

SCOTLAND CONFERENCE

The first in-person NASUWT Scotland Conference since 2019 was held at the Sandman Signature Hotel in Aberdeen on 12 and 13 May.

A large number of Motions were debated and passed, but perhaps the most significant aspect of this was the fact that the two most highly balloted Motions were on Violence in the Workplace and Pupil Behaviour. This became a major focus for the whole Conference as, on the very day that these Motions were being debated, news emerged of an attack on three teachers and a pupil by a teenage intruder at a school in Renfrewshire. New Cabinet Secretary for Education and Skills Jenny Gilruth acknowledged the challenges which many teachers are facing with regard to unacceptable pupil behaviour in some schools when she addressed the Conference on the Saturday morning. She made clear that no teacher should expect to endure verbal or physical abuse at their place of work and gave a commitment to working with the NASUWT and its members to try and address this.

Conference was also addressed by Ken Muir, Honorary Professor at the University of the West of Scotland, and author of the 2022 report *Putting Learners at the Centre*. He outlined his vision for the future of Scottish education, especially the new bodies that will replace the SQA and Education Scotland, and encouraged delegates to share their concerns with the new Cabinet Secretary about the apparent lack of classroom teacher voice in shaping this future.

Behaviour Management specialist Tom Bennett was the guest speaker at the Annual Dinner and delivered an engaging and entertaining speech which challenged some of the myths surrounding what teachers and schools can and cannot do in relation to pupil behaviour and this chimed very well with the views of delegates.

LOCAL PENSIONS DISPUTE

In the ongoing dispute with Hutchesons' Grammar School about inferior pension provision, NASUWT members decided against taking strike action while SQA examinations were still running at the school; therefore, strike dates have been announced for 30 May (when senior pupils return after Study Leave), 31 May, 7 and 8 June. EIS members at the school are also willing to strike on these dates.

Despite further political pressure and offers by the NASUWT to negotiate on the decision to fire and rehire our members and force them into an inferior pension, the employer remains intransigent and unwilling to talk. At the time of writing, the strikes are still planned to proceed.

TERMS AND CONDITIONS

Meetings of the Scottish Negotiating Committee for Teachers (SNCT) Teachers' Panel and the full SNCT took place on 17 May.

(continued overleaf)

At the former, the NASUWT submitted a Motion to review the Extended Joint Chairs negotiating mechanism but, regrettably, some sister unions on the Committee voted against this, referencing fairly unconvincing reasons for doing so.

At the latter, the Teachers' Side expressed continuing frustration at the failure to rapidly progress the manifesto commitment to cut the maximum pupil/class contact time of teachers. Negotiations on this are continuing, but progress is slow.

Many of our activists will currently be embroiled in Working Time Agreement negotiations. NASUWT Scotland advice on this, including information about common issues and advice on negotiating WTAs, can be found here:

www.nasuwt.org.uk/WorkingTimeScotland

EDUCATION POLICY

Our focus on pupil behaviour at the Scotland Conference continued, with national interest in the NASUWT position on pupil behaviour and the experiences of our members.

An NASUWT Briefing on the myths and misinterpretations around the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child is available here:

www.nasuwt.org.uk/UNCRCScotland

Guidance on creating a fit-for-purpose Behaviour Management Policy is available here:

www.nasuwt.org.uk/BehaviourManagementPolicy

The next stage of our Behaviour Campaign will be lobbying MSPs and Councillors.

The NASUWT submitted its formal consultation response to Phase 3 of the Hayward Review of Assessment and Qualifications and has since reiterated its concerns about the approach taken to the Review and some of the direction of travel with the new Cabinet Secretary for Education and Skills.

That Consultation Response can be accessed here:

www.nasuwt.org.uk/ConsultationResponses

PARLIAMENTARY

The NASUWT met with Pam Duncan-Glancy, the new Scottish Labour Education spokesperson, on 10 May.

NASUWT members attended Cross-Party Groups on Challenging Racial and Religious Prejudice and on Long COVID.

FORTHCOMING EVENTS

NASUWT Scotland Equalities Conference, Glasgow 30 September 2023

To register for this event, contact **Scotland@mail.nasuwt.org.uk**

