

NASUWT

The Teachers' Union

ANNUAL CONFERENCE 2023

DRAFT PROVISIONAL AGENDA (BALLOTTED MOTIONS)

The first motion listed in each category will be placed on the Final Agenda as set business by the Standing Orders Committee when it meets on 1 March 2023.

The remaining 14 motions will be debated, following debate of set business in each session, in the order in which they appear in this document.

The titles of the motions are working titles and are therefore subject to change by the Standing Orders Committee prior to appearing on the Final Agenda.

SECTION A – EDUCATION

ABOLISH OFSTED

Conference acknowledges that the perceived demands of Ofsted are the major contributor to the excessive workload and bureaucracy that blights the lives of teachers.

Conference instructs the National Executive to:

- (i) campaign for the abolition of Ofsted and
- (ii) press for its replacement with a supportive framework based on collaborative professional peer reviews of school performance by teachers and school leaders.

(Newcastle upon Tyne)

ADEQUATE FUNDING FOR BEHAVIOUR SUPPORT

Conference is alarmed at the reduction in funding for behavioural support services due to the Government's failure to fund schools and colleges appropriately. Conference recognises that this is partly due to insufficient funding for students with behavioural needs.

Conference asserts that this:

- (i) is detrimental to the progress of all students in schools and colleges;
- (ii) impacts adversely on the workload and health and wellbeing of teachers and
- (iii) fails to address the specific needs of children whose behaviour is challenging, and whose needs are not being met.

Conference calls upon the Government to adequately fund behaviour support services in all educational settings with targeted funding for this specific purpose in order to enable pupils with behavioural needs to receive the support they deserve.

(Executive, Oxford City, South West Oxon)

FULL-TIME TEACHERS FOR PART-TIME PAY

Conference is concerned about the increasing number of teachers who are forced to work part time in an attempt to manage their workload. These teachers still work beyond their contracted hours and are not remunerated appropriately.

Conference calls upon the National Executive to:

- (i) conduct research on the number of teachers who work on a part-time contract, identify their reasons for doing so and report back to Annual Conference 2024;
- (ii) use this research to lobby governments and administrations to challenge drivers of increased workload for teachers who work on a part-time contract and
- (iii) engage with all political parties to highlight the issues facing teachers who work part time.

(Oxford City, South West Oxon)

SPECIALIST PROVISION

Conference deplores the lack of SEND/ALN/ASN funding for all children and young people that have additional needs.

Conference recognises that there are families that struggle to secure:

- (i) specialist provision;
- (ii) an appropriate diagnosis for their children and
- (iii) appropriate support in schools.

Conference recognises that there is a shortage of educational psychologists and other specialists that work with children and young people who have SEND/ALN/ASN.

Conference calls upon the National Executive to lobby governments and administrations for increased funding so that schools and specialist services can identify and meet the needs of children and young people with SEND/ALN/ASN.

(North Northamptonshire)

SECTION B – EQUALITY

AGEISM IN TEACHING

Conference believes that older teachers are a valuable asset to the teaching profession in terms of their experience, skills and long-term contributions to teaching and learning.

Conference notes with concern that due to ageist perceptions, stereotypes and discrimination, older teachers are often overlooked for promotion, ignored or disproportionately threatened with capability procedures, with the sole purpose of driving them out of the profession.

Conference is further concerned that age discrimination within the teaching profession is often disregarded as a protected characteristic, resulting in systemic ageism going unchallenged and older teachers pressured into leaving their jobs well before their retirement age.

Conference endorses the work of the National Executive in campaigning for greater protections for older teachers in schools and colleges and in challenging discriminatory practices that impact on the current recruitment and retention crisis.

Conference further endorses action by the National Executive in campaigning vigorously for:

- (i) greater awareness of potential ageism and ageist policies and procedures within schools and colleges;
- (ii) a requirement for schools and colleges to monitor and publish their staff profile by age, along with other protected characteristics and
- (iii) a wide-scale recruitment campaign positively promoting the NASUWT as the union 'of choice' for older teachers.

(Executive)

MENOPAUSE AS A DISABILITY

Conference notes that UK equality law does not classify the various stages of menopause as a disability and thus there is no legal duty for employers to provide reasonable adjustments for members experiencing symptoms.

