

DON'T SUFFER IN SILENCE

DEALING WITH
PROBLEMS AT WORK:
A STEP-BY-STEP GUIDE
FOR ELT WORKERS



There are great things about working in ELT. It's a job that attracts creative, dedicated people. Whether we work in the classroom or in the office, we're here because we like people and want to make the world a better place.

But our enthusiasm for the job is not always matched by our employers. And despite our best efforts, problems arise in all schools.

It can be small: a photocopier breaks and isn't fixed for weeks. Other times it's more serious: late wages, sexual harassment, bullying, a disciplinary investigation. But whatever the issue, no one should face it alone.

We're writing this because, as a union, we know that problems are best faced head-on, with support, and at the earliest possible opportunity.

Don't wait until things reach a breaking point. If there's a problem at work, be proactive. To help, we've written out some basic steps that you can take.

Of all the steps, we really stress the importance of steps one and three. If you have a problem at work, your options for solving it are far fewer if you quit. As a union, we'll support all our members as best we can. But once you've left the job, it cuts off a number of legal and procedural pathways to see problems resolved.

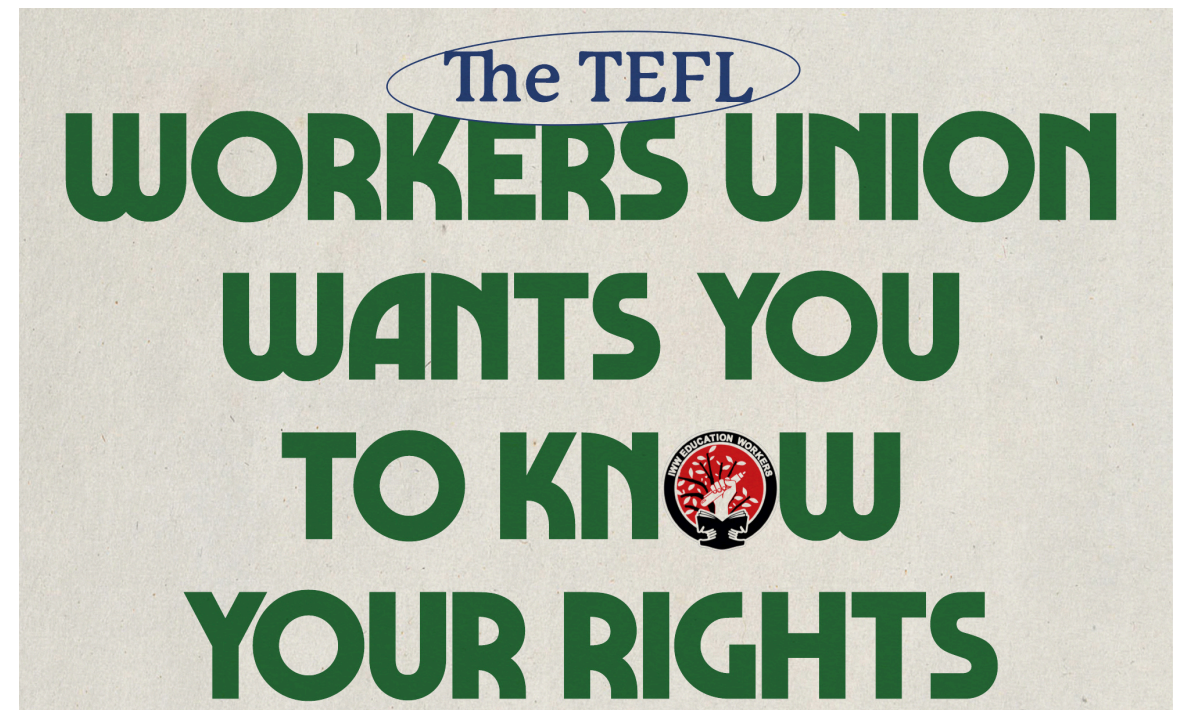
Similarly, many workplace problems don't have a simple legal fix. Rather, it's our power in numbers that lets management know they need to take our issues seriously.

So, with that in mind, read on. Share this with your workmates, trainee teachers at your school, anyone you think could benefit.

We've got your back.

STEP ONE: DON'T QUIT

Too many schools rely on staff leaving, allowing them to keep offering the same bad conditions again and again.



Stay! It's the employer who needs to change - not you!

