

NEU Annual Conference 2019 Report

I got involved in the Union after a series of extreme experiences in my early career. My first school closed after going into Special Measures, the NUT were the ONLY union who supported us. In my second school many people fell foul to a bullying head. Again, only the NUT supported us. From those experiences it was clear going alone on anything was not going to bring about any change. Change was only going to be brought about through working together.

I came to the South Glos meetings after being fed up with apathy in my school towards accepting working conditions. Since then, my dark moments at school have been made bearable by the support of a variety of people from within the union. At my school we have won several victories not because of me on my own, but because of me with the NEU. This is my second conference, and I am here with my family, which puts other pressures on my time here. But it saddens me that there have been so few opportunities to come together and show solidarity as South Glos NEU.

I think if we are here as a group we should at least meet together a few times. The fact that I have yet again met up with other districts to discuss their core business is not good for morale, being the alien in the pack is awkward.

I enjoy conference. I want to make the experience better for all. We need to make sure we can gather together for some of the time we are here.

That said my time with other districts has highlighted to me what a great variety of strengths we hold as a collective. Some districts only strengths are case work or only focus on national issues, I can't say we have one area we are strong in, we have so many strengths, particularly given the shape of S Glos, we have a lot to offer members of the NEU.

As an experience going to conference is a really positive one listening to other teachers experiencing things that I've experience every day and the scenarios they face around the country being similar to what we talk about in our meetings just give you some solace that you are not alone and that is part of what the union is about. I missed the vote on SATs which did saying to be quite an exciting experience but I was that further discussions on six form which were quite depressing I made me realise it something that we have the union do you need to tackle the funding and six forms are ridiculous and is something I personally would like to look in more into as part of South Glos because the funding crisis is hitting everywhere and I know if you've got no money and you expecting to get less money again it really is going to diminish the services that you are able to offer and so the children of South Glos are in an awful situation.

Overall conference is a very positive experience because you do feel part of one unit moving forward on very similar issues and that for me is a very powerful experience.

Leilah Boyce

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