amount of people receiving the emails and trying to get the post is large making the opportunity incredibly hard. You call the same minute the email is out and the post is gone.

125 PRIMARY · SUPPLY TEACHING

6 years on and I am still in an unstable position, unable to start a family or have peace of mind. The continued stress of going through the interview period has had a profound effect on my mental health and led me to being put on anti depressants. There has been one permanent class teacher role in my authority in 6 years.

126 PRIMARY · SUPPLY TEACHING

On two separate occasions I have been working towards my 2 year continuous supply work days, building up to gaining a permanent post in [council removed], by working at least 1 day in 10 for 2 years which would result in gaining permanent work with the council after 2 years. However, on 2 separate occasions when coming up to the 2 years, schools that I have been working in have cut my supply days, therefore guaranteeing I do not make the criteria for a permanent post. I have spoken to union staff in schools about this and it is widely known that schools are asked to do this so less people get permanent contracts. There is no industry quite like it!

127 PRIMARY · ON A SUPPLY LIST, NO WORK

The situation takes a toll on you and your whole family. The uncertainty makes it impossible to make plans for the future and the worry over money is constant. I left another career to re-train as a teacher and gave up a year of earnings to follow my dream. I have a real passion for teaching but the uncertainty and stress is causing me to look elsewhere for employment.

128 PRIMARY · SUPPLY TEACHING

The current situation around teaching employment is having a significant impact on me both personally and professionally. As I do not have a permanent contract, I feel unable to make important decisions about my future, including moving out and becoming financially independent, as I do not have the job security needed to plan for these things. I am constantly living with the fear that my contract could be broken by the council and that I could potentially have to restart the two year process towards permanency all over again. The uncertainty and lack of security is having a real impact on my mental health and I genuinely feel that if I were placed back in this position again, I would reach a



point where I would consider leaving teaching altogether. I have spent years studying and training to become a teacher, only to find myself without the job security that I had expected after qualifying. While I completely support the proposed three year guarantee for newly qualified teachers, I believe that consideration also needs to be given to teachers who have already completed their probationary [year].

129 PRIMARY · SUPPLY TEACHING

The current situation around teaching employment is having a significant impact on me both personally and professionally. As I do not have a permanent contract, I feel unable to make important decisions about my future, including moving out and becoming financially independent, as I do not have the job security needed to plan for these things. I am constantly living with the fear that I will never get anything permanent that or get my permanency. The uncertainty and lack of security is having a real impact on my mental health and I genuinely feel that if I were placed back in this position again, I would reach a point where I would consider leaving teaching altogether. I have spent years studying and training to become a teacher, only to find myself without the job security that I had expected after qualifying. While I completely support the proposed three year guarantee for newly qualified teachers, I believe that consideration also needs to be given to teachers who have already completed their probationary [year].

130 PRIMARY · NO TEACHING POST OR SUPPLY WORK

After relocating home to central Scotland I am struggling to find any teaching work. This is really difficult after having a permanent contract for 6 years in another authority.

131 PRIMARY · TEMPORARY POST

I have held three separate fixed term contracts since qualifying.

Currently, all posts within my authority excluding ISP posts are advertised internally only. There are very few posts being advertised-fewer than ten permanent fulltime posts in the past two years, I think. Even some very short contracts (six weeks) have been internal-only rather than supply.

I am concerned that when my current post ends I will become external and no longer eligible to apply for the very few positions that become available. I will be forced back on to supply which will likely force me to leave teaching next year.

Teaching is far too demanding for us to also have to put up with constant insecurity and financial worries.

132 PRIMARY · SUPPLY TEACHING

Applications for fixed-term temporary posts opened to hundreds of applicants across Renfrewshire, but only 19 posts were available. Setting unrealistic hope on being successful.

133 PRIMARY · TEMPORARY POST

The current employment situation for newly qualified teachers in Scotland is deeply concerning. After completing probation in 2023, I was unable to secure a teaching post and, despite being registered for supply work with my local authority, was not offered a single day of supply. This had a significant impact on both my mental health and financial security and ultimately forced me to seek employment outside the profession I had trained for.

I continued applying through recruitment pools and have now secured a fixed-term area-cover contract, requiring a commute of around an hour each way. While I am grateful to be teaching again, this still offers no long-term job security.

Scotland is investing significant time and public money in training teachers who are qualified, willing and actively trying to work, yet many are being left without meaningful employment or a realistic route to permanency. The personal and financial consequences of this should not be underestimated. Without greater stability and genuine employment opportunities, the profession risks losing committed



ANSWER 179 · PRIMARY · SUPPLY TEACHING

“How do I pay my bills my car to get to supply the petrol and most importantly the food on my table.”

I am now into my 3rd year of teaching after being qualified. I am lucky enough over the last few weeks I have got between 3/4 shifts a week. However this month I was paid £500 for 3 days supply, this is nearly half my mortgage alone. How do I pay anything? What happens in the October holidays 2 weeks off work no chances of supply work at all and what if no supply the week before or after that's ONE FULL MONTH no pay. I have never been so stressed in my life, I have emailed every head teacher I am known to most head teachers in my area. It's not a case that they don't want me if they can bend their own staff in the school to cover they won't ask for supply. Most schools now come to me directly rather than sending out an email or booker system. At what point do you give up the career you trained 5 years for and wanted since you were in primary school yourself. How do I pay my bills my car to get to supply the petrol and most importantly the food on my table. We have all been failed terribly and action needs to be taken

Financial hardship

Harm to their mental health or wellbeing

One of 269 written answers published with consent. It also appears in order as answer 179.



teachers simply because they cannot afford to wait indefinitely for a permanent job.

134 PRIMARY · SUPPLY TEACHING

Trying to gain 'relevant' experience for future job application when on supply is tricky as you only get what you get. Planning for financial security is difficult and demoralising being on long term supply, even with a strong support network behind you.

Demoralising applying for supply posts and not hearing back/not getting the job even if you are quick to respond/apply.

Planning for your future is extremely difficult and severely affect mental health.

135 PRIMARY · PERMANENT PART-TIME, WANTS MORE HOURS

I have been teaching for 16 years. Although I have had periods of time with full time employment since returning to [a council; identifying details removed] I have been on temporary contracts. I have a 2 day perm contract but the rest is made of temporary contracts which leaves uncertainty and also not being paid over the summer. I return to the same school and post. I also know many experienced teachers who have struggled to secure work at all. It is demoralising and given the council has the highest absence rate in Scotland you would think they would be looking to keep good teachers.

136 PRIMARY · SUPPLY TEACHING

For myself after probation year I tried every day including early morning emergency supply and was still unable to get work until 5 weeks in. I only even received this work as it was with my probation school. From there on I completed a crazy amount of different roles in the same school plus some extra supply elsewhere before finally getting my own class at the end of January and even then I wasn't actually offered the fixed term contract until Easter break therefore only received pay through one school holiday(summer). I was then also told I had a role back at the school come August but was subsequently ignored by the headteacher and given no role. I missed a week of teaching in term 1 which is a nightmare for work particularly in the first few weeks which cause me particular stress due to service. Thankfully my service wasn't unbroken and I done 2

weeks of supply all over the city before being offered a 4 week place in a school. I was told before this I am only allowed 4 weeks regardless of performance due to not having RC approval. Throughout this period I have been regularly working both my jobs, not getting home to my newborn till after 10 at night. I now also have the impending anxiety towards having to find work again after the October break.

137 PRIMARY · NO LONGER SEEKING TEACHING WORK

I have been qualified as a primary teacher for almost 20 years. I had trouble securing work where I lived when I qualified so I followed the narrative of 'the jobs are there, you have to be prepared to relocate for your career'. I got a temporary post in [another council] and relocated alone, hundreds of miles from family. I then secured a permanent role and taught there for over 15 years. When I made the decision to move back home to be near family again, I had to give up my permanent teaching post. I have been unable to get a foot in the door, even with supply work, despite my experience and excellent HT reference. I now work outside of teaching and don't know that I can return to the uncertainty of the teaching job market. It is so competitive and all for just 10 month contracts just to do it all over again the following summer. It's not good for the workforce, the schools and ultimately the children to have so much uncertainty and constant change and inconsistency in staffing.

I have done all the chasing for jobs at the start of my career, followed advice on relocating, and now feel like I am back at the beginning again, despite my decades of experience that I have to offer. I feel under valued, pushed out and hugely let down by a profession that I have given so much of my life to (because we all know that teaching does become your life). I don't know that I want to continue seeking teaching employment.



ANSWER 052 · SECONDARY · SUPPLY TEACHING

“I was recently given some bad fertility news which meant I need to start treatment ASAP if I want to have a family and I cannot.”

I excelled during probation [assessment and council details removed]. I have a first class degree. I genuinely am good at my job. There has not been a single job come up within an hour commute of me. My only option so far has been supply.

I was recently given some bad fertility news which meant I need to start treatment ASAP if I want to have a family and I cannot. Without having a stable job/ income to secure a mortgage or having the ability to take paid maternity leave, I am having to keep pursuing teaching and putting fertility and house buying on hold.

Before you even say ‘just look elsewhere’... I have applied for so many jobs outside of teaching and haven’t even gotten an interview. It has actually taken a real toll on my relationships with family and friends as I am so stressed all of the time and I just avoid seeing them so they don’t ask about work.

Life plans on hold

Harm to their mental health or wellbeing

One of 269 written answers published with consent. It also appears in order as answer 52.

138 PRIMARY · TEMPORARY PART-TIME, WANTS MORE HOURS

I have been fortunate to have temp positions since my probation year. However, normally I'm interviewing 2 times a year for separate jobs. I've done every job under the sun, class teacher, NCCT, early years teacher, inclusion teacher and worked in ASN. There is constant change and no consistency.

Every single year having to prove myself again through interviews and restart. Lots of the time I start a post then by the September when the other teacher has returned from whatever I'm starting another new role within the school.

I've been a teacher now for 6 years and every single year they cut my contract. However although I want permanent position, I want to be able to choose what school I apply to for this. And that will not be the case, if the time ever comes.

139 PRIMARY · TEMPORARY PART-TIME, WANTS MORE HOURS

The consistency in teachers for children isn't helping with schools moving forward in their improvement plans or is it helping other teachers who are stuck in a school they do not like.

The fact that you apply every year for jobs and it's the person who can say the most buzz words and it comes down to a point system against what a person wants to hear or have interpreted their guidance on interview marking. It has nothing to do with how you can do the job and schools have zero control over who they employ to best fit their school. It is having a massive detrimental impact on education.

