



# Newsletter



January 2012

## NUT Will Continue The Fight To Protect Your Pension



The NUT has not signed up to the Government's plans to worsen your pension and we will continue our campaign against them.

The joint action of public sector unions on November 30<sup>th</sup>, following on from our earlier strike on June 30<sup>th</sup>, did produce some concessions from the Government. This showed the effectiveness of what we did. If further joint action had been threatened after November 30<sup>th</sup>, as the NUT advocated within the TUC, we would certainly have achieved more concessions.

**The leadership of the NUT, including myself in my capacity as a National Officer, think that the changes to your pension will still be so bad that we need to do all that we can together to continue to resist them.**

**For all teachers**, there will still be

1. Big rises in pension contributions – 3.2% of salary for most teachers –

adding to the effects of the pay freeze and now of regional pay.

2. Indexation of pensions in payment switched from the Retail Price Index to the Consumer Price Index, cutting the average value over a lifetime by 15%.

**Teachers within 10 years of the age at which they could currently draw their full pension** will be protected from other changes, and there are some other small concessions.

**But for everyone else**

1. Normal pension age rises to 66, 67 or 68 depending on your age. So most teachers will have to work for 6, 7 or 8 years longer to draw their full pension.
2. Pension will be based on a Career Average rather than a Final Salary. This further reduces everyone's pension.

The leadership of the NUT intends to continue organising campaigning activities to prevent this injustice. We will organise further strike action if you will support it, and we will continue to try to involve other unions with us in all aspects of the campaign.

The changes to our scheme hit the youngest teachers hardest. In their scale, they go way beyond anything needed to make the scheme cover its costs. We are expected to contribute many billions of pounds to the Government's package of public sector cuts, and do it indefinitely.

**Please support your Union in continuing to say NO to the changes**, and let us know what campaigning steps you will support to force the Government to change its mind.

Ian Murch, NUT National Treasurer and Assistant Secretary, Bradford NUT

## New Appraisal Rules Unacceptable

The NUT believes in an appraisal system that supports professional development; the Government prefers a system which is nothing more than a bully's charter. Changes to the current Performance Management Regulations which are in the pipeline make this absolutely clear. But for schools, these changes are optional and Governing Bodies do not have to implement them. The NUT and other teacher unions are working on an alternative model appraisal policy with professional development at its core, and we are calling on all Governing Bodies to adopt it.

The changes the Government wants:

- No limits on lesson observations, for Performance Management or any other purpose.
- Appraisals (the new term for Performance Management) and capability will be included in the same procedure.
- Schools will be encouraged to use probationary periods when teachers move between

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**Bradford NUT, 22 Edmund Street, Bradford BD5**

**Tel: 01274 414664 / Fax: 01274 414665**

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jobs in the same school, increasing job insecurity.

- Potential employers will be able to see a teacher's appraisal documentation.

### Workload

**The NUT opposes these changes and will support members, with industrial action if necessary, in any school where the performance management/appraisal system is unacceptable or where there are any other problems of workload.**

## More tinkering with Ofsted rules

Changes to the Ofsted inspection system came into operation this month. Here is a brief summary. For more detailed information see the January/February edition of The Teacher.

The frequency of inspections will change. Schools judged "Outstanding" will be exempt from routine inspection (except for special schools and PRUs), while those judged "inadequate", or "satisfactory" with insufficient progress, will receive more attention.

Inspections will focus on four key areas: achievement, quality of teaching, behaviour and safety, leadership and management. Areas currently assessed by Ofsted will be reported under these headings.

There will be a greater focus on teaching and learning with a particular emphasis on literacy and numeracy. There will be less emphasis on formal meetings.

School self evaluation remains but schools will be able to present their information in the format of their choosing rather than having to use the SEF.

Ofsted will look at progress in narrowing gaps between groups of pupils, including pupils with disabilities and special educational needs and their peers.

Schools are now able to request an inspection, for a fee.

Another category has been invented – "coasting schools"

Commenting on this, Christine Blower, General Secretary of the National Union of Teachers, said: "First we had 'underperforming' schools, now we have 'coasting' schools. Labelling schools in this way is derogatory and insulting to pupils, teachers, school leaders and governors. The Government's real agenda behind this change is of course inventing yet another category of schools that it will then seek to force into academy status. . . The Government's focus should be on identifying and providing the resources that schools need to provide the best possible education for all children. To be constantly changing the goal posts for measuring a school's success is destabilising and demoralising for the whole school community".

### NUT advice

- Use the staff questionnaire and feedback session to give your point of view. It's better to be professionally assertive than defensive.
- Exercise your right not to take part in joint lesson observations if you don't want to. This is when inspector and headteacher watch your lesson.
- Don't produce special lesson plans or documentation for inspection which you believe to be unnecessary.
- Exercise your right to be treated with respect by inspectors who are bound by a code of conduct.
- Contact the Union office if you feel you are not being treated fairly.

## Risk Assessments for Pregnancy

As soon as you inform your school management about your pregnancy they have a legal duty to conduct a risk assessment. They should have a generic one, but this will often need amending to apply to you as an individual, so it is a good idea to ask to see it to check that it does cover the things you are concerned about.

Protection from fatigue, lifting, infectious diseases, collisions and assault often appear on the risk assessments, as well as toilet provision and rest facilities. Any aspect of your work which your pregnancy makes hazardous or uncomfortable should be considered.

Contact the union office for advice if you think the risk assessment relating to your pregnancy is inadequate, or if your school has not done one. Further details can be found on our website at [www.bradfordnut.org](http://www.bradfordnut.org) – click on current issues, then maternity.

**The next meeting of Bradford District NUT is the Annual General Meeting on Tuesday 24<sup>th</sup> January. Everyone welcome.**

**Come along and enjoy an excellent FREE curry or meal of your choice after the meeting.**

Venue: The International Restaurant, Morley Street  
Time: 5 till 6.30, with tea and coffee from 4.30.

Reports and discussions will include:

### Pensions Action

We're still fighting to protect teachers' pensions – what should we do next?

### Redundancies in Central Services

All Council Central Services Workers will have had Section 188 notices alerting them to the threat of redundancy because of budget cuts.

### Campaigns

Academies and Free Schools

### The Bradford Partnership

What is the status of this organization and why is it so problematic for our members?