

CONFERENCE EXTRA

News from the NASUWT Annual Conference 2018

2(b) Motion: Securing World-Class Education for All

Securing world-class education is about securing a student's entitlement to quality education free at the point of delivery and this depends on a teacher's right to fair pay and good working conditions, Conference heard.

The ongoing assault on public education since 2010 has led to a widespread feeling of crisis in the profession: recruitment and retention, demoralisation, assaults on pay, deteriorating working conditions and significant damage to the education and life chances of children and young people.

Neil Butler, NASUWT Honorary Treasurer, moved the motion, saying: "I think that everyone in this hall has come to the conclusion that there is something seriously wrong with the state education service as it exists in the UK today.

"We make no apology for putting teachers first, because we are ensuring that our children have a happy and fulfilled teacher and a happy and fulfilled teacher is a better teacher: a simple equation that seems to be entirely beyond the grasp of the

present government. The exodus of teachers from the profession has now developed into a stampede."



John McGill *[left]*, National Executive, seconding the motion, said that the rights of teachers and children are intrinsically linked and that the NASUWT is proud of what members have done to protect their pay and conditions by taking part in continuing action.



Debbie Hayton *[left]*, Coventry, supporting the motion, said: "I still feel proud to be a teacher. We are the educators. Society needs us. Sadly, we are not treated like professionals. They don't want professionals. They want operatives. Only by working collectively can we Restore a truly world-class Education for All".

Teacher Retention Crisis



The teaching profession is haemorrhaging, Conference was told. Of those who trained between 2011 and 2015, more than 27,500 had already left by 2017.

Javay Welter *[left]*, Birmingham, highlighted increasing numbers of teachers leaving the profession before they reach retirement due to unrealistic expectations in the classroom, micro-management and inadequate government interventions that fail to support and retain the existing teaching workforce.

Mr Welter said: "Teachers are leaving the profession in their droves – demoralised, depressed and despondent. This teacher crisis is affecting pupils' education, social mobility and life chances."



Madeleine Cooper *[left]*, Birmingham, seconded the motion, saying: "Good graduates are not choosing to enter the profession, realising they can earn better salaries with less workload elsewhere."

Today at Conference

9.00am-1.00pm

Motion: Pension Age

1.00pm to 1.30pm

President's Business

Members leaving National Executive

Vote of thanks to Conference Organisers

Vote of thanks to President

INSIDE your Conference Extra:

2(b) Motion

Motion: Class Size Really Does Matter

2(c) Motion: Northern Ireland

INTERNATIONAL SOLIDARITY AWARD

Motion: School Funding Crisis

RECRUITMENT AWARDS

HEALTH AND SAFETY AWARD

Motion: The Impact of Curriculum Reform

Class Size Really Does Matter



Paul Spencer *[left]*, Cheshire West & Chester, moving the motion, told Conference that class sizes are contributing to an unsafe environment for students and teachers alike.

Calling for legal maximum limits on class size, Mr Spencer said that children and teachers have a right to classroom conditions that do not adversely affect their physical and mental health.

Mark Perry *[right]*, Chester, seconded the motion, saying: "Evidence suggests that increasing class size harms not only children's progress in the short run, but also their long-term prospects – money saved today by increasing class size will result in more substantial social and educational costs in the future."



"Increased pupil numbers in schools coupled with reduced resources have resulted in larger class sizes. This determines the style of teaching possible and a reduction in small group interventions: in short, less interactive teaching."



Barbara Chinyani *[left]*, Brent, supported the motion, saying that large class sizes limit the ability of already drained teachers to provide the necessary time and attention that children in diverse communities deserve.

2(c) Motion: NI



Eamonn McDowell *[left]*, National Executive, told delegates that teachers in Northern Ireland are facing an increasing crisis in teacher morale caused by falling pay levels, political uncertainty and continual cuts to the education budget.

Mr McDowell, said: "Because of the solidarity we've had from our National Action Committee and National Officers, we now have every Local Association fully functional and we are carrying the battle to the classroom on behalf of our Union."

Mr McDowell told Conference that a number of substitute teacher members had reported being paid the proper rate as a result of the NASUWT's action for proper pay.

Susan Parlour *[right]*, National Executive, seconding the motion, said: "As the collateral damage of a Tory austerity agenda, we as educators have suffered over the past seven years.



"The final nail in the coffin came in 2015/16 when we were awarded 0% by the then Minister for Education, Peter Weir. Refusing to be cowed, demeaned and degraded, NASUWT members had the courage to stand up and take strike action.

"We will resist the narrative being foisted on us from above. We have remained strong and immovable in terms of implementing our industrial action short of strike action on a grand scale."

International Solidarity Award



Esmail Abdi *[left]* was awarded the International Solidarity Award 2018 at the NASUWT Annual Conference in Birmingham.

Mr Abdi was sentenced to six years' imprisonment for his union activities for teachers' rights in Iran and sent to the notorious Evin Prison.

The Award was presented to Mr Abdi in his absence, in recognition of his commitment to fighting for the rights of teachers and for quality education, because he was taken back into custody in January after only 11 days following a temporary reprieve due to ill health caused by the harsh prison conditions.

Mr Abdi, a high school maths teacher, is leader of the Tehran branch of the Iran Teachers' Trade Association (ITTA) and was convicted of national security offences in 2015 after organising peaceful protests.