I have been on the hamster wheel of supply/ temp contracts for 5 years. I have worked across two councils (Fife and Edinburgh) great feedback about how I do my job, zero concerns about my practice, always get the hard classes and still get results but, cannot get a permanent contract because I cannot seem to say enough or the right things in an interview. I have begun to look outside of teaching for jobs but my heart isn't in leaving and it breaks me to walk away from something I worked so hard to get.

140 PRIMARY · ON A SUPPLY LIST, NO WORK

I am a teacher that went into the job later in life as I had my own negative experiences of school myself as a child. As a result, I left school having failed my exams. The experience made me want to become a teacher to make experiences different for children. So from 2012 I started at college, resat highers to get into an undergraduate degree in university so that I could do the PGDE course in Primary teaching. It took me 11 years of resilience, hard work and determination (that's including my probation year) to qualify as a Primary Teacher only for me to find myself stuck on short term supply with the occasional fixed term contract. This is not why I trained to be a teacher.

Also the level of dysregulation of children in schools that I have witnessed is impacted by the continuous changing of staff.

141 PRIMARY · PERMANENT PART-TIME, WANTS MORE HOURS

I trained in London, where it is expected that you will move around schools to progress your career, and the number of posts available supports this. However, in my authority in Scotland, it is near impossible to move schools as permanent posts are so few and the number of applicants is so high. I feel this can lead to stagnation within schools and reduces the opportunities we have as professionals.

Furthermore, I do not understand why so many primary teachers are still being trained when there is such a shortage of jobs for them. Our probationer teacher last year said she had been told by the university it was highly unlikely her cohort would get jobs after probation. She did, but I feel this situation is grossly unfair on new career teachers.

142 PRIMARY · SEEKING SUPPLY ACCESS

I was interviewed and told I was successful subject to suitable availability of permanent and fixed term roles. I am now being put on the supply list as no work has been available. I began the application and interview process in January while still completing probation and now it is likely I won't work until at least October. To think I will need to begin the stress of the application process again in 3 months is very concerning. I am a parent of child dependents. To constantly go through this lengthy process with very little communication is not sustainable. It doesn't match the claim that teachers are valued in Scotland.

143 PRIMARY · SUPPLY TEACHING

I have been seen as successful and in the running for permanent or fixed term contracts since my full registration. I have yet to receive any of these and I live supply contract to contract and it negatively affects my mental health so badly I have been hospitalised due to this.

144 PRIMARY · TEMPORARY PART-TIME, WANTS MORE HOURS

I am on a fixed term part time contract with a school. I have this through the supply list but am anxious each day as I know at any point, despite being given a contract, this post can be taken away with only a few weeks notice. I don't think this is spoken about enough and not enough people are aware about this who are on the temporary supply lists until it happens to them or someone they know. It gives the sense of security, although it isn't.

145 PRIMARY · TEMPORARY POST

No

146 PRIMARY · ON A SUPPLY LIST, NO WORK

Getting your foot in the door at schools is particularly tricky as they advertise for jobs but already know who they are going to appoint, usually someone already working in the school. It is also hard to showcase what you can do and are capable of when you are not class committed and only cover classes due to supply.

147 PRIMARY · TEMPORARY POST

I managed to secure a fixed term contract after being on the supply list for two weeks. I know I am extremely lucky. Those two weeks were absolute hell. My mental health took a massive hit and I couldn't believe that I had applied for over 150 day supply jobs without getting anything. Nothing prepares you for this. The council leads sugar coat it and tell you they had the same thing happen to them and they got a permanent contract super quickly and they bought a house straight out of probation year. None of it is realistic. They tell you not to worry about it, and if you ask a question you get berated like a pupil in trouble. It's humiliating to go through all the training and then an intense probation year to then go out and say, no job yet. I'm hopeful that we can change this.

148 PRIMARY · NO LONGER SEEKING TEACHING WORK

I think the impact of teachers moving around has a huge impact on schools and especially pupils. All the built up knowledge and relationships get lost.

149 PRIMARY · ON A SUPPLY LIST, NO WORK

Supply work is good for building experience and your reputation in and around your council area.

However, supply work makes it difficult to build strong working relationships when you are only in a place for a short or temporary period of time. This has a damaging effect on people's mental health and sense of belonging.

Then there is the additional difficulty of being paid a full time wage while working, to then earning no wage over the summer holidays until the next time you receive supply work - which can be closer to October. That's three months with no income.

Teaching is supposed to be a sought after career, one which people pursue because they want to make a positive impact on the world through education. How can we do that when each year we work without a permanent job, we get further away from changing anything other than our own career path?

It takes a lot of hard work to qualify as a teacher, and more hard work to get through your NQT year. There has to be some sort of reward for that hard work! What other job requires a person to jump through so many hoops to get hee haw at the end of it???



ANSWER 126 · PRIMARY · SUPPLY TEACHING

“schools that I have been working in have cut my supply days, therefore guaranteeing I do not make the criteria for a permanent post.”

On two separate occasions I have been working towards my 2 year continuous supply work days, building up to gaining a permanent post in [council removed], by working at least 1 day in 10 for 2 years which would result in gaining permanent work with the council after 2 years. However, on 2 separate occasions when coming up to the 2 years, schools that I have been working in have cut my supply days, therefore guaranteeing I do not make the criteria for a permanent post. I have spoken to union staff in schools about this and it is widely known that schools are asked to do this so less people get permanent contracts. There is no industry quite like it!

Contracts ended or service reset before permanency

One of 269 written answers published with consent. It also appears in order as answer 126.

Education cannot continue like this. The country deserves so much more.

150 PRIMARY · SUPPLY TEACHING

I am repeatedly being accepted for temporary contracts in schools that are desperate to keep me but are either downsized, told to reconfigure or appointed an additional probationer or compulsory transfer.

151 PRIMARY · SUPPLY TEACHING

Doing a degree doesn't entitle you to a job at the end of it and teaching is no different. However the PGDE is a funded course to supply Scotland with much needed teachers. We should have the ability to at least apply for jobs and have fair ways of getting them, not being locked out of them because we can't apply externally or because they have been chosen for someone before the process has started. It doesn't make sense to pay teachers through training and then leave them scrambling for work or having to uproot their whole lives to do something they have been funded by government to do. It's misuse of public funds and devastating to teachers, children and our communities who have such turnover of hard working and dedicated staff.

152 PRIMARY · NO TEACHING POST OR SUPPLY WORK

I believe that my council unlawfully broke my continuous service by altering a short term contract without my knowledge. This was only discovered during a payscale dispute and HR were very aggressive and essentially told me it was 'too bad' and I should've said something earlier. I have struggled more and more each year to get even a supply post in my council because too many people in the area are qualifying each year and they are not being told about the situation, I then teach the TIS teachers about the supply system because I don't want them to go through what I did, meanwhile the councillors merrily pretend we're expendable and keep churning us out. Of 5 probationers I was with when I started, 3 have left teaching due to lack of jobs and I wanted to start a family. I build relationships with schools, staff and pupils and every time I have to leave a school I have to console children who feel like I'm abandoning them because I'm not being kept on - how does this

constant disruption help pupils have good H&WB and meet GTCS standards of integrity?! It has been like this for me since 2022. I'm now in my sign off year and as usual the education councillors support is "supply teachers need to choose a HT to sign off if you've been in a post for 3 consecutive months" this same rule applies to the yearly "perm/temp role" applications - once again changing the goal posts to make it harder. If I don't get a 3month post, I'm trapped on the supply list with no income. It's soul destroying.

153 PRIMARY · SUPPLY TEACHING

I have been fairly lucky with the supply work I have received. Mostly long term in the last 2 years. However, the not knowing over summer breaks causes my mental wellbeing to dip. I also work during school breaks in a play-based setting to get me by. Even having long-term supply, my brain is not fully in the job because I'm feeling uncertain for my future and can't give my all to the job. I can't relax.

154 PRIMARY · TEMPORARY POST

Yes.

Scrap the cutting of contracts to stop the person gaining permanent status.

It's unethical.

If someone has been paid by a council for 23 months. They have passed all Learning Visits. Been told they are valued.

What? Sack them and give them their P45 only to re-employ them in 2 weeks time.

It's wrong.

It's not right.

If anyone in HR or even an MSP or the Director of Education got sacked every 23 months there would be a huge outcry.

But it's ok for them to do it to us.

It's not right to get sacked and not know how much money you have coming in (they wouldn't tell me what I was getting for holiday pay)

I didn't know I'd be back so was in a panic about trying to find work.

I've been interviewed for perm posts. But not been able to get them as I'm so nervous.



ANSWER 211 · PRIMARY · TEMPORARY POST

“I have no permanent job, no permanent home and a wedding perpetually on hold.”

I have had to delay marrying, buying a home and having a baby because of the lack of job security. I am incredibly lucky my partner has been able to subsidise me when I was unable to pay my way myself, as well as supporting me when we then did eventually have a baby. I have no permanent job, no permanent home and a wedding perpetually on hold.

Life plans on hold

Financial hardship

One of 269 written answers published with consent. It also appears in order as answer 211.

There seems to be NO route to become perm supply. Which I don't understand.

Surely if I'm good enough to have been employed since 2021 why can't they make me perm supply.

Do I need to get pregnant before my current fixed term contract gets cut and go on mat leave so they can't give me my P45 to become perm????

That's mental to even think like that.

155 PRIMARY · TEMPORARY POST

The whole situation is just a disgrace. Teachers NEED teaching jobs. Schools NEED teachers. End of story. I know up to 10 people who secure temporary jobs year upon year in the same schools - there is obviously then a need for a permanent teacher? The council are so backwards.

In addition to this, the proposed guarantee for new teachers is a kick in the teeth to all of the already qualified teachers who have been waiting years for a permanent job. How about supporting them first before newly qualified teachers? There is an inevitable injustice there

156 PRIMARY · TEMPORARY POST

I have moved from a permanent contract in a private school to a temporary, part time BGE post as an English and Maths teacher in a Secondary as I was relocating due to family circumstances. I had to give a full terms notice at my previous post so was facing unemployment since April. Despite having such a long period to apply for jobs, there was not a single primary post advertised to apply for and had I not been offered the BGE post, I would be on the supply list as there were no other jobs (temporary, part-time or permanent). This was a cause of significant stress and I was actively looking into jobs outside of teaching despite wanting to remain in education.

157 PRIMARY · TEMPORARY POST

I can't do things that people my age are doing just because I am a teacher. I was better off when I worked in boots as a student

158 PRIMARY · ON A SUPPLY LIST, NO WORK

Reduce the amount of people on university courses for a few years to tackle those qualified without a job. NQTs who cannot sustain employment cannot give children the best opportunities when they are not getting experience in the classroom.

159 ASN / SPECIAL EDUCATION · TEMPORARY POST

Finding permanent employment should not be this difficult. Something has to be done.

