

OXFORDSHIRE FEDERATION NASUWT The Teachers' Union

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Academies

Michael Gove's Coalition plans to encourage high flying schools to remove themselves from local authority control and become instant academies was rushed in over the summer. As you probably know, Head Teachers and Governing bodies in Oxfordshire only expressed an interest in order to find out some hard facts from the government. What little they heard did not convince them and not one school chose to take up the offer this September. NASUWT applauds this principled stance, all those concerned reaffirming their belief in education as a shared undertaking with families, governors and employees, not just government politicians with an ideological agenda to pursue. However, the offer remains and there could be schools that, with further information from the DfE, choose to go down that avenue in the near future.

How would it affect me?

I expect that if it happened to your school, you would have some pertinent questions that would need answering. The implications for your conditions of service and contractual rights could be enormous. And it could affect every school soon. Don't forget that at least one county has proposed making **all** its schools into academies in one fell swoop, and this idea was warmly greeted by Mr Gove. We all need to be informed about how the legislation could affect teachers, support staff, heads and other leaders if we are to contribute to a useful debate at school level. The professional debate also needs to encompass governors and politicians too.

Information Meeting

There is a first joint unions meeting from 5p.m. 'til 7p.m. on October 11th in Exeter Hall Kidlington OX5 1AB, where we hope to answer questions where possible, and clarify some real information. It is open to

all, especially those in 'Outstanding' schools. Please do try to come along to share questions and find some answers alongside colleagues from other unions. Staff that are not in unions are also warmly invited, as are governors.



Current Local News

- NASUWT is working alongside our sister unions in maintaining the reliable machinery for negotiations with our employers in Oxfordshire.
- Progress is being made on ensuring that extra support for schools labelled as 'in difficulties', actually helps and doesn't just create extra work.

Don't forget

All the rights we have negotiated over recent years still apply to our contracts, despite the financial turmoil. PPA time, rarely cover, no purely administrative tasks, the right to a work life balance. Especially that last one. Ask yourself, does my work swamp my home life? Is it reasonable? If not, start to do something about it now. Contact me and I'll put you in touch with someone locally who can advise you.

Union Democracy

We are a thoroughly democratic union so don't forget to play an active part in electing our National Officers. Make sure you use your vote for our **Junior Vice President**, coming soon.

Cuts

Whatever happens on the Academy front we are all facing huge cuts to the services we rely on as teachers and support staff, and more generally as Oxfordshire voters. We already know there is an end to the building and maintenance programme, and an axe will be taken to central services. Far from cocooning the frontline in education from severe effects as the government asserts, appalling working conditions and no specialist backup readily available will make our day to day work with children more difficult. The effect on colleagues who work in those services directly is devastating.

The Comprehensive spending review, reporting on October 20th will show the depth and targets of these cuts. NASUWT will of course not stand by and just watch it happen. Nationally our General Secretary continues to challenge and refute many of the statements coming out of the DfE. We need to show that we share that outrage locally, without being backed into a 'my job or yours' row with our colleagues in other services on which we all depend.

Oxford City Centre

Oxfordshire NASUWT is working alongside other teaching unions, and unions in other public services to make a loud and sustained point on Wednesday the 20th. There will be various ways to get our point across to the public, into the local media, and to lend our weight to the message going out to national politicians. NASUWT will be staffing a 'latest information' stall in Oxford City centre, to tell the public what the spending review actually means. Retired or part time members who think they can offer an hour or two during the day, handing out leaflets and engaging the public, should contact me directly. I hope lots of members working within reach of Oxford will try to come into town straight after work to demonstrate your concern. Bring your friends and colleagues. For further information, contact me directly or see the website as the day approaches.



For further information check our website
nasuwt-oxon.org.uk