

## ACADEMIES AND THE NATIONAL CHALLENGE

The N.U.T. has a long-standing opposition to selection in schools believing that every child deserves a good local school that can deliver a first class education to a wide range of abilities and talents. No child should be left behind. Whilst the government claims to be able to provide this through offering choice and diversity, we believe that selective schools, whether grammar, academy or Trust, disadvantage the most vulnerable in our communities.

In Gloucestershire, as elsewhere in the U.K., the government is putting pressure on local authorities to encourage the private sponsorship of schools through the academy and Trust school programme. Further pressure has been added by insisting that the so-called 'failing schools' (with less than 30% A\*-C including Maths and English) either improve within 3 years or be replaced with academies. This takes no account of the fact that schools deal with a variety of local circumstances, for example in Gloucestershire the schools named are in competition with grammar schools and work hard to achieve their results with the intake and resources available.

By asking local authorities to become commissioners of schools rather than providers, the door is being opened for a significant increase in publicly funded but privately run schools.

The N.U.T. along with most other teachers' unions believes that this is wrong. The money spent on academies is often diverted from the Building Schools For The Future funding which means that Gloucestershire schools will have to wait many more years before seeing this new injection of capital for essential building work.

The academy and Trust schools are allowed to set their own selection criteria which will potentially aggravate the local situation where grammar schools distort the provision of education leaving other schools to suffer the consequences – often at the expense of those less articulate and unable to exercise true freedom of choice.

Please lobby your M.P. or councillor and speak out against this privatisation of our education service. Most of the benefits of partnership can be achieved without this 'giveaway' of public assets to private interests.

## Schools Employment Handbook:

Following representations from the N.U.T., the local authority have agreed to place a digital copy of the School Teachers Pay and Conditions Document on a website for which we will be given a password which we will pass to members via this newsletter so anybody can access it freely. The authority will keep it updated and it will be a valuable resource for members to check their statutory terms and conditions of service. A link from our own web-site will also be made available.



# GLOUCESTERSHIRE ASSOCIATION NUT CONTACTS

If your District isn't listed then contact the  
Association Secretary.  
Members can make contact with all the Officers  
listed below through the Association's website

### Gloucestershire Association Divisional Secretary:

Andy Johnson: 01285 655 022  
nut.gloucester@btconnect.com

### Gloucestershire Association Deputy Divisional Secretary:

John Pemberthy: 01594 564 508  
jpemberthy@glosnut.co.uk

### Cirencester District Secretary:

Dave Sutherland: 01285 654 416

### Cheltenham District Secretary:

Ian Morgan: 01242 578 793

### Forest of Dean District Secretary:

Geoff Davies: 01594 544 036

### Gloucester District Secretary:

Garry Wheeler: 01452 531 342

### Newent District Secretary:

John Pemberthy: 01594 564 508

### Stroud District Secretary:

Mike Davis: 01453 883 995

### Health and Safety Adviser:

Colin O'Hare: 01285 653 695

### Union Learning Representatives:

Garry Wheeler: 01452 531 342

garrywheeler@blueyonder.co.uk

and

John Pemberthy: 01594 564 508

jpemberthy@glosnut.co.uk

### Supply Teachers' Secretary:

Claire Price: 01242 244 582

### Retired Teachers' Secretary:

Pearl Harris-Clarke: 01452 616 620

### Young Teachers' Secretary:

Dave Hampson: 01531 820 550

dhampson@newent.glos.sch.uk

### National Executive member:

Max Hyde 01217 453 942

max@piscator.demon.co.uk

### Regional Office in Exeter: 01392 258 028

south.west@nut.org.uk

### Update your membership: 0845 300 1666

### 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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Gloucestershire NUT Association

Secretary: Andy Johnson Tel: 01285 655022

Email: [secretary@gloucestershire.nut.org.uk](mailto:secretary@gloucestershire.nut.org.uk)

Editor: John Pemberthy Tel: 01594 564508

MEMBERS ARTICLES/LETTERS WELCOMED



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

# GENERAL MEETING

Guest Speaker—Christine Blower, Acting General Secretary

Thursday 13th November 2008

University of Gloucestershire, Oxstalls Campus, Gloucester

7:15 pm to 8:30 pm

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

To all those members who have just started working in Gloucestershire, whether as new or experienced teachers, welcome. Take a moment to find out whether there's an NUT representative where you work and if there is, say hallo. If there isn't get in touch with us and we'll provide you with a local contact. You can do that through [www.glosnut.co.uk](http://www.glosnut.co.uk).