160 PRIMARY · ON A SUPPLY LIST, NO WORK

I've had 6 consecutive successful interviews during SLC group interviews. I have had service broken twice so I could not be automatically made permanent. It is very difficult to discuss situation with council, they do not reply to emails, other than the standard we have received your mail auto response. Treated like a number to be used and dropped whenever suits, absolutely no job security. Dreadful experience after five years successive study and success at every interview.

161 PRIMARY · SUPPLY TEACHING

Job centre is not well informed about the current situation for teachers - their role is to encourage you to take a minimum wage job which is very unfair for teachers (and any other professionals).

I took two years out of teaching due to the insecurity of jobs.

162 PRIMARY · NO TEACHING POST OR SUPPLY WORK

During census period, [the council] routinely employ a large number of additional supply staff.

When I finished 2 years of fixed term contracts in July 2024, I asked if I could be considered for permanency. They said they would need to check if I was eligible and, given there was no permanent jobs on offer, I would be added to a list who would be asked to apply for permanent jobs if/when they became available. I have yet to be told if I am eligible or offered an opportunity to apply.

**163** PRIMARY · ON A SUPPLY LIST, NO WORK

For the past three years I have spent January – September Weekend each year going through recruitment for a council (from attending application webinar through interviews and waiting on results) to be told I am ‘successful’ at interview but with no guarantee of a job and then ending up on supply again after September weekend. I secure supply work from October onwards but then start the process again. It is so tiring and demoralising and I do not feel I am giving my best in jobs as this hangs over me for most of the teaching year and across the summer holidays! It affects my mental health and my mood with my family also. I have been requested back to schools for continuity and been told I couldn’t go by the council.

I have decided if it occurs again next year I will be leaving teaching. I am praised in every school I work in with positive feedback and it doesn’t count for anything.

I’m terrified I’m going to be left as a ‘lost generation’ of teachers if the new 3 year guarantee comes in.

164 PRIMARY · TEMPORARY PART-TIME, WANTS MORE HOURS

People have given up careers to retrain as teachers. Then after probation year we are left hanging with no idea what’s going on. Councils all have different policies and timelines regarding a permanent role. Then teachers are placed in roles, without having a choice of school or role. Pressured into ASN roles, for example.,

165 MORE THAN ONE SECTOR · TEMPORARY POST

I think that it is very difficult to ensure no breaks in service when working supply and it is soul destroying to find out that this adversely affects right to permanence. The whole situation is a complete con. "But they’re crying out for teachers!" people say when you can’t find work. Unis still taking so many on PGDE courses when no real jobs. Nobody cares. It’s meant to be a profession! Zero hour contracts is the reality. Wellbeing, wellbeing, wellbeing is the focus during PGDE but not for teachers.

166 PRIMARY · PERMANENT POST

Full time permanent contract since 2017. Looking for work closer to home and have been interviewing since march 2020 – 6.5 years later and I still have been unsuccessful in gaining a permanent teaching position (full or part time) closer to home. I have applied to 6 different councils that are closer to home. There is no movement between councils and rarely any permanent contracts.

167 PRIMARY · ON A SUPPLY LIST, NO WORK

What annoys me is that I love my job. I’m passionate about the children I teach.

I want to have faith in a government that values the need for teachers because class sizes are so big. I’ve taught classes of 28+ and it is so incredibly hard to manage behaviours and ASN children who deserve their education. I also feel that I shouldn’t have to pay back a student loan every time I get a FTE position because I can’t be guaranteed the work permanently. I feel that the dream I had of being a teacher is slowly starting to fade away because of the worry of working and I’m too proud to apply for financial aid but the fact that it may come to that is embarrassing.

168 PRIMARY · TEMPORARY POST

The uncertainty of not knowing from one term to the next is very draining and puts a lot of pressure on people and their families. We keep producing student teachers but there are not enough jobs for the teachers already out there. Something has to give.

169 PRIMARY · TEMPORARY POST

I was casual supply for three years which suited me fine as I had my regular schools and could be flexible. On year 4 I was then sent a workforce and staffing email from [council removed] completely out of the blue with a year full time fixed post, with absolutely zero context. I loved the school, so I accepted the post even though I was not seeking full time employment. At the end of this year, the school had another maternity post and asked to keep me. I also wanted to stay and it made perfect sense for me to stay as it benefitted both me and the children. The council gave the post to someone else who also wanted to stay in their own school and there was zero flexibility around it, even though the HT continued to



ANSWER 259 · PRIMARY · PERMANENT PART-TIME, WANTS MORE HOURS

“I cannot get married, move house or have my second child because I do not know my finances after this year.”

I was in [a promoted post] full time when I fell pregnant. After mat leave I requested to return to work 0.6 as a class teacher and without any other information wlb was granted. No one told me this would [be] permanent. After 1 year I spoke to my HT and said financially and for my own wellbeing I would like to revert back to full time, I was told this wasn't possible and all changes were permanent. Since then I know of several colleagues who it has been temporary for 2 years and then they have reverted back to full time. How is this policy not consistent? It seems it depends your luck of who you speak to in HR depends your fate. This year I have accepted a fixed term contract to make up my hours but have no certainty over the future. I cannot get married, move house or have my second child because I do not know my finances after this year. There should be a consistent policy and formal procedures to inform staff returning from mat leave what their work life balance request means.

Concerns about employment and recruitment practices

Life plans on hold

One of 269 written answers published with consent. It also appears in order as answer 259.



fight for me. As my service was over 80%, I was given a post at another school which I did not like. I asked if there was a second option (I know SLC offer this) and was told no, like it or lump it. Two days later this post was rescinded without explanation, after I had wrapped my head around it. I was then given another year post at a very difficult school, but only found out upon visiting the school that it was full time until [date removed] when it dropped down to 0.4. The council did not tell me this.

170 PRIMARY · SUPPLY TEACHING

This is my second year being on supply and it's horrible never knowing when or where there will be work. I am constantly refreshing teacher booker to look for any opportunity for work and 9/10 unsuccessful when jobs do appear, it's so disheartening and takes such a toll on you mentally. As someone who is relatively new to the profession I am slowly losing my enthusiasm, not because I no longer want to teach, but because I am being denied the opportunity to.

For my probation year I was placed in a local authority that I do not live in and consequently this has meant that it is now the only council I can get supply work from as other councils including the one I live in advertise their supply lists internally or have closed them completely.

171 SECONDARY · ON A SUPPLY LIST, NO WORK

I am unable to claim benefits as I have not paid enough NI due to not having enough work in the 3 years since returning back to Scotland. I am a teacher with over 20 years experience and can not get work because of probationers filling posts and councils ([council removed]) continually using freebie probationer to plug posts. They haven't opened their supply list for [their subject] in at least 5 years! Being unemployed for large periods of time is hugely demoralising and extremely stressful on my family. I may have to sell my home. I wrote to [a government minister] and [my] local MSP only to receive a ridiculously tone deaf response suggesting I retrain into a STEM subject area!

172 PRIMARY · TEMPORARY POST

Reduced class sizes, currently with P7 and have 32 with a range of diverse needs. One ASNA for 45 minutes and that's only for one child.

173 SECONDARY · TEMPORARY POST

There is a real lack of consideration for the existing workforce. It should be harder to get on to teacher education courses and interview process should be more robust. There are too many applicants and too many places for the number of jobs - for English and primary. It is laughable that there is now a course to help primary teachers retrain as English teachers, given the issues I had getting English work. I am now in year two as an outreach teacher on temporary contracts.

174 PRIMARY · ON A SUPPLY LIST, NO WORK

The communication is terrible and needs fixed. I have just completed my probationary year and passed interview for permanent class posts, temporary class posts and supply. I have heard absolutely nothing about jobs since or how supply even works. When I contact the council, it's clear they are ignoring/delaying answering my emails.

175 SECONDARY · PERMANENT POST

Council can't keep blaming government and government can't keep blaming councils, they need to actually help each other

176 PRIMARY · TEMPORARY POST

If I'd known how hard seeking full time, permanent employment was going to be, I might have reconsidered my options. I've already spent 7 years of my life training and preparing for the role, yet I am still delaying major life decisions, experiencing financial insecurities and having my mental health impacted by the lack of job opportunities.

177 PRIMARY · OTHER SITUATION

I cannot seem to even get an interview now for teaching. I would only consider a permanent position due to having my children and a mortgage and people depending on me. I still need to pay bills. I have completed 5 days of supply in 2 years. Who can afford to wait around for days, weeks, couple of months of work. My mental health has been horrendous due to instability and the pressures of interviews and never feeling good enough. The demands were totally unrealistic, however I would like to go back into a nice school with a supportive team and SMT. I do not want to give up but I feel like I can no longer put myself on the firing line and be continually fighting for a job. I deserve to feel like a person who is a professional, and is worthy.

178 SECONDARY · TEMPORARY PART-TIME, WANTS MORE HOURS

I have been on temporary contracts since I qualified in 2017. I absolutely love teaching and do not want to leave, but it is very mentally draining every year when I have to try to secure a job every August with no guarantees. I met the requirements for permanency in [council removed] in 2020 but was told that due to Covid, the whole permanency process was on hold. At this time I was doing a teaching role in Support for Learning, and wanted back into my subject. I applied for a maternity cover in [another council] within my subject and was successful, so I left. My union rep fought to get me my permanency status, but was unsuccessful. I spent 2 years building service in [that council], then I was requested back to [council removed] to my original school to cover my subject. I came back, and have been in the authority since. I then reapplied for permanency in 2023, having met it for a second time, and was told that I am due this however it does not guarantee me work. It feels totally pointless. In April 2026, I received an email saying that there were a few permanent positions now available within my subject in [council removed], but as there are now a few teachers in my subject in my position we would all be interviewed for the posts. I went for the interview and was unsuccessful, and later found out that those who were successful had already been working in the schools where the vacancies were, some for 2 years, so how can I compete with them? I then found out on the last week of term in June that my school wanted to keep me but did not have the budget to do so, so I was given 2.5 days from August to April. On return to

school in August, I was then told I'm needed 5 days so I now do 2.5 days on a temp supply basis. Have yet to receive a contract from the council but I am so grateful I have something. The whole system is a mess and I hear of many teachers leaving the profession which is so sad. I can't move forward with my life due to the uncertainty I face every year. Permanency and service mean nothing to me anymore and if permanent jobs come up elsewhere I will be applying. My situation is not unique sadly and no other profession treats employees like this.

