

# NUT Wrekin News

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

Summer 2007

## Conference 2007

Conference this year was in Harrogate. The Wrekin Division sent its full delegation of four teachers. Baljeet Ghale is our President for 2007/08 and she is the first black president in the NUT's history.

### Every Teacher Matters

There was an excellent motion on stress and mental health, and we have invited the proposer of the motion, John Illingworth from Nottingham, to a Division meeting in June - provisional date JUNE 28<sup>th</sup>. John talked about an educational reign of terror under this government, with Ofsted, excessive planning, monitoring and bullying managers, leading to increased stress and illness amongst teachers. As John pointed out, if every child matters, so does every teacher!

### Salaries

Delegates voted to discuss a priority motion which was brought to Conference by the national leadership of the NUT over public sector pay. Conference rejected the government's 2% pay target for teachers and other public sector workers (inflation is currently 4.6%). Conference called for co-operation with the largest possible coalition of other teacher organisations and public sector unions, as a first step in a campaign of action to protect our pay. Conference condemned cuts in real pay and called for public sector pay to be competitive with the private sector.

The motion opposed regional pay and rejected the 2% pay offer called for a joint campaign with other TUC public sector unions. It also called for a national campaign including action if necessary.

### EDUCATION

There was unanimous support for motions against excessive lesson observations and teacher monitoring. There was also unanimous support for a motion against Building Schools for the Future - the privatisation and segregation of student agendas and condemnation of the Academy programme. A motion was also passed on streamlining the support available for members facing unacceptable pupil behaviour;

## Other motions included

- campaigning against excessive workload, unacceptable working hours and for an improvement in work/life balance;
- relaunching the campaign on the entitlement of all children to be taught by qualified teachers;
- demanding that supply teachers be properly paid a daily rate of 1/195th the rate of permanent teachers;
- achieving the removal of false allegations from teachers' personal records;
- pressing the demands of young teachers for competitive pay and affordable housing;
- promoting the development of curricula on climate change and sustainable development;
- calling for an independent review of Government policies on SEN pupils;
- continuing the Union's campaign against SATs and league tables in England;
- promoting the Union's charter for Black Caribbean boys, "Born To Be Great";
- opposing the employment in schools of members of racist and fascist organisations;
- establishing a Political Fund in order to enable the Union explicitly to campaign against candidates standing for the BNP or other racist and fascist parties or platforms;
- pursuing the need for a common foundation stage class-size policy;
- demanding a classroom temperature acceptability limit, at 26°C;
- pressing for more qualified teachers in Children's Centres;
- addressing the impact of OFSTED/ESTYN and the need for alternative inspection and evaluation methods;
- establishing professional unity through the creation of a single democratic and campaigning union; and
- providing solidarity with teachers' organisations in the Middle East and across the World.

## LOCAL ISSUES

### Excellence Day - AGAIN!

After being promised that it would NEVER happen again we were appalled to be told it had been awarded for yet another year. We intend to have a massive campaign including proposals to send in a huge amount of grievance procedures to the Authority from teachers

#### LOOK OUT FOR DETAILS IN SCHOOL

Did you know a token amount of compensation money was given to schools last year? What was it spent on in your school? Please let us know.

### Workload

**We are now in a position to make a real difference. The NUT is prepared to act to defend its members, in individual schools, over abuses in relation to the 1265 hours, after school meetings, planning, PPA time, lesson observations, work-life balance, Ofsted, and other issues.**

**Contact us if you or members at your school feel that the demands being made upon you are unreasonable.**

### Redundancies

Unfortunately there have been more teacher redundancies announced this year. We have been responding to these and supporting members and will continue to do so. There has also been an increase in the employment of support staff. We continue to hold the view that unqualified staff should not replace teachers.

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### Academies

We continue to work with our colleagues from Regional Office and our colleagues in the other Unions on the terms and conditions for the teachers in the proposed Academies.

#### Why we Oppose Academies

They threaten teachers' salaries and conditions of service.

They threaten your right to be represented by a trade union.

They threaten the local authority's ability to run a fair school's admissions policy.

They threaten the principle of a broad and balanced curriculum.

They threaten the local democratic accountability of schools – Academies are independent schools run not by the LEA but by private sponsors.

### Performance Management

The NUT model policy is now in schools. Each governing body is required to adopt a performance management policy by agreement with

**“the recognised trade unions, having regard to the consultation with all teachers.”**

The NUT's model policy has been carefully developed to meet the needs of schools, promote the interests of teachers and secure sound relationships within an effective, fair and enabling framework.

It is designed to enhance the morale and motivation of teachers.

It is focused on

- Entitlement to professional development according to identified needs.
- Encourage the development of confident and professional judgement by teachers.
- Enhance the involvement and participation of teachers in decision-making.
- Be manageable and free from unnecessary bureaucratic burdens.
- Establish an atmosphere of trust between teachers, reviewers and the head teachers.