

STICK TOGETHER TO STOP TLR PAY CUTS

Together, we can win!

by Bill Greenshields, Derbyshire NUT Secretary, National Executive & National Vice-President nominee

YOU SHOULD NOW KNOW the detail of the Head's proposals for the transition from Management Allowances to "Teaching & Learning Responsibility" (TLR) payments at your school. These **MUST** now be the subject of "meaningful consultation" with all staff and Union Reps. If you have any concerns about...

- A lack of meaningful consultation
- A radically different staffing structure being imposed
- NUT members losing pay after the pay protection...

You **MUST** ensure you contact your Association Secretary or the Division Office and send us the proposals.

The National Executive and your Local Officers are absolutely clear. If any member is threatened with a pay cut, we will resist with the strongest action, on your request. This can include strike action, with no loss of earnings to you. We are already balloting for such action in Derbyshire schools.

Schools **do not** have to 'restructure' and disrupt teachers' and pupils' lives and the school as a whole. Governors can agree a "**no change/minimum change**" and "**no pay cut**" process. Most schools are doing so. Almost everyone would 'assimilate' to the next highest TLR from current Management Allowances, while a few people might need help in negotiating minor agreed changes to job descriptions to allow such assimilation. Where you **want** to see changes to the structure, this should be done by **gradually** introducing a shadow structure, with no loss of earnings – **NOT** by this short term 'quick fix' TLR system.

THERE SHOULD BE NO LOSERS. There is no need for pay cuts. Most schools are not making such cuts. Where they are threatened, we **can** prevent them, **if** we stick together!

This is the professional and practical way forward. It is affordable, achievable and desirable. It is happening in most schools - most Headteachers value their staff. If this is not the case in your school, we need to stick together – it's not a question of who is a "winner" and who a "loser" - though the Government cynically hopes that such ideas will divide us. But we all know that "**an injury to one is an injury to all**".

If we fail to stick together we will be inviting greater attacks on pay, probably aimed at **all** pastoral posts, SEN points etc, in the next "round", and even more in the future. We believe that the Government ultimately wants school by school, person by person **individualised** pay bargaining. **We must stop this now.**

We will support members with a ballot for strike action in every school where Governors, against all our professional arguments, insist on imposing pay cuts, and where members

request such a ballot.

You must first put **your** NUT group proposals, or opposition to "pay cut"

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proposals to Governors **IN WRITING**. We can assist with this.

But, alongside this, we would carry out an "indicative ballot" showing the strength of feeling of NUT members, and get the legal procedures underway for a formal ballot under TU law. **This may be enough to get the Headteacher & Governors to reconsider.**

But if they persisted in proposing pay cuts, and you wished to take the next step, make no mistake...we **will** ballot formally for "sustained, discontinuous" strike action. This means that we would compensate members **in full** for pay deducted as a result of strike action. We would organise such action as and when necessary and appropriate – **taking your advice every step of the way**. We will also help individual members threatened with pay cuts with 'grievance' and, if appropriate, an Employment Tribunal.

BUT the Union has to know exactly what's happening if we are to help. Don't suffer in silence! If there are any pay cuts threatened at your school please get in touch as soon as possible.

Together, we can win!

STICKING TOGETHER TO STOP PENSION CUTS

Together, we won!

You **will** know by now from the press and national NUT mailings that the determined position that the Union took together with all other teacher unions, and together with all other public sector unions has forced the Government to back down and withdraw all proposals to worsen pension arrangements for teachers currently in the Pensions Scheme.

I am very proud to have proposed the successful 'pensions action' motion on National Executive some months ago. This put us in the lead with the public sector unions.

The Government said that their "**work 'til you drop proposals**" to raise pension age to 65 were "**100% definite**" and "**non-negotiable**" – but following our united action, they have withdrawn them **totally** for all existing teachers.

This is the biggest climb down by Government in two decades, and demonstrates that when we genuinely stand together and mean what we say, we can win.

Though there is still much negotiating and campaigning to do to protect **future** generations of teachers, there is no doubt that the Government retreat shows that... **Together, we won**

Lesson Observations by fellow teachers: a delicate subject [and just what is the role of a subject co-ordinator?]

Lately the new breed of Ofsted inspections has led to a spate of observations by subject co-ordinators in primary schools, with written reports, as heads seek to demonstrate that they are monitoring and evaluating the school's development plan. How should this happen and who should do it?