179 PRIMARY · SUPPLY TEACHING

I am now into my 3rd year of teaching after being qualified. I am lucky enough over the last few weeks I have got between 3/4 shifts a week. However this month I was paid £500 for 3 days supply, this is nearly half my mortgage alone. How do I pay anything? What happens in the October holidays 2 weeks off work no chances of supply work at all and what if no supply the week before or after that's ONE FULL MONTH no pay. I have never been so stressed in my life, I have emailed every head teacher I am known to most head teachers in my area. It's not a case that they don't want me if they can bend their own staff in the school to cover they won't ask for supply. Most schools now come to me directly rather than sending out an email or booker system. At what point do you give up the career you trained 5 years for and wanted since you were in primary school yourself. How do I pay my bills my car to get to supply the petrol and most importantly the food on my table. We have all been failed terribly and action needs to be taken

180 SECONDARY · ON A SUPPLY LIST, NO WORK

For teachers who qualified outside Scotland, and who have proven their skillset, it may help not to be so consistently overlooked.

181 PRIMARY · SUPPLY TEACHING

I am sure you are aware the mental impact that this is having on people. I worked hard to get to where I am and want to thrive as a teacher but I am not getting that opportunity like so many others. The risk is that so many wonderful educators will leave rather than endure this constant negative cycle that we are living in.



ANSWER 237 · PRIMARY · NO TEACHING POST OR SUPPLY WORK

“Because of this I was unable to purchase a flat and have to now spend more monthly to rent.”

After probation I remained at my school on a fixed term contract. The council refused to provide me a letter to say I would be on the supply list and may have my contract extended past Christmas, it was extended 4 times to cover the year. Because of this I was unable to purchase a flat and have to now spend more monthly to rent. This has put me in a difficult position as I have yet to get any supply work through teacher booker. I am being added to another councils list who still do phone calls which I am hopeful that I get some work with. However I have interviewed for jobs out with teaching as I can't afford to stay in the profession currently and can't access things like home ownership while on supply.

Life plans on hold

Financial hardship

Difficulty getting supply work

One of 269 written answers published with consent. It also appears in order as answer 237.

182 PRIMARY · TEMPORARY POST

One of the worst aspects is the continual breaking of service and the uncertainty of employment from year to year, or even month to month/week to week. The strain and stress is prolonged and significant. Had I known about the current job situation, I would likely not have retrained as a teacher.

183 PRIMARY · TEMPORARY PART-TIME, WANTS MORE HOURS

It's the most draining, anxiety inducing process for those of us who have qualified and been through probation year and have to worry every summer about if they'll have a job come August, or if their service will break, or if they can actually enjoy their summer. I had an experience where my service broke because of a family member passing and the council wouldn't allow any leeway for that with my service. I also think it's awful that different councils offer different levels of service for permanency, it should be across the board of how much service you need to have. I think that the need for teachers in class is so much, class sizes are getting bigger and the level of need is getting higher with no support, you aren't getting it right for any child at that point.

184 PRIMARY · SUPPLY TEACHING

I have not applied for a job in many years. One post affected my mental health so badly that I have never felt that I could put myself into another situation where I would be trapped. Many pupils are now doing what they want with little consequence.

185 MORE THAN ONE SECTOR · TEMPORARY POST

I received 106 rejections while trying to find supply work after my probation year, all within a two-week period. Receiving that many rejections in such a short time caused me extreme distress and anxiety. Being invited onto a supply register after an unsuccessful permanent supply interview felt like progress, but it did not mean I had regular work or a clear route into a permanent post. I eventually secured a full-time fixed-term role, but its end date depends on the return of the teacher I'm covering. My experience has been that getting onto a register, getting a job and having any certainty about what comes next are three very different things.

186 SECONDARY · SUPPLY TEACHING

I have almost reached my continuous service twice now within the 5 years I have been teaching. Each time schools have been delayed in being able to book me when I have been requested since the start of term—even though I am in supply I have been booked at the beginning of term every other year in between my two year service or I have had my service broken by the council for the two weeks and then rehired after the two week break to a different school, and in that situation the school went out of its way to try and keep me but the council refused.

187 PRIMARY · SUPPLY TEACHING

I have been available for work since schools started this year, but I have only managed to secure five days of work. Most of these opportunities have come from last-minute notifications, often around 8:30am. This means I have to get up and get ready for work every morning, just in case a notification comes through. Most of the time, however, no work becomes available, and I am left with no work for the day.

When notifications do come through for longer periods of work, I apply as quickly as possible, but I still do not manage to secure the position. The uncertainty and lack of work has had a significant impact on my mental health and has made me question whether I want to continue in the teaching profession, which is particularly difficult as becoming a teacher has always been something I have wanted to do.

As a result, I am now looking for alternative employment and considering moving abroad in the future, where there may be more opportunities available to me.

188 PRIMARY · TEMPORARY POST

Securing supply work can be as difficult as a longer term temporary post. Often about being in the right place at the right time



ANSWER 193 · PRIMARY · SUPPLY TEACHING

“We are treated like numbers, no consideration given to our wellbeing, or life in general.”

The impact on our mental health is frightening, having contemplated ending my own life due to lack of work and being in debt.

We are treated like numbers, no consideration given to our wellbeing, or life in general.

I shouldn't have to desperately find work for 4 years before I'm eligible for a permanent contract, with the constant risk of losing my continuous service and having to start again.

This answer describes thinking about ending their life. If you are affected, Samaritans can be contacted free, day or night, on 116 123.

Harm to their mental health or wellbeing

Financial hardship

One of 269 written answers published with consent. It also appears in order as answer 193.

**189** SECONDARY · PERMANENT POST

The lack of jobs really put a strain on me. We moved to Scotland from England, I'm a very experienced teacher with middle management experience. We moved to be closer to my family so we could start a family. I put those plans on hold because I didn't have a permanent job. This meant I am now pregnant later in life than I wanted to be and could mean I won't have the option to have a second child.

It also put a strain on my relationship and in my finances which we are finally rebuilding. Had I known how hard it would be to get a job, I maybe wouldn't have made the move...

190 PRIMARY · SUPPLY TEACHING

Supply teachers have been dehumanised. The 5.5 hours amounts to a 22% paycut. A teacher has a choice, to reciprocate this cut by arriving on unpaid time, or arriving at 9am, not knowing SEN, school policies, fire exits, behaviour and medical concerns etc. The teacher booker system discourages personal relationships developing within schools and with children. Blanket offers are sent out to see who gets there first. Some schools still have the integrity to pay a fair rate, but this is (probably deliberately) withheld from the offer. I refuse to take the cut, and have been told by schools I would be paid 7 hours, only to see the 5.5 on my timesheet. I am a professional, not a hobbyist working for pin money. Supply already offers excellent value, we don't have security, when we aren't needed we aren't paid. I have met young teachers working between schools, negotiating several stages and policies. That is their first experience of teaching, it is degrading and potentially dangerous to think teachers can arrive at 9am and deliver safe and high quality care.

191 PRIMARY · SUPPLY TEACHING

Why train all us teachers if there is no jobs?

192 MORE THAN ONE SECTOR · OTHER SITUATION

I made a sheets name for myself as a teacher, I worked hard and got specific mentions in an HMI report on a school I worked in positively praising my pedagogy. It doesn't mean anything. I now work in a nursery with the title of being a teacher but my salary is lower than a probationer now. I took the job as a level of security

while I work to get a mortgage, and now currently on maternity leave because I had to get my life started. I'm nearly 30 and wondering why I went to uni because I seem to have taken more steps backwards than forwards.

It pains me to see the teachers who hate the job or can't be bothered to do it well taking up permanent contracts when there are so many amazing teachers that don't have a contract at all. That being said, there are still a lot of great teachers with contracts, it just hurts to see the ones that have no care for the job.

193 PRIMARY · SUPPLY TEACHING

The impact on our mental health is frightening, having contemplated ending my own life due to lack of work and being in debt.

We are treated like numbers, no consideration given to our wellbeing, or life in general.

I shouldn't have to desperately find work for 4 years before I'm eligible for a permanent contract, with the constant risk of losing my continuous service and having to start again.

194 PRIMARY · TEMPORARY PART-TIME, WANTS MORE HOURS

This is the first year I have managed to secure a fixed-term, part-time teaching post. I am grateful to have been given this opportunity; however, it is only a 0.4 contract, meaning I am employed for two days per week and still need to rely on supply teaching to make up the remaining days.

In previous years, I have relied entirely on supply work. At the beginning of the school year, work can be very slow and unpredictable. In my experience, it is usually around November or December before supply becomes more consistent, and I can then often secure four or five days of work per week for much of the remainder of the school year.

The biggest difficulty is the lack of job and financial security. Even when supply work becomes fairly regular, there is no guarantee of work from one week to the next. The summer holidays are particularly difficult because supply teachers have no work and therefore no teaching income during this period.

It can be frustrating to be a qualified and experienced teacher who wants to work, but still be unable to secure enough contracted hours or a permanent



position. I would like decision-makers to consider not only how many teachers are employed, but also how many are relying on temporary, part-time or supply work when they would prefer more secure employment.

Greater access to permanent posts, or at least longer-term contracts with sufficient hours, would provide teachers with much-needed stability and make remaining in the profession more sustainable.

195 PRIMARY · NO LONGER SEEKING TEACHING WORK

I left a well paid job as a chartered accountant to pursue a career in teaching. I worked hard for my PGDE then was allocated my 5th council and from that point I felt completely unsupported by teaching as a whole. It's a 'job for the boys' system of who you know & not what you know with many roles advertised on Facebook. You can't get a job locally as you are not known due to the computer allocating you elsewhere. The whole system is run in a very unprofessional manner.

196 ASN / SPECIAL EDUCATION · TEMPORARY POST

It's just unfair. I have worked so hard and passed probation just to be on a zero hours contract. Most of my applications have been rejected and only received a temporary contract after chasing up an ASN school after an unsuccessful interview to get on the supply list. I was then contacted and asked if I would like full time until June. I understand I was extremely lucky as I only had work August- October the previous year and had no other work as I lived in Clackmannanshire and did my probationary year in Fife and was stuck on their supply list. The system worked on a text service and most of the time texts were after 8.30am and I was too far away. I eventually gave up trying. I secured part time work outside of teaching (that was extremely difficult too as I was only being rejected for normal jobs) so decided to apply for everything in forth valley in the hope of getting on a more local supply list. I did eventually in Falkirk but that was after a whole load of rejected applications. I was a mature student and my family have struggled financially. I'm still paying off credit cards and loans that we had to use in the 10 months I couldn't get any supply work. We also cannot save because of this so we are still living pay to pay until this debt is paid off. Any unexpected payments for car/ house etc I need to ask family. I didn't imagine

I would be earning a full time wage and still not be financially secure. My contract this year is term to term so I'm still living with the uncertainty of a temporary contract.

