

Independent Schools Update

NASUWT independent school members take strike action to protect their pensions

NASUWT General Secretary Dr Patrick Roach applauded the stand that NASUWT independent school members have taken to protect their Teachers' Pension in his Annual Conference address. Our members have taken sustained strike action to protect their pension entitlements in a number of independent schools around the country. **By taking this action, members are standing up for the pensions of all our members employed in the independent sector.**

Dr Roach highlighted the 'list of shame' of schools where members have had no option but to take industrial action to protect their pensions. These include Norwich High School for Girls (Girls' Day School Trust), Oxford High School (GDST), Bromley High School (GDST), Newcastle High School for Girls (GDST), Pocklington School, Forest School, the Loughborough Schools Foundation, Ipswich School, Priors Field, St Francis School, Mount Kelly, Abbots Hill, Westholme School and Tring Park School for Performing Arts.

The action taken by members in these schools is a sign to other independent school employers of the strength of feeling among our members. Pensions are an important part of the reward package for teachers. **The majority of independent school teachers are enrolled in the Teachers' Pension Scheme (TPS).**

Some independent school employers have resorted to the unscrupulous practice of 'Fire and rehire' in order to impose a private pension on teachers. This practice involves the employer threatening to dismiss teachers who are not prepared to accept a poorer contract than the one that they originally signed. Following a dismissal, the school will offer to re-employ the teacher, relying on the employee having no choice but to accept a worse contract in order to keep their post.

Why is the Teachers' Pension Scheme (TPS) the preferred scheme for teachers?

The TPS is the national scheme for all teachers and is a **DEFINED BENEFIT** scheme, which means you will know your future income and will therefore be able to plan for a secure retirement. The TPS includes benefits such as ill-health retirement and death in service benefits, and is not reliant on stock market investments. Please register with the Teachers' Pensions website at www.teacherspensions.co.uk in order to see your own records.

The private pension schemes proposed by some employers are **DEFINED CONTRIBUTION** schemes. This means that you know the amount you have to pay but not what you would receive on retirement. They can be described as a 'retirement savings account'. This means that your pension would only be based on the value of those savings on retirement, and your ability to purchase an annuity scheme. These 'savings accounts' are subject to stock market investments, so their value can vary.

If your employer proposes a consultation to withdraw from the TPS, please notify the NASUWT immediately, at advice@mail.nasuwt.org.uk. All enquiries are confidential.

The NASUWT will continue to raise this unacceptable attack on our members' pensions with the Teachers' Pensions Advisory Board and the Independent Schools Council.

More information about pensions can be found at **NASUWT | England Pensions**

THE NASUWT WILL FIGHT TO PROTECT YOUR PENSION

