

Supply teachers aren't second-class professionals: they're part of the solution to the skills crisis

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Responding to reports

(<https://inews.co.uk/news/education/children-back-school-supply-teachers-unqualified-staff-3253056>) that pupils are at risk of receiving lower quality education due to a reliance on supply teachers, education recruitment expert, The Supply Register has raised concerns that a critical segment of the education workforce is unjustly being deemed second-class professionals.

Baljinder Kuller, Founder and Director of the Supply Register commented:

“There’s a worrying trend of supply teachers being viewed as ‘second-class’ professionals in the education sector when in fact the opposite is quite often true. A vast number of these individuals have moved from permanent positions into supply, meaning they have a wealth of experience that is hugely valuable not just in the classroom, but also in the development of early career teachers. Given that education is facing a significant staffing shortage, these professionals are also crucial in ensuring that pupils can continue to learn in the classroom, so the suggestion that they will deliver lower-quality education is hugely concerning and, in my experience, incorrect.”

“The problem often extends from how supply teachers are engaged, rather than the fact they are used. Ineffective recruitment of these individuals can cause disruption to the teacher and the class alike. We are seeing a lack of face-to-face time during the recruitment process since lockdown and if they aren’t being onboarded on the day of their assignment in the manner that a permanent employee would, then they are instantly at a disadvantage. This ensures consistency in the classroom as professionals have had some prior experience or engagement with the education institution.

“Supply teachers are part of the solution to the staffing crisis, not the problem. Painting them as the latter will only push more professionals out of the industry – a situation that the UK’s education sector simply cannot afford to be in.”

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