197 PRIMARY · PERMANENT POST

Having to re interview every year or for every new post. My first year I was told I passed the interview but there wasn't enough jobs so I had a fixed term contract. Why did I then need to get pitted against a new cohort every year for 3 years? Re interviewing is soul destroying. I panicked and didn't believe in myself and bombed my next interview while less experienced probationers then took permanent roles. Worst time of my life feeling inadequate and not good enough to be a real teacher

198 PRIMARY · TEMPORARY POST

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199 PRIMARY · SUPPLY TEACHING

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200 ASN / SPECIAL EDUCATION · TEMPORARY PART-TIME, WANTS MORE HOURS

Personally, in my opinion and view, I think that employers really need to take their jobs more seriously and think of the impact that their superiority is having on newly qualified teachers lives. Taking myself as an example, I have been qualified for four years, I am in my 30s now and I work and study hard. I have yet to secure a permanent position, even with the local authority I serve with. I have returned to university to study a fourth degree (crazy, I know) Also, I am registered on multiple local authority supply lists however I would rather stay where I have built my service. I value all work that I have experienced across the different primary schools I have worked in but the HR department across the board, really need to get their act together and start thinking of the frontline workers and the impact that their "decision-making" is having on our lives as educators of the future generations.



ANSWER 140 · PRIMARY · ON A SUPPLY LIST, NO WORK

“This is not why I trained to be a teacher.”

I am a teacher that went into the job later in life as I had my own negative experiences of school myself as a child. As a result, I left school having failed my exams. The experience made me want to become a teacher to make experiences different for children. So from 2012 I started at college, resat highers to get into an undergraduate degree in university so that I could do the PGDE course in Primary teaching. It took me 11 years of resilience, hard work and determination (that's including my probation year) to qualify as a Primary Teacher only for me to find myself stuck on short term supply with the occasional fixed term contract. This is not why I trained to be a teacher.

Also the level of dysregulation of children in schools that I have witnessed is impacted by the continuous changing of staff.

Effects on pupils

One of 269 written answers published with consent. It also appears in order as answer 140.

201 MORE THAN ONE SECTOR · TEMPORARY POST

As a recently qualified teacher – going to job interviews feedback received for not being the preferred candidate is always – not enough experience or the other candidates have more experience. This just suggests that obtaining a job in the primary sector is near impossible as so many people are still seeking.

I currently have employment in a secondary school teaching BGE in a subject I have no specialty within; while this is experience and employment this is not where I'd have hoped to be and does not allow me to develop my primary teaching skills

202 PRIMARY · NO TEACHING POST OR SUPPLY WORK

Councils need to read their applications to a higher standard and work off the 'scoring' system fairly.

I received 23/25 for my interview one year and was given supply. Someone else got 12/25 but because they worked the 2 years and a day got a permanent contract.

I applied for a part time position last year and was emailed and offered a fixed term post, however no details to hours, placement or starting date were attached. When questioned about the part time status I was told 'oh no, it's a full time position, we will need to take back the offer' which left me without work for a year.

203 PRIMARY · ON A SUPPLY LIST, NO WORK

I live in South Lanarkshire but have been unable to be placed on the supply register. I was placed in East Ayrshire on probation and now feel that I am stuck there. I have managed to get on to the North Lanarkshire supply list but this is also quite a travel for me. I don't understand why I can't be placed on the supply list in the council that I currently live in and want to work in.

204 PRIMARY · TEMPORARY POST

Every council is different. I feel that they should all follow the same structure. Fife Council this year – I think – has been one of the best out of all councils for providing temporary/permanent contracts.

205 PRIMARY · TEMPORARY PART-TIME, WANTS MORE HOURS

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206 PRIMARY · SUPPLY TEACHING

The strain of supply work is greater than I thought. I'm in my 30s with a family. I'm using savings to survive and stressed about getting enough work long term. Not only that, you have to think about the future – really, you need to be saving up enough money to be able to survive August and September next year to start the supply cycle again.

In some ways, I'm grateful that you can at least see there is work appearing on teacher booker but it also adds a strange feeling of rejection when you are repeatedly applying and not getting work.

207 PRIMARY · SUPPLY TEACHING

GCC cancel your login and printing access meaning you cannot do your job properly. They also don't approve your CPD as you are a supply teacher. I wanted to use the days without work improving my skills but was denied this opportunity. Supply teachers have no support network or opportunities for peer learning. People do not talk to you in schools because you are only there for a day or two. You are on your own 'winging it' a lot of the time. All of this adds to the stress of the job and to the worry about security.

208 PRIMARY · SUPPLY TEACHING

A lot of supply opportunities are through word of mouth, with some people having been receiving regular supply work, at least 3–5 days a week while others like myself have struggled to even get a day a week. Every time I am offered a day or so it is never clear what is happening after one week or two weeks, so you can never feel safe that you at least have some income to fall back on. I am definitely considering other career options as the whole system is very unfair and the government wants "Scotland to be the best place for children to grow up in" and receive education yet funding for teaching staff does not correlate with this.



ANSWER 171 · SECONDARY · ON A SUPPLY LIST, NO WORK

“I may have to sell my home.”

I am unable to claim benefits as I have not paid enough NI due to not having enough work in the 3 years since returning back to Scotland. I am a teacher with over 20 years experience and can not get work because of probationers filling posts and councils ([council removed]) continually using freebie probationer to plug posts. They haven't opened their supply list for [their subject] in at least 5 years! Being unemployed for large periods of time is hugely demoralising and extremely stressful on my family. I may have to sell my home. I wrote to [a government minister] and [my] local MSP only to receive a ridiculously tone deaf response suggesting I retrain into a STEM subject area!

Financial hardship

Concerns about employment and recruitment practices

One of 269 written answers published with consent. It also appears in order as answer 171.

**209** PRIMARY · TEMPORARY PART-TIME, WANTS MORE HOURS

I am so deflated with teaching at the moment. I am lifted and dropped whenever and struggling to support my family. Both times I came up to two years continuous employment my contract would end and I had to have a break before being employed again. I am a good teacher but struggle to get interviews within areas I'm able to work around my kids.

210 PRIMARY · SUPPLY TEACHING

I am in a very serious amount of debt, relying on food banks, welfare grants and universal credit advance payments to survive and keep my young family. I believed that teaching was a lifelong career, and this was never suggested otherwise during my application for university or during my studies. The way that supply teachers are paid a full month in arrears makes for unstable living conditions that don't meet the demands of the cost of living. There is also no additional financial support for supply teachers should they fall ill, require planned or emergency surgery or treatments, on maternity/paternity, caring for children or dependents, that permanent teachers benefit from. Being a supply teacher feels like a thankless and far under appreciated job.

211 PRIMARY · TEMPORARY POST

I have had to delay marrying, buying a home and having a baby because of the lack of job security. I am incredibly lucky my partner has been able to subsidise me when I was unable to pay my way myself, as well as supporting me when we then did eventually have a baby. I have no permanent job, no permanent home and a wedding perpetually on hold.

212 PRIMARY · NO TEACHING POST OR SUPPLY WORK

I am heart broken. I went to uni for 5 years, completed my masters, completed my probation year that I adored, and I cannot get a job. I believe I am a passionate and excellent teacher who strives to make a difference to individual lives for the better. I am devastated that I do not have, even a close opportunity, to pursue the career that I love. I have simply given up due to my financial and personal situation.

213 PRIMARY · TEMPORARY PART-TIME, WANTS MORE HOURS

Our service is broken after 10 days of no work and like clockwork it can be broken with no supply being offered till October. Teachers have to interview multiple times in the year to retain jobs as contracts end in January or Easter. I know teachers that have had the same job for 6 years and have had to interview for the job every Easter. We are interviewed and given no say in where we go and are placed in a job with hours we have not got to decide and area of travel.

214 SECONDARY · TEMPORARY POST

Since completing probation in 2022, I have almost consistently worked long term supply in schools and been paid as a temporary/fixed term teacher but I have never received a contract stating this.

I had worked for more than 28 weeks every year since qualifying, yet had to chase payroll to ensure my pay grade was updated accordingly, as I was 3 grades below what I should have been. I received back pay for this, but my tax code is consistently incorrect due to such unpredictable earnings, and it is difficult to determine what my take home pay will be at the end of each month. I have worked since 17th August this year and have not yet been paid because the deadline for payroll forms to be submitted was not communicated to me. I will not receive this pay until Oct/Nov.

I have only recently been able to purchase my first property, which was not easy without a permanent job.

There is a lack of support and understanding from colleagues of how difficult it is to be on supply, and the inability of SLC to create Glow accounts for temporary staff is ridiculous. I am expected to do my job to the same standard as a permanent member of staff despite not having access to Seemis, Glow, or any of my resources or be able to connect a USB to school computers. I previously lost all of my resources saved on Glow because it was not communicated that moving from Temp contract to Supply would mean I no longer had access to my account.

I think there is a real lack of awareness of the realities of being a temporary teacher. My union rep was not even aware of the majority of difficulties temp staff face and very little is communicated to temp staff about what we are entitled to.

I now suffer from severe anxiety around interviews and am reluctant to apply for permanent jobs despite needing the job security.

I am in my late 30s and keen to start a family but discouraged due to the lack of clarity surrounding maternity pay entitlement for supply staff.

I am seriously considering leaving the teaching profession, but I am unsure whether my skills will be viewed as transferable or not. I am keen to begin something new alongside teaching as a way to transition into a new career. However, I am so exhausted and have little work life balance that there is no feasible way for me to find the time or energy to do so in my current situation.

215 PRIMARY · TEMPORARY POST

If work is not secured being on supply can be difficult in the first term of teaching as many of the supply roles that come through are taken quickly but also there aren't as many as there are in later terms. It can impact financial situations as well as mental health.

216 MORE THAN ONE SECTOR · TEMPORARY POST

The lack of opportunity for gaining permanency in every council needs to be addressed. I am now in my 14th year of teaching, and after relocating from another authority and leaving a permanent post, I now have no opportunity to gain permanency in my new council because of the situation. As someone with extensive experience in Primary and Pupil Support, this should not be the case. If the 3 year employment proposal goes ahead then councils will lose skilled and experienced teachers. This needs to be addressed before anything else.

217 ASN / SPECIAL EDUCATION · NO TEACHING POST OR SUPPLY WORK

I think there needs to be greater consideration of the impact that the increasing reliance on supply and temporary staff is having, both on pupils and on the teachers working in these roles.

For children, a lack of consistency and routine can be incredibly difficult. Continually changing teachers and staffing arrangements can affect relationships, expectations and classroom stability, and I worry that this may be contributing to some of the behavioural difficulties we are seeing in schools.

