



Newsletter



September 2011

More reasons than ever to be in a strong union

Welcome back to the new term, and a special welcome to new members and to those of you who are working in Bradford for the first time. As the Coalition Government attacks our pensions and living standards, and the opening of Academies and Free Schools threatens to turn back the clock to a time of greater inequality in our education system, it has never been more important to be a member of a strong union.

During the coming year the NUT will be asking you to support our campaigns on these and other issues. A great way to keep in touch with developments (and with friends) is to come to Branch Meetings which are always held at the International Restaurant and followed by a free meal. The next meeting is on **Tuesday September 20th**. Meetings start at 5, with tea and coffee from 4.30. The meal is at 6.30. Hope to see you there.

We will also keep you up to date through this local Newsletter in addition to The Teacher magazine and other mailings which you will receive from Head Office.

And finally, if you ever need advice or help, don't hesitate to contact our office on 01274 414664 – it's open 9 till 5 on school days.

Send a teacher from your school to joint union lobby



The teaching unions, working together, aim to have at least one representative from every school in England and Wales at a mass lobby of Parliament on 26th October.

The unions involved are the NUT, ATL, NASUWT, NAHT, ASCL, the Welsh teaching union UCAC, and the further and higher education union UCU.

As this is joint action, the representative can be a member of any of the participating unions. All the unions are asking their members to hold a collection to send the representative to London, whichever union they are a member of. The cost of the train + expenses would be in the region of £80-£100.

Once it has been decided who is going to the lobby, they should register their details on the joint union microsite, www.decentpensions.org.uk **The attack on our pension is an attack on all teachers, so it is important that all schools support the lobby.**

Sign the pension petitions
School Heads have been sent a joint petition for all staff to sign. It can also be found at www.teachers.org.uk – then click link to www.decentpensions.org.uk There is also a petition to the Prime Minister, Fair Pensions For All, on the same website page. Please make sure everyone signs both to leave the Government in no doubt about our determination

Extra day's holiday

To cheer us on our way through 2012 we are to get an extra day's holiday to celebrate the Queen's jubilee. Teachers will be required to work only 194 days (189 teaching days) in 2011/12. Directed time is reduced accordingly, from 1265 to 1258.5 hours. So if your school has allocated the whole of the 1265 hours time budget, it will have to lose 6.5 hours.

Join the NUT, the largest teachers' union.

Membership for first-time joiners is **FREE** until January 2012, and just £1 for NQTs for the whole year. Ring the joining hotline on 0845 300 1669 or 0207380 6369

Black Teachers' Conference

Friday 4th to Sunday 6th November at Stoke Rochford, the Union's training centre near Grantham. If you are interested in attending please contact the office.

Is your classroom safe?

Overleaf is a checklist produced by the Health and Safety Executive. It isn't meant as a job to be done (you will have enough of those!), but you might find it useful in spotting hazards, and you might want to mention something to the union H&S Rep who will visit your school this term.

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Get a better copy and online version at
<http://www.hse.gov.uk/risk/classroom-checklist.pdf>

Health and Safety
 Executive

Questions you should ask:		Yes	Further action needed	N/A
Movement around the classroom (slips and trips)	Is the internal flooring in a good condition?			
	Are there any changes in floor level or type of flooring that need to be highlighted?			
	Are gangways between desks kept clear?			
	Are trailing electrical leads/cables prevented wherever possible?			
	Is lighting bright enough to allow safe access and exit?			
	Are procedures in place to deal with spillages, eg water, blood from cuts?			
	For stand-alone classrooms: <input type="checkbox"/> Are access steps or ramps properly maintained? <input type="checkbox"/> Are access stairs or ramps provided with handrails?			
Work at height (falls)	Do you have an 'elephant-foot' stepstool or step ladder available for use where necessary?			
	Is a window opener provided for opening high-level windows?			
Furniture and fixtures	Are permanent fixtures in good condition and securely fastened, eg cupboards, display boards, shelving?			
	Is furniture in good repair and suitable for the size of the user, whether adult or child?			
	Is portable equipment stable, eg a TV set on a suitable trolley?			
	Where window restrictors are fitted to upper-floor windows, are they in good working order?			
	Are hot surfaces of radiators etc protected where necessary to prevent the risk of burns to vulnerable young people?			
Manual handling	Have trolleys been provided for moving heavy objects, eg computers?			
Computers and similar equipment	If you use computers as part of your job, has a workstation assessment been completed?			
	Have pupils been advised about good practice when using computers?			
Electrical equipment and services	Are fixed electrical switches and plug sockets in good repair?			
	Are all plugs and cables in good repair?			
	Has portable electrical equipment, eg laminators, been visually checked and, where necessary, tested at suitable intervals to ensure that it's safe to use? (There may be a sticker to show it has been tested.)			
	Has any damaged electrical equipment been taken out of service or replaced?			
Asbestos	If the school contains asbestos, have details of the location and its condition in the classroom been provided and explained to you?			
	Have you been provided with guidance on securing pieces of work to walls/ceilings that may contain asbestos?			
Fire	If there are fire exit doors in the classroom, are they: <input type="checkbox"/> unobstructed; <input type="checkbox"/> kept unlocked; and <input type="checkbox"/> easy to open from the inside?			
	Is fire-fighting equipment in place in the classroom?			
	Are fire evacuation procedures clearly displayed?			
	Are you aware of the evacuation drill, including arrangements for any vulnerable adults or children?			
Workplace (ventilation and heating)	Does the room have natural ventilation?			
	Can a reasonable room temperature be maintained during use of the classroom?			
	Are measures in place, for example blinds, to protect from glare and heat from the sun?			

This is not an exhaustive list and you should identify any other hazards associated with the daily use of the classroom in the space overleaf, including any further actions needed. If necessary, discuss this with your head teacher or employer.