Conference is concerned that employers do not have sufficient understanding of the issues or their responsibilities towards the many employees who experience symptoms of the menopause.

Conference is further concerned about the lack of appropriate support for these issues in the workplace, often resulting in a number of highly skilled and experienced staff being forced out of the profession due to lack of support.

Conference therefore instructs the National Executive to:

- (i) lobby governments and administrations for the menopause to be classified as a disability under equality law;
- (ii) promote the NASUWT Menopause Policy Guidance and training in all workplaces and
- (iii) campaign to ensure free access to appropriate medication.

(North Bedfordshire, Oxford City, South West Oxon)

OLDER PRACTITIONERS

Conference is alarmed that older members of the profession are facing potential discrimination by being effectively priced out of their employment or prospective employment, or being prevented from reaching the top of the salary spine.

Conference notes that the equality legislation identifies age as a protected characteristic from discrimination.

Conference is encouraged by motions adopted at previous annual conferences regarding issues faced by older colleagues.

Conference calls upon the National Executive to:

- (i) conduct research across the trade union network to explore support given to older workers;
- (ii) use the research to inform consideration of an NASUWT Older Teachers Advisory Committee, so that issues facing our members can be addressed more readily and, if necessary, acted upon and
- (iii) report to Annual Conference 2024.

(Oxford City, South West Oxon)

SECTION C – HEALTH, SAFETY AND WELLBEING

VIOLENT PUPILS

Conference is appalled by the numbers of teachers experiencing physical and verbal assaults.

Conference is further appalled that, in too many schools, assaults are seen as a normal part of teaching.

Conference is concerned that many employers are failing in their statutory duties by either not completing risk assessments or seeing them as a paper exercise, including those for potentially violent pupils.

Conference is further concerned that many school leaders are not given sufficient guidance in the completion of risk assessments for violent pupils.

Conference calls upon the National Executive to:

- (i) continue to support members through all means possible where employers fail to protect teachers from aggression and violence;
- (ii) work with agencies such as the Health and Safety Executive to highlight the statutory requirement for effective risk assessments for all workplace hazards and
- (iii) produce updated guidance on violent and abusive behaviour.

(Executive)

HEALTH AND SAFETY AND THE WORKING DAY

Conference is deeply concerned that the length of the school day and increased contact time with pupils has grown in many schools, often by shortening breaks and lunchtimes, imposition of 'period 6' sessions, and numerous meetings/twilight sessions of excessive duration.

Conference asserts that the lengthening of the school day and increased contact time with pupils is having a detrimental impact on teachers' health, safety and wellbeing.

Conference is further concerned that teachers are being denied statutory and/or contractual breaks through requests to work through lunchtimes and breaks.

Conference condemns those school leaders who extend the school day surreptitiously, through either claiming sessions are optional, and/or 'guilt tripping' staff into attending.

Conference calls upon the National Executive to:

- (i) continue to campaign for a maximum limits on working time;
- (ii) publish updated guidance to members on directed time allocations and break entitlements;
- (iii) work with Valued Worker Scheme employers and unions to devise best-practice guides to the structure of the school day;
- (iv) collect data through the wellbeing survey on lengths and changes to school days and
- (v) support members through all means available where school days are being lengthened.

(Executive)

WOMEN'S HEALTH AND THE WORKPLACE

Conference notes that women make up the majority of the teaching profession and that they play an essential and positive role in schools and colleges.

Conference notes with concern that women's health concerns are often downplayed and even dismissed by employers in the workplace, resulting in many women being forced out of the profession.

Conference is further concerned that despite the fact that women are disproportionately vulnerable to long-term inflammatory immune conditions such as endometriosis and ME/CFS, many sickness-absence and health and safety policies fail to address gender-specific conditions.

Conference condemns the stigmatisation of women's health in the workplace and society in general, which results in many women suffering in silence and reluctant to seek the work-life adjustments they need.

Conference supports the National Executive in continuing to campaign for:

- (i) greater awareness of intersectional gender-sensitive health and safety issues in schools and colleges;
- (ii) a requirement for gender-sensitive sickness absence and health and safety policies in schools and colleges, with mandatory training for all managers and
- (iii) specific training for NASUWT negotiators on bargaining for gender-sensitive health, safety and welfare policies in schools and colleges.

