

SEASON'S GREETINGS



Each year one of the pleasures as Christmas approaches is to share greetings with members, colleagues and friends of the Union. It is Advent once again and the time for the traditional wish that all have:-

'A Merry Christmas and a Happy New Year'.

TAKING STOCK

As we move into 2016 it is worth considering the issues facing schools and teachers and what the next year will bring. We still have ongoing problems, issues which continue to pose a threat to the future of the education of our children.

There is a **crisis of teacher recruitment**, not enough new teachers are being trained and this will mean larger classes, unqualified people in charge of classes and loss of certain curriculum subjects.

Teachers are faced with **pay restraints** and excessive **workload issues** often leading to **stress and illness**. Inappropriate **assessment** and testing methods are imposed by central government in the face of opposition by teachers. Central government's obsession with **privatisation** of our education system is leading to so-called Free Schools and the spread of academies. Locally, Parrs Wood High School is the latest Manchester school to seek academy status. The Government continues to seek the **de-professionalisation of teaching** leading to unqualified people taking the place of qualified professional teachers reducing teaching to just another job in schools. The **Trade Union Legislation** currently

going through Parliament is designed to prevent Unions being able to defend public education and the public sector in general. This might seem a bleak outlook, but NUT will continue its well received **Stand Up for Education** campaign and there will be further action.

Members should be ready to support their Union by responding to **ballots** by making sure they vote, for or against, and then support the resultant action. Always members should be **contacting their M.Ps** by email or letter, or visiting surgeries to express their worries, even directly to the Secretary for State for Education, and be **united** in supporting their Union in its **defence of education**.

NATIONAL EXECUTIVE ELECTION

In the New Year, elections for the NUT National Executive will take place. Member for Greater Manchester, Jay Barry, is stepping down as part of his wider retirement which is a loss but MTA has adopted General Secretary, **John Morgan**, as its candidate and all members are urged to support John in the coming election. As MTA can **nominate two candidates**, existing Executive member, **Nick Wigmore**, of Rochdale NUT, has been proposed and ballot papers are out to be returned by **14th December**. If you wish to support Nick as a second candidate don't forget to return your voting paper by 14th December.

Whatever happens please look out for ballot papers for the National Election which will be posted to each member in the Spring term. Please **ensure you vote** and defend Union democracy.

ELECTION RESULT

In this year's election for MTA Treasurer the result was as follows:-

Liam Duffy 161 votes

Chris Ayton 28 votes

Congratulations to Liam and thanks to all members who took part in the election and upheld the essential democratic process of the Association. Thanks are also

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due to **Jay Barry** who will retire as Treasurer in 2016. Jay has worked tirelessly in the interests of MTA and deserves the best wishes of the Association.

RETIRED TEACHERS SECTION

When you read this the Section will have enjoyed that annual highlight, the Christmas Lunch on 1st December at Hough End Centre.

The next meeting will be on **Tuesday 5th January 2016**. This will take the form of a new event which will be a

social occasion with a **buffet** to purchase on the day. Members are asked to bring a photograph or an object they would like to talk about with others if they wish, or just to share conversation at the beginning of the New Year. The Section is hoping this will be a success and with experience of the conviviality at any session it should be.

The normal series of talks resumes on Tuesday **2nd February** when **Mr Pennant Roberts** returns to share with us memories of his '**Misspent Youth in North Wales**'. Our Welsh members will no doubt be curious to see whether they recognise any of this 'spending'! New members always welcome.

GENERAL MEETING

The next General Meeting of MTA NUT will be the AGM on Wednesday **20th January 2016 at 5pm at Hough End Centre**, Mauldeth Road.

Refreshments will be available and the Association is arranging for a **speaker** on an education topic. Please try to attend and/or encourage a member from your school. General Meetings are important in the life of the Association and AGMs can be particularly so.

Details of the agenda will be in schools beforehand and we hope to see you there.

TEACHERS PENSIONS

NUT was unsuccessful in its opposition to the Government assault on Teachers Pensions which changed the scheme from a Final Salary scheme with defined benefits to the current Career Average scheme. However members should **stay in the TPS** scheme. All new teachers are automatically enrolled and will pay at least 7.6% of salary towards pension but the employer contributes 16.4%.

Recent Government changes have increased the contribution rate and the retirement age but the scheme, though reduced, is still the **most valuable**

'benefit' available to teachers. More information at www.teacherspensions.co.uk

A talk, on the recent pension changes, will take place at **Rack House Primary School**, Wythenshawe, at 3.50pm on **13th January 2016**. Details will be sent into schools shortly. Anyone wishing to attend should contact the MTA office.

A SIGN OF THE TIMES

Analysis of latest workforce statistics show a **dramatic drop** in the number of serving teachers **aged over fifty**. Anecdotal evidence and casework files suggest that increased workload pressures and excessive use of capability procedures have a significant impact on these figures.

These older teachers are experienced and well qualified in education, teaching, and often a specialised subject. They are often less compliant because of confidence in their work and can speak out with authority but they are comparatively expensive.

In some schools struggling with **funding problems** and facing central government requirements for a **centralised** and **marketised** service these can be significant factors to bring about the latest work force statistics. Any members facing such problems should contact John Morgan, General Secretary, at the MTA office early.

FRED AND ANNE JARVIS AWARD

This award is given annually to a person who has 'campaigned tirelessly on a national or local level on education issues which are broadly in support of the NUTs ethos and approach, and accord with the example and commitment shown by Fred and Anne Jarvis'.

Members are invited to nominate a non-NUT member for the 2016 award. Nominations close at **5.00pm** on Monday **11th January 2016**.

Further details can be found at

www.teachers.org.uk/fredandannejarvisaward

NUT BENEVOLENT FUND

NUT has set up a benevolent fund to provide **financial assistance** to members and their dependants who have fallen on hard times. This **replaces** previous connection with Teacher Support Network. Details on how to contribute to NUTBF and how to apply for a grant can be found on the NUT website www.teachers.org.uk



The professional and responsible union for all teachers