

Another NASUWT Victory for Primary Teachers?

At last there seems to be the prospect of Primary Teachers being paid for responsibilities they are given, if the School Teachers' Review Body (STRB^①) accepts the evidence given to it in October by the Rewards and Incentives Group (RIG^②)

All RIG partners, including Primary Heads, have signed up to the proposal that "...teachers will be expected to contribute to curriculum development by sharing their professional expertise with colleagues and advising on effective practice. This does not mean that they can be expected to take on the responsibility of, and accountability for, a subject area or to manage other teachers. ...Responsibilities of this nature would need to be part of a post that was in the leadership group or which attracted a TLR payment..."

If the STRB makes this a recommendation to Government – and as you will have noticed, the Government is signed up to this evidence since they too are part of RIG – it will close a major loophole in teachers' contracts which so many primary heads (but not all – there are honourable exceptions) have used to exploit primary colleagues by denying them the payments they deserve for additional responsibilities.

RIG has suggested that the following should be the responsibilities which apply to all teachers –

- Plan and teach lessons to assigned classes
- Contribute to the development, implementation and evaluation of school policies, practices and procedures
- Assess and monitor learning needs, progress and achievements of pupils
- Promote the safety and well-being of their pupils in school
- Deploy the resources delegated to them
- Direct and supervise support staff assigned to them
- Participate in professional development
- Communicate with pupils, parents and carers
- Collaborate and work with colleagues within and beyond the school
- Work in teams on curriculum or pupil development

Anything beyond this would need to be recompensed through the payment of a TLR or a leadership post.

Once again, by focusing on teachers' pay and conditions of service, NASUWT has driven through significant improvements for its members – in this instance principally its Primary members. Why would anyone want to belong to a union unable to secure such benefits for its members?

^① The STRB is the body set up by law to take evidence from interested parties and make recommendations to Government on teachers' pay and conditions of service.

^② RIG is made up of the Department for Children, Schools & Families (DCSF), the Local Authority Employers' organisation (NEOST), the Association of School & College Leaders (ASCL), the National Association of Head Teachers (NAHT), and teaching unions ATL, NASUWT & PAT.