

TEACHERS IN WALES

Issue 59 summer term 2018



NATIONAL Education Union (NEU): NUT section conference issued a clear message to the Welsh Government on devolution of pay and conditions to Wales. The Welsh Government decision to subject teachers' pay to annual public consultation, alongside the option of a review body rather than collective bargaining, has been widely criticised. Conference called the First Minister to honour his statement that "the Welsh Government is fully committed to the extension of collective bargaining". It also called for teachers' pay to keep pace with awards in England, as well as ensuring a national pay structure for teachers and senior leaders.

Photo by Kois Miah

300,000 teaching days lost to stress

RESEARCH conducted by NEU Cymru (NUT section) shows pressure being put on the teaching profession has led to more than 300,000 teaching days being lost due to stress-related illnesses since 2012.

In addition to the damage to individual teachers' mental health and the impact on the continuity of teaching that lost days are having, the Union estimates the financial burden to the sector to be upwards of £42m.

The figures, compiled through freedom of information requests, show that a total of 51,905 days were lost between 1 January and 31 December 2017. This is the highest in a calendar year since the figures were first tracked in 2012.

With funding problems faced by our schools, these statistics are likely to get worse.

Overall, 15 of the 22 local authorities in Wales saw an increase in stress-related sick leave over the past 12 months.

Damning indictment on work conditions

David Evans, Wales Secretary of NEU Cymru (NUT section), said: "Every year

these figures are published is a frustrating reminder of the pressures being placed on the teaching profession.

"That we have hit the unwanted milestone of over 300,000 lost teaching days due to stress-related illnesses is a damning indictment on the working conditions of those delivering education at the chalk face in Wales.

"The greater concern is that with the funding problems faced by our schools, these statistics are likely to get worse.

"We will be taking these figures up directly with the Cabinet Secretary and calling for immediate action to better support education professionals."

News

Welsh conference snowed off



THE first annual NEU Cymru (NUT section) conference had to be postponed due to the snow in March.

With issues such as curriculum changes, workload and devolution of pay and conditions set to be discussed, it was expected to form the foundation of the Union's policy making for years to come.

We are pleased to say that it will be rearranged for later in the year. The date and location will be confirmed shortly.

Government warned of 'quiet' funding crisis

THE Welsh Government has been warned about a 'quiet' crisis in education funding.

Speaking to the BBC, Neil Foden, NUT section executive member, said: "When there's a crisis in the health service, it's very visible and often high profile.

"Pictures of ambulances queuing up outside A&E departments are something people have become sadly familiar with. But there's a quiet crisis in education."

He warned that some primary schools had started looking at using unqualified staff to cover for PPA time.

"I'm sure if parents realised that, for the equivalent of one month of every academic year, their children were effectively child-minded, not taught, there would be a real crisis.

"But they don't know, so it's a hidden crisis.

"I think it's only when we see a real dip in standards, as measured by examination results, or parents starting to realise that their children are increasingly in classes of 32, 33, 34 or 35, that it will become apparent."



Dates for your diary

TRAINING FOR REPS

The Union's one- and three-day training courses for all new and existing school reps gives you the tools and confidence to make a real difference to members' lives.

Advanced

11-13 June – The Bear Hotel, Cowbridge.

Foundation

18-20 June – The Village Hotel, Swansea.

Employment law

2 July – The Village Hotel, Swansea.

■ If you're interested in becoming a school rep and attending one of the above, contact Lisa Williams at the NEU Cymru (NUT section) office.

For more information on all our training and professional development courses and to book a place, go to teachers.org.uk/learning

TRAINING FOR TEACHERS

Beginners Part 3 Welsh Course
12-13 May – Future Inn, Cardiff.

Start Right

Behaviour management for NQTs.

10 July – Future Inn, Cardiff.

■ To attend any of the above courses, email beth.roberts@neu.org.uk

Check your email inbox for information on the latest training opportunities.

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Follow us on Twitter: [@neucymrutrain](https://twitter.com/neucymrutrain)

Union successfully bids for more training funds

NEU Cymru (NUT section) has once again been successful in gaining access to the Wales Union Learning Fund (WULF).

The Union plans to continue with four priority areas:

■ to promote Welsh language learning to all teachers across Wales by developing a bespoke programme;

■ to promote the development of Union-led learning to cover teachers Wales-wide, with a focus on essential IT skills;

■ to provide a comprehensive, bespoke support programme for supply and out-of-work teachers; and

■ to promote and support the

development of lifelong learning for teachers, with a focus on mindfulness and well-being.

Beth Roberts, who was appointed as project co-ordinator in 2016, will continue to be responsible for the development of the learning strategy for NUT Cymru.

NEU Cymru (NUT section) Principal Officer Stuart Williams said: "I'm delighted that we've been successful with our third application for WULF. Ours is the only teaching union in Wales to access this fund, which means that we can continue to ensure that members in Wales will receive the lifelong training and support they need."

