



Frequently Asked Questions (FAQs) - Schools

Find below some frequently asked questions about Unified Reward, and the Job Evaluation letter stage these will be updated regularly to reflect questions submitted to the helpline. The FAQs are relevant to all support staff in community schools, an alternative version is available for other council staff. Where an FAQ relates to a particular group this will be specified or allocated to a separate section. Click on the links in the contents table below to be taken to a specific section.

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1. About Unified Reward

1.1. What is Unified Reward?

Unified Reward encompasses; a review and redesign of the pay and grading structure and a harmonisation of the terms and conditions across the council and community schools. The aims and objectives of Unified Reward are to create a pay and reward system which is simpler, fairer, more flexible and rewards performance. The council believes this will address the wide range of grades in use across the authority, remove inconsistencies and ensure that staff are being rewarded for the work they do.

1.2. Who is covered by the project?

All employees at the council and across community schools are in scope for unified reward, except:

- Fixed Term/Temp employees whose end date is before 1 April 2017 (unless extended)
- National Management Trainees
- Apprentices
- Education and Skills staff
- Staff on Soulbury T&Cs and Teachers
- Support staff in non-community schools

1.3. What are the timescales for Unified Reward being implemented?

The planned timescales for the implementation of Unified Reward are as follows;

Date	Schools Staff
8 February 2016	Consultation Opened
8 March 2016	Consultation Closed
21 March 2016	Proposals taken to General Functions Committee
31 May 2016	Council, Unison and GMB reach collective agreement
July 2016	Schools staff receive job evaluation letters
September - October 2016	Job Evaluation Appeals
December 2016	Schools staff receive new contracts of employment
1 April 2017	Implementation of Unified Reward

2. Collective Agreement

2.1. What is a collective agreement?

A collective agreement is a written agreement between the council and the trade unions that covers all of the negotiated terms and conditions of employment for employees. The terms and conditions were reached through collective bargaining between the council, Unison and GMB. The collective agreement was signed on 31st May 2016 following an in principled agreement in January 2016 and staff consultations run by both the council and the trade unions.

2.2. I am not a Trade Union member why can they agree to the changes under Unified Reward on my behalf?

At Barnet, we are an organisation that recognises trade unions as having power to negotiate on behalf of all staff, regardless of Trade Union membership. Any agreements that are made between the trade unions and council in this respect are lawfully binding, and all current employment contracts state terms and conditions can be varied via a collective agreement.

3. Job Evaluation Letters

3.1. When will I receive my job evaluation letter?

All support staff in schools are scheduled to receive their job evaluation letter between 1st and 6th July 2016. Staff will receive their letter from their headteacher. If you are on short-term leave or off work on the dates that the letters are due to go out you will receive your letter on your return to work. If you are on longer term leave (e.g. maternity) your letter will be posted to you following a conversation with the headteacher (where possible). Only in scope staff are due to receive a letter for more information on this see 3.4.

3.2. What happens if I receive my letter late?

All headteachers have been asked to ensure employees receive their letter between 1st – 6th July 2016. If for any reason you receive your letter later than this date and wish to appeal you can contact the Unified Reward helpline to discuss whether you are eligible for an extension to the appeals deadline. This will be assessed on a case by case basis.

3.3. What will the job evaluation letter tell me?

The job evaluation will include;

- Your current and Unified Reward job title
- Your current grade and Unified Reward Grade
- Your Current salary and Unified Reward salary details
- Information about pay protection arrangements (where relevant)

If you do not understand any of the information included in the letter you should discuss this with your headteacher or contact the Unified Reward helpline.

3.4. Who should not receive a letter?

Employees on the following contracts will not receive a letter:

- Fixed Term/Temp/Seconded/Acting up employees with an end date before 1 April 2017
- National Management Trainees and Apprentices
- Staff on Soulbury Terms & Conditions and Teachers

Note that all casual staff will receive a job evaluation letter but not until a later date.