There is also a significant impact on the wellbeing and morale of supply and temporary teachers. I worked extremely hard to qualify as a teacher, yet since qualifying I have received very little support, guidance or opportunity to feel that I am developing within the profession. Instead, I often feel that I am being used to fill staffing gaps rather than valued as a qualified professional. There is very little sense of belonging, job satisfaction or recognition, and at times it feels as though my role is reduced to providing supervision rather than allowing me to use and develop my professional skills as a teacher.

Perhaps most difficult is the uncertainty around why I have been unable to secure a more stable position. If there are concerns about my suitability, ability or performance as a teacher, I would genuinely prefer those concerns to be communicated to me so that I can understand them and develop, rather than continuing to invest considerable time and emotional energy without knowing where I stand.

This lack of support is something I have experienced from the beginning of my teaching career. During my probation year, when I raised concerns about the availability of teaching posts and asked what opportunities might be available after qualifying, I was told that "there were jobs in Dubai". I found that response incredibly disheartening and insensitive after working so hard to qualify and enter the profession.

I appreciate that schools and local authorities are operating within extremely difficult financial and staffing circumstances. However, the current situation does not feel sustainable — either for children who need consistency and stability, or for qualified teachers who want to feel valued, supported and able to build a career within the profession. Decision-makers need to consider how temporary and supply arrangements affect teachers' job security, professional development and wellbeing, as well as the continuity of education provided to pupils.

218 PRIMARY · TEMPORARY POST

The amount of Primary teachers in Aberdeenshire is saturated. School rolls are falling, the council is reviewing merging several schools which in turn will mean even less teachers are requested for permanent posts.



ANSWER 015 · PRIMARY · OTHER SITUATION

“The council are actively stopping many of us from working to save money.”

I am in my 5th year of seeking a permanent contract. I spent my nqt year and 2 consecutive years at one school. Following that the council deliberately broke my service and made me ineligible for a permanent position. Last year I was offered temporary area cover on 16th Sept but this did not start until late November. This year I am still waiting on being offered a post despite being successful at interview. Those of us in this position haven't even been added to the supply list in the mean time. The council are actively stopping many of us from working to save money. It is a huge strain on finances and my mental health and coming into teaching was supposed to bring stability into my life as a single parent but it has been anything but. The whole situation is utterly demoralising.

Two years or more without a permanent post

One of 269 written answers published with consent. It also appears in order as answer 15.

**219** PRIMARY · TEMPORARY POST

I have been exceptionally lucky in regards to supply work that I have mainly been on back to back fixed term contracts. However whenever I almost reach my two years continuous service (which would make me eligible to be made permanent) they give me a 3 week break in the contract so my continuous service restarts. They do this across the council to all the temporary supply staff. In every instance I know of, including myself, after the 3 week break we return to the same school in the same role, the break is purely to break the continuous service.

220 PRIMARY · PERMANENT POST

I took my last class on mid-year after finally securing a permanent post. They had had 6 teachers before me across the previous 2 years. Apart from one maternity leave, this had been down to insufficient staffing and contracts expiring, often because the school had submitted to have contracts extended but HR had taken so long to process it, the original teacher's contract expired first. Their education had suffered massively, they had minimal structure and routines and they were so disillusioned with school. We had a good 6 months together and made a lot of progress. At the end, they met their next teacher for the 26-27 session, someone who'd been assigned through citywide recruitment. When they came back in August, they found out that person had been reassigned because they finally got a permanent post elsewhere on the last day of term in June. Another new person came in to take the class short-term while the school had to recruit for someone to take the year long post. Now their teacher has left, again, and once again the school is stuck with rotating supply teachers to staff the class while HR processes the recruitment. I interviewed for my own role late last November, and started in January. The role had been vacant since August but the sheer volume of short-term teacher posts being processed for the new session pushed back recruitment. The whole process is so inefficient, it pushes good teachers out of school which would love to keep them, and children are paying the price. It's awful.

221 PRIMARY · PERMANENT POST

Their plans for staffing increased NCCT

222 PRIMARY · SUPPLY TEACHING

Trying to do the only job I've ever loved has been demeaning, demoralising, and financially disastrous. I'm still here, clinging on, but every year feels harder.

It's had me in bits, especially after my contract being broken six weeks before the two year point. It's just treating people like scrap. Cheap labour during nqt, cannon fodder during covid, and utterly worthless now.

223 PRIMARY · TEMPORARY POST

I am currently starting at a new school which has just changed my contract 7 weeks into the post to not include the summer holidays. Every year I approach the holidays with fear and dread that I am not going to secure any posts. I am [a] young adult trying to start a life and family but my job situation is putting everything on hold.

224 PRIMARY · TEMPORARY POST

I have been more fortunate than expected, I am now in my 3rd year of supply. I managed to secure work for this whole first term during the summer, today I was offered an extension for next term and given the situation, it would have been silly for me to reject the offer. The trouble is that there are significant issues at the school, they are being taken to a union meeting next week. In an ideal world of job security, I would probably choose never to return to this school. I am hopeful that there will be changes as a result of this. Having spoken to a colleague tonight who also had to move school this year, she is experiencing similar issues and afraid that leaving her school will have a detrimental impact on future employment within the city.

225 PRIMARY · SEEKING SUPPLY ACCESS

The job situation in Scotland is an absolute disaster and is a national crisis which the government should be ashamed of - the government continues to blame local councils and vice versa whilst teachers are kept on a never ending merry-go-round every year not knowing if they will have secure work to move on and progress with their lives. We are losing so many good teachers to other professions and those moving abroad because they can't continue to rely on seeking teaching jobs as a stable career. Why are we still



ANSWER 235 · PRIMARY · SUPPLY TEACHING

“My council have never asked me what type of work i want. Not once!”

Application forms should be the same for every council. Interviews should scrap the 20 point system and include a HT statement and or an observed lesson.

In fact the whole application/interview system is broken. I know teachers who have never filled out an application or interviewed that have permanent jobs!

Applying over and over again for positions in schools where you are already 'good enough' for supply work/ temp contracts is horrible. I am constantly told by SLT's that it is a crime i don't have a permanent job and that they would keep me if they could.

Why don't HT's have a say in who their teachers are? Why does it come down to your interview skills? Why do councils not look at their supply lists and help those who want permanent jobs?

My council have never asked me what type of work i want. Not once!

I have put in the same amount of hours/money/study as everyone else and it is an unfair system.

In the same council, the only council, i have worked for , i have had two year long temp contracts, three 6 month temp contracts and many, many full weeks in other schools.

I have cancelled holidays and plans to go into schools at the last second. I have HT's phoning me to see if i am free. I respond to emails and hear nothing.

The impact on my MH has been awful. It's demoralising as a teacher. I know i am a great teacher but now i have actively chosen to take a step away and it breaks my heart!

Concerns about employment and recruitment practices

One of 269 written answers published with consent. It also appears in order as answer 235.

training so many primary teachers every year when so few jobs are available? Universities need to drastically cut teacher training numbers until the job situation is resolved. The fact that councils constantly break contracts over the summer to avoid building continuous service towards permanency is deplorable and also results in never ending inconsistency for pupils and families year on year with the staff turnover. I have friends from probation who are locked out the supply lists and any jobs in their own local area as they completed probation in another local authority, meaning they are effectively trapped in their probation authority (some travelling crazy distances) and can't seek work out with. This 3 year 'job guarantee' for probationers needs scrapped or re-thought to include those who have been looking for teaching jobs for years - it is absolutely not fair to prioritise probationers through this as cheap labour and is merely a sticking plaster to make it look like the government are boosting teacher numbers and is a total slap in the face to all those teachers who have been seeking work for much longer than eligible probationers. The reduction in class contact time absolutely MUST result in more permanent teaching posts in Scotland and the government need to fulfil their promise and deliver on this - our schools are bursting with ASNs with so many pupils needing additional support which one teacher alone in a class of 30 pupils cannot deliver...children are suffering as a result of this jobs crisis with too many falling through the net due to unmet need which is rooted in lack of appropriate staffing to accommodate pupil need - how the government can justify spending thousands on 'free' school bags for every P1 pupil but continues to refuse to actually resolve the jobs crisis is beggars belief and we need action now. Scottish education used to be a jewel in the crown and looked at in admiration all over the world - it is now a total mess and can't go on.

226 PRIMARY · SUPPLY TEACHING

Where are the jobs?

Reduce class sizes and make more jobs to make it manageable

Make more permanent jobs

227 PRIMARY · NO LONGER SEEKING TEACHING WORK

Every council is so different and makes it very confusing

Interviews seem to be what you know rather than what you can do

228 PRIMARY · SUPPLY TEACHING

It's a disgrace that this ridiculous situation continues year after year. It's soul destroying.

229 PRIMARY · TEMPORARY POST

I have chosen to go back to further education to try and help my employability.

I am also so disheartened with the detrimental effect the amount of staffing changes are having on pupils learning within schools. The high level of change every year and throughout the year is disruptive for pupils, does not support continuity. It takes time for new staff members to integrate into school communities and do the role to the highest standards as they are learning the systems and building those relationships and often are moved on to another school quickly to start again.

230 ASN / SPECIAL EDUCATION · TEMPORARY POST

I have had two temporary contracts back to back in the same post and the council deliberately shortened the second contract so I wouldn't be eligible for a permanent post. I think that is unfair.

231 PRIMARY · ON A SUPPLY LIST, NO WORK

The need for teachers is growing massively and the conditions for permanent teachers are getting worse. Teachers looking for jobs cannot get anything. There needs to be a massive change for example the introduction of team teaching as an additional option. The government need to put more money in education and need to be in contact with councils to ensure that it is going towards jobs. Older teachers should be given the option of early retirement to clear space for new teachers.

232 PRIMARY · ON A SUPPLY LIST, NO WORK

As a teacher now at the top of the pay scale and my permanency now delayed again I am often overlooked for probationers. There is a real problem for those teachers who qualified around 2020-2023.

233 SECONDARY · SUPPLY TEACHING

Unless the government pauses the probationer guarantee scheme, things will not improve any time soon!

234 PRIMARY · PERMANENT POST

Working on supply has affected my self confidence. At times it has felt like there is no light at the end of the tunnel.

Me and my husband are relocating to [location removed] so I can start [a permanent teaching role; identifying details removed]. It is a permanent post and I am forever grateful for the opportunity.

We are extremely lucky because I know relocation is not a viable option for lots of people.

235 PRIMARY · SUPPLY TEACHING

Application forms should be the same for every council. Interviews should scrap the 20 point system and include a HT statement and or an observed lesson.

In fact the whole application/interview system is broken. I know teachers who have never filled out an application or interviewed that have permanent jobs!

Applying over and over again for positions in schools where you are already 'good enough' for supply work/temp contracts is horrible. I am constantly told by SLT's that it is a crime i don't have a permanent job and that they would keep me if they could.

