



How do I organise a local event?

The school cuts campaign is uniting teachers, support staff, pupils, parents and school leaders in its fight against cuts to school funding.

The NEU, alongside other Unions, has been campaigning for fairer funding for schools through local action groups, meetings and last year's lobby of Parliament. With our national weekend of action on 21-22 April, we want NEU members to bring the issue of school funding home to their communities with events and activities to show how the funding crisis affects them.

You might want to leaflet school gates, hold a lunchtime meeting or a public evening event. You could lobby a politician or knock on doors asking people to think about how they can #vote foreducation in upcoming local elections. Organising a school-wide or local event can feel a little daunting but the NEU has resources to help you. Here are some practical steps to help you get started.

1. You don't have to organise alone.

Find out who can support you by contacting your local NEU division. There are many other political and community groups fighting for school funding – involving them can increase publicity and participation, as well as ease the pressure of doing the organisation by yourself.

2. Have clear aims and objectives.

Are you raising awareness, highlighting issues at an individual school or fighting for a specific part of the education system? Whatever your aim, it needs to be clear, concise and easy to explain to people who may not realise what a profound effect the lack of funding is having. Be clear about the NEU's ultimate goal – to hold the Government to account and force them to invest fairly in local schools.

3. Don't overcomplicate your plans.

Successful Union action needs to be carefully planned but not over-complicated. If you want to involve as many people as possible, make sure any instructions you give are easy to follow and everyone knows what is happening. If you are planning a march, for example, it needs to be clear when you're starting, where you're going, how long it should take and who to go to with questions participants may have. These things sound obvious but it's the small details that ensure success.

4. Make sure people know about it!

Invite every interested party you can think of. Fellow educators and support staff (they don't just have to be from your school), local and regional NEU reps, pupils, parents, school management, politicians, other activist groups and the local press. Publicise your event through press releases, letters to parents, social media, radio, local noticeboards – the more people who know about it, the greater chance your event will be a success.

If your area is holding local elections in May, this could also be a great opportunity to get your community talking about education and the pressures schools are facing. Follow this [link](#) to find out about upcoming local elections.

5. Don't forget to follow up from your event.

Once your event is over, make sure you retain the links you have made. The NEU will be holding a national weekend of action on 21-22 April – you could use this to maintain the momentum. Remember to highlight and build upon the successes you have achieved – don't let your event become a one off.

6. Tips:

- DO keep the issues personal. The public need to understand the real issues facing real people in schools. Personal anecdotes from teachers or pupils will help people understand why the NEU is fighting so hard on this issue.
- DO keep people talking about your event in the run up and aftermath of the day itself. Count downs on social media or live updates are a great way to keep coverage of your event exciting and relevant.
- DON'T be worried about asking for help. The more organisations you involve or invite to take part, the greater your chances of involving a wider base of supporters on the day.
- DON'T be worried about talking to parents or school leaders – the cuts to education are affecting management and parents alike and neither wants to see pupil's learning suffer. Encourage them to make their voices heard.
- DON'T forget that the NEU has already forced the Government to accept the need to invest in education. Last July, the then Education Secretary Justine Greening announced a £1.3 billion boost for core school funding as the result of Union pressure. Although more needs to be done, this shows what's possible through focussed, collective action. This is not a losing battle.
- DO remember to check out the resources available for reps and members at www.neu.org.uk/funding

Good luck with your event!