3.5. How was my job evaluated?

All roles within the council and across community schools have been subject to evaluation under Unified Reward. At the start of the process headteachers were requested to submit a role profile and supplementary information form outlining the role. Job evaluations were then completed by independent experts using the Hay methodology. All evaluation panels included the Trade Unions and representatives from schools to advocate on behalf of the role. We are confident that this has been a fair and transparent process. Headteachers have been made aware of the outcomes of the evaluations and the impacts on staff and have signed this information off to be included in the job evaluation letters.

3.6. Where can I find my Job Evaluation documents?

You can request the role profile used in your job evaluation from your headteacher or the Unified Reward Helpline.

3.7. How have I been assimilated (matched) to my grade and salary?

Your role will have been evaluated using the method outlined in question 3.5 to determine the Unified Reward grading. You will have been moved onto your new grade dependent on your current salary as follows;

- If your current salary is *within* the range of the new grade (e.g. Grade D £19,524-£21,552) you will move across on the same salary and see no change.
- If your current salary is *lower* than the range of the new grade you will be placed at the minimum point of the new grade (e.g. Grade D £19,524) and will see an increase.
- If your current salary is *higher* than the range of the new grade then you will be placed at the maximum point of the new grade (e.g. Grade D £21,552) and receive pay protection at your current salary for 12 months.

The above applies to all staff except Teaching Assistants (52 weeks), Nursery Nurses (retainer pay) who will be detrimentally affected – these staff may be assimilated higher in their grade to limit their loss.

3.8. Why does my current salary in my Job Evaluation letter not match the amount shown on my payslip?

We are aware that for some staff there will be a difference between the salary they see on the Job Evaluation letter and the amount they see on their payslip. This may be occurring due to London weighting, for some staff the salary on their payslip does not include London Weighting, whereas the job evaluation letter you received does include London Weighting.

In these circumstances it will look as though you are being paid less on your payslip than we have identified in your Unified Reward letter. This is not the case you receive London Weighting in addition to the amount you can see on your payslip.

3.9. Why is a colleague doing the same job as me being paid a different amount?

We cannot discuss individual circumstances with anyone but the specific employee as their pay and salary are confidential. Your salary and the amount given on your letter must be within the grade your role has been evaluated at but has been matched based on the amount you currently receive. The Unified Reward grade ranges allow for employees to receive a salary anywhere between the grade minimum and maximum (e.g. anyone on Grade F will receive between £23,334 - £26,277 no more and no less) but this will not necessarily be exactly the same amount for everyone. Staff have been matched based on their current salary according to the assimilation arrangement outlined in 3.7.

3.10. What if I am unhappy with my Unified Reward grade and salary?

If you are unhappy with your Unified Reward details you may have the right to appeal. In order to appeal you must register an appeal by completing the appeal form and returning to unified.reward@barnet.gov.uk by 19th July 2016. There are 3 grounds for appeal and you will need to provide evidence that you meet one of these criteria in order for your appeal to be heard. Further information on the appeals process can be found in section 4.

4. Job Evaluation Appeals

4.1. Do I have a right of appeal and how do I appeal?

Yes all employees have the right to appeal against their job evaluation and grading if they can evidence they meet one of the 3 grounds for appeal. Information on how to appeal, the full appeals policy and appeals form will be available from your headteacher, Barnet Website, working with children in barnet website and by request from the Unified Reward Helpline. You can submit your appeal to the Unified Reward appeals team by emailing unified.reward@barnet.gov.uk

4.2. What is the deadline for submitting an appeal?

You must submit your appeal by 19th July 2016. If you have extenuating circumstances and cannot meet this deadline you should contact unified.reward@barnet.gov.uk to discuss the possibility of an extension. Extensions may be granted in exceptional circumstances in agreement with the HR Director.

4.3. What are the grounds for appeal?

If you wish to appeal you need to meet one of the three grounds of appeal these are;

Ground 1	Assimilation Error	You believe you have been assimilated (matched) to the wrong job.
Ground 2	Substantial change in the job	You believe there has been a substantial change to the level of accountabilities / responsibilities and this may require a higher level of knowledge, skills and experience since the role profile and person specification was agreed.
Ground 3	Incorrect Evaluation	You believe that your job has not been scored correctly using the job evaluation scheme. An example might be that you feel insufficient weight has been assessed against one or more of the job evaluation factors.