To all our other members returning from an all too short holiday, welcome back! Please take a few moments to invite new teaching colleagues to join you in the NUT. Don't assume your NUT Rep will have the chance to welcome all your new colleagues. After all, it is your union - the best and largest teaching union in Gloucestershire!! The main reason teachers give for not joining a union is no-one ever asked them.

The local branch has a proven track record for providing support for members, not just with pay, conditions of service, or professional difficulties, but also with training and professional development. And we don't ignore student teachers – they have been provided with a free DVD each, giving guidance and training in behaviour management.

The Union runs courses both locally and nationally for teachers at all stages of their careers.

Yet for all the joy and privilege that comes from being a teacher, sometimes it feels as though we are working against the odds. At every turn it feels as though the government is creating more work for us and making our working lives more difficult.

Teachers know that the most important factor in education is building good working relationships with the children they teach. Get that right and everything else follows. Yet successive governments have ignored the importance of class size and instead focussed on testing, league tables and Ofsted. Their remedy for a school in difficulty: turn it into a foundation school, a trust school, a faith school or an academy when a simpler solution would be to reduce class sizes.

SATS results, GCSE results, AS and A level results are used to measure the success or failure of a school. For individual teachers pay, promotion prospects and even job security can depend upon those results. Is it any wonder then that teachers teach to the test?

The government defends SATs and league tables on the grounds that they provide parents with important information to help them choose the school for their child, disregarding the distortions to the curriculum and the damage caused to many children's education as a consequence.

In a rural county like Gloucestershire, where most parents have a limited choice about which school their child will go to, all they really want is a good local school for every child.

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**FAIR PAY FOR SCHOOLS!  
FAIR PAY FOR TEACHERS!  
FAIR PLAY FOR CHILDREN!**

**The Pay Campaign Continues...**

**What is the current situation?**

The Secretary of State has confirmed that he intends to proceed with the overall 2.45 per cent pay increase from 1 September 2008; however, following the NUT campaign for a review of the 3 year pay offer he has confirmed that there will be a review of the indicative pay awards of 2.3 per cent for September 2009 and September 2010. The NUT have decided to ballot our members for further discontinuous strike action to persuade the Government to increase the current offer to the level of inflation. Ballot papers will be distributed in the coming weeks. It is important that you vote to make sure that the result is an accurate reflection of how the membership perceives this campaign.

**Why are we being asked to strike again?**

The NUT strike on 24<sup>th</sup> April raised public awareness of the problems inflation was causing teachers whilst the NUT's involvement in the successful TUC lobby of Parliament on 9<sup>th</sup> June has brought the issue to MPs and the Government. Strike action is always a last resort for teachers - but we have tried every other avenue and the Government won't listen. Our campaign is important not only for teachers but for education as a whole - the alternative is a return to teacher shortages and classes without teachers.

Every year since 2005 teachers' pay has been eroded by lower-than-inflation pay increases. The 2008 teachers' national pay increase of 2.45% is far below the Retail Price Index (RPI) of around 5%. In real terms, teachers will again be worse off. If you are an NQT, inflation has cut the value of starting pay for September 2008 by £1,000 per year. For those on UPS3, inflation has cut the value of your September 2008 pay increase by £1,600 - by 2009 you will have lost £4,000 and rising.

The average teacher's pay will not provide a mortgage for the average house price in over 75% of our towns.

**What can you do?**

It is important that we work together - there is strength in unity!