A member benefit you can Count on to save money

IN these difficult economic times, using a Countdown card is a simple, effective way to save a little every day.

The card – which is one of the many benefits of being an NEU member – offers discounts and reward schemes at a national network of thousands of high street shops, as well as holidays, fun days out, keeping fit and more.

Participating outlets include Alton Towers, ASDA, B&Q, Boots, Comet, Halfords, Odeon

Cinemas, Pizza Express, Sainsbury's, Ticketmaster, Vision Express, Wallis and many more.

There are also hundreds of local shops and services offering discounts – from your local Indian restaurant to your high street flower stall.

As an NEU member you will be able to save at will, with no points to collect, just flexible savings every time you use your card. For more information and to register, visit countdowncard.com



Neil Foden presenting a workshop at the Young Teachers' Conference

'Fantastic' workshops for young teachers

YOUNG teachers from all over Wales attended the South Wales Young Teachers' Conference at The Vale Resort, Hensol, in January.

On the Friday night Laura Chisholm, Young Teacher Officer in Portsmouth and Young Teachers' National Organising Forum member, ran a session on getting the most out of your union.

The following morning, delegates were given a choice of workshops: Engaging Pupils and Improving Literacy

Skills, led by Welsh Government literacy consultant Helen Bowen; or Managing your Workload – What your Head Teacher can reasonably ask you to do, led by NUT section executive member and head teacher Neil Foden.

After the mid-morning break, delegates were offered a choice of more workshops: Embracing Inspection... a Survival Guide led by Helen Bowen who is also an Estyn inspector; and How to develop your skills in order to develop

your career, led by Neil Foden.

Geraint Williams, from St David's College in Cardiff, said: "What an excellent conference. Having a choice of workshops to attend was fantastic, and everyone there took a great deal from them.

"Both Neil and Helen's talks were very informative, filled with lots of useful tools and ideas to take back."

■ If you're interested in attending a future Young Teachers Conference, contact Lisa Williams at lisa.williams@neu.org.uk

Here to help

AS the largest teachers' union, NEU Cymru (NUT section) is able to offer members an unrivalled service.

Our professional team is here to provide expertise to our network of school and college representatives and local association and division secretaries.

If you have a problem at work or want to know more about member services, contact:

- your school or college representative;
- your association or division secretary;
- NEU Cymru (NUT section) office.

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£170 of own money spent on class costs

A SURVEY of NEU members in Wales has highlighted the startling impact of funding cuts on schools.

Figures revealed that, on average, teachers spend £170 of their own money annually to cover the costs of classroom and school provisions that would otherwise not be funded.

These range from pens, pencils, computer equipment and trips, to toiletries and furniture.

It is estimated that this average would add up to millions if taken across the whole profession. Results included:

- 98 per cent of respondents stated they have bought something for a pupil, their classroom or school using their own money;
- Of those purchases, 79 per cent were deemed as a resource which was needed;
- The average expenditure was £170 with three instances of teachers spending over £999.

Feedback included:

- "It has become commonly accepted that we buy resources and do not claim money."
- "The demands of the curriculum, alongside funding pressures,

98% of teachers say they have bought something for a pupil, their classroom or school. These resources range from pens to furniture.

means I feel that if I don't spend my own money, the children I teach miss out."

■ "I spend my own money on resources that are needed for school but I also hold down a part-time job on weekends and evenings to have extra money."

Owen Hathway, Wales Policy Officer, said: "It is a pretty damning indictment of the approach we have seen to education funding over the years that teachers and parents, who have already paid for education through their taxes, have to put their hands in their pockets simply to ensure the most basic provisions can be bought by a school.

"Everyone wants to see a world-leading education system in Wales but we cannot continue to deliver the progress we have seen in recent years on such a poor financial investment."

Student teachers prepare to Show Racism the Red Card

MORE than 700 final year students discussed current issues around racism at Show Racism the Red Card (SRtRC) conferences in February.

Following on from the success of previous years, student conferences were held at five of the six teacher training universities in Wales – University of South Wales, Newport; University of Wales Trinity St David, Swansea and Carmarthen; Aberystwyth; and Bangor – with financial support from NEU Cymru (NUT section).

Students on BA (QTS), Graduate Teacher Programme and PGCE courses learnt how to deal with racism if it arises and how to teach pupils the wrongs of racism during PSE lessons.

SRtRC at your school

They also asked questions, discussed the correct and incorrect terms to use in the classroom, and attended workshops



An SRtRC Education Officer delivering a workshop at the University of Wales Trinity St David, Carmarthen campus

on immigration and how to use SRtRC resources.

■ If you'd like SRtRC to visit your school to deliver these or other workshops, email Sunil Patel at sunil@theredcardwales.org