If you believe you can appeal on one of the three grounds above then you should complete the Job Evaluation Appeal Form and email it to unified.reward@barnet.gov.uk by 19th July 2016.

4.4. How do I know if I meet the appeals criteria?

We would suggest in the first instance you access your job evaluation documents including role profile and supplementary information form and discuss this with your headteacher. You can also contact the appeals team with any queries by emailing unified.reward@barnet.gov.uk

4.5. What will the process for appeals be?

If you have submitted an appeal form your appeal will then go through the stages outlined below;

Initial Assessment

The Unified Reward Team will carry out an initial assessment of the information provided. If there has been an obvious error made (for example, an employee has clearly been matched to the wrong job) then this may be corrected without the need for a Stage One meeting. If there is insufficient information or evidence provided to support the appeal then the appeal documents will be returned to the appellant. If sufficient information is then provided by the appeal submission deadline the appeal will proceed. If there is no obvious error and there is sufficient supporting information then the appeal will move to Stage One.

Stage One

At Stage One the appellant will meet with an HR representative and their headteacher to discuss the nature of their appeal. Appellants may be accompanied by a trade union representative (if they are a member of a trade union) or a work colleague if they wish. It is the appellant's responsibility to arrange this. The outcome of the Stage One meeting will be either 'no change', 'change of grade (up or down)' or 'proceed to Stage Two'. If the decision is 'no change' or 'change of grade (up or down)' then there is no further right of appeal.

Stage Two

At Stage Two the appellant will be required to present their appeal to a job evaluation panel. The panel will consist of trained evaluators (one management and one union) and the appellant's line manager. The appellant may be accompanied by a union representative (if they are a trade union member) or a work colleague if they wish. It is the appellant's responsibility to arrange this. The outcome of the Stage Two hearing will be either 'no change' or 'change of grade (up or down)'. The panel's decision is final and there is no further right of appeal.

4.6. What could happen as a result of my appeal?

Your appeal could have the following outcomes;

- No appeal heard due to insufficient information or evidence
- No change
- Change of grade (up or down)

Once a decision is made by a panel at stage 2 there is no further right of appeal.

4.7. Where can I find more information on Job Evaluation appeals?

You can find more information on the appeals process on;

- Barnet Website
- Working with children in Barnet Website (Schools information section)

If you have any further queries please contact the Unified Reward appeals team by emailing unified.reward@barnet.gov.uk

5. The Impacts of Unified Reward

5.1. How will staff be affected by Unified Reward?

As with any review individual staff will be affected differently. Some will see positive or neutral impacts and others will be negatively affected. We have worked closely with the trade unions and headteachers to limit the losses experienced by staff. If you are concerned about the impacts of the changes you can contact the Unified Reward team to discuss this.

5.2. I am a teaching assistant currently paid on a 52 week contract how will I be affected?

Unfortunately your pay will be reduced to reflect the number of actual weeks worked so you may see a loss in pay. The council have done what they can to negate this loss therefore as a result of pay protection you will see no loss for 12 months from 1 April 2017, following this the council has committed to limiting your loss to a maximum of 3.4% for a further 12 months.

5.3. I am a nursery nurse currently receiving retainer pay how will I be affected?

Unfortunately your pay will be reduced as a result of the withdrawal of retainer pay so you may see a loss in pay. The council have done what they can to negate this loss therefore as a result of pay protection you will see no loss for 12 months from 1 April 2017, following this the council has committed to limiting your loss to a maximum of 3.4% for a further 12 months.

6. The Unified Reward Changes – Detailed Reminder

Pay

6.1. How is the pay and grading structure different?

The pay and grading structure has been simplified from over 300 grades down to 12 new grades. A range of pay has been added to each grade to allow for employee progression. Basic pay has also been uplifted to the average paid by other local councils.

