



Staff employment jargon buster

We have created a glossary of key terms related to staff employment in schools in England and Wales. In researching the definitions listed in the glossary, we consulted the [Advisory, Conciliation and Arbitration Service \(ACAS\)](#) website, [GOV.UK](#), and our articles on [The Key for School Governors](#).

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Contents

ACAS (Advisory, Conciliation and Arbitration Service)	3
Burgundy Book	3
CEO (chief executive officer).....	3
Continuous employment/service	3
CRB checks.....	3
DBS checks	3
Equality Act 2010	3
Executive headteacher	3
Fixed-term/temporary contract	3
Green Book	3
Head of school	4
HLTA (higher level teaching assistant)	4
INSET days	4
Living wage.....	4
Local Government Pension Scheme.....	4
Maternity pay and leave	4
National living wage	4
Notice period	4
Parental leave	4
PPA (planning, preparation and assessment) time.....	5
Qualified teacher status (QTS).....	5
Safer recruitment.....	5
School business manager (SBM).....	5
SENCO (special educational needs co-ordinator)	5
Shared parental leave	5
Single central record (SCR)	5
Sick pay	5
STPCD (school teachers' pay and conditions document).....	6
TA (teaching assistant).....	6
Teachers' pension scheme	6
Teachers' Standards	6
TOIL (time off in lieu).....	6
TUPE (Transfer of Undertakings (Protection of Employment) Regulations 2006).....	6
Whistleblowing	6

ACAS (Advisory, Conciliation and Arbitration Service)	ACAS provides free and impartial information and advice to employers and employees on all aspects of workplace relations and employment law.
Burgundy Book	The Burgundy Book outlines conditions of service for teachers in most maintained schools. It includes provisions on appointment, resignation, retirement, sick pay and leave, maternity pay and leave, and other leave. The Burgundy Book is a national agreement between teacher associations and local authorities (LAs).
CEO (chief executive officer)	CEO is the job title usually given to the chief executive of a multi-academy trust (MAT). MATs must appoint a chief executive in order to comply with the Academies Financial Handbook. Some smaller MATs refer to the chief executive as 'executive headteacher'.
Continuous employment/service	Continuous employment/service is when an employee has worked for one employer without a break (not including certain types of leave e.g. maternity, sickness or parental leave). The length of an individual's continuous service may affect his/her entitlement to certain employment rights.
CRB checks	See 'DBS checks'.
DBS checks	Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) checks, previously known as Criminal Records Bureau (CRB) checks, are used to check the criminal records of job applicants. Employers ask for DBS checks to be conducted, rather than applicants themselves, and there are three different types of check. A DBS check has no official expiry date.
Equality Act 2010	The Equality Act 2010 replaced all existing equality legislation, such as the Race Relations Act, Disability Discrimination Act and Sex Discrimination Act. It provides a single, consolidated source of discrimination law, covering all the types of discrimination that are unlawful. The Act applies to all maintained and independent schools in England and Wales, as well as to academies and free schools.
Executive headteacher	Executive headteachers can be appointed in both maintained school federations and MATs. The remit of the role varies depending on the structure of the federation or MAT.
Fixed-term/temporary contract	Contracts that last for a specified time, or will end when a specific task or event has been completed. The term 'fixed-term' is usually used interchangeably with 'temporary'.
Green Book	The basic terms and conditions for employees in local government services. While these terms are not compulsory, most support staff in maintained schools are employed under them.

Head of school	A title given to individuals responsible for running a school without being legally recognised as the headteacher. For example due to the presence of an executive headteacher in the case of a maintained school federation or a CEO in a MAT. The remit of the head of school will vary from case-to-case, however, they are usually more involved in the operational aspects of school management, rather than the school's strategic direction or leadership.
HLTA (higher level teaching assistant)	HLTAs do all the things regular teaching assistants do, but have increased responsibility. For example, an HLTA may be asked to teach classes on their own, cover planned absences, and allow teachers time to plan and mark. External assessment for HLTA status is no longer required, and it is generally for schools to decide whether a candidate is competent and qualified enough to be an HLTA.
INSET days	Maintained schools must designate five days per year for purposes other than teaching. These days are commonly referred to as INSET days. For example, INSET days may be used for training purposes.
Living wage	An hourly rate of pay calculated according to the basic cost of living in the UK. It is set independently and updated annually. Businesses who pay the living wage can receive accreditation from the Living Wage Foundation.
Local Government Pension Scheme	The Local Government Pension Scheme (LGPS) is a nationwide pension scheme for people working in local government or working for other employers participating in the scheme, including schools. Non-teaching staff will typically have access to the LGPS.
Maternity pay and leave	All employed new and expectant mothers qualify for up to 52 weeks of statutory maternity leave, which is made up of ordinary maternity leave (the first 26 weeks), and additional maternity leave (the last 26 weeks). For employees who qualify, the employer pays 90% of the average weekly earnings for the first six weeks, then up to £139.58 for the remaining 33 weeks of maternity leave.
National living wage	A guaranteed wage for employees aged 25 and over, initiated by the government. Unrelated to the 'living wage' (above). As of 1 April 2016, the national living wage is £7.20 per hour.
Notice period	There are two types of notice period: statutory and contractual. Statutory notice is the minimum legal notice that can be given, while contractual notice is the amount of notice that the employer can set out in the terms and conditions of employment which can be longer.
Parental leave	Time off work for an employee to look after a child's welfare. It is normally unpaid, and is available for each child up to their 18 th birthday. Employees need to request leave giving at least 21 days' notice, while employers may ask for this notice to be in writing. (Different to shared parental leave, described below)