(Executive)

SECTION D – PAY, PENSIONS AND CONDITIONS OF SERVICE

WORKING HOURS

Conference notes that the Government's Education White Paper 2022 calls for 'all mainstream schools to run a 32.5 hour week minimum by September 2023'.

Conference believes this is the start of extending teaching hours by stealth.

Conference calls upon the National Executive to:

- (i) survey schools on opening and teaching hours and
- (ii) build a campaign to support members to challenge attacks on their contractual rights on working hours.

(North Tyneside)

STATE PENSION AGE

Conference condemns the decision of the UK Government to move all teachers into the 2015 Teachers' Pension Schemes with a teachers' pension age which is equal to the state pension age.

Conference condemns the Government's decision to proceed with an increase in the state pension age, despite the long-term impact of COVID-19 on mortality rates being unknown. Conference notes that the UK state pension age in the UK is already amongst the highest of all OECD nations, before any further increase.

Conference endorses the National Executive's campaign to break the link between the state pension age and the teachers' pension age.

Conference calls on the National Executive to build a broad alliance of trade unions, community groups and civil society organisations which oppose any increase in the state pension age and campaign for its reduction over time.

(Executive)

WORKING TIME ARRANGEMENTS

Conference is concerned that the working time arrangements for individual teachers are not fit for purpose.

Conference is aware that:

- (i) teachers are increasingly not being effectively consulted over annual working time arrangements at the beginning of the school year;
- (ii) teachers are increasingly being put under pressure to complete tasks outside of agreed working arrangements and
- (iii) there is inconsistency across the UK.

Conference urges the National Executive to produce a checklist to inform discussions on annual working time arrangements in workplaces across the UK.

(North Down)

TRANSFORM PERFORMANCE MANAGEMENT AND APPRAISAL

Conference is aware that the performance management and appraisal process creates stress for teachers.

Conference opposes the outdated method of directly linking pay progression to performance.

Conference is also aware that some employers have separate appraisal and pay policies, allowing staff to move up the pay scale unhindered.

Conference asserts that all annual pay progression should be automatic.

Conference calls upon the National Executive to continue to campaign vigorously to remove the link between pay progression and performance management and appraisal.

(Newcastle upon Tyne, Northumberland)

EXPLOITATION OF UPPER PAY RANGE TEACHERS

Conference congratulates the National Executive for its work in supporting members through pay progression.

Conference deplores the exploitation of many Upper Pay Range (UPR) teachers who are expected to take on management roles.

Conference recognises that this is a particular issue in the primary sector.

Conference calls upon the National Executive to campaign to protect the rights of UPR teachers.

(North Northamptonshire)

SECURING AND SUSTAINING HIGH LEVELS OF RECRUITMENT INTO TEACHING

Conference believes that the recruitment and retention of a highly skilled, well-supported graduate teacher workforce is critical to ensuring that all children can benefit from their entitlement to a world-class education.

Conference is, therefore, deeply concerned by the ongoing and worsening teacher recruitment crisis and the failure to invest in high-quality training and development for the future of the profession.

Conference notes that across all phases and the vast majority of subjects, the education systems in the UK fail to recruit enough graduates into programmes of initial teacher education (ITE).

Conference further notes with concern the failure of Ministers to meet the national targets set for teacher recruitment, exacerbating the teacher supply problems, and the high levels of exit from the profession among serving teachers and leaders.

Conference condemns the failure of governments and administrations to take effective action to address the causes of the teacher recruitment crisis and to ensure that every ITE participant gets access to the high-quality training and support they deserve.

Conference, therefore, calls on the National Executive to continue to press governments and administrations to take action to ensure that:

- (i) pay and conditions support the competitiveness of teaching in the graduate labour market and provide an attractive and motivating reward package for teachers at the start of and throughout their careers;
- (ii) other disincentives to entering teaching, including persistently high workload levels, poor wellbeing, lack of clear career progression pathways, poor pupil behaviour and inadequate ongoing professional development opportunities,

are tackled;

- (iii) initial teacher education programmes reflect the status of teaching as a highly skilled, professional activity and that all routes, including those based in schools, benefit from the support and expertise of higher education institutions and
- (iv) teachers and leaders are given the resources they need to provide critical in-school experience to ITE participants in a way that is manageable, recognises the range of additional responsibilities teachers and leaders have and does not impose excessive workload burdens on them.