6.2. What does the new pay and grading structure look like?

The table below lists the 12 new grades.

Grade	Grade Minimum	Grade Maximum
Grade A	£17,981	£18,324
Grade B	£18,324	£19,005
Grade C	£18,603	£20,394
Grade D	£19,719	£21,768
Grade E	£21,066	£23,568
Grade F	£23,568	£26,541
Grade G	£26,541	£30,024
Grade H	£29,223	£32,307
Grade I	£32,307	36,012
Grade J	36,924	41,484
Grade K	44,307	48,963
Grade L	49,947	55,938

6.3. What is happening to automatic increments?

Automatic increments will be removed the final increment will be paid on 1 April 2017 for the majority of staff. Following the implementation of Unified Reward annual pay progression will be based on an employee's performance review rating. See question 6.11 for more detail.

6.4. I am due to get my annual pay increment on 1 April 2017. Will I still get this?

Yes you will receive your final increment in April 2017 following this annual increases will be dependent on performance ratings. You may receive progression based on your performance but there is no guaranteed increase. For more information on this see question 6.11

6.5. Will my pay change as a result of the project?

As with any full review of the pay and grading structure it is usual that some posts and therefore employees will see a change in their pay. Some employees will see their pay increase, others may decrease and some will remain the same. We have worked hard to minimise any reductions in pay and the majority of employees will receive the same or a higher rate of basic pay. The overall aim of Unified Reward is focused on fairness and transparency not making reductions or cost saving.

6.6. When will I receive my new salary?

Unified Reward will be implemented in community schools from 1 April 2017. If your salary has increased you will receive the first pay reflecting this at the end of April 2017. If you are negatively impacted by Unified Reward you will be protected at your current salary for 12 months and will therefore not see a change in pay until April 2018.

Pay Protection

6.7. What happens if I am negatively impacted by Unified Reward?

All schools staff negatively impacted by Unified Reward will receive 12 months' pay protection from 1 April 2017. Thereafter 6 month pay protection will be the normal practice following any future restructures. The general principle for protection is that only base pay and London weighting is protected.

We have the following exceptions to the rules set out above;

Pay Protection Exceptions

- Teaching assistants (52 weeks), nursery nurses (retainer pay) and meal time supervisors will receive protection of total pay.
- Following the 1 year protection the council have committed to limit the loss of teaching assistants and nursery nurses to 3.4% for a further 12 months.
- Employees on maternity leave will receive a full 12 months' pay protection this may not commence until they return from maternity leave.
- Any current Pay Protection arrangements will continue as per the agreement followed by UR pay protection (if entitled) up until September 2017.

6.8. How long will my pay be protected for?

All employees negatively impacted by Unified Reward will receive 12 months' pay protection. Following the introduction of Unified Reward the standard length for pay protection (as a result of restructures etc.) will be 6 months.

Additional Payments and Allowances

6.9. What is happening to the additional payments some employees receive?

As a principle we are intending to remove additional payments as part of the process of ensuring all employees are paid correctly (in their salary) for the work that they do. In some instances we recognise there is a need to retain an additional payment. The table below lists the allowances to be removed and retained. You can also contact the Unified Reward helpline for clarification.

To be Removed	To be Retained
Special responsibility payments	Standby allowance (inc. mental health standby)
Additional responsibility / Honoraria payments	Opening and Locking payments
Contractual overtime (Unless authorised by the Headteacher)	Callout allowance
Ad hoc and discretionary payments	First Aid allowance
Local agreements	Sleep in Duty
Quality payments	Standard night between 10pm-6am to be paid via green book at x1.33
Incentive Bonus	
Retainer pay	

Recruitment and Retention

6.10. What mechanisms will be available to ensure we can recruit and retain staff?

Two schemes one for recruitment and one for retention will be implemented each allowing up to 10% additional pay. This will replace the existing Market Factor Supplement and will allow flexibility to react to changes in the market and staff shortages or skills gaps.

