

# NUT Wrekin News

A Newsletter from The Wrekin Division of the National Union of Teachers

Summer2000

## **Conference Report**

Members will already be aware of the main items of business at Conference through the insert in the recent issue of "The teacher".

This is a delegate's eye view of the two issues that drew most publicity, most of it adverse.

### Estelle Morris

Regular delegates at NUT Conference have, in the past few years, become increasingly frustrated by the number of outside speakers who have used up much valuable debating time when the Union should be deciding on matters of its own policy. This year, to show their disapproval, some delegates left the hall whenever an outside speaker came to the podium, not, of course, your Wrekin delegates, even though they felt equal frustration at the loss of business time.

The small amount of heckling of Estelle Morris was very largely stage-managed by the politician herself by making statements that were bound to provoke a reaction. Her most outrageous point was to state that before the introduction of the literacy hour, the majority of 11 year olds left primary school unable to read or write.

### Performance Related Pay and the Strike Ballot

The debate on this issue was piecemeal, being spread over three days, being delayed and interrupted by the arrival of outside speakers. Members will be aware of the decision made at Conference and the subsequent about-turn by the General Secretary and the National Executive.

Making a decision on which way to vote on the ballot question was very difficult for the Wrekin delegates who wanted to reflect what local members would wish. However, the low response rate to the national survey and even lower response to our own local questionnaire meant we did not have sufficient information on the views of the majority. At the end of the day, the Wrekin delegates decided that members should at least be given the opportunity to make a choice and so voted in favour of the strike ballot.

The lesson to be learned from this is that all members should do their utmost to reply to surveys and make their views known. We appreciate the demands already placed on your time and, at a local level, we shall strive to make any survey we carry out as simple as possible to complete, with the minimum of time and effort on your part.

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## Threshold Assessment

Arrangements are in preparation to ensure that advice and support is provided to members whose applications to cross the threshold are refused and, in particular where there are potential grievances.

The Executive agreed that the Action Sub-Committee should have referred to it cases of disputes of a collective nature regarding threshold assessment arising in individual schools, which cannot be resolved by negotiation and the intervention of the regional office.

## TBF

Having recently attended a Conference on Teacher Stress and the work of Teacherline, Terry Davies will give a presentation on this at a meeting early in the Autumn term.

## School Year

**The NUT is opposed to any proposals to shorten the summer break and has pledged to fight any such changes.**

## Palace award

We were very proud that our President was invited to the Palace in recognition of her achievements in teaching. You may have seen her picture in the "Teacher" although the article was not accurate. The whole staff of **Malinslee School** did not attend, but were nevertheless very proud of Lisa.

## Thanks

Thank you all for your support and hard work over the year. Have a well-earned restful Summer Break.

## Dates for your Diary

Friday July 7<sup>th</sup> a **Treasure Hunt**. To start in Telford.

Please phone for details.