(Executive)

SECTION E – SOCIAL, ECONOMIC AND INTERNATIONAL

EDUCATING REFUGEE AND ASYLUM SEEKER CHILDREN AND YOUNG PEOPLE

Conference notes the enormous effort that teachers and schools put into supporting refugee and asylum children and young people.

Conference is concerned with the lack of funding and proper training available to fully meet the needs of these pupils and students.

Conference is further concerned by the woeful underfunding of community support and CAMHS, and the lack of training that teachers are given to support the wellbeing of these pupils and students.

Conference calls for the National Executive to lobby governments and administrations for:

- (i) fully funded training and specific teaching resources to support staff to meet the needs of refugee and asylum seeker children and young people;
- (ii) a fully funded package of educational wellbeing support for refugee and asylum seekers and
- (iii) a significant increase in funding and access to CAMHS services.

(Leeds, York)

TRANSFORMING EDUCATION

Conference acknowledges the value and importance of international solidarity and reaffirms the commitment to the NASUWT's participation in international campaigning and policy making.

Conference commends the work of Education International (EI) in bringing unions together to campaign for a new deal for teachers through the transforming education agenda.

Conference welcomes the creation of an International Commission on the Teaching Profession announced at the Transforming Education Summit in September 2022.

Conference believes that every learner should have access to a professional, trained and well-supported teacher and that every teacher has access to the tools, time, and trust necessary to reach, teach, and inspire the generations and communities they have been entrusted to serve. Teachers should be protected from having to promote harmful political propaganda and from interference in the workplace.

Conference calls upon the National Executive to continue to lobby governments and administrations to ensure they adopt and enact the five priorities of the EI New Deal for Teachers campaign to:

- (i) increase investment in quality public education systems;
- (ii) guarantee labour rights and decent working conditions;
- (iii) invest in quality teacher training and professional development;
- (iv) trust and respect teachers and their pedagogical expertise and
- (v) involve teacher unions in policy through social dialogue.

(Executive)

TEACHERS AND THE HOUSING CRISIS

Conference condemns the failure of successive governments and administrations to address the shortage of affordable housing for working people and their families, including teachers.

Conference recognises that the shortage of affordable housing for teachers affects all parts of the UK. Furthermore, geographical areas exist where the shortage has become acute. Conference asserts that the teachers' housing crisis is having a profound impact on teachers' living standards and teacher supply.

Conference calls on the National Executive to campaign for a change in Government policy to address the housing crisis, which should:

- (i) include teachers in all definitions of key workers;
- (ii) ensure reserved housing provision across all areas solely for key workers and
- (iii) create and extend discount schemes for rental and first-time buyers of at least 30% below market prices in all areas where teachers struggle to afford suitable housing.

(Executive)

SECTION F – TRAINING, RECRUITMENT AND UNION ORGANISING

TRADE UNION RIGHTS AND THE RIGHT TO STRIKE

Conference believes the right to strike is a fundamental human right.

Conference decries the fact that trade unions have been subject to draconian legislation that severely impacts on workers' rights to organise and defend their rights in their workplaces and communities.

Conference notes that the current government's pursuit of a radical extension of laws that ensure a minimum service in schools is a direct attack on the profession's right to strike and must be resisted by the NASUWT.

Conference asserts that anti-trade union restrictions represent an attack on workers' rights to fair pay, decent jobs and good terms and conditions.

Conference believes the NASUWT must defend the rights of teachers to take strike action at all costs.

Conference calls on the National Executive to:

- (i) build coalitions with any political parties willing to campaign against further restrictive trade union legislation;
- (ii) create an information campaign for teachers to understand the importance of taking legal industrial action when appropriate and
- (iii) build an appropriate industrial response to defend teachers' rights to strike if restrictive legislation is progressed by the Government.

Conference further calls on the National Executive to work with other education trade unions to resist any further restrictive trade union legislation and demand:

- (a) the repeal of all anti-union laws, including the Trade Union Act 2016;
- (b) stronger rights for unions to access workplaces, win recognition, and establish collective bargaining rights and
- (c) the right for trade union members to vote online during industrial action ballots.

(Executive, Newcastle upon Tyne, North Tyneside, Northumberland)