Why don't HT's have a say in who their teachers are? Why does it come down to your interview skills? Why do councils not look at their supply lists and help those who want permanent jobs?

My council have never asked me what type of work i want. Not once!

I have put in the same amount of hours/money/study as everyone else and it is an unfair system.

In the same council, the only council, i have worked for , i have had two year long temp contracts, three 6

month temp contracts and many, many full weeks in other schools.

I have cancelled holidays and plans to go into schools at the last second. I have HT's phoning me to see if i am free. I respond to emails and hear nothing.

The impact on my MH has been awful. It's demoralising as a teacher. I know i am a great teacher but now i have actively chosen to take a step away and it breaks my heart!

236 PRIMARY · TEMPORARY POST

Since completing my probation year, I have found the lack of job security incredibly difficult. I want to teach and build a career in education, but despite being willing to work and gaining valuable experience, I have had to move between supply work and temporary contracts rather than being able to secure a permanent position.

Temporary contracts can involve taking on all of the responsibilities of a permanent class teacher – building relationships with pupils and families, planning for their needs, contributing to the wider life of the school and investing in long-term improvement – while still having very little certainty about your own future. It can be difficult to fully settle into a school when you know that your employment may end within a matter of months.

The uncertainty also affects life outside of work. It makes it much harder to make longer-term financial decisions, such as applying for a mortgage or planning where to live, when you do not know whether you will have employment after the end date of your current contract.

I think it is particularly frustrating because there is clearly a need for teachers. I have been able to find supply and temporary work, and schools need cover and classroom teachers, but that need does not necessarily translate into secure permanent employment. I would like decision-makers to understand that employment figures alone do not capture the experience of teachers who are working, but moving between short-term posts and continually having to think about what happens when the current contract ends.

I love teaching and want to remain in the profession. What I would like is the opportunity to have the stability to properly establish myself in a school and



ANSWER 143 · PRIMARY · SUPPLY TEACHING

“it negatively affects my mental health so badly I have been hospitalised due to this.”

I have been seen as successful and in the running for permanent or fixed term contracts since my full registration. I have yet to receive any of these and I live supply contract to contract and it negatively affects my mental health so badly I have been hospitalised due to this.

Harm to their mental health or wellbeing

One of 269 written answers published with consent. It also appears in order as answer 143.

continue developing as a teacher without the constant uncertainty surrounding my next contract.

237 PRIMARY · NO TEACHING POST OR SUPPLY WORK

After probation I remained at my school on a fixed term contract. The council refused to provide me a letter to say I would be on the supply list and may have my contract extended past Christmas, it was extended 4 times to cover the year. Because of this I was unable to purchase a flat and have to now spend more monthly to rent. This has put me in a difficult position as I have yet to get any supply work through teacher Booker. I am being added to another council's list who still do phone calls which I am hopeful that I get some work with. However I have interviewed for jobs out with teaching as I can't afford to stay in the profession currently and can't access things like home ownership while on supply.

238 PRIMARY · PERMANENT PART-TIME, WANTS MORE HOURS

A huge part of the problem is also that there are many permanent part time teachers who for various reasons (mainly after having children) who have reduced their hours and once their children have started school have been told they cannot increase their hours to full time again. I have been at a school since [year removed] and even after asking for supply work in my own school I was passed up for post NQTs. Of course they need work but the system seems to penalise older and experienced teachers.

239 PRIMARY · TEMPORARY POST

It has been deeply unsettling to be working as a teacher during this current period of uncertainty. I have studied and worked for years to reach this point in my career, yet I still find myself unable to make secure plans for my future.

I have been fortunate enough to secure employment continuously since completing my probationary year. Following probation, I moved councils after being placed in my fourth-choice local authority, in the hope of finding greater stability and opportunities to establish myself within a school community. I recognise how fortunate I have been to remain in employment and I am incredibly grateful for the opportunities I have been given. However, this does not take away from the worry and uncertainty that I

continue to experience.

Teaching is a career I have invested significant time, effort and commitment into, and it is difficult to feel that, despite this, my future remains so uncertain. The lack of security makes it challenging to plan ahead, both professionally and personally, and creates an ongoing sense of anxiety about what the coming months and years may look like.

240 SECONDARY · TEMPORARY POST

It has been so tough to keep going with the hope that a permanent post comes up in the subject I teach that I'm not up against 70 odd applicants for. I absolutely love the job however it has been a struggle being on temp contracts not knowing if they will continue with at times not even knowing if I have a job or not the following week. It is extremely stressful when I have a mortgage to pay and I am a mum to two young children. I don't understand why universities are still putting 40+ students through the course when there are so many qualified teachers already in the subject without a post.

241 PRIMARY · ON A SUPPLY LIST, NO WORK

Personally, my own mental health has suffered a serious decline. I now have severe anxiety about going [to] new schools and now have PTSD from both supply and the interview process.

242 PRIMARY · SUPPLY TEACHING

Teacher Booker didn't approve me then removed me, resulting in me missing job opportunities.

243 PRIMARY · TEMPORARY POST

The variation in local authorities decision on how many years before permanency is given should be more consistent, and service should be able to be transferred from councils, so any teacher who has taught for example 4 years, is a qualified teacher with experience, and should be able to get a job.

244 SECONDARY · TEMPORARY POST

The general process is arduous. It should be centralised. We all should have a job profile and history, with say three generic questions answered through MyGTCS. Job adverts should be on there and you simply press apply. There is far too many variations to make it a good process. We should basically all qualify to be on supply post-probation, again through MyGTCS and local authorities will be notified you are available to work in their authority if you tick yes to them.

245 PRIMARY · SUPPLY TEACHING

I think one of the biggest issues is the gap between being an experienced, qualified teacher who is willing to work and actually being able to secure a permanent or suitably long-term post.

Supply teaching and temporary contracts can provide valuable experience, but there is a huge amount of uncertainty attached to them. You can build relationships with pupils, become part of a school community and take on significant responsibility, but still have no idea where your work or income will come from a few months later. It also makes it difficult to plan your life financially or personally.

I also think there needs to be more recognition of the experience gained through supply and temporary work. Moving between schools and settings requires teachers to be adaptable and able to quickly understand different pupils, staff teams, routines and approaches. In particular, experience in ASN, nurture and specialist settings can be incredibly valuable, but it can sometimes feel as though teachers in temporary positions are continually having to prove their suitability from scratch.

There is also a real difficulty for teachers who want to work part-time. There are teachers who would happily commit to a permanent 0.4 or 0.6 post, for example, but finding appropriate permanent opportunities at those hours can be extremely difficult. This can leave people choosing between insecure supply/temporary work and posts that don't fit their circumstances.

Ultimately, I think the system needs to recognise that job security affects more than simply whether someone has a job. It affects whether teachers can plan financially, make longer-term commitments and

feel able to build a sustainable career in teaching. There are many teachers who want to stay in the profession and contribute, but the uncertainty surrounding employment can make that much harder than it needs to be.

246 PRIMARY · NO TEACHING POST OR SUPPLY WORK

I moved abroad to teach because I was unable to secure consistent, full-time employment in Scotland. I have since returned home for family reasons, but my partner has had to remain abroad because he has been unable to secure work in Scotland and was not even able to get onto a supply list.

I am currently unemployed and receiving benefits. Despite actively applying for work, attending successful interviews and making every effort to secure employment, I have not yet been offered a position, and I have received no work through the supply list I am on.

I am actively seeking work and want to work. The current situation has been incredibly difficult and uncertain, particularly as I have no idea when I will next see my partner or whether he will be able to return to Scotland. I am continuing to apply for any suitable opportunities and am willing to travel for work.

247 SECONDARY · SUPPLY TEACHING

I went on maternity leave 1.5 years ago, before that I found supply work easily but since returning from mat leave I found much fewer opportunities and a harder system to deal with.

248 PRIMARY · SUPPLY TEACHING

All councils are different! If you get probation in Aberdeen city you are offered a chance to interview and be placed in a school for your newly qualified year, if you are in Aberdeenshire you are left to find your own employment after probation year



ANSWER 123 · SECONDARY · NO TEACHING POST OR SUPPLY WORK

“If I can[not] get a permanent full time job with a decent salary I'll have no choice but to leave teaching and that is devastating.”

Supply in my area doesn't really exist now. There have been 3 advertised posts so far this year and they have all been for subject specific cases. So have been unable to get anything. ELC have been pursuing a redundancy plan in its schools for the last few years now which has not made things great either. If I can[not] get a permanent full time job with a decent salary I'll have no choice but to leave teaching and that is devastating. Me and my wife are pausing having children because the job market just does not exist.

Difficulty getting supply work

Leaving, or thinking of leaving, teaching or Scotland

One of 269 written answers published with consent. It also appears in order as answer 123.

**249** PRIMARY · TEMPORARY POST

Although I have been lucky enough to secure a temporary post, I'm absolutely putting my plans for starting a family on hold. Not enough information is given on a clear route to obtaining a permanent contract in the council. Have had to involve unions to get further information

250 PRIMARY · SUPPLY TEACHING

It works for me as I am retired. I am offered way more work than I can do which demonstrates shortages in some areas. They are not offering contracts so I understand why people do not move to remote areas. Supply is not guaranteed so moving is not an option.

251 PRIMARY · SUPPLY TEACHING

Authorities shouldn't be allowed to bring in probationer numbers if there is not sufficient work for current teachers or those probationers after probationary year. Also the issue of probationers being placed in council by GTCS which may not be their choice or closest council in probationary year and then being stuck here as lots of councils don't externally open their supply list. So it has become complete luck.

252 PRIMARY · SUPPLY TEACHING

I am a single person living alone and currently work as a supply teacher in [council removed]. I am passionate about teaching and genuinely enjoy my profession; however, the current conditions surrounding supply teaching have left me feeling increasingly vulnerable, insecure and unsupported.

Despite being very successful in my probationary year I have been required to interview again for what is ultimately a zero-hour contract. The prospect of having to repeatedly interview for a position that provides no guarantee of work, despite having already demonstrated my competence and commitment, is extremely disheartening.

The requirement to have no more than 4 days without work in order to maintain continuous service is particularly concerning. For someone reliant on supply work as their primary income, this creates an enormous amount of financial and emotional pressure. It means that periods when I am not

contacted for work can have consequences far beyond simply losing a few days' pay. Knowing I am competing with over 300 people for just one council for even 1 days supply is awful.

This has become even more difficult due to circumstances beyond my control. I have been physically assaulted on numerous occasions while working (bitten, punched, spat on, kicked). Despite this, I have been informed by HR that leaving my supply position will result in my continuous service being broken. This has left me feeling that I have no genuine choice but to continue working in circumstances where my personal safety has already been compromised. No employee should feel that they must tolerate being physically assaulted in order to protect their employment status.