Make sure you return your ballot whether you support strike action or not

- Write to your MP using the email lobbying facility at [www.teachers.org.uk/fairpay](http://www.teachers.org.uk/fairpay)
  - See your local MP or councillor at their surgeries
  - Sign the NUT petition and make sure your colleagues at school do the same
  - Make sure that teachers' pay and workload are live discussions in your staffroom and community
- Get involved in the NUT and in local meetings and campaigning

Acting General Secretary, Christine Blower says "Excessive workload and the erosion of teachers' pay are issues which affect every teacher and can unite the teaching profession. The NUT is ready to work with those who recognise this and want to do something about it."

**What about teachers' workload?**

Following a study into teachers' working hours by Price Waterhouse Cooper in 2001, the Government began negotiations with teachers' unions and local authorities with the aim of restructuring the teaching workforce. This process, known as remodelling, aimed at reconfiguring teachers' work and remuneration to focus teachers' efforts on the core task of teaching and learning by doing away with bureaucratic tasks or those which do not require the specialised skills of a qualified teacher. The removal of the requirement to cover for absent colleagues by September 2009 is the latest attempt to support this aim.

The TES reported on August 29 that a poll of 3,453 teachers showed that the workload deal is being ignored and teachers are no better off whilst some claim that the deal has increased their workload.

The NUT has commissioned the Faculty of Education at Cambridge University to compile a series of reports on teachers' working lives - the latest of which was published in March 2008. It concludes that "Demands on teachers have increased beyond their capacity to meet them." A major cause of additional work and stress is pupil behaviour and classroom disruption caused partly by "pressures emanating from the performance culture" and also from poor parenting and the inclusion of children with learning difficulties without adequate resourcing.

**What can we do?**

The NUT has always believed that schools learn and change from the bottom up. The recent report states that

*"the survival of the educational system will depend on the mantra of distributed leadership becoming a reality as teachers themselves, collectively, set the agenda and see themselves not only as leaders of children's learning but as contributing to, and learning from, their colleagues. The time afforded to them through a better resourced and intelligently remodelled working week... [will] also raise standards in a more meaningful sense than that currently espoused by impatient government ministers."*

*Most teachers accept that the demands of the twenty-first century require that they change their practice. They are happy to accept guidance on the general principles that should govern their teaching. But once inside the classroom, only teachers have that expertise, born out of their daily experience, to determine how best to put such principles into practice."*

The NUT wants a proper work life balance for every teacher - indeed it is the statutory duty of every Head teacher to safeguard this. The NUT workload campaign is a nationally supported campaign alongside the pay campaign. Working together we can secure a better future for teachers and students. In Gloucestershire I will be meeting with the Cabinet Member for the Children' and Young People's Directorate in September to ask what the Local Authority can do to ensure that local schools are meeting their statutory obligations on workload.



Enclosed with this newsletter is a brief questionnaire about the impact of workload at your school. Please take a moment to complete it and send it back to us. This will be a great help in our local negotiations for improvements.

**Making Good Progress?**

Thank you to those who responded to my call for feedback from those schools involved in the pilot. I am working closely with the local authority and the national office of the N.U.T. to make sure we can influence the government to make the necessary changes to this programme.

Our research shows

- teachers in pilot schools were often not consulted or properly trained prior to implementation despite DCSF guidelines
- There are significant concerns about extra workload
- The pilot is being rolled out to dozens more schools in Glos.

Please continue to contact John Pemberthy with feedback about this pilot in your school. We need this information to guide our response. (contact details on back page)

**PAID TIME OFF TO ATTEND LOCAL UNION TRAINING**

The term school rep covers those who simply open the post and maintain the flow of information to members to those who actively recruit new members and a few who play an active part in supporting their members through difficult times. Whichever category you fall into your work is very much appreciated. To help you play this important role in the work of your union we provide an annual training course at Hucclecote with paid time off to attend.

As a school rep you have a statutory right to attend and we can assist with negotiating this with your senior management if necessary. This year we are having a two tier training opportunity with a new course for those who are more experienced and have attended in previous years. Please contact Andy Johnson or John Pemberthy if you would like details and to obtain forms for claiming paid time off on behalf of your school.

The dates are:

December 12<sup>th</sup> 2008 for new reps and those attending for the first time.

February 13<sup>th</sup> 2009 for those wishing to attend advanced level training