

## PRESIDENTIAL RUMINATIONS ON CONFERENCE '08

It's been a few years since I was last at Annual Conference, and I must say we do things a lot better these days. Factionalism and confrontation, however passionate and well-intentioned, is out - replaced by a strong sense of everyone pulling in the same direction. That doesn't mean that we all thought and acted like clones. The NUT is rightly proud of its dedication to educational matters such as inclusion, international issues and the like. Get any group of intelligent, well-informed people together discussing topics like these and you'll get differences of opinion, often forcefully expressed - and rightly so. But on the main 'trade union' issues facing us - pay, conditions of service, workload and the like - there was remarkable unity of thought and purpose.

As often occurs there were a few moments both heart-warming and heart-stopping. It was good to hear inspiring words from former General Secretary Fred Jarvis, 80-odd years young and still going strong. It was devastating to listen to a delegate whose child had been murdered at the end of a spiral of decline following exclusion, and to another orphaned as a result of a back-street abortion, both stories simply and powerfully told.

Conference was chaired ably and with great good humour by new President Bill Greenshields, and both he and General Secretary Steve Sinnott presented us with a picture of a Union in good heart, with rising membership, secure finances and a clear view of our way ahead. We may have been disappointed with the unrepresentative nature of our own delegation - white, male, mostly secondary, several far too close to retirement - but it was encouraging to see plenty of young colleagues playing an active role at Conference. We were sent back to our local associations with some big challenges - to make a success of the pay campaign, and to start to make real inroads into problems of workload and class size. But a final word of caution - don't believe everything you read in the papers - and that includes the Guardian's patronising twaddle. (Were all their education correspondents NASUWT members?) If I read one more article about our debate on faith schools - which NEVER TOOK PLACE because we ran out of time - I shall give up newspapers for good!

Mike Davis—President

### Common Assessment Framework Review

Last issue we reported that the local authority had drawn up a CAF Memorandum of Understanding and Protocol to address inconsistencies in the implementation of a multi-agency approach. Responding to concerns that school staff currently shoulder a hugely disproportionate burden to act as lead professional, Jo Davidson has stated that the new protocol agrees that every organisation will play its part and this will be monitored to ensure it redresses the balance. She emphasised that CAF must not be used as an alternative to Child Protection when significant concerns arise as this poses an unacceptable risk and asked that everybody be vigilant about this.

## GLOUCESTERSHIRE ASSOCIATION NUT CONTACTS

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Members can make contact with all the Officers  
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Know someone who wants to join? 0845 300 1669

National Union's website: [www.teachers.org.uk](http://www.teachers.org.uk)

Local Association website: [www.glosnut.co.uk](http://www.glosnut.co.uk)

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MEMBERS ARTICLES/LETTERS WELCOMED



NEWSLETTER OF THE GLOUCESTERSHIRE ASSOCIATION OF THE NATIONAL UNION OF TEACHERS ~ MAY 2008

# GENERAL MEETING

7.15pm Thursday 12th June 2008

University of Gloucestershire—Oxstalls Campus

The meeting will consider a motion for the establishment of an Industrial Action Hardship Fund

Can't make the meeting? Then let us know your views via [www.glosnut.co.uk](http://www.glosnut.co.uk)

## Report from Divisional Secretary—Andy Johnson

### Pay Campaign

A big THANKYOU to all school reps and members who helped make the day of action a big success. The march and rally in Bristol on the 24<sup>th</sup> April was attended by an estimated 3000 teachers.



We were blessed with fine weather. It was great to meet members from primary and secondary Gloucestershire schools.

The Union is calling on members to continue the campaign by:-

- Writing to your MPs using the electronic lobbying facility on the website;
- Going to see your MPs at constituency surgeries;
- Raising the Union's campaign with local councillors;
- Signing forthcoming petitions and getting colleagues in other unions to sign as well;
- Publicising the TUC's lobby of Parliament being held on Monday 9<sup>th</sup> June—if you want to attend, let us know
- Discussing pay and workload with colleagues
- Writing to local papers and keeping the issue in the news

Go to local union meetings and let the union know your views!!!

