

December 2012

## OFSTED Does Its Job – Taking The Michael

"If anyone says to you that 'staff morale is at an all-time low' you will know you are doing something right." Michael Wilshaw, Ofsted Chief Inspector

These days, Ofsted is the attack dog of the two Michaels – Gove and Wilshaw. Its job is to shake the life out of education as a democratically accountable public service, and to prepare the ground for its privatisation on the (appalling) unsuccessful American and Swedish models.

While defending the privilege that continues to give access to the best jobs and opportunities to those who can show the designer label of a private education, these men blame everyone except themselves for the disadvantage experienced by children from poor and indeed ordinary backgrounds when confronted with trying to make their way in one of the most unequal Western societies. They spew out a daily diet of "reports" and anecdotes claiming to show the alleged failings of local authorities, school governors, social workers and, above all, teachers. Meanwhile the Government continually cuts spending on education and welfare provision in a way that makes it ever harder for these same "culprits" to do the job they conscientiously continue to work at day-in-day-out – the job of really trying to make a difference to the lives of the children they are responsible for in our state schools and services.

No surprises then that another day brings another cobbled-together

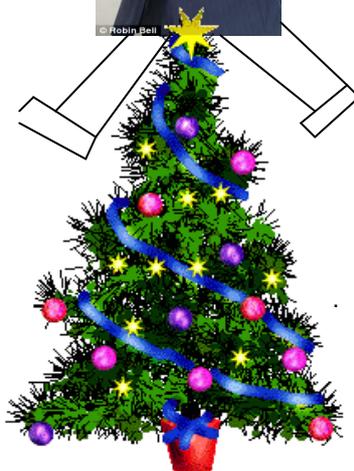
league table; nor that in one part of it Bradford is near the bottom; nor, sadly, that the media treat it as though it were real news.

The real news is that Bradford has some of the best improvements in pupil outcomes in the country, made against the background of some of the greatest disadvantages; that, even by Ofsted's own standards, hardly any Bradford schools are failing.

The real news is that Bradford has just been told by the Government that it has to carry out further cuts on a horrendous scale to education services mainly targeted at the poorest.

Believe your own eyes. Don't let them take the Michael.

*Merry Christmas Mr Wilshaw*



## Calling School Reps!

### Training Day

Wednesday 30<sup>th</sup> January  
NUT Office  
Edmund Street, Bradford

We will be discussing

- How to organise in school
- Recruitment
- The joint union action
- Other current national and local issues (eg pay)
- You will also be able to raise any problems which may be particular to your own school.

Please try to come, especially if you have not attended any previous training.

Registration 9am for a 9.30 start.  
Finish by 3.30

Lunch and refreshments during the day are provided

## No School Rep?

If your school does not at present have an NUT Rep, would you consider volunteering? A Rep greatly enhances our ability to communicate with members in school and helps them to get in touch with us. Having a reliable person to open the post and distribute it, and put posters we send on the noticeboard, is invaluable. You might want to do more than this – but if you don't, local union officers are always

Join the NUT, the largest teachers' union. Just ring the Joining Hotline on 0845 300 1669 or 020 7380 6369

Bradford NUT, 22 Edmund Street, Bradford BD5 0BH

Tel: 01274 414664 / Fax: 01274 414665 email: [contact@bradfordnut.org](mailto:contact@bradfordnut.org) website:

willing to come into school to do the jobs you might not feel comfortable with. And remember, help from the local office is only a phone call away.

We are at present holding brief meetings in schools which do not have reps to talk about the role and to answer any questions you might have about current union policies. If you would like such a meeting at your school, just give us a ring.

## And Here's Another Cut

At the same time that Ofsted castigates Bradford, the Government is further slashing the resources needed to improve the life-chances of young people.

The Early Intervention Grant, which is currently paid to Local Authorities to support early years education and family intervention programmes, including Sure Start, is to be cut nationally by £150million. In Bradford this means a cut of £6million. The Index of Deprivation shows that Bradford is the 32<sup>nd</sup> most economically deprived Local Authority in England, of a total of 354, so this cut is all the more damaging.

Childrens' charities are queueing up to condemn the move. Family Action, The Council For Disabled Children, 4Children and Mentor have already made their objections known. The Local Government Association has written a strongly worded letter to Michael Gove objecting that the Government has provided "no justification for this arbitrary reduction" of "funding for frontline services for vulnerable children."

## Stress – on-line help for managers

Work-related stress is a major cause of sickness and absence in the UK. It can be debilitating to those who experience it and, if not tackled, can lead to significant illness.

"The industries that reported the highest rates of work-related stress in the last three years were health, social work, education, and

public administration." The Health and Safety Newsletter (Published by the Health and Safety Executive) Issue 32.

Line manager behaviour has been identified as crucial in preventing work-related stress within their team. The HSE has helped to develop a free online tool aimed at equipping managers with the skills they need to understand how their behaviour can prevent people being made ill through stress.

The tool, which includes exercises and learning materials, is designed to help managers increase their awareness of the management approach by completing a questionnaire and by getting feedback from others on how they perceive them. Also to help managers understand the key themes of manager behaviour that research has shown are important for the prevention and reduction of stress and to equip managers with the tools to further enhance their skills.

The tool can be downloaded free from [www.hse.gov.uk/pubns/books/newletter-autumn12.pdf](http://www.hse.gov.uk/pubns/books/newletter-autumn12.pdf)

## But isn't a certain level of stress normal in a job like teaching?

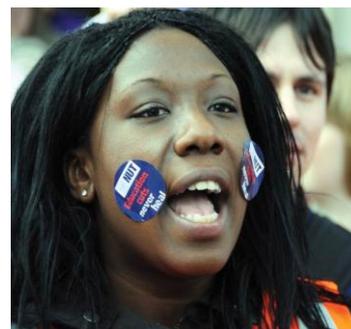
No, it isn't! This is what the HSE says:  
"Work-related stress is the adverse reaction people have to excessive pressure or other types of demand placed on them at work. There is a clear distinction between pressure which can be a motivating factor, and stress, which occurs when this pressure becomes excessive."

**Merry  
Christmas!**



**And A Happy New Year**

## Women United



A Roundtable on Women in the Union  
2<sup>nd</sup> February 2013  
NUT HQ, Hamilton House,  
Mabledon Place,  
London WC1 9DB

At last year's Annual Delegate Conference a motion was passed to make 2012-13 the year of "A Woman's Place is in her Union."

Join us to discuss how women members do and can make their voices heard in school and in the Union, within the current education environment.

Brainstorm how the Union can support women's active participation in the Union in a way that works for women teachers. Women make up 75% of the NUT's membership.

Share your stories and hear from other inspiring NUT women activists on how they have made a difference to others' working lives, and to the Union.

Attendance is FREE for NUT members.

Please contact the Bradford office if you are interested in going to this conference.