

STAND UP FOR EDUCATION STAND UP FOR TEACHERS CAMPAIGN

We are rapidly approaching a **General Election** which will be crucial for the future of education, schools, children and teachers. Teachers will be looking for a change, they will not fall prey to the trendy ‘politicians are all the same, only in it for the money, no difference between parties, don’t bother to vote nonsense’; **the stakes are too high** for that.

NUT has no plans for further strike action before the election but there will be **campaigning** in key marginals, widespread promotion of the, increasingly well received, NUT **Manifesto for Education** including a new petition both online and hard copy.

There will be further **joint initiatives** on workload with other Unions and the seeking of meetings with the main political parties. Cooperation with academics and other like minded campaigning groups will present a critique of current systems and present alternatives.

There will be further **‘Education Question Times’** around the country and **leafleting** and **street stalls** will spread our manifesto further.

Individual members should **lobby** MPs and candidates with specific questions based on the manifesto and remember, you are trained, graduate professional teachers you have a right to have your specialist worries heard and questions answered. Demand that the **pernicious system** which allows unqualified people to act as teachers in Free Schools and Academies be ended and the right for all children to be taught by **qualified professional teachers** be ensured.

Stay close to your Union, read its publications, seek information, join in and help where you can and stand up for education and for your specialist role in its pursuit. **The current government has had a privatisation agenda for five years masquerading as education reform; you have a real education agenda.**

GOVERNMENT RESPONSE TO WORKLOAD CHALLENGE

The published response of the Government to the Workload Challenge has proved **disappointing** and five Teacher Organisations have sent a joint response to the Secretary of State and the Deputy Prime Minister. **ASCL, ATL, NAHT, NUT and Voice** have expressed continuing serious concern about teacher workload and its impact on teacher recruitment and retention.

There are **positive points** in the Governments response including recognition that workload is a real problem and a commitment to plan greater lead in times and consider workload issues more seriously before further changes are

introduced. Unfortunately many of the Joint Unions suggestions have **not been adopted** including the **central point** that the high stakes system of accountability in general and Ofsted in particular is driving unnecessary workload at unacceptable levels for teachers and for school leaders.

The Joint Unions will continue to press for an **external review** of the validity and reliability of Ofsted inspections and other key points such as additional non teaching days during the summer term, communication from HMCI around the need for teacher workload to be managed. A clear statement is also sought from the Secretary of State that **teacher time is a precious resource**, that average working hours are too high and that she wants them to decrease, preferably with a target for reduction.



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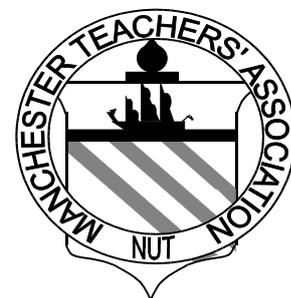
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The Unions will continue jointly to urge these points in the remainder of the talks process and beyond.

RETIRED TEACHERS SECTION

The annual Silent Auction which took place at the March meeting was a resounding success and thanks are due to all those who either made donations or purchases or both.

The next meeting will be on **Tuesday 7th April** when the talk will be of '**Folk, Fells and Fantastical Tales. Lake District Folk and Folklore**', something for us to look forward to.

Venue is the usual **Hough End Centre** 10.15am, all existing and new members welcome.

Here is advanced notice that the AGM of the Retired Section will be on **Tuesday 5th May** when some important decisions will be made.

ELECTION SUCCESS

In the recent election of National Deputy General Secretary 2015-2020 members will be pleased to note that the Manchester Teachers Association's nominated candidate **Kevin Courtney** polled more votes than the second and third candidates combined and was elected. The Association sends him best wishes that he will continue the service he has given in the last five years in these troubled times. Thanks are due to all members who took part in the democracy of the Union.

NATIONAL CONFERENCE

NUT National Conference this year will take place in Harrogate and Manchester Teachers Association will be represented by the following members:- John Morgan, Stephen Marciniak, Peggy Etchells, Greg Fox, Maria Noone, Glenn Feeny, Liam Duffy and Jay Barry who will attend in his capacity of National Executive Member. The best wishes and thanks of the Association go with them as they consider the important decisions to be made.

MORE FREE SCHOOLS

David Cameron's announcement that if elected a government led by him would introduce five hundred new Free Schools threatens to continue the nonsense of new schools opening in areas where they are not needed.

However, don't forget the deplorable fact that this would mean five hundred more schools where there is no requirement to employ only qualified professional teachers to provide teaching for our children. What do prospective candidates in your

constituency think of unqualified people acting as teachers in our schools?

CHILDCARE DISQUALIFICATION

The NUT's **legal challenge** on this matter has prompted significant improvements. The **revised guidance** now clarifies that:-

- In a school setting, only staff providing early years provision during school hours and those providing later years provision outside school hours fall within the scope of the Childcare Act.
- It is not necessary for schools to ask staff to complete a self-declaration form. They may use other, less intrusive means to determine whether a member of staff is or may be disqualified by association. (The full DfE response expands helpfully on this point).
- Employers should avoid asking for 'unrelated or spent conviction of household members'.

There is still some clarification needed such as the meaning of 'household' in relation to disqualification by association and **NUT will continue to press** for further clarification on this and other points and will shortly produce additional guidance.

BASELINE TESTING

The NUT is not alone in **opposing baseline testing** and in believing that there is a fundamental contradiction between the principles of early education and administering a formal assessment of four year olds as they enter school.

A **wide range** of organisations from professionals and academics to parents are coming together to challenge the Government's notion that a test of children as they start school is beneficial in any way. Further information is available on the Union's website.

H & S STRESS SURVEY

There is a new **health & safety** page on our website which includes a **teacher stress survey**, details at www.manchesternut.com

CORRECTION

As we approach the General Election, opponents of the Coalition Government may well consider it a '**sagging act**' but readers will have realised that on the third line of the article 'Campaign for Education' in the February 2015 issue it should have read '**Gagging Act**'. Apologies for any misunderstanding caused.



**The professional and responsible
union for all teachers**