Peer observation

'Peer observation' helps teachers hone their skills by getting the observations of colleagues. The process is mutually agreed and, as a general rule, discussion is confidential and the process voluntary. The NUT encourages "peer observation", as a means of improving one's skills. However, its effectiveness is highly dependent on the personal relations between the teachers involved.

Peer n 1. a member of the nobility 2. a person of equal rank vb 1. to look intently 2. to appear dimly.

A subject co-ordinator observation is likely to be different from and detract from 'peer observation' unless it is carefully handled.

What is the protocol for an observation?

Subject co-ordinator observations raise a number of problems, crucially what is being observed? If they are for school self-evaluation they should observe the implementation of the Development Plan. It follows that any report should focus on this, and avoid reference to other aspects of the lesson. If the observation or report goes wider than this, then the observed teacher is entitled to consider whether the observer has been trained for this role. A written report introduces Performance Management into the equation.

Subject co-ordinator or subject leader?

If the observation goes wider than this, then the observing teacher is entitled to consider whether they should be receiving a TLR for it. Subject leaders have some responsibility for the teaching of a subject; this is beyond the duties of a classroom teacher. In many schools the role of a co-ordinator has changed, usually without any reference to the job description. It has moved from writing the scheme of work, to auditing what is taught, to auditing the quality of learning or teaching, to leading the improvement in teaching quality. There is an argument for drawing up schemes of work as sharing work reduces workload. But auditing what is taught is an extension to this role. Auditing by observation is another matter altogether; is it possible to do this without assessing the performance of the teacher? **[We would be very interested to hear your views on this].**

In the meantime...

The boundary between observing the implementations of a curriculum development and reporting on the skills of a teacher is very narrow, and needs to be handled with delicacy. Unfortunately there will be some teachers who will enjoy the status of an observer and may not have the tact to go with it. The head must ensure that the procedure has been talked through, and that all staff are confident in the procedure. The teacher may be grateful for feedback on other aspects of the lesson, this should be voluntary and should not be recorded.

Further guidance

The NUT issued a pamphlet on classroom observations last March. It covers the wide variety of reasons for observations (performance management, curriculum audit, governors visits etc). It discusses what is reasonable regarding the number of observations and the essential features of good practice. It is found on the NUT website (www.teachers.org.uk), where a search for "classroom observations", will locate it.

Further guidance on peer observation can be found on the GTC website (www.gtc.org.uk), where there is a pamphlet jointly written with the NUT, "A Guide to Peer Observations", together with some follow up studies.

TEACHERS' RETIREMENT SEMINAR . . .

*Thinking of retirement?
Unsure you can afford it?*

*Worried about your pension?
Unclear about the effects of TLR's?*

Hear the answers to these, and other questions you may have, from our knowledgeable speakers including:

**Peter Wood, Financial Consultant, Teachers Group
The Chesterfield Hotel, Malkin Street, Chesterfield
Thursday 24th November 2005
5.00 pm – 6.30 pm
Refreshments available from 4.00 pm**

NB The seminar will be preceded by the Chesterfield and East Derbyshire Teachers' Association Meeting which you are invited to attend (4.30 pm – 5.00 pm).

PHONE THE DERBYSHIRE NUT OFFICE 01629 585086 TO LET US KNOW IF YOU CAN ATTEND - FOR CATERING PURPOSES

INFANT TEACHERS: ARE YOU WALKING TALL?

B*ad backs are endemic among infant teachers. Why? Bending over children to see their work.
Have you found a solution? If you have, please tell us, we really want to know.*

Solution 1 - Carry a teacher's chair or stool as you move from child to child

Problem

- Does the chair go low enough to get your knees under the table?
- Is it light enough to carry?
- Is there space to wheel it about the classroom?

Solution 2 - Sit on the child's chair

Problem

- Modern metal and plastic infant chairs are really not strong enough for adults.

Solution 3 - Provide children's chairs which are strong enough for adults

Problem

- More expensive in the short term, even if they last five times as long.

Solution 4 - Kneel on the floor

Solution 5 - Have a teacher chair and desk, which the children visit

Problem

- Frowned on as bad practice

Teachers should choose from a range of options, finding the best solution for them and their classroom. You may need more than one solution; eg a teacher's desk for some of the time and a librarian's kick stool for others. We want to put a list together, with prices and order details, making it easy for the school to find the best one. Remember you have rights (as well as a sore back).

