COVID-19 UPDATE

 **KEY WORKER LETTERS**

The lock down of the entire Country means the Police can stop you and ask what you are doing and where you are going. If you are required to attend work, your employer should provide you with a letter detailing your role and workplace for you to show if you are stopped.

 **EASTER HOLIDAYS**

The majority of School Support Staff are employed on a Term Time only contract. This means although you are paid in equal amounts throughout the entire year, that payment is only for 39 weeks work plus your annual leave entitlement. Generally speaking, this means that although you are paid for 12 months, the money you receive only covers approximately 43 weeks out of 52. This means you are not paid during school closures. Therefore, you cannot be told or expected to work during what should be a closure period - you should be asked to volunteer to work. If you do choose to work, these hours are outside those in your contract and you should receive additional payment for them.

 **REGULAR ADDITIONAL HOURS**

If you work regular additional hours you are probably concerned what will happen to your pay during this time. GMB supports Members in requesting that regular additional hours are incorporated into their contracted hours, as is set out in the Green Book. GMB suggests that if you have been working regular additional hours, you should speak to your Head Teacher to make sure you will still receive payment for these regular additional when the School is closed. The latest NJC Guidance for Local Government and Schools states “Employees should not suffer any detriment in pay and conditions for the period of any temporary changes that are introduced.

 **SITE STAFF**

GMB has been working with many Members this week who have been concerned about their role during this time. If the School is open it is perfectly reasonable to expect Site Staff to be at work also and the measures to protect staff should be the same for all. Non- emergency contractors should not be coming onto site and routine maintenance work should not be taking place. The latest NJC Joint Circular is very clear that “all schools will be closed except those providing education provision for critical workers or for vulnerable children”. The message is clear; **this is not business as usual.**

Cleaning Staff in schools should not be expected to carry out deep cleaning, unless trained to do so and provided with the specialist equipment and any necessary PPE. Full COSHH risk assessments need to be completed for any new cleaning products being used.

**CATERING STAFF**

GMB has written to the outsourced catering providers, seeking clarification as to what will happen with catering staff in Schools during this closure period. For those Companies who have ‘furloughed’ their staff, which means 80% of the usual salary will be paid, GMB has asked the Companies to pay the other 20%.

**ADMINISTRATION OF MEDICINES FOR FEVER**

GMB advises Members to only administer medicines, if they feel adequately trained and happy to do so. For those who do administer medication, the normal school policy on administration of medicines should apply. Where PPE is available this must be worn, but if the task is no more than dispensing tablets/oral suspensions, this can be passed in sealed boxes and cleaned on return.  GMB would also like to draw Members attention to the latest Government advice which states that until there is more information **“take paracetamol to treat the symptoms of coronavirus, unless your doctor has told you paracetamol is not suitable for you”.** <https://www.gov.uk/government/news/ibuprofen-use-and-covid19coronavirus>

If you have any questions about any of these issues, please contact your local Branch or Officer who will be able to help you.