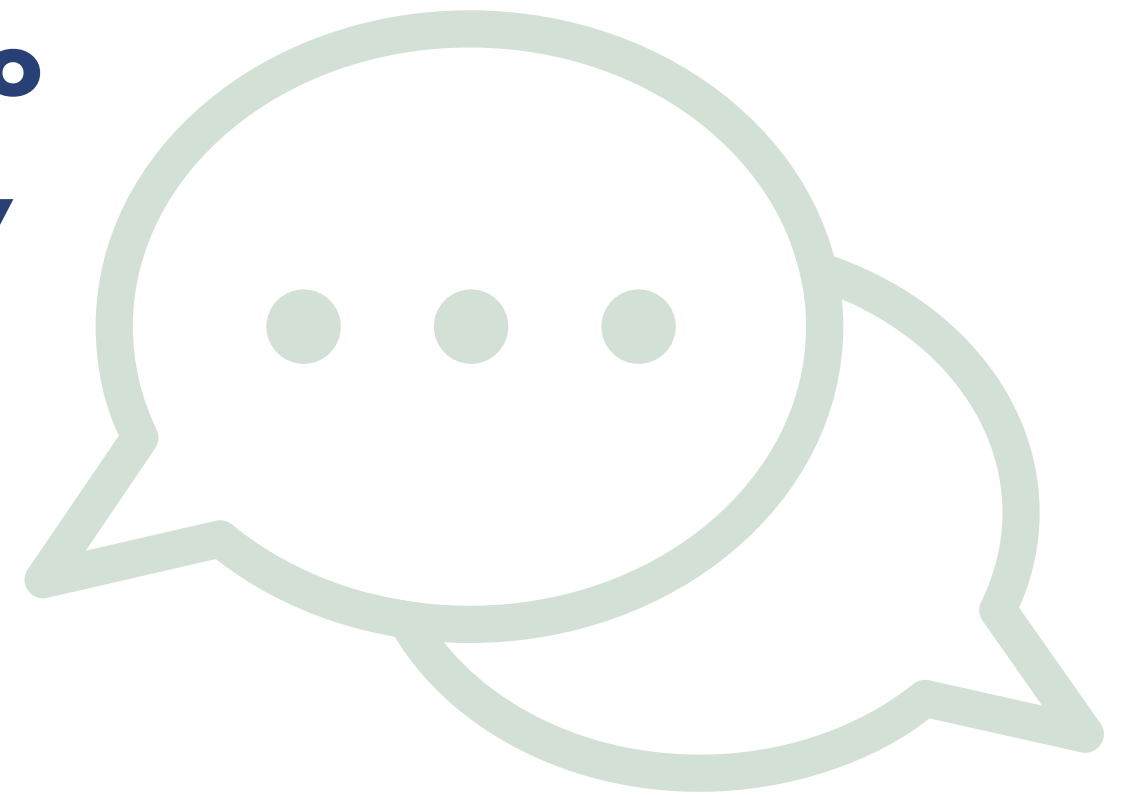
STEP TWO: TAKE NOTES



What happened? When? Who said what and how did it make you feel? Were there any witnesses? Are there any relevant emails? Make notes and a timeline and keep them somewhere safe.

STEP THREE: DON'T SUFFER IN SILENCE

Speak to your workmates. Problems at work rarely affect just one person, so there's a good possibility others may join you in speaking up. Plus, just having someone you trust alongside you can make all the difference.