Interestingly, in the days before the strike the Union was inundated with applications for membership.

Should the Executive decide to call for further strike action another ballot will be needed.

### Early Years and Children's Centres

The allocation process is now in full swing making this an anxious time for many of the staff involved. Most of the senior LA officers overseeing the process do not come from teaching backgrounds and seem unaware of school holiday dates which has already led to problems.

I remain concerned that the new centres will have a reduced teaching staff (this is a cost-saving, teachers are expensive) compared to the Early Years' Centres from which they have been derived.

On the plus side, there will be areas of the county with Children's Centres where there have not previously been Early Years or Opportunity Centres.

### Workforce agreement monitoring

A Local Authority working group exists to monitor workforce reform including issues such as work load. At its last meeting the following matters were raised:

- Continuing problems with providing PPA time;
- Workload of head teachers who have a teaching commitment particular those in smaller primary schools;
- Misuse of TAs instead of HLTAs for covering teachers' PPA time;
- Extended services in schools and the implications for staff;
- Implementation of performance management

If you have any issues you'd like raised in this forum let me know. You can write to me at [nut.gloucester@btconnect.com](mailto:nut.gloucester@btconnect.com).

### Procedures for Centrally Employed Teachers

Procedures for issues such as conduct, capability, attendance and grievance are being re-drafted by the Authority. The Authority's intention is to have the same procedures for all its staff (except the Directorate).

The joint teacher union response, agreed by NUT, ATL, and NASUWT, was that all teachers, whether centrally employed or school based, should have the same conditions of service. It was pointed out that the Authority has no option over teachers' pay and conditions and performance management as these matters are imposed by statute. Additionally, the Burgundy Book agreements bind the Authority over matters such as notice periods, maternity leave and sick leave. To have different procedures for school vs centrally employed staff has no basis in logic.

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## Report on A.G.M. – Guest Speaker: National President, Bill Greenshields 5<sup>th</sup> AGM of the Glos.Assoc. of the N.U.T.

The 5<sup>th</sup> AGM of the Association took place in Cheltenham on the 5<sup>th</sup> March and was well attended by members and officers who were addressed by the incoming President of the National Union, Bill Greenshields.

Bill spoke eloquently about the main issues facing teachers linking the pay campaign to the threat posed by the Government's policy of delegating negotiation of conditions of service to school level through the programme of Academies, Trust Schools and Specialist Schools. Saying we must "draw a line in the sand" he warned that the pay campaign is a fight we need to win if we are to face the challenges ahead from a position of strength.



Quoting a Chinese word for crisis he said that it meant both danger and opportunity and the current confusion about the direction of the curriculum also represented an opportunity for the NUT to use its resources to influence change positively. It is imperative that Government policy draw on the experience and expertise of teachers if standards of education are to be maintained and improved.



The new Gloucestershire President, Mike Davis, was installed by outgoing President Geoff Davies. Mike promised to focus on ensuring that the network of local district officers was as effective as possible in delivering the best possible service to members.

### Schools Employment Handbook:

The old system of schools maintaining hard copies of the various national and local legal agreements for teacher's conditions of service is being replaced by a digital version that can be accessed over the internet. As the digital data is on subscription it cannot be made freely available - only to schools that buy into the school extranet service. All schools were sent a link to the site by the LA (which can be added to the favourites folder for convenience) and have a code for access. It cannot be accessed outside of schools. The NUT have asked the LA to make access easier for teachers to access but in the meantime ask the school secretary for details or go to the NUT local or national web-sites for detailed explanations of policies and advice on conditions of service.



### DATES FOR YOUR DIARY... Association General Meetings for 2008/9

12<sup>th</sup> June  
13<sup>th</sup> November  
22<sup>nd</sup> January  
11<sup>th</sup> March (AGM)  
University of Gloucestershire,  
Oxstalls Campus, Gloucester  
7:15 p.m. to 8:30 p.m.