Performance

6.11. How is performance being linked to pay progression?

From April 2018 pay progression within a grade will be dependent on staff performance. The level of increase received will be determined by the performance review rating a headteacher awards their employee. If an employee receives an increase this is then consolidated and becomes their new base pay. Once an employee reaches the top of their grade they will no longer receive performance related increments. The end of year review must be completed by mid-March 2018 to ensure the progression payment is received in April 2018. The increases and ratings are set out below;

Current Rating	New Rating	Percentage Increase
Red	Development Needs	0%
Amber	Satisfactory	0.5%
Green	Good	2.25%
Gold	Outstanding	3%

6.12. How will performance be measured?

Employee performance will be measured in the same way it is now via the performance review scheme. We will be making tweaks to the scheme to ensure it is fit for purpose and there will be clear guidance for how an employee can achieve each rating.

6.13. How will you make sure the performance ratings are fair?

As is the case now reviewing performance should be a process a line manager undertakes regularly with their staff to ensure there are no surprises when completing the end of year review. We understand that moving towards performance related progression means there is more at stake for an employee and we need to ensure the process is fair and transparent. There will be the opportunity for an employee to appeal against their rating if they do not agree or feel it is unfair. There will also be a system of moderation in place to ensure the same standards are being applied across the board.

6.14. I'm at the top of the grade will I get an increment based on my performance?

No, as is the case now employees at the top of their grade are not eligible for progression within the grade. Under Unified Reward there has been consideration to awarding those employees who are rated outstanding for 2 years in a row a one off additional payment. Employees at the top of their grade would be eligible for this. This scheme is yet to be agreed.

Annual Leave

6.15. Is Annual leave changing?

Yes, from 1 April 2017 annual leave entitlement will be 30 days for all employees (pro-rated for part time staff). For those staff with 31 days or more entitlement currently one year's protection will be applied at 31 days with a reduction to 30 days for the 2018/19 leave year.

6.16. I have to have my annual leave during the school holidays so what does increased annual leave mean for me?

For schools staff an increase to the amount of annual leave will increase the amount of paid weeks and will be reflected in your pay.

Sickness

6.17. What changes will be made to the sickness absence scheme?

There will be no change to the current sick pay entitlements of six months full pay and six months half pay as outlined in the current policies.

What is proposed is that the approach and procedure for managing short term sickness is revised with the introduction of new sickness triggers. The sickness triggers are outlined in the table below;

Trigger	Sickness level	Salary Reduction
Trigger 1	8 days or 3 occurrences/events within 12 months	1 days' pay
Trigger 2	Another occurrence/event following Trigger 1 within 12 months	2 days' pay
Trigger 3	Another occurrence/event following Trigger 2 within 12 months	3 days' pay

It has been agreed with the Trade Unions that the triggers will be piloted for a period of 12 months in which staff will incur no financial penalties. If an employee hits a trigger management action will be taken. As is the case now headteacher discretion should be exercised in individual cases to ascertain what action (if any) should be taken.

The triggers are only one aspect of the Attendance Management procedure, headteachers should be addressing sickness as it arises and taking the appropriate action to manage this with the employee.

Guidance will be provided on disability related absence, it is not our intention to penalise those staff that have a disability or serious life threatening conditions.

6.18. Will my sick pay entitlements change?

No, the sick pay entitlement will remain at up to six months full pay and six months half pay depending on an individual's length of continuous service in local government.

6.19. What type of illnesses will not activate the triggers?

As is the case now management discretion can be exercised when enforcing the triggers. The intention is not to penalise staff with a disability, serious life threatening condition or long term condition. The triggers will also not be hit when a member of staff has sustained a serious injury or needs to attend hospital for a procedure which requires recovery time. It is not possible to list every instance where a trigger would or would not be activated, however as is the case now headteachers will be expected to use their own discretion with HR support in the management of sickness.

Working Week & Overtime

6.20. What changes have been made to working hours?

The normal working day is being extended from 6am-8pm to 6am-10pm this does not suggest any changes to your current working hours, i.e. staff who work from 9am-5pm will continue to do so. This change only affects the time that the out of hours overtime rate will begin to be paid (from 10pm).