I have also recently experienced the death of a close family member. Despite the significant emotional impact of this bereavement, I have felt unable to take time away from work because doing so would mean losing income and breaking my 2 years continuous service. Having to prioritise maintaining employment status and financial stability over properly grieving and dealing with the loss of a close family member has been extremely distressing.

The financial insecurity associated with supply teaching is also having a significant impact on my ability to secure stable housing. My current landlord is selling my property, meaning that I need to find alternative accommodation. However, because my income is not guaranteed and I do not have a conventional permanent contract, I am struggling to demonstrate financial stability.

I have subsequently been rejected by 15 mortgage lenders. The feedback I have received is that my employment circumstances are considered too risky, with the terms of supply teaching described as not providing lenders with sufficient confidence. This is particularly frustrating because I am working with find employment but so are thousands of teachers in Scotland and I have successfully completed my probation. Yet the structure of my employment prevents me from being viewed as financially secure.

I therefore find myself in a situation where I am working within the education system, contributing to schools and supporting pupils, while simultaneously being denied the stability and security that most people would reasonably expect from sustained employment. I am trying to build a secure future for



ANSWER 177 · PRIMARY · OTHER SITUATION

“I deserve to feel like a person who is a professional, and is worthy.”

I cannot seem to even get an interview now for teaching. I would only consider a permanent position due to having my children and a mortgage and people depending on me. I still need to pay bills. I have completed 5 days of supply in 2 years. Who can afford to wait around for days, weeks, couple of months of work. My mental health has been horrendous due to instability and the pressures of interviews and never feeling good enough. The demands were totally unrealistic, however I would like to go back into a nice school with a supportive team and SMT. I do not want to give up but I feel like I can no longer put myself on the firing line and be continually fighting for a job. I deserve to feel like a person who is a professional, and is worthy.

Harm to their mental health or wellbeing

Difficulty getting supply work

One of 269 written answers published with consent. It also appears in order as answer 177.

myself, but the nature of my employment is making it increasingly difficult to obtain housing, secure a mortgage and plan financially.

I want to make clear that I love teaching. I want to continue working in education and contributing to the pupils and schools I serve. However, I feel that the current system of supply teaching is leaving people like me in an extremely vulnerable position.

I believe that there needs to be greater recognition of the impact that insecure supply arrangements have on teachers' financial security, mental wellbeing, housing prospects and personal safety. Teachers should not be placed in a position where they feel they must continue working despite experiencing physical assaults, bereavement or significant personal difficulties simply to avoid losing their employment status.

I am asking for these concerns to be taken seriously and for consideration to be given to whether the current arrangements provide supply teachers with the fairness, dignity, security and protection that they deserve.

I want to teach. I want to work. I simply want the opportunity to do so with a reasonable degree of security, safety and respect.

253 PRIMARY · TEMPORARY POST

No

254 PRIMARY · PERMANENT POST

I am lucky to have a permanent contract and feel for those who do not, however I really dislike my school and working there has a negative effect on my mental health but I cannot move as there are no other jobs to move to. Whilst the lack of permanent jobs affects those without secure employment most, it also prevents any kind of movement to other schools or local authorities for all teachers as there are no sideways moves.

255 SECONDARY · TEMPORARY PART-TIME, WANTS MORE HOURS

Money for schools to offer permanent teaching positions or even more regular supply

256 PRIMARY · TEMPORARY POST

I've been very lucky to have 2 fixed term posts since my probation year however it's still the dread and anxiety when June comes around and not knowing. In the year 25-26 the council hadn't even told my HT if I could stay or not yet. It's an unfair system where teachers are overlooked and disregarded

257 PRIMARY · ON A SUPPLY LIST, NO WORK

I have spent 8 years studying to become a teacher in Scotland- 6 of these still working full time in another job. I have given up a lot of time with my own children at nights to achieve my dream job. I complete a masters at [university removed] and was told this would help my case in the awful job situation currently in Scotland for teachers. Since qualifying it has been nothing short of draining and depressing trying to obtain work. This year, since August, has been particularly difficult and has had a serious impact on my mental health. So far I have not managed to obtain ONE day of work as supply and with the current crisis, unfortunately I cannot afford not to work (coming from a home with two incomes). I have now had to take a job in a care home for elderly doing night shifts- which again is taking me away from my own children and reducing my availability for supply- however this is not stopping me from trying every day. When the statistics are shown on how many teachers leave the profession in the first 5 years is it really that surprising when this is how 'professionals' are being treated after committing such a huge part of their lives to become qualified.

258 PRIMARY · SUPPLY TEACHING

I find it hard to get into the "circle" of some schools, I feel once schools know your name then they'll easily hire you for supply but you need to get your name out there first which is tricky to do

259 PRIMARY · PERMANENT PART-TIME, WANTS MORE HOURS

I was in [a promoted post] full time when I fell pregnant. After mat leave I requested to return to work 0.6 as a class teacher and without any other information wlb was granted. No one told me this would [be] permanent. After 1 year I spoke to my HT and said financially and for my own wellbeing I would like to revert back to full time, I was told this wasn't



possible and all changes were permanent. Since then I know of several colleagues who it has been temporary for 2 years and then they have reverted back to full time. How is this policy not consistent? It seems it depends your luck of who you speak to in HR depends your fate. This year I have accepted a fixed term contract to make up my hours but have no certainty over the future. I cannot get married, move house or have my second child because I do not know my finances after this year. There should be a consistent policy and formal procedures to inform staff returning from mat leave what their work life balance request means.

260 PRIMARY · PERMANENT POST

Our [council removed] permanency eligibility was changed recently without anyone's knowledge. Very poor communication. Even our school union rep wasn't made aware. You now have to apply for and interview for the permanency pool jobs whereas last session you were just given a permanent job after your two years' continuous service (excluding the probation year).

261 PRIMARY · TEMPORARY POST

The lack of clear information available about temp contracts, supply, routes to permanency. As someone who has had contracts in different schools, it was never straight forward when my contracts changed. I've spent countless hours trying to sort out my pay and no information was clear about what I was entitled to.

262 SECONDARY · PERMANENT PART-TIME, WANTS MORE HOURS

I think the issue is that for certain subjects and primary school they are over subscribing at PGDE level.

So many people are training for jobs that simply don't exist. They then become deskilled as they languish on supply lists for general supply in unfamiliar schools and eventually leave the profession before they got a proper foot in the door. Schools are far from welcoming and supply staff are expected to 'teach' with absolutely no access to ICT/pupil info/introductions and little awareness of the school behaviour policy. It's failing the pupils and the teachers.

The 3 year NQT plan worries me as it will create a potential blockage for skilled, experienced staff and also create a backlog of NQTS. Will it be that at any point a department could have 3 NQTS at different stages? Or do they only get an NQT every three years in which case... where are the newest NQTs going to go if we are reducing the available schools by a third?

We need to find places for the thousands (yes, thousands) of competent, unemployed and under employed teachers before we prioritise the employment stability of newcomers.

263 PRIMARY · PERMANENT POST

I had worked at the exact same council in the exact same school from my probation year in [year removed] and was bounced between supply and temporary contracts until the union were able to fight my case and I earned a permanent contract in [year removed]. During the period before my contract remortgaging was difficult because while I was earning full time pay mortgage companies did not want to accept me because I was not permanent. I also had my Mum die in [year removed] and only took 2 days off due to fears of taking any longer off and that being put as a break in service.

264 PRIMARY · PERMANENT POST

I am in the fortunate position to be in a permanent position.

What is frustrating is when schools have to lose teachers who have worked temporarily and are part of the culture.

I wish there wasn't a push to have classes at their maximum capacity rather than have schools have the maximum classes they could. [Details of the school's class structure removed.] We had the staff and space but nope a teacher had to go and a composite be created.

Now would be the perfect time to gradually reduce class sizes and increase staffing.



ANSWER 073 · PRIMARY · NO TEACHING POST OR SUPPLY WORK

“I feel I have wasted so many years of my life chasing something I would never have.”

It is destroying my mental health and I am unable to support myself financially taking a huge cut in wages. I often rely on my parents for help. This is why I have taken a side step away from teaching but desperately want to get back to the classroom. It is not feasible studying for years and years to have no employment in the field you love and I would not recommend it to anyone. In fact, I resent the choices I made and I feel I have wasted so many years of my life chasing something I would never have.

Harm to their mental health or wellbeing

Financial hardship

One of 269 written answers published with consent. It also appears in order as answer 73.

**265** SECONDARY · OTHER SITUATION

I moved to [another area] away from my support system for a permanent full time job. I did what was expected and advised by [a government minister] to the detriment of my personal life and mental health. I have waited 6 years for a job to become available in the central belt which will never happen. I have put off buying property, marriage and having children due to this which has affected my financial stability.

Scotland needs to fund permanent jobs across all of Scotland. Freeze teacher training for most school subjects for multiple years until current qualified teachers are employed. Reduce class size and hire more teachers (many qualified currently unemployed).

266 PRIMARY · ON A SUPPLY LIST, NO WORK

The biggest and most frustrating issue I've had is that when applying for jobs a head teacher report is needed, unfortunately it is very difficult to get one while only completing short term supply. This severely limits my options and forces me to stick to supply jobs, without the possibility of long term work or permanency.

As a parent of teenagers, I'm constantly struggling to make ends meet and it's creating anxiety and stress.

267 PRIMARY · SUPPLY TEACHING

Full time permanent jobs are rarely seen, and if they are those jobs are already taken by head teachers' friends or people who they like better. There is an enormous amount of nepotism within the councils. The applications aren't fair process and interviews. They provide no feedback. There is no guarantee of improving. But they are happy to have us back to the school for supply with no planning or help left behind. The whole process of hiring needs to be better, more transparency on how they hire.

268 SECONDARY · SUPPLY TEACHING

The number of students at university doing teaching needs to be reduced to help solve the existing problem of lack of teaching jobs, especially for specific subjects like History.

269 PRIMARY · NO LONGER SEEKING TEACHING WORK

How soul destroying it is coming in from working in a job that is not teaching just so I can pay the bills to then spend every evening until midnight or later filling out teaching applications only to get a standard rejection email for every one. To have everyone say oh they're crying out for teachers you'll get something when in reality...!

To put money into savings not for a holiday or IVF which I've been unable to start or for a mortgage or car but money set aside in case I've not got supply, or a temp contract isn't extended - it's now a in case I don't have a job fund and not a life fund!

Everything is on hold, starting a family, my partner having to be relied upon as the main bread winner and they've put furthering their education and career on hold, yet being able to go on holiday with my wife (we've been together 5 years), worrying about the food shop being too much, lots of little things that just add up!