### 14-19:

Some of the 17 new diplomas will be in 5 areas of the LA from 2010 although most have sought approval for only one or two at present. I registered our concern that the logistics for timetabling and pastoral responsibility have not been resolved and was told that consortia can make their own arrangements for dealing with this but at the moment they were only approved to offer one or two diplomas which would assist in phasing in the arrangements. Regulations concerning the qualified status necessary to teach these 14+ students are under review so it was hoped the anomaly of FE lecturers not being QTS would be resolved. Concern about training for teachers delivering these new diplomas has been much in the news later despite the hard work of local partnerships in trying to make this happen, once again the government is expecting schools and teachers to do miracles in short time spans and with insufficient resources.

## Making Good Progress?

Are you teaching at one of the fifty or so Gloucestershire schools taking part in a national DCFS pilot scheme called 'Making Good Progress'? If so, we need your feedback. With the introduction of school level progress targets another layer of target-setting and bureaucracy is being created as teachers are required to develop, set and monitor the progression targets in pilot schools.

The NUT has campaigned long and hard for the removal of SATS but anecdotal evidence from some schools involved in the pilot nationally suggests that the pilot scheme includes elements that make it even worse than SATS with children being tested at every single level rather than at the end of each Key Stage as at present. The pilot, according to the DCFS, will involve 'extra activity' for schools. Local authorities were advised by the DCFS to ensure that schools have consulted with teachers (not just school leaders), making them aware of the extra activity which will be expected of them before agreeing to take part in the pilot. Did this happen in your school?

To assist your local NUT officers in consulting with the LA we need to monitor the extra workload implications of the scheme e.g. to what extent are teachers in the pilot schools facing additional workload issues relating to the extra planning involved in working with the teachers giving additional one-to-one support for individual pupils. Although teachers with such pupils will already be planning for their individual requirements, additional time will be required to meet with the one-to-one tuition teacher to discuss progress, planning and target-setting. These meetings should take place regularly and be within teachers' designated working time.

Below is a checklist for use in considering whether the progress tests will bring additional bureaucratic burdens:

- whether teaching staff consider that the tests will bring educational benefits;
- whether implementation is consistent with existing school policies and practice on assessment;
- whether the existing responsibilities allocated to teachers can be replaced by identified time for implementing the tests.

For schools, there may also be additional cost implications especially for the offer of additional one-to-one tuition for targeted low-attaining pupils. The pilot should fund "10 one-hour sessions of individual tuition in Maths and/or English for pupils who started the key stage below the national expectations and who are still making poor progress". Schools in the pilot scheme should be monitored to ensure that additional costs for the pilot are not being sourced from other areas of school budgets. Are you able to confirm that this is the case at your school?

The provision of extra tuition, according to the DCFS, must be delivered by qualified teachers. While this is welcomed by the NUT there are concerns that the deployment of a teacher will be costly and that the level of funding for the pilot may not be sufficient to employ the kind of qualified and experienced teacher who will be able to work best with the pupils who most require additional support.

The additional pupils tests between Key Stages will be externally marked. This is welcomed by the NUT in terms of workload but there will be additional costs for marking. These costs should be met by the funding for the pilot but there may be ongoing cost issues once the pilot is completed and schools are expected to continue offering the same provision.

At a meeting with the LA I asked a number of questions raising concerns about workload and costs as follows:

- Are current costs fully funded by pilot funds (Yes)
- Even if teachers say they are happy with the extra workload this is still not acceptable in the light of the workforce reform legislation - could they sample test rather than put everybody through these single level tests (Agreed)
- Can cost of individual tuition programmes be maintained (Agree this is an issue but money saved on SATS should be available)
- Can data be manipulated to gain premium bonuses at expense of stress on teachers and other schools (Agree that this could be a problem and would prefer premium bonuses to be left out of roll out)
- Are there enough qualified teachers for tuition (There are problems here)

There are benefits to the replacement of SATS with teacher judgement if the testing is not too bureaucratic but we must ensure we monitor the workload and cost implications in order to lobby effectively for the final scheme to take into account our concerns - both for teachers and for the over-testing of our students. Please contact John Pemberthy with any information on how the pilot is operating in your school (contact details on back page).