

# **Staff at Edinburgh schools will join Scotland wide strike**

**The largest local government union, UNISON, confirmed today that there will be a rolling schedule of strike action at schools in Scotland beginning in the coming weeks. This will include staff at Edinburgh schools as well as 23 other local authorities.**

Nine in ten UNISON members voted to reject the pay offer put forward by COSLA in a consultative ballot. The strikes will involve support staff such as school cleaners, caterers, janitors and school support assistants. 1,868 schools in Scotland will be affected.

Dates for the strike action will be announced soon.

UNISON's Scottish secretary Lilian Macer said: "No one takes industrial action lightly. It's a very difficult decision for anyone, but as much as this is about pay, it's also about standing up for local services.

"The school staff taking part in strike action support children in school every day of the year, and many are parents with school-age children too.

"Workers are taking action because they want children to be

educated in well-resourced, well-staffed schools. They want to start trying to reverse years of cuts and under-investment in the workforce and services.

“No one wants to cause disruption for pupils and parents, but school staff have been left with no other option. The blame must be laid squarely at the door of Cosla and Scottish ministers. They have it within their gift to end the strike, but they are showing no sign of wanting to do so. That’s a terrible shame for everyone affected.”

Chair of UNISON Scotland’s local government committee **Mark Ferguson** said: “UNISON’s local government members have voted overwhelmingly to reject this offer, which shows their resolve to fight for the fair pay they deserve.

“I’m a parent myself, so I understand the disruption these strikes cause. But if wages don’t rise, school staff will leave for other jobs beyond education that pay significantly more an hour. That would be a disaster and would help no one.

“The current offer amounts to a real-terms pay cut and adds further stress to a dedicated workforce who are already suffering from the cost-of-living crisis.

“Cosla and the Scottish government need to give school staff a decent pay rise, fund any increase properly and commit to implementing a pay of £15 per hour for all local government workers.”