



Tower Hamlets

Class Struggle

A Workers' Liberty education workers' bulletin

www.workersliberty.org • awl@workersliberty.org • 0207 394 8923

Performance related pay? No way!

The School Teachers' Review Body report is an unprecedented attack on teachers' pay. Take-home pay is already 12% worse because of increased pension contributions and rising inflation.

This trend will continue in to 2013; by April some teachers will be paying 10% of their salary in to the pension fund.

Michael Gove has promised a 1% pay rise in 2013 at the top and bottom of the pay spines. This is still a pay cut against inflation and "schools are free to determine the extent of pay uplifts", meaning individual schools can choose to continue the pay freeze.

The report includes a plan for performance related pay rises, which Gove wants to implement from September 2013. Newer teachers will lose automatic annual increases on the pay scale and older teachers will see the upper pay scale dismantled so that they can be placed anywhere on an upper pay band with the "amount and timing of any progression [to] be at the school's discretion".

OBLIGATION

Also, if you move to another school there will be "no obligation on schools to match a teacher's existing salary on either the main or upper pay scales."

The report plans on having Ofsted 'help [to] encourage a clear focus on the relationship between pay progression decisions and quality of teaching'. This means a system of managing schools by insecurity and fear. If your manager is a bully, or looking to make cuts decisions on pay will be harsh and arbitrary. Some will reward favourites and punish others and schools where poverty, class and injustice make it difficult to meet targets will suffer.

The government feels confident enough to go after pay because union leaders made a shambles of the pensions fight. No more one-day strikes, followed by months of silence, or promised regional action that never materialises! We need a programme of action. If NASUWT aren't willing to organise then the NUT can't wait for them. We need a calendar of na-

tional and regional strikes, demonstrations and other forms of action to give members confidence and force Gove to back down.

We also need democratic control of the action to avoid the pensions debacle. No more protest strikes, we need to fight to win!

Victimisation at Bishop Challoner

Teachers at Bishop Challoner are in further dispute with management.

Following the threat of strike action which successfully prevented a mock Ofsted and forced an embarrassing climb down by the head, one of the school's NUT reps has been placed on informal capability proceedings. Halfway through this term the same rep was given an informal warning by the head for telling members about union meetings in lesson time.

Angry at her humiliation and fearing union strength in further disputes, the head has decided to victimise a union representative and make an example of him to discourage others.

The union school group and the local NUT branch (ELTA) has given the rep full support. They have called on the head to withdraw all warnings and drop all proceedings. If this is not done, members will vote on a ballot for strike action.

The joint union action short of strike action has enabled members at Bishop Challoner to challenge and stop many of the unsound practices going on at the school, but there is still much that needs improving. Of immediate concern is the way staff are intimidated in meetings with management (particularly NQTs), workload as well as management's somewhat bizarre short-term changes in timetabling in English and RE leading to Year 11 boys receiving no religious education and as a result excessive workload for English teachers.

Victimising trade unionists will not stop them confronting management on these and other issues.



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Rank-and-file school workers' network holds second conference

Local Associations Network plans to win

The Local Associations for National Action network (known as LANAC, or LAN) was set up just before the NUT's 2012 national conference.

It emerged because of fury amongst members at the calling off of national strike action over pensions. On Saturday 8 December, over 50 delegates met for LANAC's second conference to discuss the NUT's campaign against the onslaught of attacks on teachers. Delegates reflected upon the successes and limitations of phase one the action short of strike on workload.

The discussion acknowledged that this has been patchy, leaving some members isolated. But we also heard inspiring stories from reps that have used the action to take on bullying heads and unbearable conditions. One of these was told by a rep from Stratford whose school took nine days of strike action before their head backed down from a threat to cut pay. With the strength of the national union and the support of parents, the members at this school grew in confidence until management had no choice but to concede. Successes such as these have been possible because the union has fought them as if they are not prepared to lose.

We heard about the on-going and escalating attacks we face — on pay, pensions, and facilities time and talked via Skype to members of the Caucus of Rank-and-File Educators (CORE), a grassroots network within the Chicago Teachers' Union that has just led the union to a huge victory.

LANAC discussed the need for a programme of action to win; no more one day protest strikes but a long-term, thoughtful strategy of escalating national and regional strikes, around clear demands, with NASUWT if possible, without them if necessary, combined with on-going demonstrations, lobbying and petitioning.

Following Gove's recent announcements on changes to our pay, the NUT leadership needs to declare war with a strategy to win. It's up to ordinary members to pressure them into doing so.

Gove raids schools' budgets to fund Academies

Michael Gove has slashed £1 billion from community schools' budgets to fund his campaign to expand Academies. Read about his disgusting budget robbery at tinyurl.com/goveschoolcuts



Hands off our breaks!

A Tower Hamlets support worker writes:

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At my school, a few people are asked to do errands and tasks during their lunch breaks because they are seen as reliable and feel uncomfortable saying no to SLT. I like my job, but I don't do it as a favour to anyone! We're entitled to our breaks and need to defend them.

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DO YOU HAVE A WORKPLACE STORY FOR US? EMAIL IT TO US AT [AWL@WORKERSLIBERTY.ORG](mailto:awl@workersliberty.org) WITH THE SUBJECT LINE 'TOWER HAMLETS CLASS STRUGGLE'



Workers' Liberty is a revolutionary socialist organisation active in the British labour movement fighting for an alternative to capitalism and Stalinism based on common ownership, democracy and workers' control. *Class Struggle* is produced by our members, supporters and friends who work in education in Tower Hamlets. To get involved with producing the bulletin, or to take copies for your workplace, email awl@workersliberty.org with the subject line 'Tower Hamlets Class Struggle'.