

NORTHERN IRELAND TEACHERS' COUNCIL

C/O Ben Madigan House
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19 March 2020

Mr Peter Weir MLA
Minister of Education
Rathgael House
Balloo Road
Rathgill
Bangor
BT19 7PR

Dear Peter

We write on behalf of the Northern Ireland Teachers' Council (NITC) seeking urgent intervention on behalf of the substitute teaching workforce who no longer have access to secure work.

We acknowledge and welcome the steps by the Department and employing authorities to ensure that all fixed term workers are paid on the same basis as permanent staff. This is being honoured by most schools but we would encourage you to reinforce the message to schools that all substitute teacher bookings must be honoured for the agreed period of time.

A plan now needs to be put in place for those substitute teachers who were providing day-to-day cover whose regular work has now ended. In most cases they are not eligible for Universal Credit but still have financial commitments in terms of mortgages and other household bills.

The Northern Ireland Teacher's Council request that the Department of Education seek immediate support from the Department of Finance to establish a hardship fund to support these teachers who keep schools running all year round.

The department has access to all payroll records and should be able to calculate an appropriate amount based on the average service of each teacher.

The NITC are available to discuss this proposal and any alternative proposal that the Department may have.

Best wishes

Justin McCamphill Secretary
Gerry Murphy Chairperson
Jacqui White
Mark Langhammer
Geri Cameron