

Media release from Fórsa trade union

Fórsa calls on Minister for Education to increase pace of engagement for new school caretaker pay structure

For immediate release Monday 27th May 2024

Fórsa trade union, which represents more than 18,000 non-teaching staff in the Irish education sector, has urged the Minister for Education, Norma Foley TD, to increase the pace of engagement with the union for a new school caretaker pay structure.

Responding to a statement by the Minister today and welcoming a pay survey on the current pay and conditions of school caretakers in more than 3,800 schools, Fórsa said increasing the pace of engagement is essential to ensuring school caretakers do not have to wait any longer for a new pay structure to be implemented.

Fórsa head of Education Andy Pike commented: “We believe that an agreement is possible on the same terms agreed for school secretaries, an agreement that will significantly increase pay and provide basic conditions of service.

“This would include, for example, paid leave entitlements, which would end the need for school caretakers to claim social protection payments during weeks of school closure. This arrangement has been transformative for school secretaries, who have been on a centralised payroll system since September 2023.

“Fórsa appreciates there are a number of complex elements to the proposed caretaker agreement, such as how to treat overtime and on-call obligations, but we are confident that if both parties intensify their efforts a beneficial agreement can be reached,” he said.

Following the establishment of a new pay structure for school secretaries in 2021, Fórsa and the Department of Education agreed to negotiate a new pay structure for school caretakers.

The schools pay survey is to be completed by 14th June. Mr Pike said the survey is an essential exercise to identify current pay arrangements, the results of which will inform ongoing negotiations on a new pay structure.

ENDS