

NASUWT 'Action Short of Strike Action' in schools and sixth form colleges (England): Advice for school support members

The teachers' union NASUWT has announced it will be taking Action Short of Strike Action (ASOSA) in some schools and sixth form colleges from Monday 18 September 2023. NASUWT's mandate for this industrial action ends in January 2024 in schools, and December 2023 in sixth form colleges.

Participating teachers will 'work to rule' and could refuse to complete tasks which fall outside of their contracts, such as midday supervision, extra-curricular duties, routine clerical & admin tasks or covering for other staff - except in unforeseen circumstances. [More details are available here.](#)

The NASUWT state their industrial action strategy is "designed to be pupil, parent and public-friendly, freeing teachers to do what parents and the public expect of them, which is to focus on teaching and learning. Nothing in the action short of strike action will damage children's education." While ASOSA is not intended to close schools and colleges, it may cause some disruption depending on the school or sixth form college's particular circumstances, especially if they have a high number of staff who are NASUWT members.

This action is not national action so not all schools will be affected. However, please see our advice below should teaching staff be taking part in your school.

UNISON Advice

UNISON respects the rights of other trade unions to take industrial action. We urge UNISON members to support legal protests and rallies organised by NASUWT that take place outside your contracted hours of work.

It is important to note that UNISON members in schools and sixth form colleges themselves have not been balloted for strike action or action short of strike action on this occasion and are therefore advised to continue with their normal duties and responsibilities. However, UNISON members should not take on any additional responsibilities being given to them directly as a result of other unions' industrial action.

*Support staff should **not** be expected to provide cover for, or take classes, where this would normally be done by teachers who are taking any form of industrial action. Staff should not be moved from the duties they would normally have carried out in order to cover work and*

frustrate the industrial action of colleagues. This includes any staff employed as either HLTAs or cover supervisors. Members who are under pressure to provide cover for colleagues undertaking industrial action should contact their UNISON rep, branch or region for further advice and support. Where a member is asked to cover the work of a NASUWT colleague due to them taking ASOSA, they should obtain this management instruction in writing and share it with their local branch for advice.

Branches should also ensure that participating schools work with local reps to conduct a risk assessment of the risks posed to pupils and staff by any reduced staffing levels.

Members are reminded that due to industrial relations legislation, only those employees who have been involved in a legal ballot are allowed to take industrial action.

Should you need further advice or support relating to your personal situation, please [contact your local UNISON branch](#).