STEP FOUR: GET SUPPORT



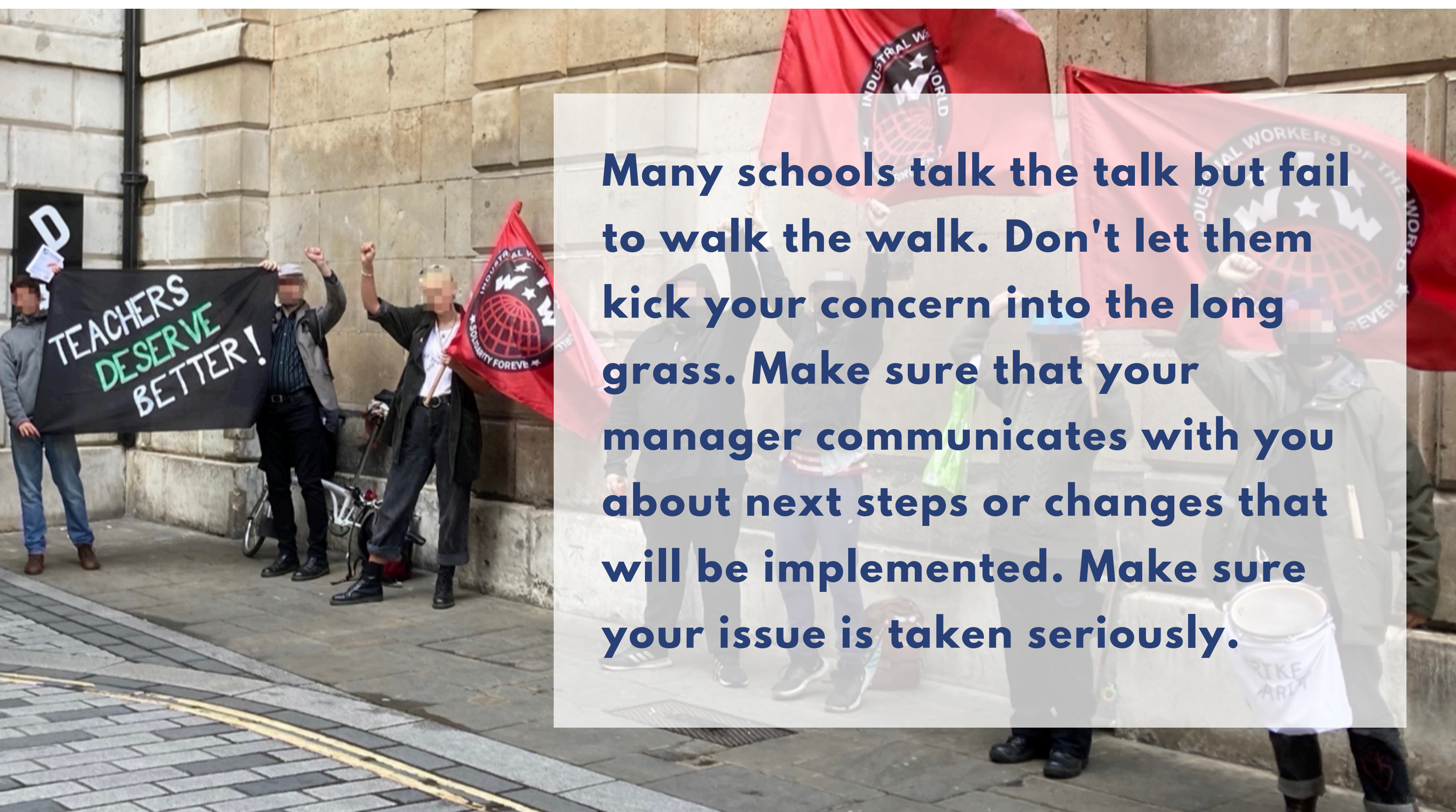
Collect all your relevant documents (contract, handbook, etc.) and contact the union. A rep can walk you through next steps, whether that's an email to your manager, a grievance, or a group petition.

STEP FIVE: RAISE THE ISSUE

Whatever you decide on for your next step, it's important to go in with a plan. Do you have someone who can join you in meetings? What happens if management says no or never responds?



STEP SIX: FOLLOW UP



Many schools talk the talk but fail to walk the walk. Don't let them kick your concern into the long grass. Make sure that your manager communicates with you about next steps or changes that will be implemented. Make sure your issue is taken seriously.

SUCCESS STORY!

“ The IWW have been a massive help in me reclaiming my unlawful fine from my previous employer. Getting into this conflict with employers I thought I had a fair relationship with is very uncomfortable and upsetting, but the IWW took the brunt of the conversation out of my hands and secured the payment I never thought I'd see, for which I'm massively thankful.



VICTORY!

“ My rep prepared a letter within 24 hours of me contacting them & followed up with a phone call a few days later to the school when they attempted to ghost us. This level of efficiency & professionalism is what helped to achieve a positive outcome.



“ My rep made the process feel so easy. I'm so relieved. It was over, without any hassle. Just after one letter.

We are here to improve conditions across the ELT industry.

We support ELT workers to fight for secure contracts, wages that allow us to get a mortgage or start a family, and to make sure we have a voice on the job.

We offer training on everything from how to raise issues with the boss to specific legal issues: redundancy processes, zero-hours contracts, an introduction to disciplinary and grievance processes.

Don't hesitate to reach out if you'd like to arrange a session for you and your workmates or to discuss an issue at work. For more information check out our website or drop us an email.

We've got your back.



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