

NASUWT

The Teachers' Union

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Dear Member,

Dare I say that word – Christmas? I don't know about you but I'm nowhere near ready, not helped by a 15 ½ year old daughter who won't give us any ideas for present, who has no specific interests! Any ideas out there – would be really grateful!!!

Firstly, thank you to those members who came out in support of the Industrial action. It was great to see so many people united together in the cause. I personally do not normally agree with strikes but on this occasion I felt we had to make a statement to the Government not just about pensions but for the future of our State Education system that they seem set on dismantling. It was disappointing that some members felt unable to join us but it must be stressed that we live in a democracy and we must respect peoples' decisions regardless of whether we agree with them.

In our area alone we now have at least two schools who are being forced to become Academies because they failed to meet LAST years benchmarks not this years! Some schools have already become Academies and other schools feeling under tremendous pressure to convert.

A REMINDER: ARE YOU REGISTERED AT THE CORREXT SCHOOL? HAVE YOU ADVISED CHANGE OF ADDRESS/TELEPHONE NUMBERS/ EMAIL ADDRESSES TO THE MEMBERSHIP TEAM ? If not do it NOW don't wait any longer or at least contact me and I can make the necessary changes for you.

The challenge from the Government will continue and we are all in for a tough year so it is vital that ALL schools have at least one nominated person to act as a point of reference for me so I can disseminate information quickly and accurately. Please, please volunteer even if you don't want to become an official NASUWT representative at least I'll have someone I can send info to and know it will get posted on the notice-board and in the staff bulletin of your school.

Please remember to keep referring to the FAQ on the main website www.nasuwt.org.uk now we are in the period of 'action short of strike action' to ensure you are not unwittingly undermining the stand we are taking trying to get the Government to listen. We also have a local website www.nasuwt-oxon.org.uk for Oxfordshire news. Already some members have had to make a stand and say No. Please remember if you directed to do something by your Head teacher that is against the Union instructions you MUST not refuse to do it. However, you must inform them that you will do as directed but you are doing so under duress and will be advising the union accordingly and get on with what you are being directed to do. Ensure you advise them in writing – state what you are being directed to do, the fact that you will do so, but are doing so under duress and that you will be advising the Union and then copy it to me asap.

I would like to reiterate the message I gave in the last letter I sent out. In the past membership of the Union was often seen as a safety net, as a fallback in times of difficulty but those times are over. Now, more than ever we have to be so careful and stand up and make sure we protect our interests and those of our students. Let's face it, we are in Education because we care about the young people in our care – we don't get any perks. We get long holidays sure, but we work goodness knows how many extra unpaid hours during term-time and you show me a teacher that doesn't do any work in their so called 'holidays'!

Please can I encourage you to become more involved in the Union even if it's just coming to local meetings. We only meet four times a year for about an hour, so it isn't a huge commitment. The meetings are an opportunity to meet other local members, raise & discuss local & national issues, to keep up to date with what's happening and to check that your school is doing things correctly. I have a suspicion that some Heads are incorrectly interpreting the rules to members' detriment. We meet at the Cherry Tree Inn in Steventon, we even provide drinks and sandwiches to tide you over until you get home to eat!

Locally we contain to raise concerns about how members are being treated, deployed, intervening when staff have been treated unfairly, negotiated leaving conditions for some staff who have felt unable to continue working in their schools, assisted in redundancy procedures and pressured schools to be transparent in their restructuring processes, advised in Academy transitions to protect our members, ensured members received their statutory entitlement of PPA and much more. You need to keep us in touch with what's happening in your school so we can support you as best we can.

The dates set for our meetings for the rest of the school year are: 11th October 2011, 10th January 2012, 13th March 2012 (Annual AGM), 12th June 2012 please put them in your diary now!

Come along to one meeting and give it a try, we would really like you to join us!

I hope you have a safe holiday and wish you and your families a very Happy Christmas and New Year

Kind regards
Carol Reaney

**Calling notice for next local meeting to be held at
The Cherry Tree Inn,
33 High Street
Steventon
OX13 6RZ
Agenda: 10th January 2012 @ 4.45pm**

- Apologies
- Minutes of last meeting
- Matters Arising
- President's Remarks
- Secretary's Report
- Treasurer's Report
- Executive Member's Report
- Federation Report
- The consideration and making of nominations for District members of the National Executive
- Annual Conference Easter 2012
- AOB at the discretion of the President.