Please write/e-mail/phone to say what you use.

STOP THAT NOISE

Easier said than done. Nevertheless it is this year's focus for the European Health and Safety Week.

For most work places noise is a health problem because it harms your hearing. For teachers it is usually a serious problem because it can harm your voice and cause stress.

Voice strain can come from repeatedly raising your voice: the warning signs include bouts of a sore throat; hoarseness; a loss of vocal range; discomfort when speaking. Do not assume that you simply have to put up with it as an occupational hazard. The problem may well start with poor acoustic design, or noise from machines or the kitchens. Noise generated by children has a cumulative effect, they shout to make themselves heard above the other noisy children. Noise at work, even at quite low levels, can be a factor in work-related stress. Teachers might be struggling to hear what children say.

What can be done?

Identify design faults; ask the H&S representative to focus on this in their next inspection. Raise the issue at staff meetings. We know that there is never money available for building repair, but it is cheaper than staff sickness.

Hunloke Primary introduced a surround sound speaker system in a class containing a hearing-impaired child. The benefits for all the children, their levels of concentration, the teachers voice and stress levels was marked.

If you are worried about your voice, look out for the course on voice care which we hope to put on (you can contact our office for details). If you have a disability relating to your voice or your hearing, then you may well have rights relating to this.

Full details of the "stop that noise" campaign can be found on the NUT website (www.teachers.org.uk)

TRAINING OPPORTUNITY UPDATE

A quick update on the range of *free* courses that we – the NUT Learning Reps - have organised (in partnership with local colleges, the NUT and other Unions) for teachers in Derbyshire for the Spring Term 2006.

The demand for ICT training remains high and we are therefore pleased to offer repeats of courses previously run in Derbyshire and to extend the ICT provision by offering two new courses involving whiteboard and multimedia training

The National NUT courses are being run at the Tupton Campus of Chesterfield College and are as follows:

'Basic ICT for Teachers Course' OCN Level 2

- **Details** - Delivers training on Word, Spreadsheets, Internet and Email.
- **Duration** - 2 hours per week over 11 weeks
- **Dates** - Commences Tuesday 10th January from 5.30-7.30p.m.

'Multimedia ICT for Teachers Course' OCN Level 2

- **Details** - Delivers training on Whiteboards, Digital Cameras and Publisher.
- **Duration** - 2 hours per week over 11 weeks
- **Dates** - Commences Wednesday 11th January from 5.30-7.30p.m.

The TUC Education centre at Derby will also be running two courses:

'Digital Photography Course' OCN Level 2

- **Details** - Uses Adobe PhotoShop.
- **Duration** - 2½ hours per week over 12 weeks
- **Dates** - Wednesday 11th January from 5.30-8.00p.m.

'Website Design Course' OCN Level 2

- **Duration** - 2½ hours per week over 12 weeks

- **Dates** - Thursday 12th January from 5.30-8.00p.m.

In addition to the above a new 'Interactive Whiteboard Course' (two twilight sessions of 3 hours duration) is being trialled at Derby College. This course is ASET Level 2 accredited and has been written at the behest of the NUT, NASUWT and UNISON for teachers and classroom practitioners. It is designed to enable participants to identify what an interactive whiteboard is, how to set up and configure one, how to identify and correct common causes of IW operating difficulties and how to use this technology practically in the classroom situation. Participants require knowledge of PowerPoint. This course *is likely* to be on offer in January at Derby College.

If you/any of your colleagues would like to become a participant on any of the ICT courses outlined above, or would like to express an interest in receiving further details about the 'Interactive Whiteboard Course', please

contact us at the NUT Office, Matlock 01629 585086 as soon as possible – numbers are limited.

If you would like to discuss how to become a school-based learning representative and access the NUT's learning representatives' courses please contact us. The courses are run over five days at Stoke Rochford Hall and the dates are:

- **Monday 6th March - Friday 10th March 2006**
- **Monday 26th June – Friday 30th June 2006**

**SCHOOL REPS TRAINING DAY
TUESDAY 29TH NOVEMBER
2005
9.30 am – 3.30 pm
ENTERPRISE PARK, DERBY
COLLEGE, PRINCE CHARLES
AVENUE, MACKWORTH, DERBY**

***School Reps are entitled to attend –
please contact the office for details***