PPA (planning, preparation and assessment) time	Designated time given to teachers in maintained schools, and some academies, to plan and prepare lessons and mark work. In schools that follow the School Teachers' Pay and Conditions Document (STPCD), PPA time must be given to all teachers with timetabled teaching commitments, it must be at least 10% of a teacher's timetabled teaching time, it must be allocated during timetabled teaching time, and it must be in blocks of at least 30 minutes.
Qualified teacher status (QTS)	A qualification for those taking up teaching posts in maintained schools and non-maintained special schools in England. Some individuals without QTS may still be employed in teaching posts.
Safer recruitment	Governing bodies and proprietors must act reasonably in making decisions about the suitability of the prospective employee based on checks and evidence including: criminal record checks (DBS checks), barred list checks and prohibition checks together with references and interview information.
School business manager (SBM)	The precise role of the school business manager (SBM) depends on the school and its management structure. However, common responsibilities include: financial management and control, administrative management for the school, procurement and contract management, strategic budget setting, premises management, health and safety, HR management, payroll and project management.
SENCO (special educational needs co-ordinator)	A qualified teacher who works with the headteacher and governing body in determining the strategic development of special educational needs (SEN) policy and provision in the school. All schools are required to designate a SENCO, who is expected to have day-to-day responsibility for the operation of SEN policy, co-ordinate specific provision made to support individual pupils with SEN, provide professional guidance to colleagues, and work closely with staff, parents and other agencies.
Shared parental leave	Designed to give parents more flexibility in how to look after their child in the first year following birth or adoption. Parents are able to share leave between them, and can decide to be off work at the same time and/or take it in turns to have time-off to look after the child.
Single central record (SCR)	A record of employment and suitability checks a school has carried out on staff. The SCR should be kept up-to-date by staff in the school, while the governing body or academy trust must ensure its existence and monitor its completion.
Sick pay	The amount an employee is entitled to receive if he/she is too ill to work. All employees in the UK are entitled to statutory sick pay, paid by the employer for up to 28 weeks. Sick pay entitlement for school staff varies depending on the type of school they are employed to work at.

STPCD (School Teachers' Pay and Conditions Document)	The STPCD is updated annually and sets out the statutory requirements for teachers' pay and conditions that maintained schools and LAs in England and Wales must abide by. The provisions of the STPCD also apply to staff in academies who had their employment transferred at the point of conversion (see TUPE below). The areas covered in the STPCD include pay ranges and progression, pay allowances, professional responsibilities, and working time arrangements.
TA (teaching assistant)	Staff who support children with their learning activities in the classroom, and work closely with teachers to ensure pupils learn in a safe and caring setting.
Teachers' pension scheme	A statutory occupational pension scheme for all teachers in both maintained schools and academies. All teachers, full-time or part time, between the ages of 18 and 75 are automatically members of the scheme unless they formally opt out.
Teachers' Standards	A document setting out the minimum level of practice expected of trainees and teachers from the point of being awarded qualified teacher status (QTS). The standards are used to assess all trainees working towards QTS and those completing their statutory induction period. They are used to assess the performance of teachers in maintained schools and non-maintained special schools, while academies and free schools may use them if they wish to do so. Part 2 of the standards, relating to personal and professional conduct, is used when assessing cases of serious misconduct regardless of the education sector in which the teacher works.
TOIL (time off in lieu)	Where employers give an employee time off in return for overtime rather than payment. The terms of TOIL are agreed between employee and employer.
TUPE (Transfer of Undertakings (Protection of Employment) Regulations 2006)	Regulations designed to protect employees against unfair treatment as a result of a transfer of employment. When a school transfers from LA maintained to academy status, its staff automatically transfer their terms and conditions to the academy under the TUPE regulations. Therefore teachers employed under the STPCD and Burgundy Book will continue to be employed under each, while support staff will carry over their existing employment conditions. These conditions can only be changed on transfer in limited circumstances.
Whistleblowing	Where an employee reports wrongdoing, usually something he/she has seen at work. The wrongdoing must be against the public interest, and the whistleblower is protected by law. All maintained schools and academies should have appropriate procedures in place for whistle-blowing.