6.21. Has the working week changed?

No, the standard working week will still be Monday – Friday.

6.22. What will the new overtime rates be?

There are some proposed changes to the overtime payments under Unified Reward the new payments will be as follows;

Overtime Type	Rate	Percentage	Alternative
Monday - Saturday rate	x1.25	25%	N/A
Sunday rate	x 1.5	50%	N/A
Out of Hrs (22:00-6:00)	x1.5	50%	N/A
Bank Holiday	x2.0	100%	Day off in Lieu

6.23. I currently receive 4 hours contractual overtime. Will this continue?

Contractual overtime is being removed for the majority of employees therefore it is unlikely you will continue to receive it. In individual circumstances headteachers have indicated that they would like contractual overtime to continue, they will inform you if this is the case for you.

6.24. If I work on a bank holiday will I get extra pay?

Yes the rate for working on a bank holiday is double-time. Employees can choose between a higher rate of pay or a day off in lieu.

Employee Benefits Scheme

6.25. What is the Employee Benefits Scheme?

We propose to introduce a market leading employee benefits scheme for all staff. This could potentially include; high street discounts, leisure discounts, purchasing annual leave, childcare vouchers, cycle to work scheme and lease cars. The Council is currently in negotiation with a provider and a date for introduction will be announced shortly.

7. Employee Consultation

7.1. When were the staff consulted on Unified Reward?

The consultation period ran for a period of 30 days from 8 February to 8 March 2016.

7.2. What happened during the consultation period?

The consultation phase included 29 briefings to around 1,000 staff, from both corporate and school settings. Staff were able to engage with the consultation in the following ways;

- Attending a consultation session
- Accessing information available on the Intranet/Internet including the consultation overview, 6 page consultation pack, presentation slides and FAQs
- Contacting the Unified Reward helpline with queries or feedback
- Contacting their Trade Union to give feedback on the proposals

All feedback to the consultation and any queries were taken and collated by the Unified Reward Helpline.

7.3. Did the Trade Unions consult with their members?

The recognised Trade Unions (Unison and GMB) consulted with their members by ballot separately to the council during April and May. For further information on these ballots you can contact the Trade Unions directly;

Unison
contactus@barnetunison.org.uk

GMB
mary.goodson@barnet.gov.uk

7.4. What was the outcome of consultation?

The majority of feedback on the Unified Reward proposals was positive in nature. All feedback received during the consultation period from staff and the trade unions was collated and presented to the Chief Executive for consideration. This was then fed into a report of final recommendations heard by the General Functions Committee on 21 March 2016 where the proposals were signed off. During the consultation period over 300 questions were taken in the sessions and a detailed response document to all questions was posted on the intranet and council website.

8. Next Steps

8.1. When will I get my new contract?

Following the school summer holiday all job evaluation appeals will be heard from 12 September – 14th October. New contracts will be distributed to employees upon the completion and resolution of the job evaluation appeals we expect this to be at the beginning of December 2016. Unified Reward will be implemented in community schools from 1 April 2017.

9. Further Information

9.1. Where can I find more information?

Barnet Website / Working with Children in Barnet Website – Schools information section

If you want to know more detail or have a specific question make sure you have a look on the Barnet Website or the Working with Children in Barnet site and read the information documents including FAQs (updated regularly):

Barnet Website – www.barnet.gov.uk/unified-reward

WWCIB – www.barnet.gov.uk/wwc-home/information-for-schools/Unified-Reward-Project

Unified Reward Helpline: T: 0330 606 4444 E: barnethrpayroll@capita-services.co.uk

Unified Reward Appeals Team: For appeals only; E: unified.reward@barnet.gov.uk

9.2. Which trade unions have been involved with Unified Reward and how do I contact them?

Unison and GMB represent the employees covered by the project you can contact them with the details below or via your local shop steward.

Unison
contactus@barnetunison.org.uk

GMB Convenor
mary.goodson@barnet.gov.uk