Chris Keates, NASUWT General Secretary, said: "Esmail's courage and determination are truly humbling. Our deepest regret is that he is unable to be with us in Birmingham to accept the award in person.

"In making this Award, the NASUWT and its members want to honour Esmail's courage and offer him hope and our solidarity and support in his tremendous struggle."

The NASUWT is continuing to maintain solidarity with Esmail and with teachers in Iran, working with partners, including Amnesty International, to press for Esmail's unconditional release.

Fringe Meetings

Zimbabwe – life after Mugabe



PTUZ President Takavafira Zhou [left] said teachers in Zimbabwe are still victims of political violence and pupils are being exploited for political ends five months on from the removal of Robert Mugabe.

Dr Zhou told a packed fringe meeting at Conference that little had changed since the military took over in a bloodless coup in November. Zimbabwe needed “political, social and economic hygiene” and he called on the international community to put pressure on the regime to hold free and fair elections.

He said: “There was so much hope that with the fall of Mugabe there could be a government of national unity. But the hope quickly evaporated like morning dew.”

Zimbabwe was now a military state and the lives of ordinary people didn’t matter, he added.

Disturbingly schools were still on the frontline of political violence. He told delegates: “We have seen school pupils being bussed to political rallies, schools closed for political rallies by the new military regime. Teachers are being assaulted by the youth militias in schools and the militias are not penalised.”

For the NASUWT, Deputy General Secretary Dr Patrick Roach stressed the deep friendship between the Union and the PTUZ. He said: “You can be absolutely assured of our continuing solidarity and support in the months and years ahead.”

Cracking the Gender Pay Gap – What needs to be done?

At a fringe highlighting the continuing gender pay gap in education and to discuss the work of the NASUWT in promoting gender equality, Rachel Halliday, Thompsons Solicitors, told delegates that in 2104, women teachers earned less than 90% of what a male teacher earns.

Ms Halliday said: “In secondary schools, 36% of teachers are men, but 62% of headteachers are men. When the government’s data for all teachers is analysed, it shows that the gender pay gap is particularly stark in school leaders’ pay, where in 2015 women school leaders in state-funded schools were paid on average £5,700 or 94% less than men.”

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Ms Moses, NASUWT National Official, told delegates that the limitations of the legislation applying to employers of 250 or more people mean that only 0.4% of schools will need to provide a gender pay gap and that voluntary enforcement leaves its effectiveness in question.

Recruitment Awards



Harjinder Nahal, Leeds Association, Recruiter of the Year



Delma Boggs, Best Communication Award



*Crewe and Nantwich Local Association
Best Activity for Engaging Under-represented Groups Award*

Health and Safety Awards



*Michael Baker
Health and Safety Award*

School Funding Crisis



Ian Davies, North Northumberland, moved a motion on the school funding crisis, saying that schools and colleges are woefully underfunded to the point that teachers' workloads have become unsustainable.

Mr Davies said: "Teaching assistants have been reduced by 80%, admin staff have been slashed, which puts a burden on teachers to fill their role, school councils have disappeared, staff CPD has gone, the classic 'restructuring' of schools, where over 40% say there are job reductions because of funding."

Joshua Wright, Devon, seconding, said: "In these turbulent times, with the looming threat of Brexit, where the UK has just become the slowest growing major economy, education and the skills it gives our children is going to become ever more important for us to succeed as a nation."



Dawn Andrew, Lincoln, supported the motion, saying: "Funding is so low that in some schools leaving staff are often not replaced, maternity isn't covered, temporary staff contracts are terminated and in the sores cases redundancies are made."

Thanks for donating



The NASUWT would like to thank all Elected Representatives who have contributed toward the foodbank. As well as cash which has been donated, we have also received items which will be forwarded to a local foodbank.

Tweet Talk #NASUWT18

NASUWT We've launched a Valued Workers Scheme today at #NASUWT18 with @unisontweets @unitetheunion and @GMB_union which aims to recognise and support good employment relations in schools. Find out more at www.nasuwt.org.uk/valuedworkerscheme

See you in Belfast



The NASUWT would like to thank you all for attending Conference 2018 and hope that you have had a productive and enjoyable four days.

Remember to stay in touch with the NASUWT through Twitter @nasuwtunion and Facebook at www.facebook.com/NASUWT. We hope you return to school with even greater resolve to stand up for standards. Have a safe trip home and see you in Belfast in 2019!

The Impact of Curriculum Reform

The impact of curriculum reforms is leading to a narrowing of the curriculum and the loss of teachers' jobs, resulting in pupils not receiving the broad and balanced curriculum that enables every child to realise their potential.



Michelle Codrington-Rogers [left], Junior Vice-President, said: "We believe that any curriculum framework that we have should give us, the teacher, the ability to use our professional judgement and knowledge to shape the work in our classrooms, the work that helps us to develop the child, the young person, the individual, to become the well-rounded, thinking, curious adults of tomorrow."



"The mental health and wellbeing of everyone working and learning in this toxic environment is created by many issues that have been discussed not just this weekend, but will continue to be discussed in living rooms and staffrooms across the country every single day until it's sorted."

Katherine Carlisle [left], Birmingham, seconded the motion, saying: "Maths and English have always been prominent subjects in our schools. But the prominence of these two subjects has turned into dominance."