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LABOUR PROMISES TO BRING IN NATIONAL PAY AND CONDITIONS FOR SCHOOL SUPPORT STAFF

Launching its education manifesto yesterday, the Labour Party announced that if elected it will introduce national pay and conditions for school support staff, just like teachers.

Labour tried to do this when it was last in government, by setting up the School Support Staff Negotiating Body. But the Conservatives and Lib Dems scrapped it before it even had a chance to get going, as soon as they came to power in 2010. Now Labour has said it will put national negotiations for school support staff back in place.

What would this mean? Well, GMB has campaigned for years for support staff to have parity with teachers over the setting of pay and conditions. At the moment, support staff are treated differently by every local authority and often differently by individual schools. There is little proper training and development and even less career recognition. A national negotiating body for school support staff involving GMB would give us the opportunity to put all this right.

It's high time that national politicians gave support staff credit for the important and necessary work they do in schools. If Labour is elected to form the next government we will see tangible benefits for teaching assistants, administrative staff, caretakers, kitchen and playground staff and all the other "hidden professionals" inside and outside the classroom.

GMB will be working hard to help bring this about.

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